Welcome to the Slavic Department!

COURSE OVERVIEW

What is culture? Ways of living? Social practices? Institutions? Literature and arts? Memory? Each historical epoch has its own definition of culture. In his famous collection of articles on culture and semiotics titled *Typology of Culture* (1973), Yuri Lotman defines culture as a mechanism to generate meaning. Nowadays, most scholars agree that culture first and foremost refers to the realm of the intangible – e.g., symbols, myths, representations, interpretations, values, and perspectives that "distinguish one people from another" (Banks, J.A., Banks, & McGee, C. A. (1989). *Multicultural education*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon, p. 8). It is precisely how we will address culture in this course. We shall try to understand how Russian culture constructs and interprets the world. We will further try to uncover and explain why elements of the old culture are being recycled today.

We will be examining a diverse range of sources – e.g., icons and paintings, literary stories and chronicles, journalistic texts and diaries, cinematic works and photography, operas, symphonies, and popular music, ballet and athletic parades among others – to discern major themes, motifs, and ideas. We will map artistic developments onto a broader historical canvas to see the connections between socio-historical contexts and culture.

The primary purpose of this course is to help students develop necessary analytical and interpretive skills to identify, compare, and analyze Russian cultural products, practices, and perspectives as relates to basic socio-historical contexts.
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Our goals include the development of a range of skills necessary not only for the academic success but for encountering, analyzing, and enjoying differences in real world situations. The skills we will be developing in this course are:

IDENTIFYING: Develop the ability to Identify Russian cultural products, practices, and perspectives as relates to basic socio-historic contexts

DISCOVERING: Develop skills to discover relevant information through the analysis of primary (in English translation) and secondary sources

CONNECTING, COMPARING & INTERPRETING: Develop the ability to integrate (connect) the newly acquired information with your existing knowledge of various subject areas. Through comparison and contrast, discover patterns, make predictions, analyze, and interpret similarities and differences across cultures.

ANALYZING & EVALUATIVE: Develop the skill to critically analyze the studied material (a text, an artifact, an idea, a practice, an institution), evaluating the significance and the value of the material for a given purpose – e.g., a more accurate and more multifaceted understanding of the studied culture’s perspectives.

SELF-REFLECTING: Develop critical cultural awareness and the ability to reflect critically on one’s own beliefs, values, cultural practices and social structures.

APPRECIATING: Develop the ability to understand and consider various perspectives; develop appreciation for cultural differences.

TOLERATING & SUSTAINING CULTURAL CURIOSITY: Develop the ability to tolerate ambiguity and change, sustaining cultural curiosity.

ASSESSMENT

To measure our progress we will be doing a series of assessment activities, including quizzes, summaries of reading assignments, oral and written interpretations of primary and secondary sources; written responses to the topics discussed in class, midterm project, and a final examination.

COURSE GRADE CALCULATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations of the textbook chapters</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyses/Reflections/interpretations</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm (art) project (October 3-12)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading scale:

- **A+** 97 - 100%
- **B+** 87 - 89%
- **C+** 77 - 79%
- **D+** 67 - 69%
- **F** 0 - 59%
Introduction to Russian Culture

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION (20%)

Regular class attendance is essential for your progress. You make a commitment to invest your time, energy and thought required to succeed in this course, you also make a commitment to your fellow classmates to study steadily and to attend all classes regularly, lest we all waste valuable time repeating material that has already been discussed in class.

If you must miss class due to illness or some other legitimate reason (i.e., religious holidays), please notify the instructor in advance by sending an email. For every 3 unexcused absences your final grade will be dropped by one point (for instance, “A+” $\rightarrow$ “A”; “A” $\rightarrow$ “A-”; “A-” $\rightarrow$ “B+”).

Class participation is one of the most important components of your performance and, consequently, your grade in this class. Your full engagement is expected, so come prepared and try to speak as much as possible in class.

Each week, you will receive two points - one for attendance and one for participation.

PRESENTATION OF THE TEXTBOOK CHAPTERS (10%)

These are group assignments. Each of you will be assigned to a group. Each group will prepare one in-class presentation of a reading assignment (a textbook chapter, usually about 30 pages), summarizing the readings and highlighting the most important concepts, ideas, events, or dates. These assignments are usually scheduled for Mondays.

For these assignments, you are expected to demonstrate the complex ability of reading and analyzing the text, evaluating the discussed facts, events, concepts, and ideas, selecting the most important of them and summarizing the reading to present in a new format – presentational speaking.

