SLAVIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

2704 Hall of Graduate Studies, 203.432.1300, slavic.department@yale.edu
http://slavic.yale.edu
M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair
John MacKay

Director of Graduate Studies
Molly Brunson

Professors Vladimir Alexandrov, Katerina Clark, Harvey Goldblatt, John MacKay

Associate Professor Molly Brunson

Assistant Professor Marijeta Bozovic

Senior Lectors II Irina Dolgova, Constantine Muravnik

Senior Lectors I Krystyna Illakowicz, Julia Titus, Karen von Kunes

FIELDS OF STUDY
The department offers the Ph.D. in Russian literature and culture and, by special arrangement, in medieval Slavic literature and philology.

SPECIAL ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS
An advanced-level command of the Russian language is required. A ten- to twenty-page writing sample, written in English, should be submitted with the application.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE
All graduate students are required to take four courses. RUSS 607, Topics in Russian Literature from Its Origins to the Eighteenth Century, is coordinated with the department’s graduate reading list of required works in Russian literature of the period. All students will take an examination in RUSS 607 that will also double as the medieval Russian literature examination for the doctorate (for more on examinations, see below). RUSS 608, Eighteenth-Century Russian Literature, follows the same pattern as RUSS 607. Its readings are also coordinated with the department’s graduate reading list of required works in Russian literature. All students will take an examination in RUSS 608 that will also double as the eighteenth-century Russian literature examination for the doctorate. The other required courses are SLAV 754, Old Church Slavonic, and RUSS 834, Aspects of Russian Grammar and Teaching Methodologies, which combines pedagogy with the structure of Russian. If possible, SLAV 754 should be taken before RUSS 607. RUSS 834 should be taken concurrently with or before a graduate student’s first term of teaching Russian language, typically during the seventh term of study.

The minimum number of graduate courses for the Ph.D. is sixteen, counting the above four required courses. Of the remaining twelve, at least two must be taken in nineteenth-century Russian literature and at least two in twentieth-century Russian literature, including poetry and prose or dramatic works.

Students who have done graduate work elsewhere may petition the department for up to three course credits toward their degree after one year’s residence at Yale.

A special curriculum may be arranged for students wishing to specialize in medieval Slavic literature and philology.

Minor field As part of their program of study, students will also be responsible for developing a minor field of specialization in one of the following: (1) a Western or non-Western literature; (2) film studies; (3) a topic in intellectual history; (4) one of the other arts; (5) another Slavic literature; (6) Slavic linguistics; (7) another discipline relevant to their primary interests in Russian literature. The student’s minor field of specialization will be determined in consultation with the director of graduate studies (DGS). The minor field can be developed most readily through reading courses in the Slavic department or by taking graduate courses in another department. Up to two graduate courses in other departments will count toward the sixteen for the doctorate if they are relevant to a student’s program of study. The successful completion of a course or courses in the student’s minor field taken in another department may double as the departmental examination in the minor.

Examinations The Ph.D. qualifying examinations comprise eight parts and will be completed during the third year of study: (1) medieval Russian literature; (2) Russian literature of the eighteenth century; (3) minor field; (4) nineteenth-century Russian prose and drama; (5) nineteenth-century Russian poetry; (6) twentieth-century Russian prose and drama; (7) twentieth-century Russian poetry; (8) pre-prospectus examination.

The first two examinations are taken in conjunction with courses offered during the first two years of course work, RUSS 607 and RUSS 608. Early in the fifth term of study, students will take (3), a forty-minute oral exam in their chosen minor field, administered
by the DGS and relevant faculty within and/or outside the department; this examination will be waived if the student has successfully completed one or two relevant graduate courses in another department. In October of the third year of study (typically during the second week), students will take two written examinations, (4) and (5), of two hours each, the first on Monday of the given week, the second on Friday. Each exam will consist of two or three passages drawn from well-known works of literature that will be identified and that are designated as required on the department’s reading list (which also includes additional works that are recommended but not required).

