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 (RUS 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) 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 9, 2021. 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)

Russian and East European Studies encompasses the history, literature, politics, economics, social organization, and culture of Russia, the non-Russian portions of the former Soviet Union, and eastern Europe. Majors design individual courses of study that reflect the interdisciplinary nature of Russian and East European Studies.

Courses taught in English and suitable for first-year students include:

- RSEE 225 Russia from the Ninth Century to 1801
- RSEE 241 Government, Law, and Society in Modern Russia, 1853-1953
- RSEE 271 European Intellectual History since Nietzsche
- RSEE 337 The Invention of Tradition in Post-Soviet Nation States
- RSEE 350 Internet Cultures, Histories, Networks, and Practices
- RUSS 220 Russian and Soviet Art, 1757 to the Present
- RUSS 241 Russian Culture: The Modern Age
- RUSS 350 Nineteenth-Century Russian Literature
- RUSS 352 Modernism and Revolution
- RUSS 254 Tolstoy and Dostoevsky
- RUSS 260 Nabokov and World Literature
- RUSS 337 The Invention of Tradition in Post-Soviet Nation States

Students who plan to focus on Russia and the former Soviet Union should take RUSS 110 and RUSS 120, or RUSS 125 as first-year students and RUSS 145 as sophomores. Those specializing in eastern Europe should take introductory Czech, Polish, Romanian, Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian, or Ukrainian as early as possible. Students interested in taking another East European language should contact the director of undergraduate studies (DUS) regarding availability.

Every major takes at least one course in Russian or East European history and at least one in a social science. Majors are encouraged to study in Russia and eastern Europe, and they should consult the DUS in the fall about programs for study abroad. See the Center for Language Study website for information about placement examinations.

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 Illakowicz, Julia Titus, Karen von Kunes

View Courses