ANALYSES, REFLECTIONS, INTERPRETATIONS (20%)

These will comprise both individual and group assignments. Throughout the work of the course, you will be asked to interpret, analyze, and evaluate a document or a scene in a film, a short story or a painting. These assignments will be both oral and written.

While the primary goal of these assignments is to help you interpret studied material within its own cultural context, you will also get a chance to self-reflect on your personal learning and express the thoughts, ideas, and emotions about a particular theme, document, film, literary text evoked in you.

Be ready to complete at least one assignment each week.

QUIZZES (15%)

Each thematic unit will be accompanied with at least two-three quizzes. Some will be announced by your instructors, others will be administered without prior announcement. The quizzes will be short covering most important information pertinent to the thematic unit – e.g., concepts, dates, personalities, primary sources.
MIDTERM (ART) PROJECT (20%)

Prepared individually or in groups, the midterm art project will give you a chance to engage with the course at a different level and through a different medium – color and shape, verse, dramatic performance, film – anything you can think of, anything that you are most comfortable with or want to explore. Instead of ‘decoding’ and analyzing, you will synthesize and create, devising your own communicative code.

The main purpose of these projects is to give you an opportunity to apply your new knowledge of Russian culture to the present context (e.g., a remix of the 2014 Super Bowl commercial with Mr. Peanut and a Russian mobster). Unleash your imagination and creativity!

We will have a poster session for presenting your ‘stills.’ Other projects will be showcased through Canvas or presented in class (e.g., dramatic performance).

FINAL EXAM (15%)

The final exam will have three types of assignments. The first part will be similar to our quizzes, prompting you to answer multiple-choice questions. These will assess your knowledge of general facts and chronology, important events, personas, tangible and intangible symbols, and the like. In the second part, you will be asked to define certain concepts or name important practices, products or symbols for a certain historical period. In the last third section, you will write a short essay to interpret a particular product, practice or symbol.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Students with special learning needs are asked to discuss them with the instructor as soon as possible. We are committed to providing instruction to all learners.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students are expected to obey the Indiana University Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The Russian Language Program does not discriminate based on race, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, physical impairment, or disability. Everyone has the right to a safe working and learning environment.

IMPORTANT DATES

If you decide to drop the course, there are several important dates to remember so to avoid or alleviate possible academic and financial consequences: http://enrollmentbulletin.indiana.edu/pages/offcal.php?Term=1&s=f16w
After a week of the inconsequential course-drop period (by August 28, 2016), it will be progressively more difficult to drop the course. If you need to drop the course well into the semester, try to arrange it by October 25, 2015, so you will leave with an automatic W-grade. After October 23, 2016 you won't be able to drop the course via online system, instead you will need to obtain a course drop form from your school, complete it and submit it at Student Central on Union.

**COURSE MATERIALS**


- All **supplementary** course related materials, as well as homework assignments are available through Canvas: [https://canvas.iu.edu/lms-prd/app](https://canvas.iu.edu/lms-prd/app)
  
  - E-format (on Canvas) or printed:
    - Pushikin, A. “The Bronze Horseman”
    - Radischev, A. *Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow* (selected chapters)
    - Gogol’, N. “The Nose”
    - Chaadaev, P. “Apology of a Madman” (excerpts)
    - Lermontov, M. *A Hero of Our Time*
    - Turgenev, I. *Notes of the Hunter* (selected stories)
    - Chekhov, A. *The Cherry Orchard*
    - Zamyatin, E. “Dragon”
    - Artsybashev, M. “The Revolutionary”
    - Bulgakov, M. *The Heart of a Dog*
    - Shalamov, V. *Kolyma Tales* (selected stories)
    - Trifonov, Yu. “Moscow Stories” (selected stories)
    - Petrushveskaia, L. “Night.”

  - Films (most of these films available on YouTube)
    - Animation *Fox and Rabbit* (1973) by Yuri Norstein
    - *Aleksander Nevsky* (1938) by Sergei Eisenstein (excerpts)
    - *Andrei Rublev* (1973) by Andrey Tarkovsky (excerpts)
    - *Ivan the Terrible* (1944) by Sergei Eisenstein (excerpts)
    - *Mother* (1926) by Vsevolod Pudovkin
    - *Bed and Sofa* (1927) by Abram Room
    - *The Fate of a Man* (1950) by Sergei Bondarchuk
    - *Stalker*² (1979) by Adnrey Tarkovsky
    - *My Perestroika*² (2010) by Robin Hessman

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

---

¹ You will need to read these materials, either in electronic format or in print. PDF files or URL addresses will be provided for the readings. If you opt for the print version, you will have to decide for yourself how to obtain the materials — at the Wells library or bookstores.

