

Russian 245: RUSSIAN LIFE AND CULTURE

TR 12:30 - 1:45 BOL 281

Instructor: Dr. Rebecca Pyatkevich

Office: Curtin 822 Office Hours: Mon 9:45 to 10:45 a.m., Thurs 3:00p.m. to 4 p.m., and by appt.

Course description:

Russia, a land of contrasts and enigmas, has both fascinated and repelled us. On the one hand, it is mysterious and foreign: we see it as “a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma” (Winston Churchill), a land full of beautiful female tennis players and male Olympic gymnasts. On the other, Russia fascinates because it is like a somewhat distorted mirror of ourselves: a warm and multicultural people, only recently on the historical stage but, for better or for worse, a regional and world leader, spread out across a continent (or two).

This mysterious land seems to have something to say to us and to the rest of the world. Not only has Russia been, over the last four centuries, a formidable and unpredictable player, politically, on the world stage, but it has produced books, paintings, music, theatre, architecture that are not only original, but artistically influential – a breadth of art and philosophy that speaks to universal human concerns about the nature of our personal and political experience of the world. The question is – WHY? What about the Russian historical, political, cultural, and artistic experience has allowed it to create art and literature that reflects so deeply and effectively on the major questions of human existence?

In this course, we will attempt to understand how Russian culture developed, the connection between the national search for identity and self-understanding, and the works of art that deal with these questions on the national and the individual level. With reference to important points in Russian history and its relation to the West, we will learn about all aspects of Russian culture as expressed in literature, fairy tales, art, religion, daily life, crafts, architecture, and music. All the while, we will be exploring answers to important questions, such as: What is culture? How does a culture, in all its manifestations, change and develop? Is it a place’s history that makes its culture, or do the forces of culture drive and determine a history? What religious, political, and aesthetic ideas make up Russian culture, and what, if anything, do these ideas, through Russian art, music, and literature, have to tell us? What can we learn about ourselves, culturally and politically, by studying Russia? And what do you think we can expect from the future of Russian-American relations?

1. Required materials:

Suzanne Massie, *The Land of the Firebird*.

Course reading packet (on e-reserve and D2L; see schedule below)

Humanities GER

This course partially satisfies the Humanities component of the UWM General Education Requirements. The course approaches the study of Russian culture through humanistic means of inquiry (e.g., critical use of sources and evaluation of evidence; exercise of judgment and expression of ideas; organization, logical analysis, and creative use of substantial bodies of knowledge). It introduces students to substantial and coherent bodies of historical, cultural, literary, and philosophical knowledge as a means of increasing understanding of the complexities and varieties of human events. Students will gain fundamental knowledge of Russian cultural history over the

last millennium: themes, influences, religion, literature, theater, film, art, dance, architecture, music, daily life. Students will analyze and critique the information presented with the goal of identifying elements of all these topics that speak to a uniquely Russian character. They will acquire a refined understanding of the historical readings, literary texts, films, etc. covered in the course, and they will be asked to demonstrate thoughtful, original, and creative approaches to the course material in their presentations and exams.

One of the most important learning goals of this course is that students will have an understanding of Russian cultural patterns that they will be able to apply beyond the context of this class. The extent to which this goal is met will be measured via analysis of midterms and finals. These exams and assignments will be assigned a grade and by the instructor. In addition, at the end of each semester, Slavic Languages Program faculty will analyze these assignments and assign each student a number 1-5 that represents the extent to which the student has been successful in applying knowledge of cultural patterns to concrete cultural-historical episodes, artifacts, or trends. By analyzing the distribution of scores, the Program will be able to determine how well the course has succeeded in meeting the learning goal. In addition, the Program can note areas of clear understanding or confusion, information that will be used to determine modifications of course content and/or presentation that may be needed.

2. Course requirements:

This class will be run in a mixture seminar/lecture format, leaning towards the seminar. In order to maximize involvement with course material, you will be placed into discussion groups of four people each for the duration of the semester.