Students will be expected to choose one passage and write an essay in which they analyze the text from as many of the following points of view as possible: versification (if relevant), style, structure, narrative point of view, themes, genre, period, place in the author’s oeuvre and in literary history, comparative context, and critical reception. Two additional written examinations, (6) and (7), which will follow the same format, will be held during one week at the end of the student’s fifth term of study (typically the first week of December), again on Monday and Friday. Each of these four written exams will be compiled and graded by two faculty members with expertise in the given century and genres. After each exam, students will be informed as to how they performed.

After the final written exam, all students will have a one-hour oral pre-prospectus exam on a date to be specified by the department near the beginning of the sixth term (typically, during the first week of February). This examination will explore issues pertaining to the student’s future dissertation prospectus. Normally, preparation for the exam will entail a more focused reading of the departmental reading list. For example, a student who proposes to work on Pasternak would read not only the required and recommended works by Pasternak, but also the required and recommended works by other writers of the twentieth century. Students will also be expected to explore secondary and theoretical sources outside the reading list that are relevant to their chosen topic. Preparation for the examination will be done in consultation with two faculty advisers (see below), and students will be required to prepare in advance a seven- to ten-page text outlining their future dissertation topic, including a discussion of existing scholarship and the way they propose to structure their work. An annotated bibliography of primary and secondary works pertaining to their dissertation topic should also be appended. The pre-prospectus text will be distributed to all departmental faculty one week prior to the exam, and all faculty will attend the exam. The aim of this exam is for the student to take an intermediate step toward developing a dissertation prospectus and also to provide the student with feedback from the faculty about the project.

The departmental reading list is available on the department’s website.

Article in lieu of examination As a possible alternative to one of the four written examinations on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, students may choose to write an article that they will submit for publication to a scholarly journal. The work will be carried out in consultation with a faculty adviser and will focus on a work or works in either poetry or prose (or drama) of the given century. This article will be due on the date that the exam on the given genre is normally scheduled. It is expected that the article will be ambitious in its overview and in its conceptualization of the issue(s) being addressed. The faculty adviser will evaluate the work and will advise the student on publication.

COMBINED PH.D. PROGRAM WITH FILM AND MEDIA STUDIES

The Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures also offers, in conjunction with the Film and Media Studies Program, a combined Ph.D. in Slavic Languages and Literatures and Film and Media Studies. For further details, see Film and Media Studies in this bulletin and the department’s website. Applicants to the combined program must indicate on their application that they are applying both to Film and Media Studies and to Slavic Languages and Literatures. All documentation within the application should include this information.

MASTER’S DEGREES

M.Phil. See Degree Requirements under Policies and Regulations.

M.A. The Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures does not admit students for the terminal M.A. degree, nor does it award an M.A. en route to the Ph.D. degree. If, however, a student admitted for the Ph.D. leaves the program prior to completion of the doctoral degree, the student may be eligible to receive a terminal master’s degree. The student must have completed at least fifteen term courses in Russian literature and linguistics, chosen in consultation with the DGS. A grade of Honors in at least two term courses and an average of High Pass in the remaining courses must be attained. A reading knowledge of French or German is required, and candidates must pass departmental proficiency examinations in Russian.

More information is available on the department’s website, http://slavic.yale.edu.

COURSES

RUSS 663a, Introduction to Russian Poetry  Marijeta Bozovic
This seminar presents an introduction and historical overview of the classics of Russian poetry in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including works by Pushkin, Lermontov, Tiutchev, Nekrasov, Gippius, Bely, Blok, Akhmatova, Mandelstam, Khlebnikov, Mayakovsky, Tsvetaeva, and Brodsky, as well as by several contemporary Russian poets.