² To watch the film with English subtitles, you need to check the film out from the Wells library or REEI library

³ As a copyrighted film, you can’t watch it (stream, torrent, or download); check it out in the Wells Library or REEI library
The schedule lists the minimum reading assignments, we may have additional readings as we progress. On some weeks, instead of reading you will be asked to watch a film or listen to an opera, watch a ballet, familiarize yourself with a series of paintings and the like. You will be informed about all these assignments in class and through Canvas. We may also need to slightly adjust our schedule as we move along.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic &amp; Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
• *The Primary Chronicle.* |
|      | 8/24  | Christianity in Kievan Rus’. The Beginning of Russian Literacy. Slavic Languages. The status of the Russian Orthodox Church throughout history.  
• *The Primary Chronicle.*  
• Treatise “On Letters” by Monk Khrabr.  
• Diglossia and its role in the evolution of Russian literary language and Russian literary tradition.  
• The first Russian saints Boris & Gleb |
• Thompson, Chapter 1, pp. 1-29  
• Russian law (*Russkaia Pravda Yaroslava*). |
|      | 8/31  | Frontier Tales. An All-Front War: The Pechenegs, Polovets, Swedes, Teutonic Knights, Livonians, the Mongols.  
• *The Lay of Igor’*  
• Film *Aleksander Nevsky* (1938) by Sergei Eisenstein (*The Battle of the Ice*)  
• Modern day interpretations:  
  - Bank Imperial ads: World history - *Dmitry Donskoy* (with English subs)  
  - *The Lay of Igor’* read to the *rap beat*  
  - Name of Russia Project (2008) |
| 3    | 9/5   | Labor Day. No classes |
|      | 9/7   | Russia Divided & Conquered, 1054-1462  
• Thompson, Chapter 2, pp. 29-46  
• Moscow the Third Rome Doctrine  
• Filofei’s letters |
| 4    | 9/12  | Moscow & “The Gathering of the Russian Lands,” 1328-1533  
• Thompson, Chapter 3, pp. 47-65  
• The Mongol Yoke: Competing accounts  
• The evolution of the national hero: Competing representations  
• Multiple evidence: official historiography (school textbooks, museums); chronicles; artistic representations; entertainment; alternative discourses.  
• Opera by Rimsky-Korsakov *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh* (1905)  
• Animation *Battle of Kerzhenets* (1971) by Norshtein. Yu. & Ivanov-Vano, I.  
• *Kolovrat* (2016) teaser by Oleg Stepchenko  
• “Kulikovo Battle (Chelubei vs. Peresvet)” in a *game* format |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 9/14 | The Face (Lik) of Russia. Russia on Canvas.  
- Film *Andrei Rublev* (1973) by Andrey Tarkovsky (1st part); (2nd part) |
| 9/19 | Ivan the Terrible & the Time of Troubles, 1533-1618  
- Thompson, Chapter 4, pp. 67-87  
- Film *Ivan the Terrible* (1944) by Sergei Eizenstein  
- Andrey Kurbsky & Ivan Grozny (1564) Correspondence  
- Opera *Boris Godunov* (1868-1873) by Mussorgsky (scene with a holy fool)  
- Opera *A Life for the Tsar* (1836) by Glinka (“Glory to our Tzar” recycled)  
- The Myth of Prince Dmitry in literature, painting, and folklore |
- Linguistic evidence: Kurbsky-Grozny correspondence vs. The Lay of Igor Campaign  
- Merging of the discourses: The evolution of Simple-Ivan stories (“Ivan the Simpleton” from Alexander Afanasiev’s *Russian Fairy Tales* collection; Later versions merging Simple Ivan and Holy Fool)  
- Evolution of the foe: Domesticated dragons (*Shrek, Dobrynia & the Serpent*); eroticized killers (*He is a Dragon* (2015) by Indar Dzhendubaev)  
- Ever-complex animal-heroes *Fox and Rabbit* (1973)/ *Hedgehog in the Fog* (1975) by Yuri Norstein  
- A few words about the Russian smile (an unsurmountable feat – making Tsarevna-Who-Never-Laughs (Nesmeiana) laugh; prosecution of skhomoroks; iconography of a smile)  
- From ‘teaching a lesson’ to throwing a spectacle – Ballets Russes  
  - Opera *Prince Igor* (1909) by Borodin/Fokin/Roerikh; Ballet *The Right of Spring* (1913) by Stravinsky/Nijinsky/Roerich; Ballet *Petrushka* (1911) by Stravinski/Fokin/Benois; Ballet Fire-Bird (1910) by Stravinksy/Fokin/Golovin |
| 9/26 | The molding of Russian Society, 1613-1689. The Great Schism.  