Attendance and participation in class is an important part of the learning experience. You are allowed three unexcused absences for any reason. Attendance will be reported on the group note-sheet you will hand in at the end of each class session. **15% of grade**

Class participation. Much class work will take place in pre-assigned groups for the semester; therefore, your participation will be self-reported and reported by your peers three times during the semester. These reports will account for ½ of your participation grade; the other half will come from an evaluation of the results of group work you will submit in class. In addition, I may lower your reported participation grade if there is evidence that you are not prepared for class discussion, that you are uncooperative or distracting to the class as a whole or to your group. **15 % of grade**

Reading quizzes. The reading assignments are to be fully completed before the beginning of class. When necessary, reading will be accompanied by (1) a helper sheet with needed vocabulary (if any), a set of questions to guide your reading, plus a question or two to think about as you head into class, (2) a reading quiz to be completed on D2L. There will be a total of 24 quizzes. Quizzes will be open for 36 hours before the class meeting at which they are to be discussed; they will close at the beginning of the class. If you do not take the quiz during this time, you will receive a zero. The lowest two quiz grades will be dropped. **20% of grade**

Group Presentation. Each group has been assigned a date on which they will give a 10-minute presentation for the class. The tongue-in-cheek group names relate to real significant people, events, or ideas in Russian cultural history, and your assignment will be to learn more about the group (person, or idea) you are named after and explain why they (or he/she) is important. See attached packet for directions and information on grading. **10% of grade**

Midterm The midterm exam will consist of short-answer identification questions and a longer interpretive essay question; the forum discussions and discussions in class are meant to prepare you for this work. **15% of grade**

Final The final exam will be cumulative, but will have the same format as the midterm.

25% of grade

3. Course policies

Office hours. I am happy to be available outside of class for help with assignments, questions, or to talk about all things Russian. If you cannot make it to my office hours, email me to set up a mutually convenient time.

Electronic devices: Use of electronic devices during class time is not allowed. Please turn off and stow away cell phones, PDAs, laptops, etc. for the duration of the class.

Make-up Tests: Please let me know in advance if you have a conflict with the midterm or final exam, and we will schedule a time within 48 hours after the test for you to take it. If you do not let me know in advance, and you do not have documented proof of an emergency, I can't give you a make-up test.

Email policy: I will respond to all e-mails in a timely fashion. Due to the demands of my teaching load, any e-mails sent after 9 pm may not be answered before 3 pm the next day. Additionally, please check your campus e-mail regularly, especially if the campus situation changes due to inclement weather or another type of emergency. I have no other way to efficiently communicate with all of you at once.

Disabilities: If you have any kind of disability, physical or psychological, that might affect your performance in this class, please notify us *immediately* so that we can accommodate your needs.

Harassment: No harassment of any kind, inside or outside the classroom, will be tolerated. If you feel you are being harassed or if you think one of your classmates is being harassed in any way, please inform me, Russian Program Coordinator Professor Joe Peschio (peschio@uwm.edu), or our departmental chair (Professor Jennifer Watson (jwatson@uwm.edu)) *immediately* so that we can get the problem taken care of.

Inappropriate behavior: Behavior that is inappropriate and that disturbs the other students' ability to learn will be referred to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.

For policies on academic misconduct, complaint procedures, and grade appeal procedures, see
<http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf>

Plagiarism. All work must be your own. Breaking this rule can result in a failing grade and even expulsion from UWM. I forward all suspicious cases directly to the Dean of Students. If you're unsure whether or not something constitutes plagiarism, please just ask before you do it. For UWM policies on plagiarism and other sorts of academic misconduct, see:
[http://www4.uwm.edu/acad aff/policy/academicmisconduct.cfm](http://www4.uwm.edu/acad%20aff/policy/academicmisconduct.cfm)

RUSSIAN LIFE AND CULTURE

SCHEDULE

C l a s s	Date	Topic	Reading due FOR this day
1	January 25, 2011	Introduction. What is Culture? What is Russia? What is Russian Culture?	INTRODUCTION.
2	January 27, 2011	Emergence of Russia. Christianization. Kiev and the medieval world. Relations with other principalities.	1. Firebird, pp. 21-28 2. Excerpts from the <i>Primary Chronicle: Christianization of Rus'</i> In: Daniel A. Kaiser and Gary Marker, eds., <i>Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings, 860-1860s</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 63-67. 3. Icons: http://tars.rollins.edu/Foreign_Lang/Russian/frame1.html
3	February 1, 2011	Relations with other principalities. Church architecture.	1. Firebird, pp. 29-39 2. Excerpts from the Novgorodian Chronicle: pp. 77-83 3. Lay of Igor's Campaign: 167-190
4	February 3, 2011	Rise of Moscow. The "Third Rome". Role of Monasteries. Icons	1. Firebird, pp. 40 - 47 2. Lives of Saints: Boris and Gleb. In: Serge A. Zenkovsky, <i>Medieval Russia's Epics, Chronicles, and Tales</i> (Meridian: New York, 1974), pp. pp. 101-104. 3. <i>Life of Theodosius</i> , in Daniel A. Kaiser and Gary Marker, eds., <i>Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings, 860-1860s</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 67-71.
5	February 8, 2011	Daily life, part 1. Social classes; town, court, country Fairy tales.	1. Firebird, pp. 53- 60 2. Fairy tales: "Ivan the Simpleton", "Baba Yaga", "Prince Ivan, The Firebird, and the Gray Wolf", "The Fox and the Crane." In: <i>Russian Fairy Tales: Translated by Norbert Guterman from the Collections of Aleksandr Afanas'ev</i> . Random House: New York, 1973. Pp. 142-145; 171-172; 194-195; 612-624
6	February 10, 2011	Daily life: the countryside. Superstitions. Church calendar	1. Firebird, pp. 174-181 2. Linda J. Ivanits, "The Pagan Background", <i>Russian Folk Belief</i> (Armonk, NY: 1992), pp. 3-14 3. Selection of narratives, in, "The Pagan Background", <i>Russian Folk Belief</i> (Armonk, NY: 1992), pp. 162, 167, 169, 171, 178, 179, 185-187.
7	February 15, 2011	Ivan the Terrible. The Schism. The time of troubles.	1. Firebird, pp. 64-71, 74-80 2. "Frol Skobeev, the Rogue", in Serge A. Zenkovsky, <i>Medieval Russia's Epics, Chronicles, and Tales</i> (Meridian: New York, 1974), pp. 474-486.
8	February 17, 2011	The Turn to the West. Peter the Great, Part 1	1. Firebird, pp. 80-98 2. Orlando Figes, "European Russia", <i>Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia</i> (Picador: New York, 2002), pp. 4-13

