This course is an interdisciplinary introduction to Balkan and South Slavic cultures, primarily those of former Yugoslavia (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia).

When most people think of this region today, images of the most recent wars, devastation, and chaos of postcommunist times come to mind. However, hidden behind these images is a region rich in history and culture: Viennese cafe culture meets the best of Southern Europe; Adriatic beaches rival those of Southern France; Western, Byzantine, and Islamic influences come together; while contemporary art, architecture, literature, film, and music are some of the best the world has to offer.

We will explore the turbulent history of this region, the cross-cultural interactions, common
traditions and tropes in literature, film, art, and music, as well as the shared cultural customs of everyday life. Assignments will include films, literature, animation, popular culture, music, culinary traditions, and much more. The course will conclude with a South Slavic festival - a celebration of all that we've learned and come to appreciate about this fascinating corner of the world.

**Learning objectives:**

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- recognize and evaluate major trends in Balkan and South Slavic cultures in the modern period
- identify and discuss the historical and social context for a range of Balkan and South Slavic cultural products
- identify, analyze, and scrutinize stereotypes and patterns of perception of South Slavic cultures
- assess, compare, and interpret South Slavic high and popular cultural products with reference to the student’s native culture (or other cultures they might be familiar with)

**Course Requirements:**

- attendance and participation in class discussions
- class presentation on a topic chosen in coordination with the instructor
- two 5-7 page papers, due midterm and finals week
- final project to be presented at the South Slavic Festival

**FILM SCREENINGS:** Please note that all films will be shown on **Tuesday evenings at 6 pm** in **Wells 043 Media Showing room**, **the day before they are to be discussed in class**. If you cannot join us at that time, the films will be **on reserve at Wells Library** for you to watch.

**Attendance and participation:**

This course will be conducted in a seminar format. This means that the bulk of our class time will be spent on discussions of materials we have read and screened outside of class. For this method to work, you must be a) present in class, b) prepared for class participation, i.e., having read and thought about our assignments, and c) be willing to offer your contribution to discussion in a respectful manner.

**Papers:**

Two papers on topics of your choosing will be due at midterm and finals. You should let me know what your topic will be well ahead of the due dates. A thesis statement will be due a week before the papers are due. You will be submitting the papers through Canvas in a .doc or .docx format.
Final project:

Around the third week of the semester I will ask you to choose a partner (or at most a group of 3) for your final project. You will be asked to do a presentation and/or project to be presented at the South Slavic festival. The festival will be in a large room with booths or tables set up for each group that is presenting. As folks stop by to see the festival, you will have your table and/or booth to present your project and answer any questions the visitors might have. This will be your chance to showcase how much you've learned over the course of the semester, while also giving you a chance to practice your presentation skills - something you will need in your professional life beyond the university.

A good topic for your presentation would be something you found particularly interesting in the course or something you found surprising about South Slavic cultures that you think might be fun to share with your peers. This project is not limited in terms of format, so let your creativity run wild. You can do a short video on a topic, a poster, or a show and tell type of presentation, you can write a poem, perform a skit, sing a song... Students in the past have created mock music videos for a song they really liked, recorded video reenactments of a scene from a movie they really liked, had posters and photographs, shared something about their own life that connects them to region, etc. As long as you make it informative in some way and come prepared to answer questions about your topic, you are free to choose your format.

Evaluation:

- Attendance and participation 20%
- First paper 25%
- Final paper 30%
- Final project 25%

While I will ask you to submit your papers electronically, via Canvas, you will receive your comments in hard copy. All your grades will be marked outside of Canvas. Should you at any point be interested in how you are doing or what grade you are earning, you can come talk to me or e-mail me and I will let you know. While the grading in Canvas is a good feature, for a course of this size it is not an appropriate tool.

Academic Misconduct

As a student at IU, you are expected to adhere to all the standards and policies of the code of academic conduct. Any suspected infractions of this Code will be handled according to the official rules and policies of the University. Penalties for infractions may result in a failing grade in the course or expulsion from the University. If an incident cannot be resolved between the instructor and the student, the matter will be taken to the Dean of Students and the instructor will abide by the decisions reached. See the Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct (http://www.iu.edu/~code/) for full info.

Disability Statement
Any student who feels he/she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability must register with Disability Services for Students first. According to DSS guidelines, only students who have registered their disabilities with DSS are officially eligible for accommodations. When the disability has been registered, the student will receive a letter describing any accommodations necessary which must be presented to the instructor in the first week of classes. Please contact Disability Services for Students at 812-855-7578 in Wells Library W302 to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. More information is available on the DSS web site (https://studentaffairs.indiana.edu/disability-services-students/).

