RUSSIAN LITERATURE IN ENGLISH (RULE)

RULE205 Murder and Adultery: Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and the 19th-Century Russian Novel
The 19th-century novel is widely regarded as the supreme achievement of Russian literature. This course will trace its development from Pushkin's elegant, witty novel in verse, EUGENE ONEGIN, through the grotesque comedy of Gogol, to the realist masterpieces of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, with their complex depiction of human psychology and the philosophical struggles of late 19th-century society. We will consider the historical background in which the novels were produced and the tools developed by Russian critical theory, especially the Russian formalists and Mikhail Bakhtin, for understanding 19th-century Russian prose.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-REES
Identical With: RUSS205, REES205, WLIT241
Prereq: None

RULE206 A Matter of Life and Death: Fiction in the Soviet Era
The great Russian writers of the 20th century risked their lives insisting on moral absolutes to counter Soviet doctrine. Zamyatin's WE inspired BRAVE NEW WORLD and 1984; Bulgakov's MASTER AND MARGARITA remained hidden for 27 years; Solzhenitsyn dared to submit IVAN DENISOVICH during Khrushchev's Thaw--each decade has its characteristic masterpiece. (Students who wish to read excerpts from the course readings in the original Russian should see the instructor to enroll in a 0.5 credit tutorial.)
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-REES
Identical With: RUSS206, REES206
Prereq: None

RULE208F Otherness & Belonging (FYS)
One of the many haunting utterances of Fyodor Dostoevsky's most famous antihero, the Underground Man, is "I am alone, I thought, and they are everyone." Like him, the other protagonists of this course are outcasts, dissidents, and strangers - jaded office clerks and repressed misanthropes, queer activists and "enemies of the state" - who refuse to conform to societal norms, disrupt conventions by saying the unsayable, and write and make art from the margins, the realm of undesirables. Focusing mainly on Russia and Eastern Europe, we will analyze representations of otherness and belonging in fiction, non-fiction, and film. We will explore narratives of undesirability through the thematic prisms of exile and immigration; gender and sexuality; mental illness; prison writing; ethnic difference; religion; and unrequited love. The concept of undesirability will also be our point of entry for constructing arguments about community, privilege, and a society without outsiders.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-REES
Identical With: REES208F, RUSS208F, WLIT245F
Prereq: None

RULE220 Speak, Memory: The Russian Memoir
Memoirs offer a chance for individuals to make sense of their relationship to larger historical forces and allow writers of fiction and poetry to reflect on the tensions between biography and the creative process. We will read memoirs of prison and of Stalinist terror by Fyodor Dostoevsky and Nadezhda Mandelstam; visions of childhood by Lev Tolstoy, Vladimir Nabokov, and poets Osip Mandelstam and Marina Tsvetaeva; and works of autobiography by Viktor Shklovsky and Sergey Gandlevsky that create their own worlds of literary experimentation. The course will also consider the theoretical problems of autobiographical writing. Students will write a memoir of childhood (3-5 pages) to better understand the technical problems faced by Tolstoy in writing about his childhood. Students will also write a piece of memoiristic prose, or a parody or imitation of one of the writers in the course (minimum 10 pages), as one of their three papers. We will devote one class session to a writing workshop session on the creative project.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-REES
Identical With: RUSS220, REES220, WLIT243
Prereq: None

RULE223 After Communism: Animals, Avatars, Hybrids
During the last two decades of the 20th century, a wide array of Soviet and post-Soviet writers either replaced or merged the traditional human protagonist with another: the animal. Whether featuring a penguin avatar or disillusionsed insects; a human centipede or a pack of werewolves, these literary works directly and indirectly shed light on the historical context in which they were written: the last decade before and the one immediately following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Keeping in mind this historical and social context, we will analyze representations of hybridity, violence, sexuality, and (imagined) communities--all through texts that challenge us to consider what the animal represents and how it affects our expectations of narrative. The secondary readings will situate the animal in a broader philosophical and theoretical framework, and special attention will be paid to postmodernism as a movement in literature and art. Conducted in English.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-REES
Identical With: RUSS223, REES223, WLIT256
Prereq: None