		The Baroque.	
9	February 22, 2011	Peter the Great, Part 2; Elizabeth; Petersburg	1. Firebird, pp. 98-107; 119-127; 247-259 2. Online slide show (D2I)
10	February 24, 2011	Catharine the Great. Russia on the European Stage	1. Firebird, pp. 128-146. http://tars.rollins.edu/Foreign_Lang/Russian/frame2.html
11	March 1, 2011	Catharine the Great.	1. Orlando Figes, "European Russia", <i>Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia</i> (Picador: New York, 2002), pp. 61-68 2. Nikolai Karamzin, "Poor Liza". In: Nicholas Rzhevsky, <i>An Anthology of Russian Literature from Earliest Writings to Modern Fiction: Introduction to a Culture</i> , pp. 104-117.
12	March 3, 2011	Napoleon and after	1. Firebird, Ch. 11, pp. 156- 160; 165-167 2. Orlando Figes, "Children of 1812", <i>Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia</i> (Picador: New York, 2002), pp. 72-83 3. Selections from Evgeny Baratynsky, N. M. Yazykov, A. Zhukovsky, Prince Vyazemsky, and Mikhail Lermontov. In: Alan Myers, trans., <i>An Age Ago: A Selection of Nineteenth-Century Russian Poetry</i> (Farrar, Straus & Giroux: New York, 1988), pp. 4, 7, 21-23, 53, 78-79, 85, 89.
13	March 8, 2011	Pushkin.	1. Firebird, pp. 202 -211; 238-242. 2. Alexander Pushkin, <i>The Bronze Horseman</i> . In: Nicholas Rzhevsky, <i>An Anthology of Russian Literature from Earliest Writings to Modern Fiction: Introduction to a Culture</i> , pp. 118-131. 3. Alexander Pushkin, Selections. In: Alan Myers, trans., <i>An Age Ago: A Selection of Nineteenth-Century Russian Poetry</i> (Farrar, Straus & Giroux: New York, 1988), pp. 32, 35-36, 42.
14	March 10, 2011	Midterm Review	Midterm Review
15	March 15, 2011	MIDTERM EXAM	MIDTERM EXAM
15	March 17, 2011	Gogol	1. Orlando Figes, from "In Search of the Russian Soul", <i>Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia</i> (Picador: New York, 2002), pp. 311- 315 2. Nikolai Gogol, "The Overcoat," <i>From Karamzin to Bunin: An Anthology of Russian Short Stories</i> (Carl R. Proffer, ed.), Indiana University Press, 1969, pp. 104-133.
16	March 29, 2011	Dostoevsky	1. Orlando Figes, from "In Search of the Russian Soul", <i>Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia</i> (Picador: New York, 2002), pp. 325- 332 2. Fyodor Dostoevsky, "Bobok", <i>The Eternal Husband and Other Stories</i> (Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky, trans), New York: 2008. Pp. 245 -267
17	March 31, 2011	Tolstoy	1. Firebird, pp. 285-290; 308-321 2. Lev Tolstoy, "Three Deaths," <i>Collected Shorter Fiction</i> . Louise and Aylmer Maude and Nigel J. Cooper, trans. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001), pp. 565-583
18	April 5, 2011	The Wanderers; music 19 th century	1. Firebird, pp. 290-297; 329-351 2. http://tars.rollins.edu/Foreign_Lang/Russian/frame3.html 3. audio excerpts posted on D2L