RUSS 680a, Space and Place in Modern Theory and Fiction  Edyta Bojanowska
While the study of literature has been dominated by questions of time and chronology, recent scholarship has seen a surge of interest in the spatial discourse of literary texts. This course considers the geometric, geographic, social, and epistemic spaces of literary texts. How do humans organize space, and how are they organized by space? How do literary texts conceptualize and sometimes transgress their
own spatial order? Is space a “container” or a relation? How does it situate knowledge, culture, and society? Borders, thresholds, and in-between spaces occupy us along with transformations and animations of space. We are guided in this conceptual terrain by key theoretical contributions on space and place from a variety of disciplines, including philosophy, literary and cultural theory, anthropology, sociology, phenomenology, and geography. We test their insights by analyzing key texts of Russian literature from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century. Theoretical readings include Plato, Heidegger, Goffman, Lefebvre, Foucault, Anderson, Bakhtin, Lotman, Tuan, Bachelard, de Certeau, Moretti, Massey, Grosz, Said, Bhabha, Deleuze, and Guattari. Primary texts include Russian texts by Pushkin, Gogol, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Chekhov, Bely, Zamyatin, Platonov, Nabokov, Ulitskaya, and Pelevin.

RUSS 695a / FILM 778a, Russian Literature and Film in the 1920s and 1930s  Katerina Clark
This course presents a historical overview, incorporating some of the main landmarks of the 1920s and 1930s including works by Pilnyak, Bakhtin, the Formalists, Platonov, Mayakovsky, Bulgakov, Zoshchenko, Eisenstein, Protazanov, Pudovkin, the Vasilyev “brothers,” and G. Aleksandrov.

RUSS 753b, The Russian Short Story and Beyond  John MacKay
Despite its importance, ubiquity, and popularity, the short story form remains one of the most woefully understudied of all literary genres, having attracted far less scholarly attention than the novel, the lyric, the epic, or drama. This class is intended to make a start on filling that gap by paying close historical, critical, and aesthetic attention to Russian short stories from the early nineteenth century onward.

RUSS 834a, Aspects of Russian Grammar and Teaching Methodology  Irina Dolgova
The course examines various aspects of Russian grammar and the use of different teaching methodologies. Special emphasis is placed on the connection between linguistic knowledge and its application for teaching Russian in an English-speaking classroom. Different types of language learners, diverse teaching strategies, and existing resources for teaching Russian are discussed.

RUSS 851b, Proseminar in Slavic Literature  Molly Brunson and Marijeta Bozovic
Introduction to the graduate study of Russian literature. Topics include literary theory, methodology, introduction to the profession.

RUSS 882a / CPLT 882a / ENGL 709a, What Happened to Race, Class, and Gender? Keywords of Recent Critical Theory  Ayesha Ramachandran and Marta Figlerowicz
What did happen to race, class, and gender? This course examines the persistence of older theoretical frameworks such as Marxism or feminism in current critical discourse. It also explores new critical keywords—biopolitics, affect, the Anthropocene, and others—that now help structure theoretical debates in the humanities. Intended as a fast-paced, reading-heavy introduction to recent critical theory, the course will help graduate students in literature acquire a better sense of their field of study and reflect upon the methodologies they will use in their dissertation projects. Readings include the work of older theorists such as Jacques Derrida, Theodor Adorno, Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, and Donna Haraway, as well as recent ones such as Jasbir Puar, Sianne Ngai, Tiqqun, Paolo Virno, and Dipesh Chakrabarty.

SLAV 752a, The Slavic Peoples and Their Languages: From Unity to Diversity  Harvey Goldblatt
Examination of the linguistic and cultural history of the Slavs from their prehistoric period up to the formation of the diverse Slavic languages, the individual Slavic states, and their national literatures.

SLAV 756a, Princely Valor: The Lay of Igor's Campaign  Harvey Goldblatt
This course offers a close reading of The Lay of Igor’s Campaign, which tells of the adventurous but ultimately unsuccessful military campaign waged by Prince Igor, the son of Svjatoslav, against the Polovcians in 1185. It compares the Lay with the chronicle accounts that also describe the rash military deeds of Prince Igor and the implications of his defeat for Old Rus’. The course seeks to highlight important coincidences between the Lay and the heroic epics that played a central role in the medieval European literary patrimony.