RULE224 Performing Russian Culture: From Peter the Great to the Russian Revolution
This course offers a survey of Russian culture from 1700-1917 through the perspective of performance studies. Starting with the reign of Peter the Great and ending on the eve of the revolution, we read some of the seminal works of the Russian literary canon, including plays, poems, short stories, and novels. We also consider examples from visual and material culture: paintings, sculptures, and everyday objects. Alongside these primary sources, we discuss theoretical pieces from the field of performance studies in order to expose and reflect on the social and political mechanisms embedded in the shaping of various forms of "Russianness." The course will explore ever-relevant questions of belonging, display of power, and ideology, and ask how, why, and by whom cultural identities are contrived and performed. The course is conducted in English.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-REES
Identical With: RUSS224, REES224, WLIT257
Prereq: None

RULE233 Introduction to Russian and Soviet Cinema
This course provides an introduction to the history and poetics of Soviet and Russian cinema. From the avant-garde experimentation of Lev Kuleshov, Sergei Eisenstein, and Dziga Vertov to the masterpieces of Andrei Tarkovsky, Sergei
Parajanov, and Kira Muratova, the course will explore the development of Russian film as artistic medium and as national tradition. The discussion and comparative analyses of different forms and genres, including silent cinema, propaganda films, blockbusters, and auteur cinema, will be situated within the cultural, political, and aesthetic contexts of the Soviet Union and contemporary Russia.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-REES
Identical With: REES233, RUSS233, FILM333, WLIT255
Prereq: None

RULE235 Queer Russia
Russia is accustomed to playing the role of the "evil empire." The current ongoing war in Ukraine has resurrected the Cold War-era narratives about Russia as a dark, aggressive, and ruthless military power. The notorious legislation of recent years—whose functions range from barring Americans from adopting Russian orphans to criminalizing the so-called "gay propaganda"—have further solidified Russia's reputation as a country with little regard for human rights. Yet generations of Russian poets, artists, and writers have transformed the country's systematic oppression and violence into spectacular forms of protest and self-expression. This course focuses on gender and sexuality in exploring an alternative cultural history of Russia, which highlights its queer legacy from the nineteenth century to the present. We will examine poetry, fiction, art, memoirs, plays, films, performances, and discursive texts that showcase uniquely Russian conceptions of marriage, gender relations, gender expression, and sexual identity. Attention will be paid to the ways in which Russian and Western narratives of queerness align and diverge. In English. No knowledge of Russian is required or expected.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-REES
Identical With: REES235, RUSS235, FGSS234
Prereq: None

RULE240F Reading Stories: Great Short Works from Gogol to Petrushevskaya (FYS)
This course is designed to help students improve their writing through the close reading and analysis of short stories and novellas by Russian masters of the form. Students will be asked to bring to each class their ideas on how to construct an argument that could be developed into a written interpretation of the work being discussed. These discussions, along with work on building logical arguments, recognizing propaganda and disinformation, and polishing grammar and style, will inform students' own writing (four 5-page papers). We will read works from the 19th century to the late 20th century that include Tolstoy's novellas of faith, adultery, and facing death; Gogol's surreal comedies and urbanistic fantasies; Chekhov's subtle psychological tales; Bunin's reflections from exile on a lost Russia; Bulgakov's sketches of life as a country doctor; and Petrushevskaya's modern stories of the tortured lives of women in the late Soviet period.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-REES
Identical With: RUSS240F, REES240F, WLIT240F
Prereq: None

RULE251 Dostoevsky
Dostoevsky is widely recognized as one of the world's greatest novelists. His career begins at the end of Russian Romanticism, is interrupted by nine years of prison and exile in Siberia, and resumes at the beginning of the age of the great realist novel. Dostoevsky's major works grapple with the themes of sin and crime, the disintegration of the family, and the difficulty of believing in God in a world full of evil.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-REES
Identical With: RUSS251, REES251, WLIT244
Prereq: None

RULE252 Tolstoy
During the 19th century when Tolstoy wrote his novels and stories, literature was viewed in Russia as the intelligentsia's primary medium for debating its big questions (such as how to resolve the inequalities that had been institutionalized under serfdom, or how to choose between new and old values as Russia experienced modernization). Writers like Tolstoy and Dostoevsky willingly assumed the responsibility to address a broad range of political, historical, and philosophical-religious questions in their fiction, and they wrote novels with radical formulations as well as solutions to these questions. However, they also viewed literature, particularly the novel, as a medium with rich potential for innovative formal experimentation, and so they resisted the call for conventional ideological novels. Each of Tolstoy's best works is an innovative formal experiment that creates an unprecedented, new type of novel. This course will study how Tolstoy's writings both responded to and transcended their times by creating new novelistic forms and new truths within those forms.

