RUSSIAN AND EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES

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The major in Russian and East European Studies, administered by the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, offers an interdisciplinary approach to the study of a broad region: Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, the Caucasus, and central Asia; Poland, Hungary, the Czech and Slovak Republics, and other areas in east central Europe; and the Balkans. The program is appropriate for students considering careers in international public policy, diplomacy, or business, and is also suited to students wishing to continue academic work.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

Thirteen term courses taken for a letter grade are required for the major. Students must take one course in Russian or East European history selected in consultation with the director of undergraduate studies (DUS). If Russian is presented as the primary language to satisfy the requirements of the major, then all East European language courses and third- and fourth-year Russian courses count toward the major. If an East European language other than Russian is presented as the primary language, then all courses in that language designated L3 or higher count toward the major. Electives are chosen in consultation with the DUS from an annual list of offerings. Electives must include at least one course in a social science. Other undergraduate courses relevant to Russian and East European Studies, including residential college seminars, may also count toward the major if approved by the DUS.

Languages A full understanding of the area demands knowledge of its languages. Students must demonstrate either proficiency in Russian or intermediate-level ability in an East European language. Students may demonstrate proficiency in Russian by (1) completing fourth-year Russian (RUSS 160, 161); (2) passing a written examination to demonstrate equivalent ability; or (3) completing a literature course taught in Russian and approved by the DUS. Students may demonstrate intermediate-level ability in an East European language by (1) completing a two-year sequence in an East European language (currently Czech, Polish, Romanian, or Ukrainian; students interested in studying other East European languages should contact the DUS); or (2) by passing a language examination demonstrating equivalent ability. Students are encouraged to learn more than one language.

SENIOR REQUIREMENT

Every major must write a senior essay in RSEE 490, 491. At the beginning of the senior year, students enroll in RSEE 490 and arrange for a faculty member to serve as senior adviser. By the third Friday of October, majors submit a detailed prospectus of the essay, with bibliography, to the adviser. A draft of at least ten pages of the text of the essay, or a detailed outline of the entire essay, is due to the adviser by the last day of reading period of the fall semester. The student provides the adviser with a form that the adviser signs to notify the DUS that the first-term requirements for the senior essay have been met. Failure to meet these requirements results in loss of credit for RSEE 490. The senior essay takes the form of a substantial article, no longer than 13,000 words, excluding footnotes and bibliography. Three copies of the essay are due in the Slavic departmental office by April 10, 2020. A member of the faculty other than the adviser grades the essay.

ADVISING

Qualified students may elect pertinent courses in the Graduate School with the permission of the instructor, the director of graduate studies, and the DUS.

Graduate work The European and Russian Studies program does not offer the simultaneous award of the B.A. and M.A. However, students in Yale College are eligible to complete the M.A. in European and Russian Studies (with concentration in Russia and eastern Europe) in one year of graduate work. Students interested in this option must complete eight graduate courses in the area by the time they complete the bachelor’s degree. Only two courses may be counted toward both the graduate degree and the undergraduate major. Successful completion of graduate courses while still an undergraduate does not guarantee admission into the M.A. program. Students must submit the standard application for admission to the M.A. program.

STUDY ABROAD

Students should be aware of opportunities for study and travel in Russia and eastern Europe. The DUS can provide information on these programs and facilitate enrollment. Students who spend all or part of the academic year in the region participating in established academic programs usually receive Yale College credit, and are strongly encouraged to take advantage of study abroad opportunities during summers or through the Year or Term Abroad program. Students wishing to travel abroad as part of the major should consult the DUS.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

Prerequisite None

Number of courses 13 term courses (incl senior essay and specified lang courses)

Distribution of courses Demonstrated proficiency in Russian or intermediate-level ability in an East European lang; 1 course in Russian or East European hist approved by DUS; at least 1 course in social science
Senior requirement Senior essay (RSEE 490, 491)

FACULTY ASSOCIATED WITH THE MAJOR

Professors Sergei Antonov (History), Edyta Bojanowska (Slavic Languages & Literatures), Paul Bushkovitch (History), Katerina Clark (Comparative Literature, Slavic Languages & Literatures), John Gaddis (History), Harvey Goldblatt (Slavic Languages & Literatures), John MacKay (Slavic Languages & Literatures, Film & Media Studies), Timothy Snyder (History)

