

Russian Studies

Program Chair: Sheila Fitzpatrick, SS 511, 702.1784, sf13@uchicago.edu

Program of Study

Students who major in Russian Studies gain a thorough grounding in selected aspects of the history, literature, politics, economics, and cultural and social life of Russia and the former Russian/Soviet empire (including Ukraine and Belarus, Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the Baltic states), as well as acquiring competence in the Russian language. The BA program in Russian Studies can provide an appropriate background for careers in business, journalism, government, teaching, or the nonprofit sector, or for graduate study in one of the social sciences disciplines. Students planning on going on to graduate study in one of the social sciences may wish to take the Honors option and write a BA thesis under the mentorship of one of the Russian Studies faculty.

Program Requirements

Before entering the program in Russian Studies, students are expected to have completed a year of Russian language through College course work (eligible students may petition for partial credit). They are also expected to have taken the two-course sequence in Russian civilization (SOSC 24000-24100) that may be used to meet the general education requirement in civilization studies.

The program requires three additional courses in Russian language and eight further courses dealing with Russia, at least four of which must be courses in the social sciences, and three of which may be third- or fourth-year Russian.

Summary of Requirements

0–2	SOSC 24000-24100 (if not taken to meet general education requirement)
3	RUSS 20100-20200-20300 (second-year Russian)*
4	courses in social sciences dealing with Russia
4	additional courses dealing with Russia
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** Or credit for the equivalent as determined by petition.*

Grading. Students majoring in Russian Studies must take program requirements for a quality grade. With consent of instructor, other students may take Russian Studies courses for P/F grading.

Honors. Students wishing to apply for honors must have at least a 3.25 GPA overall and a 3.5 GPA in the major. In order to be considered for honors, students must write a BA thesis in consultation with the Russian Studies honors committee.

Students intending to write the BA thesis should meet with the Program Chair no later than Spring Quarter of their third year. RUSS 29900 will be allowed as an elective within the major.

Faculty

R. Bird, S. Fitzpatrick, L. Grenoble, M. Jackson, J. Leitzel, S. Markus, B. Maslov, E. Raikhel, L. Steiner, Y. Tsivian

Courses: Comparative Human Development (CHDV)

CHDV 33302. Disordered States. *This course may be counted towards the social sciences requirement of the Russian Studies major.* This course examines the intersection between two areas of research that have recently experienced a resurgence in anthropology: (1) new ethnographic work on states and state-like institutions and (2) the literature on the subjective experiences of illness and suffering. In other words, this course covers different ways in which the relationships between persons and states in crisis have been conceptualized in recent anthropological work. Topics may include trauma and political violence; social memory and commemoration; citizenship and humanitarian intervention; and political economic transformation and social marginalization. *E. Raikhel. Spring.*

Courses: History (HIST)

HIST 13900-14000. Introduction to Russian Civilization I, II. (=RUSS 25100-25200, SOSC 24000-24100) *Not offered 2010–11; will be offered 2011–12.*

HIST 23702. Soviet History. *This course may be counted towards the social sciences requirement of the Russian Studies major.* This course is a survey of Soviet history (1917–91) that focuses primarily on Russia but also deals with the non-Russian republics of the USSR. Topics include Lenin and the Bolshevik revolution; the cultural and social experimentation of the 1920s; Stalinism, especially collectivization and the Great Purges; World War II; the cold war; Khrushchev's reforms; the Brezhnev "period of stagnation"; Gorbachev's perestroika; and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. *S. Fitzpatrick. Autumn.*

Courses: General Slavic (SLAV)

SLAV 22000/32000. Old Church Slavonic. (=LGLN 25100/35100) *PQ: Knowledge of another Slavic language or good knowledge of one or two other old Indo-European languages required; SLAV 20100/30100 recommended.* This course introduces the language of the oldest Slavic texts. It begins with a brief historical overview of the relationship of Old Church Slavonic to Common Slavic and the other Slavic languages. This is followed by a short outline of Old Church Slavonic inflectional morphology. The remainder of the course is spent in the reading and

grammatical analysis of original texts. Texts in Cyrillic or Cyrillic transcription of the original Glagolitic. *Y. Gorbachov. Winter.*

SLAV 28502/38502. Comparative Metrics. (=CLAS 38410, CLCV 28410, CMLT 28401/38401, ENGL 28914/38401, GRMN 28411/38411) *Working knowledge of one European language besides English is strongly recommended. This course meets the critical/intellectual methods course requirement for students who are majoring in Comparative Literature.* This class offers an overview of major European systems of versification, with particular attention to their historical development. We are particularly concerned with Graeco-Roman quantitative metrics, its afterlife, and the evolution of Germanic and Slavic verse. In addition to analyzing the formal properties of verse, we inquire into their relevance for the articulation of poetic genres and, more broadly, the history of literary (and sub-literary) systems. *B. Rodin. Spring.*

Courses: Political Science (PLSC)