For native speakers and learners who have studied Russian for at least four semesters, a half-credit course is available in which we will read excerpts from Tolstoy's works (CGST 330).

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-REES
Identical With: RUSS252, REES252, COL262, WLIT252
Prereq: None

RULE254 Nobel Laureates: The Politics of Literature
The course examines key cultural and socio-historical moments in the development of twentieth-century Russian literature by focusing on the prose and poetry of authors awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature—IVAN Bunin (1933), Boris Pasternak (1958), Mikhail Sholokhov (1965), Alexander Solzhenitsyn (1970), Joseph Brodsky (1987), and Svetlana Alexievich (2015). Additionally, the students will read Lev Tolstoy, who rejected being nominated for the prize, as well as Vladimir Nabokov and Anna Akhmatova, who arguably merited the award but never received it. On the broader level, the class will ponder literature's relevance for shaping public discourse on cultural policies, national identities, and international relations.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-REES
Identical With: REES254, RUSS254
Prereq: None

RULE255 Prague, Vienna, Sarajevo: 20th-Century Novels from Central and Eastern Europe
This course is a survey of 20th-century prose fiction of Central and Eastern Europe, with an emphasis on the Czech novel. The novels we will read make history come alive through the eyes of vividly individual characters. In Joseph Roth's RADETZKY MARCH, the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire is viewed through the lens of a single heartbroken family; in Bohumil Hrabal's I SERVED THE KING OF ENGLAND, the Czech experience in World War II and postwar Stalinization is embodied in the figure of a diminutive hotel waiter; Milán Kundera's THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING refracts the Soviet domination of Czechoslovakia through the traumas and love affairs of a quartet
of characters; in Witold Gombrowicz’s TRANS-ATLANTYK and Aleksandar Hemon’s THE QUESTION OF BRUNO, the main characters find themselves in a foreign land when their home countries (Poland and Yugoslavia, respectively) are torn apart by war. All the works we will read exemplify the high level of narrative sophistication, in realist, absurdist, and experimental modes, that is a hallmark of Central and Eastern European literature.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-REES
Identical With: RUSS255, REES255, WLIT259
Prereq: None

RULE267 Parody: Humor, Artistic Evolution, and Restoration of the Sacred

This course begins and ends with two of the most important dates of the 20th century. On November 7, 1917, the Bolshevik party launched a revolution against the government of the Russian Empire with the aim of overthrowing not just the state but capitalism, the economic and social system that defined modern civilization. Over the coming decades, the state they created (eventually named the USSR) embarked on an unprecedented project to transform human beings and remake the world. On December 26, 1991, the Soviet Union collapsed into 15 European and Asian countries.

The Soviet project raises fundamental questions about political systems, economics, and human nature—questions that are a long way from being answered. It also shaped modern history all over the world, including in the United States, which confronted the Soviet Union as its political and ideological archenemy during the Cold War. In charting the USSR’s trajectory from pariah nation after World War I to global superpower following World War II, we will move beyond the cliched view of the Soviet Union as the Evil Empire. Instead, we will examine the ways in which socialist modernity offered an alternative to its capitalist twin.

In an effort to understand the contradictions of Soviet life leading up to and during the Cold War, the class will examine how the Soviets sought to rethink issues of class struggle, family structure, education, gender dynamics, race, religion, sexuality, and patriotism. We will consider the theoretical writings of Marx, Lenin, and Trotsky in addition to poetry and prose by Babel, Mayakovskiy, Akhmatova, Platonov, Pasternak, Tsseteava, Berggolts, and Nabokov, among others. Particular attention will be paid to underground cultures that arose in response to the repression of free speech, ethnic discrimination, and the Gulag prison system. All readings are in the English translation.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-REES
Identical With: REES256, RUSS256, WLIT246
Prereq: None