1 9	April 7, 2011	Fin-de-Siecle as movement and concept. Ballets Russes.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Firebird, pp. 431-449 2. http://www.russianartgallery.org/vrubel/ 3. Ballets Russes slideshow on D2L
2 0	April 12, 2011	The Avant Garde (art and poetry); Revolution in art	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Firebird, pp. 450 -460 2. Mayakovsky et al, "Futurist Manifesto": http://www.unknown.nu/futurism/slap.html 3. Alexander Blok, <i>The Twelve</i>. In: Yevgeny Evtushenko, ed. , <i>Twentieth Century Russian Poetry: Silver and Steel, an Anthology</i>. (New York, 1993), pp. 71-81.
2 1.	April 14, 2011	The Russian Revolution in politics and life.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nicholas Riasanovsky, "Soviet Russia: An Introduction", <i>A History of Russia</i>, 8th ed., (Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 479-493. 2. Propaganda posters of the era.
2 2.	April 19, 2011	Soviet Russia in the 20s.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Walter G. Moss, "Religion and Culture, 1917-1953," from Walter G. Moss, <i>A History of Russia: Volume II: Since 1855, 2nd Ed.</i> (London: Anthem Press, 2005), pp. 367-371; 380-385. 2. Excerpt from <i>Cement</i>, in: Walter G. Moss, "Religion and Culture, 1917-1953," from Walter G. Moss, <i>A History of Russia: Volume II: Since 1855, 2nd Ed.</i> (London: Anthem Press, 2005), p. 381, box. 3. Mikhail Bulgakov, "Black Magic and Its Exposure", from <i>The Master and Margarita</i>. Nicholas Rzhevsky, <i>An Anthology of Russian Literature from Earliest Writings to Modern Fiction: Introduction to a Culture</i>, pp. 511-524.
2 3	April 21, 2011	Stalinist Russia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tamara Petkevich, <i>Memoirs of a Gulag Actress</i> (Yakov Klots and Ross Ulfberg, trans.), selections 2. http://www.russianartgallery.org/famous/soviet.htm
2 4	April 26, 2011	The Great Patriotic War, and the Cold War	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nicholas Riasanovsky, "Soviet Society and Culture", <i>A History of Russia</i>, 8th ed., (Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 553-558; 578-587 2. Excerpts from films, examples of propaganda materials.
2 5	April 28, 2011	The 60s as turning point	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Joseph Brodsky, "Less than One", <i>Less Than One</i> (Farrar, Straus & Giroux: New York, 1986), pp. 3-33. 2. some poems from Samizdat in translation (posted on D2L)
2 6	May 3, 2011	From the Underground to Perestroika	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Walter G. Moss, "Religion and Culture, 1953-1991", from Walter G. Moss, <i>A History of Russia: Volume II: Since 1855, 2nd Ed.</i> (London: Anthem Press, 2005), pp. 510-511; 513; 528-535. 2. (in class) excerpts from film <i>Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears</i>
2 7	May 5, 2011	From the Underground to Perestroika, and Beyond	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nicholas Riasanovsky, "The Gorbachev Years, 1985-1981", <i>A History of Russia</i>, 8th ed., (Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 620-634. 2. Viktor Pelevin, "Vera Pavlovna's Ninth Dream", in Victor Pelevin, <i>4 by Pelevin: Stories</i> (New Directions Bibelot, 2001), pp. 61-84.

28	May 10, 2011	Today's Russia: Nationalism, Empire.	<p>1. Walter G. Moss, "Religion and Culture, 1953-1991", from Walter G. Moss, <i>A History of Russia: Volume II: Since 1855, 2nd Ed.</i> (London: Anthem Press, 2005), pp. 544-552.</p> <p>2. Andrew Meier, <i>Black Earth: A Journey Through Russia After the Fall</i>, excerpts – pp. 11-13, 18-27, 36-39-42-43, 46-49, 411-418.</p>
29	May 12, 2011	21 st -century Russia: Money, and its Discontents	<p>1. Stephen K. Wegren and Dale R. Herspring, "Whither Putinism?", in <i>After Putin's Russia: past imperfect, future uncertain</i> (Rowman & Littlefield, 2010), pp. 291-305)</p> <p>2. Selections from current press in/about Russia.</p>
30	Final Review	Final Review	Final Review
	FINAL EXAM	MONDAY MAY 16, 2011; 12:30 TO 2:30, our regular room	FINAL EXAM