PLSC 28100. Russian Politics. *This course may be counted towards the social sciences requirement of the Russian Studies major.* This course introduces Russian politics. After a brief review of the milestones in Soviet history, the focus is on the developments since the fall of the "evil empire." Topics include domestic politics, political economy, and foreign policy. We also put the Russian developments in context by looking at other post-communist countries. *S. Markus. Winter.*

Courses: Russian (RUSS)

Language

RUSS 10100-10200-10300. First-Year Russian I, II, III. This course introduces modern Russian to students who would like to speak Russian or to use the language for reading and research. All four major communicative skills (i.e., reading, writing, listening comprehension, speaking) are stressed. Students are also introduced to Russian culture through readings, videos, and class discussions. This yearlong course prepares students for the College Language Competency Exam, for continued study of Russian in second-year courses, and for study or travel abroad in Russian-speaking countries. Conversation practice is held twice a week. *V. Ivleva. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

RUSS 10400-10500-10600. Russian through Pushkin I, II, III. *Not open to students who have taken RUSS 10100-10200-10300.* This literary and linguistic approach to Russian allows students to learn the language by engaging classic Russian poetic texts (e.g., Pushkin's *The Bronze Horseman*), as well as excerpts from *Eugene Onegin* and selections from Pushkin's shorter poems and prose works. Although the focus is on reading Russian, all four major communicative skills (i.e., reading, writing, listening comprehension, speaking) are stressed, preparing students for the College Language Competency Exam and for continued

study of Russian in second-year courses. Conversation practice is held twice a week. *Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

RUSS 20100-20200-20300. Second-Year Russian I, II, III. *PQ: RUSS 10300 or consent of instructor.* This course continues RUSS 10100-10200-10300; it includes review and amplification of grammar, practice in reading, elementary composition, and speaking and comprehension. Systematic study of word formation and other strategies are taught to help free students from excessive dependence on the dictionary and develop confidence in reading rather than translating. Readings are selected to help provide historical and cultural background. Conversation practice is held twice a week. *Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

RUSS 20400-20500-20600. Russian through Literary Readings: Second Year I, II, III. *PQ: RUSS 10600.* This course is a continuation of Russian through Pushkin. Second-year grammar, as well as oral and reading skills, are strengthened through intensive reading of important poetic and prose texts from the Russian classics. Conversation practice is held twice a week. *Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

RUSS 20702-20802-20902. Third-Year Russian through Culture I, II, III. *PQ: RUSS 20300 (two years of Russian) or equivalent.* This course, which is intended for third-year students of Russian, covers various aspects of Russian grammar in context and emphasizes the four communicative skills (i.e., reading, writing, listening comprehension, speaking) in a culturally authentic context. Excerpts from popular Soviet/Russian films and clips from Russian television news reports are shown and discussed in class. Classes conducted in Russian; some aspects of grammar explained in English. Drill practice is held twice a week. *V. Pichugin. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

RUSS 21002-21102-21202. Fourth-Year Russian through Short Story I, II, III. *PQ: Three years of Russian or equivalent.* This course treats some difficult issues of grammar, syntax, and stylistics through reading and discussing contemporary Russian short stories. This kind of reading exposes students to contemporary Russian culture, society, and language. Vocabulary building is also emphasized. Classes conducted in Russian. Conversation practice is held twice a week. *V. Ivleva. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

RUSS 21302-21402-21502. Advanced Russian through Media I, II, III. *PQ: RUSS 21200 or consent of instructor.* This course, which is designed for fifth-year students of Russian, covers various aspects of Russian stylistics and discourse grammar in context. It emphasizes the four communicative skills (i.e., reading, writing, listening comprehension, speaking) in culturally authentic context. Clips from Russian/Soviet films and television news reports are shown and discussed in class. Classes conducted in Russian. Conversation practice is held twice a week. *V. Pichugin. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

RUSS 21600. Russian for Heritage Learners. *PQ: Ability to speak Russian fluently required; formal training in Russian not required.* This course examines

the major aspects of Russian grammar and stylistics essential for heritage learners. Students engage in close readings and discussions of short stories by classic and contemporary Russian authors (e.g., Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Platonov, Bulgakov, Erofeev, Tolstaya), with special emphasis on their linguistic and stylistic differences. All work in Russian. *Autumn.*

Literature and Linguistics

RUSS 22401. Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*. (=FNDL 27101) Tolstoy's most famous novel has been the subject of critical controversy ever since its first serialized publication in the 1870s. This course is dedicated to a slow and close reading and careful interpretation of Tolstoy's masterpiece. It also includes several additional short works by Tolstoy on love. All work in English. Russian majors have an option of reading the text in the original and discussing it in a special Russian intensive section. *L. Steiner. Spring.*

RUSS 23001/33001. Structure of Russian Syntax. This course covers agreement, case usage, and word order in Contemporary Standard Russian. Major syntactic features of modern colloquial Russian, and other topics, are also examined. *L. Grenoble. Spring.*