- Thompson, Chapter 5, pp. 87-107  
- *Life of Avvakum Written by Himself* (1672)  
- Old-Believers today |
| 9/28 | The Old & the New: Russia on the Verge of Petrine Reform.  
- Film *Russian Ark* (2002) by Aleksandr Sokurov |
| 10/3 | Peter the Great & Westernization, 1689-1725  
- Thompson, Chapter 6, pp. 107-125  
- Pushkin, A. (1833), *The Bronze Horseman*  
- Midterm project presentations (Dramatic performance, film) |
| 10/5 | Midterm project presentations (Poster/Collage/Art session) |
| 10/10 | Change & Continuity, 1725-1801  
- Thompson, Chapter 7, pp. 125-149  
- Radishchev, A. (1790) *Journey from Petersburg to Moscow*. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Authors/Works</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/12</td>
<td>Midterm project presentations (Poetry reading)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Petrine Dream Goes Wrong</td>
<td>Gogol, N. (1835-1836) &quot;Nose,&quot; “The Overcoat”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/17</td>
<td>Power, Backwardness, and Creativity, 1801-1855</td>
<td>Thompson, Chapter 8, pp. 149-168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chaadaev, P. (1826-1831) &quot;Apology of a Madman&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/19</td>
<td>Russian Hero, Russian Heroine</td>
<td>Lermontov, M. (1839-1841) <em>A Hero of Our Time</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pushkin, A. (1825) <em>Eugene Onegin</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Opera <em>Eugene Onegin</em> (1879) by Petr Tchaikovsky (Sergei Lemeshev, <em>Duel</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dostoevsky, F. (1880) “Pushkin Speech”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/24</td>
<td>Reform, Reaction, &amp; Modernization, 1855-1904</td>
<td>Thompson, Chapter 9, pp. 169-192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Turgenev, I. (1852) <em>Notes of the Hunter</em> (“Singers,” “Khor’ and Kalinych”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chekhov, A. (1904) <em>The Cherry Orchard</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/31</td>
<td>Revolution, Reform, &amp; War, 1904-1917</td>
<td>Thompson, Chapter 10, pp. 193-215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Film <em>Mother</em> (1926) by Vsevolod Pudovkin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/2</td>
<td>Russia in the Whirlwind of Revolution</td>
<td>Zamyatin, E. (1918) “Dragon”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Artsybashev, M. (1905) “The Revolutionary”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/7</td>
<td>Revolution, Civil War, &amp; the Founding of Soviet Society, 1917-1928</td>
<td>Thompson, Chapter 11, pp. 215-241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Film <em>Bed and Sofa</em> (1927) by Abram Room (opening scene; new sexual mores)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bulgakov, M. (1925) <em>The Heart of a Dog</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/9</td>
<td>The Art of Revolution</td>
<td>Architecture, painting, design, poetry, photography and film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Film <em>Aelita</em> (1924) by Yakov Protazanov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/14</td>
<td>The Second Revolution, the Stalinist System, &amp; World War II, 1928-1946</td>
<td>Thompson, Chapter 12, pp. 243-269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shalamov, V. (1954—1962) <em>Kolyma Tales</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/16</td>
<td>Finding Peace in War</td>
<td>Film <em>The Fate of a Man</em> (1950) by Sergei Bondarchuk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/20-11/27</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 11/28 | The Soviet Union as a Superpower  
- Thompson, Chapter 13, pp. 269-306  
- Film *Stalker* (1979) by Adnrey Tarkovsky |
| 11/30 | Living in Paradise  
- Trifonov, Yu. (1966-1975) "Moscow Stories"  
- Thompson, Chapter 14, pp. 307-335  
- Film *My Perestroika* (2010) by Robin Hessman |
| 12/7 | Concluding Remarks |

**Final exam is due on December 12 by 12 a.m.**  
Please submit electronically via Canvas or email