RULE263 Nabokov and Cultural Synthesis

This course will trace the development of Nabokov’s art from its origins in Russian literature by close readings of the motifs that spiral outward through his (principally English-language) novels.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-REES
Identical With: RUSS263, REES263
Prereq: None

RULE268 The Soviet Century

This course begins and ends with two of the most important dates of the 20th century. On November 7, 1917, the Bolshevik party launched a revolution against the government of the Russian Empire with the aim of overthrowing not just the state but capitalism, the economic and social system that defined modern civilization. Over the coming decades, the state they created (eventually named the USSR) embarked on an unprecedented project to transform human beings and remake the world. On December 26, 1991, the Soviet Union collapsed into 15 European and Asian countries.

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Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-REES
Identical With: RUSS267, REES267
Prereq: None

RULE277 Gogol and His Legacy: Witches, Con Men, and Runaway Noses

Nikolai Gogol (1809-1852), hailed as one of Russia’s greatest and most distinctive writers, created a phantasmagorical world of devils and witches coexisting with the gritty details of life in Ukraine, St. Petersburg, and the Russian provinces. Gogol’s satirical observations delighted socially conscious contemporary critics, while his linguistic experimentation and subversion of the rules of logic inspired later modernist writers. Roughly half of the course is devoted to major writers of the twentieth century. We will consider Gogol’s interest in the demonic; his complex identity as a bilingual writer claimed by both Ukraine and Russia as one of their greatest cultural figures; the influence of his formal and linguistic experimentation on later writers such as Dostoevsky, Nabokov, and Bulgakov, with his vision of the Devil visiting Soviet Moscow; and Gogol’s reception by modern Russian and Western writers and critics. The course is conducted in English.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-REES
Identical With: RUSS277, REES277, WLIT242
Prereq: None

RULE321 Moscow/Berlin: Socialist Modernity and the Transnational Avant-Garde

The October Revolution of 1917 in Russia and the November Revolution of 1918 in Germany ushered in an era of imagining and building an anti-capitalist world based on the ideals of universal equality, freedom, and comradeship. Between World War I and World War II, Soviet Moscow and Weimar Berlin developed into centers of the international leftist movement that was committed to the cause of global proletarian revolution. While the revolutionary cause proved to be unattainable and costly, the period’s artistic and intellectual achievements, known as the avant-garde, offer an extraordinary archive of utopian experimentation across borders.

Focusing on Moscow and Berlin, this course maps the socialist modernist aesthetic in interwar Europe and provides a comparative review of the transnational circulation of leftist and reactionary ideas registered in a variety of -isms: dadaism, expressionism, futurism, suprematism, and constructivism, as well as the New Objectivity, Bauhaus, and the practice of factography. The alignment of art and ideology will be explored through literature, art, and film and will consider the entanglements of egalitarian aspirations with nationalist
agendas and emancipatory ideals with patriarchal residues. The course will also review the cultural production of Russian exiles living in Weimar Berlin and their conception of an "off-modern" path. The course will conclude with a discussion of the revolutionary avant-garde’s legacy in the East Berlin underground and post-Soviet Moscow.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-CHUM
Identical With: RUSS321, REES321, GRST221, WLIT341
Prereq: None

RULE340 Reading Theories
In this survey of theories that have shaped the reading of literature and the analysis of culture, emphasis is on key concepts—language, identity, subjectivity, gender, power, and knowledge—and on key figures and schools such as Marx, Freud, Nietzsche, Saussure, Barthes, Gramsci, Benjamin, Althusser, Foucault, Lacan, Deleuze, Jameson, Berlant, Moten, postmodernism, and U.S. feminism.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL295, COL339, CCIV393, CEAS340, RL&L290, GRST231, RUSS340, REES340
Prereq: None

RULE350 Twentieth-Century Russian Poetry (CLAC .50)
Taught in Russian, this course is dedicated to the reading of 20th-century Russian poetry in the original (Blok, Mayakovsky, Mandesltam, Akhmatova, Brodsky, Prigov, etc.). The course is appropriate for native speakers, heritage speakers, advanced and intermediate learners (with the minimum of four semesters of Russian).

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 0.50
Gen Ed Area: SBS-REES
Identical With: RUSS350, CGST350, REES350
Prereq: RUSS202

RULE401 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

RULE402 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT