RUSSIAN, EAST EUROPEAN, AND EURASIAN STUDIES (RSEE)

* RSEE 009a / RUSS 026a, Culture and Everyday Life in Central Asia  Claire Roosien
This first-year seminar explores the diverse cultures of Central Asia, including the former Soviet republics (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan), and Xinjiang. Students encounter a range of literature, film, music and performance, material culture, and food culture. Students apply a critical eye to the ways outsiders have represented and misrepresented Central Asia. The course begins with a historical overview of the region through a critical analysis of several popular misconceptions. In three subsequent units, focused on steppe nomadism, urban life, and mobility and migration, students get a small taste of the diversity and dynamism of contemporary Central Asian culture. Students visit the Beinecke Library and the Peabody Museum to encounter a range of Central Asia-related holdings at Yale. In a field trip to Brighton Beach, an on-campus concert, and a cooking demo, students also encounter the cultures of the Central Asian diaspora communities in New York and Connecticut. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.  WR, HU

* RSEE 222b / HIST 222Jb, Russia and the Eurasian Steppe  Paul Bushkovitch
A study of Russia’s interaction with the nomads of the Eurasian steppe. Topics include the Mongol invasion, the Mongol Empire in Asia and the Golden Horde, Islam, nomadic society, and the Russian state. Focus on conquest and settlement. May count toward either European or Asian distributional credit within the History major, upon application to the director of undergraduate studies.  WR, HU

RSEE 225a / HIST 290a, Russia from the Ninth Century to 1801  Staff
The mainstream of Russian history from the Kievan state to 1801. Political, social, and economic institutions and the transition from Eastern Orthodoxy to the Enlightenment.  HU 0 Course cr

* RSEE 241a / HIST 240Ja, Government, Law, and Society in Modern Russia, 1853–1953  Sergei Antonov
Russian political culture from the Crimean War to the death of Stalin. Special attention to continuities, as well as changes, across the revolutionary divide of 1917, and to comparing official policies with daily experiences of ordinary Russians. Changing ideologies and ruling styles of tsars and early Soviet leaders (esp. Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin) and relations with aristocratic and bureaucratic elites; political dissent and protest, including popular and state-imposed violence; the problem of legality and the rule of law. All discussions and readings in English.  WR, HU TR

RSEE 254b / LITR 245b / RUSS 254b, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky  Molly Brunson
Close reading of major novels by two of Russia’s greatest authors. Focus on the interrelations of theme, form, and literary-cultural context. Readings and discussion in English.  HU

RSEE 266a / HIST 265a, Soviet Russia 1917-1991  Staff
Overview of the rise and fall of the Soviet Union. Topics include political culture and ideology of the Bolshevik/Communist Party; social and economic changes; foreign policy and the role of WWII; major artistic and cultural movements. Paper assignments involve close readings of memoir and oral history accounts.  HU 0 Course cr

RSEE 268b / ER&M 263b / HIST 264b, Eastern Europe since 1914  Timothy Snyder
Eastern Europe from the collapse of the old imperial order to the enlargement of the European Union. Main themes include world war, nationalism, fascism, and communism. Special attention to the structural weaknesses of interwar nation-states and postwar communist regimes. Nazi and Soviet occupation as an age of extremes. The collapse of communism. Communism after 1989 and the dissolution of Yugoslavia in the 1990s as parallel European trajectories.  HU 0 Course cr

RSEE 271a / HIST 271a / HUMS 339a, European Intellectual History since Nietzsche  Staff
Major currents in European intellectual history from the late nineteenth century through the twentieth. Topics include Marxism-Leninism, psychoanalysis, expressionism, structuralism, phenomenology, existentialism, antipolitics, and deconstruction.  HU 0 Course cr

RSEE 312a / HIST 260a / HUMS 255a / LITR 253a / RUSS 312a, Tolstoy’s War and Peace TR  Staff
The course is a semester-long study of the quintessential big Russian novel, Leo Tolstoy’s War and Peace, about Napoleon’s failed 1812 war against Russia. War and Peace (1865-1869) is a sweeping panorama of nineteenth-century Russian society, a novel of profound philosophical questions, and an unforgettable gallery of artfully drawn characters. Reading the novel closely, we pose the following questions. In what ways is this patriotic war epic also an imperial novel? What myths does it destroy and construct? How does it combine fiction and history? What forces drive history, as it unfolds in the present? What are the limits of individual agency, and how much do emperors and generals control the fates of nations and armies? Finally, a question that is never too broad for Tolstoy: what is a meaningful, well-lived life? We explore these questions while refining our tools of literary analysis and situating the novel in its historical context and in our contemporary world. Secondary materials include Tolstoy’s letters, contemporary reviews, maps, and historical sources, as well as readings in political theory, philosophy, international relations, and literary criticism. All readings and class discussions in English.  No prerequisites required. Both WR and non-WR sections are offered.  HU TR 0 Course cr
RSEE 380b / FILM 360b / LITR 301b / RUSS 380b, Putin’s Russia and Protest Culture  Marijeta Bozovic
Survey of Russian literature and culture since the fall of communism. The chaos of the 1990s; the solidification of power in Putin’s Russia; the recent rise of protest culture. Sources include literature, film, and performances by art collectives. Readings and discussion in English; texts available in Russian.  WR, HU