RUSS 25501/35501. Word, Image, and Ritual: Early Russian Literature in Its Historical and Cultural Context. This course examines elements of premodern Russian material culture through a selection of Old Russian (early East Slavic) texts. Sample topics include iconography and fresco painting in medieval Rus', church architecture, chronicles, lives of saints, and Novgorodian birch bark documents, explored in their historical and social contexts. Readings in English. *Y. Gorbachov. Autumn.*

RUSS 25600/35600. Realism in Russia. From the 1830s to the 1890s, most Russian prose writers and playwrights were either engaged in the European-wide cultural movement known as "realistic school," which set for itself the task of engaging with social processes from the standpoint of political ideologies. The ultimate goal of this course is to distill more precise meanings of "realism," "critical realism," and "naturalism" in nineteenth-century Russian through analysis of works by Gogol, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Aleksandr Ostrovsky, Goncharov, Saltykov-Shchedrin, and Kuprin. Texts in English and the original. Optional Russian-intensive section offered. *Winter.*

RUSS 25700/35700. Russian Literature from Modernism to Post-Modernism. Given the importance of the written word in Russian culture, it is no surprise that writers were full-blooded participants in Russia's tumultuous recent history, which has lurched from war to war, and from revolution to revolution. The change of political regimes has only been outpaced by the change of aesthetic regimes, from realism to symbolism, and then from socialist realism to post-modernism. We sample the major writers, texts, and literary doctrines, paying close attention to the way they responded and contributed to historical

events. This course counts as the third part of the survey of Russian literature. Texts in English. *M. Sternstein. Spring.*

RUSS 27100/37100. Gogol. *Knowledge of Russian not required.* One of the most enigmatic authors in Russian literature, Nikolai Gogol (1809–52) was hailed in his own lifetime as the leading prose writer of his generation, a brilliant comic writer, and the innovator of the new school of Russian Naturalism/Realism. Since his death Gogol's has been the subject of ever-greater critical controversy. Reading representative works from each period of Gogol's career, including his *Petersburg Tales* and *Dead Souls*, we trace the author's creative development and consider it in relation to his biography and early nineteenth-century Russian literary and social history. We work together to identify the characteristic features of Gogol's narrative technique as well as the challenges to interpretation his texts pose. *M. Sternstein. Autumn.*

RUSS 28000/38000. The Russian Revolution as an Aesthetic Fact. *Knowledge of Russian not required. D. Khitrova. Autumn.*

RUSS 28903/38903. Russian Experimental Poetry. *PQ: Knowledge of Russian.* All work in Russian. *D. Khitrova. Spring.*

RUSS 29600/39600. Pale Fire. (=FNDL 25311) This course is an intensive reading of *Pale Fire* by Nabokov. *M. Sternstein. Spring.*

RUSS 36800. Identity, Democracy, and Autobiography: A Comparative Perspective. *PQ: Advanced standing and consent of instructor.* Drawing on the European, Russian, and North American writings from the end of the eighteenth to the middle of twentieth centuries, this graduate seminar examines the emergence of the modern conception of “identity” and its literary representation through the genre of fictionalized autobiography. We explore the influences of social mobility, political exile or immigration, and democratic education on the transformation of personal “identity” in the works by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Stendhal, Alexander Herzen, Vladimir Nabokov, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Ralph Ellison. The readings also include philosophical works by John Locke, Rousseau, Benjamin Constant, Alexis de Tocqueville, Charles Taylor, and Jean-Luc Nancy, which help us understand the relationship between “identity” and subjectivity and account for the growing intellectual prestige of “identity” in the contemporary democratic public sphere. Texts in English and the original. *L. Steiner. Winter.*

RUSS 37504. Dostoevsky's Money. This reading-intensive course explores the works of Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821–81), focusing on one of the central structuring elements of his poetics and one of his greatest life concerns: money. Sampling from his early and late novels, private letters, and journalistic writings, we follow the movements of money throughout Dostoevsky's oeuvre. We consider a diverse array of biographical, narratological, and historical approaches to money in Dostoevsky, as well as sociological and literary-theoretical accounts of money's social, semiotic, and metaliterary functions. The syllabus includes selections from Smith, Marx, Simmel, Zelizer, Saussure, Barthes, Goux, and Shell. *Spring.*

RUSS 42201. Recovering Bakhtin. (=CMLT 42201) Since the 1970s, Mikhail Bakhtin's work has had an enthusiastic reception in the Western academe. In spite of—or, arguably, as a result of—its wide dissemination, it has also suffered much from reductionist readings. In this seminar, we read Bakhtin's major works, seeking to restore them to the intellectual context of the Russian school of historical poetics. In addition, we discuss primary texts that provided the impetus for Bakhtin's theories (Petronius, Plutarch, Dostoyevsky). Texts in English. *B. Rodin. Spring.*

Courses: Social Sciences (sosc)

SOSC 24000-24100. Introduction to Russian Civilization I, II. (=HIST 13900-14000, RUSS 25100-25200) *Not offered 2010–11; will be offered 2011–12.*

SOSC 29700. Independent Study in the Social Sciences. *PQ: Consent of instructor and senior adviser. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*