Disclaimer

All information in this syllabus, including course requirements and daily lesson plans, is subject to change and should not be considered a substitute for attending class or for any information that is provided to you by your instructor.

Required texts:


All other readings will be posted in Canvas.

Schedule:

This is a very tentative schedule, which we will adjust as needed.

Mon 8/24: Introduction
Introduction

Wed 8/26: Whose Is This Song?

Screening: Whose Is This Song? by Adela Peeva
Mon 8/31: What is so Balkan about the Balkans?

Wed 9/2: What is so Balkan about the Balkans?
Screening: Underground by Emir Kusturica
Larry Wolff, Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment (selections)

Mon 9/7: Happy Labor Day! (start reading Death and the Dervish)

Wed 9/9: Cultural Crossroads
Meša Selimović Death and the Dervish (continue reading)
Music selection: Folk Music

Mon 9/14: Cultural Crossroads
Meša Selimović Death and the Dervish (continue reading)

Wed 9/16: Cultural Crossroads
Meša Selimović Death and the Dervish (continue reading)

Mon 9/21: Cultural Crossroads
Meša Selimović Death and the Dervish (finish reading)

Wed 9/23: Cultural Crossroads
Screening: At Uncle Idriz’s (Days and Hours) by Pjer Žalica
Food Customs

Mon 9/28: From Folk to Turbo-Folk
Music selection: Folk and Turbo-Folk
Ljerka V. Rasmussen Newly Composed Folk music of Yugoslavia (selection)

Wed 9/30: Who's That Singing Over There?
Screening: Who's That Singing Over There? by Dušan Kovačević
Traveling in former Yugoslavia

Mon 10/5: Twice There Was a Country
John Lampe Yugoslavia as History: Twice There Was a Country (selection)

Wed 10/7: No Man’s Land
Screening: No Man’s Land by Danis Tanović
Srdjan Vučetić “Identity is a Joking Matter: Intergroup Humor in Bosnia”

Mon 10/12: Supermarkets and Rock N' Roll
Dennison Rusinow "The Supermarket Revolution" in Yugoslavia: Oblique Insights and Observations
Music selection: From Folk Rock to Punk

Wed 10/14: Supermarkets and Rock N' Roll
Dalibor Mišina Shake, Rattle, and Roll: Yugoslav Rock Music and the Poetics of Social Critique (selections)
Screening: A Wonderful Night in Split by Arsen A. Ostojić

Mon 10/19: How to Lose Your Mind the Yugoslav Way
First Paper Due
Miroslav Krleža On the Edge of Reason (read first 50 pages)

Wed 10/21: How to Lose Your Mind the Yugoslav Way
Miroslav Krleža On the Edge of Reason (continue reading)

Mon 10/26: How to Lose Your Mind the Yugoslav Way
Miroslav Krleža On the Edge of Reason (finish reading)

Wed 10/28: How to Lose Your Mind the (Post)Yugoslav Way
Screening: Pretty Village, Pretty Flame by Srđan Dragojević

Mon 11/2: “For Children and Sensitive Readers”
Danilo Kiš Early Sorrows

Wed 11/4: "For Children and Sensitive Readers"
Danilo Kiš Early Sorrows
Music selection: New Wave
Education in former Yugoslavia

Mon 11/9: Lexicon of Yugoslav Mythology
Selections from Leksikon YU mitologije
Screenings:
“Zagreb School of Animation” – animation shorts
Top Lista Nadrealista – selections
Music selection: Beyond New Wave

Wed 11/11: Hip Hop!
Music selection: Hip Hop
Screening: Summer in the Golden Alley by Srđan Vuletić

Mon 11/16: Ear, Nose, Knife
Vedrana Rudan *Night*
Anatomy of curse words

**Wed 11/18: Ear, Nose, Knife**
Vedrana Rudan *Night* (finish reading)

**Mon 11/23 Happy Thanksgiving!**

**Wed 11/25 Happy Thanksgiving!**

**Mon 11/30: Postsocialist and Postmodern**
Dubravka Ugrešić *The Culture of Lies*
Music selection: **Hip Hop** and **Ethno-beat**

**Wed 12/2: Postsocialist and Postmodern**
Dubravka Ugrešić *The Culture of Lies*

**Mon 12/7: Yugoslav Festival**
Prep for South Slavic Festival

**Wed 12/9: Yugoslav Festival**
South Slavic Festival

**Mon 12/14: Finals Week Begins**

**Wed 12/16: Final Paper Due**