

ART/LIT/SOC/HIS/POL/ECO 381: Russian Studies Seminar

Lead Professor: Dr. Marina Rozina
Institution: Moscow State University
Contact Hours: 40

Overview

This is a survey course of Russian society and culture. The course objective is to understand the development of the Russian culture over the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.

Textbook: Hand-outs provided by instructor

Credits: 3

Evaluation Methods: 25% each

- Class Discussion
- Homework Assignments
- Museum Assignments
- Final Term Paper

Topics Covered

Each term, the course covers 4 to 5 topics in addition to the Overview of Russian Culture & Society. Sample topic outlines are listed below. Other topics, such as Russian Education System, Multi-faith & Multi-pluralism in Russia and the Russian Army, may also be covered depending on availability of professors and current events.

TOPIC 1: Overview of Russian Culture & Society

Classroom Instruction

- Discuss Syllabus
- *Introduction to Russian Culture*
 - 18th Century
 - 19th Century
 - 20th century, pre-soviet and soviet epoch
 - New Russia
 - Influences of each period

Cultural Visits & Discussion

- Visit to the Museum of the History of Moscow
- Discussion of the visit to the Museum of the History of Moscow

TOPIC 2: Comparative Culture

Cultural Visits & Discussion

- Trip to Vladimir & Suzdal
- Discussion: comparative culture

TOPIC 3: Russian Culture through its Arts

Classroom Instruction

- *Russian Culture through its Art:*
 - Icon painting;
 - 18th century: portrait painting (Ivan Argunov, Fyodor Rokotov, Dmitry Levitzky, and Vladimir Borovikovsky);
 - 19th century: neoclassicism, romanticism (Karl Briullov, Alexander Ivanov), realism, Peredvizhniki (Ivan Shishkin, Arkhip Kuindzhi, Ivan Kramskoi, Vasily Polenov, Isaac Levitan, Vasily Surikov, Viktor Vasnetsov and Ilya Repin);
 - Turn of the 20th century: Boris Kustodiev, Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin, Mikhail Vrubel and Nicholas Roerich);
 - 20th century: Russian avant -garde, modernism, neo-primitivism, suprematism, constructivism, rayonism, and futurism (El Lissitzky, Kazimir Malevich, Wassily Kandinsky, Vladimir Tatlin, Alexander Rodchenko, and Marc Chagall);
 - Socialist realism: primitivism, hyperrealism, grotesque, and abstraction (Ernst Neizvestny, Ilya Kabakov, Mikhail Shemyakin, Erik Bulatov, and Vera Mukhina);
 - Modern Russian Art

Reading Assignment

- The Station Master- Pushkin
- The Bronze Horsemen- Pushkin
- A Hero of our time: Bela – Lermontov (Handout)
- Mtsyri (poem) – Lermontov (Handout)
- The Dream of a Ridiculous Man- Dostoevsky

Cultural Visits & Discussion

- Visit to the Tretyakov gallery
- Discussion of the visit to the Tretyakov gallery

TOPIC 4: Russian Literature

Classroom Instruction

- *Russian Literature:*
 - Introduction to Russian Literature
 - 18th Century
 - 19th Century (Sentimentalism, Preromanticism, romanticism and realism)
 - 20th century, first half (pre-soviet and soviet epoch)
 - Influences of each period
 - Pushkin;
 - Lermontov;
 - Gogol;
 - Turgenev;

- Dostoevsky
- Tolstoy;
- Chekhov;
- Gorky;
- Kuprin;
- Bunin;
- Bulgakov;
- Modern Russian literature

Reading Assignment

- The Death of Ivan Ilych- Tolstoy
- Anna on the neck – Chekhov
- Master and Margarita, Chapter I, II, III – Bulgakov (Handout)

Cultural Visits & Discussion

- Visit to the Pushkin Museum
- Discussion of the visit to the Pushkin museum
- Visit to the Bulgakov museum.
- Discussion of the visit to the Bulgakov museum

TOPIC 5: Russian Music & Performing Arts

Cultural Visits & Discussion

- *Russian music and dance:*
 - Folk music;
 - 19th century music: classical music, Romantic traditions in the Russian Classical music: Mikhail Glinka, Anton and Nikolay Rubinstein, Petr Chaikovsky;
 - 20th century music: socialist realism (Scriabin, Stravinsky, Rachmaninoff, Prokofiev, Shostakovich and Sviridov);
 - Russian world-renowned soloists: violinists David Oistrakh and Gidon Kremer; cellist Mstislav Rostropovich; pianists Vladimir Horowitz, Sviatoslav Richter, and Emil Gilels; vocalists Fyodor Shalyapin, Galina Vishnevskaya, Anna Netrebko and Dmitry Hvorostovsky;
 - Russian opera;
 - Russian modern music (Soviet music, Russian rock music, rock and roll, heavy metal, bard music, pop music);
 - Russian folk dance;
 - Russian ballet (Sergey Diaghilev, famous dancers: Anna Pavlova, Vaslav Nijinsky, Maya Plisetskaya, Rudolf Nureyev, Mikhail Baryshnikov).

Cultural Visits & Discussion

- Visit to the Glinka music museum.
- Discussion of the visit to the Glinka music museum

TOPIC 6: Russian Media & Cinema

Classroom Instruction

- *Russian cinema, animation and life style:*
 - history of the Russian cinema;

- Soviet cinema: socialist realism, famous directors (Eisenstein, Tarkovsky), comedies (Ryazanov, Gaidai), dramas, film adaptations (Bondarchuk, Menshov), osterms (Motyl);
- documentary films;
- modern Russian cinema;
- Russian animation: history and traditions;
- national costume;
- cuisine;
- traditions;
- holidays;
- sports;
- national symbols

Cultural Visits & Discussion

- Visit to the Historical Museum
- Discussion of the visit to the Historical Museum

TOPIC 7: Russian Politics & Economics

Classroom Instruction

- *Political Economy*
 - Nature of Communist Rule
 - Post-Soviet Government
 - Military in Russian Politics
 - Russian Economy & Society
 - Russian Economic Reform
 - Equalities and Inequalities in Russian Society
 - Role of government in the economy

Cultural Visits & Discussion

- Visit to the Russian Duma (if access is allowed)
- Discussion of Russian parliament and executive