Associate Professors Molly Brunson (Slavic Languages & Literatures), Jason Lyall (Political Science), Douglas Rogers (Anthropology), Marci Shore (History)

Assistant Professors Marijeta Bozovic (Slavic Languages & Literatures, Film and Media Studies, Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies), Marta Figlerowicz (Comparative Literature, English)

Senior Lectors II Irina Dolgova, Constantine Muravnik

Senior Lectors Krystyna Illakovicz, Julia Titus, Karen von Kunes

Courses

RSEE 225a / HIST 290a, Russia from the Ninth Century to 1801 Paul Bushkovitch
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

RSEE 254a / LITR 254a / RUSS 254a, 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 268b / 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

RSEE 271a / HIST 271a / HUMS 339a, European Intellectual History since Nietzsche Marci Shore
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

* RSEE 300b / CZEC 301b / LITR 320b, Milan Kundera: The Czech Novelist and French Thinker Karen von Kunes
Close reading of Kundera’s novels, with analysis of his aesthetics and artistic development. Relationships to French, German, and Spanish literatures and to history, philosophy, music, and art. Topics include paradoxes of public and private life, the irrational in erotic behavior, the duality of body and soul, the interplay of imagination and reality, the function of literary metaphor, and the art of composition. Readings and discussion in English. HU TR

RSEE 312b / HUMS 255b / RUSS 312b, Tolstoy’s War and Peace Edyta Bojanowska
A study of Leo Tolstoy’s masterpiece War and Peace (1865-1869) about Napoleon’s 1812 invasion of Russia, in philosophical, historical, and political contexts. All readings and class discussions in English. WR, HU TR

* RSEE 327a / FILM 409a / LITR 306a / RUSS 327a, The Danube in Literature and Film Marijeta Bozovic
The Danube River in the film, art, and literature of various Danubian cultural traditions, from the late nineteenth century to the present. Geography and history of the region that includes the river’s shores and watershed; physical, historical, and metaphorical uses of the Danube; the region as a contested multilingual, multicultural, and multinational space, and as a quintessential site of cross-cultural engagement. Readings and discussion in English. WR, HU TR

* RSEE 329a / MMES 300a / RUSS 329a, Introduction to Modern Central Asia Staff
An overview of the history of modern Central Asia—modern-day Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of the People’s Republic of China. This course shows Central Asia to be a pivotal participant in some of the major global issues of the 20th and 21st centuries, from environmental degradation and Cold War, to women's emancipation and postcolonial nation-building, to religion and the rise of mass society. It also includes an overview of the region's longer history, of the conquests by the Russian and Chinese empires, the rise of Islamic modernist reform movements, the Bolshevik victory, World War II, the perestroika, and the projects of post-Soviet nation-building. Readings in history are supplemented by such primary sources as novels and poetry, films and songs, government decrees, travelogues, courtly chronicles, and the periodical press. All readings and discussions in English.

RSEE 400a / PLSC 400a, Legacies of Communism and Conflict in Europe Andrea Aldrich
This course examines the challenges of democratic transition and consolidation in Europe in an exciting way using contemporary and historical political research, documentary and dramatic film, a graphic non-fiction novel, and a field trip to MOMA in NYC (optional). Together we explore political themes like authoritarianism, state collapse, nationalism, ethnic conflict, transitional justice, and democratic
development through the turbulent political history of Southeastern Europe, which provides a solid theoretical foundation for the understanding of past and current events around the world.

* RSEE 490a and RSEE 491b, The Senior Essay  
Preparation of the senior essay under faculty supervision. The essay grade becomes the grade for both terms of the course. Required of all seniors majoring in Russian and East European Studies. Credit for RSEE 490 only on completion of RSEE 491.

RELATED COURSES THAT COUNT TOWARD THE MAJOR

Students are encouraged to examine the offerings in Slavic Languages and Literatures and other departments, as well as residential college seminars, for additional related courses that may count toward the major.

HIST 263a, Eastern Europe to 1914  
Timothy Snyder
Eastern Europe from the medieval state to the rise of modern nationalism. The Ottoman Empire, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Hapsburg monarchy, and various native currents. Themes include religious diversity, the constitution of empire, and the emergence of secular political ideologies.  

HIST 264b / RSEE 268b, 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.