Course Description and Goals
This course is designed as a survey of the highlight of Russian and Soviet cinema between 1986 and the present. Special attention is paid to the avant-garde film, theory, and the aesthetics of Soviet filmmakers of the 1920s; the totalitarian cinema, propaganda, and the ideological uses of films in the 1930s-1940s; the films of the thaw period of the 1950s-1960s; the stagnation era of the 1970s; perestroika period, and finally cinema in the post-Soviet Russia. In addition we will talk about film industry in these periods and about the major themes and genres of Russian and Soviet cinema.

In this course student will acquire basic skills of film analysis through film viewing, classroom discussions, and through reading and writing assignments. The course is taught in English; all films are in Russian with English subtitles. No prior knowledge of Russian language and culture is required.

Course Format:
The course meets twice a week for lectures and once a week for film screening, followed by discussion.
In addition there will be films assigned to watch at home through online streaming.

Reading material:
Readings should be completed prior to the lectures and students should be prepared to discuss them in class. The readings will be posted online on Oncourse.

Bibliography:

The list below includes materials for the required reading that will be posted Online on Oncourse as well as additional reading literature for a more in-depth study.

Birgit Beumers, A History of Russian Cinema (Berg, 2009)


Levaco, Ronald (translated and edited), *Kuleshov on Film: Writings of Lev Kuleshov*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974

Lotman, IU. M. *Semiotics of Cinema*. Ann Arbor: Dept. of Slavic Languages and Literature, University of Michigan, 1976.

---------------------. *Film Form*.
---------------------. *The Film Sense*.
---------------------. *Film Essays and a Lecture*.
---------------------. *Three Films*.
---------------------. “On the Question of a Materialist Approach to Film.” *The Avant-Garde Film*, Ed. P. Adam Sitney.
---------------------. “Notes For a film of Capital.” *October* 2.


Course policies and requirements
E-mail and Oncourse will be the official means of communication for the class.

Exams and writing assignments:

1) Two in-class quizzes
2) Two-take home assignments each of 3-6 pages long
3) Final written exam
4) Final paper 6-10 pages long
5) Graduate students should review three additional Russian films.

Grading Policy:

Attendance and participation 20%
Assignments 20%
Quizzes 20%
Final paper 20%
Final exam 20%

Missing more than three classes will affect the final grade unless a well-founded excuse is presented to the instructor. All missed films must be reviewed independently.

Grading scale

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Rules of social grace:
Students should refrain from eating, chewing gum, sleeping or browsing the internet in class. If students need to leave class early they should inform the instructor before the class starts.