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. 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) 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 13, 2018. 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 director of undergraduate studies.

Graduate work  The European and Russian Studies program does not offer the simultaneous award of the B.A. and M.A. degrees. 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 or corequisite  Demonstrated proficiency in Russian or intermediate-level ability in an East European language

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

Distribution of courses  1 course in Russian or East European hist approved by DUS; at least 1 course in social sciences

Senior requirement  Senior essay (RSEE 490, 491)
Courses

* RSEE 218b / HIST 218Jb, Capitalism and Socialism in Russia  Sergei Antonov
Ideologies and practices of capitalism and the challenge of socialism, using twentieth-century Russia as the case study. Capitalism’s potential and limitations in the early 1900s. The 1917 socialistic revolution and attempts to build the world’s first socialistic society in Soviet Russia. Impact of forced modernization and industrialization in the 1920s and 1930s; “developed socialism” in post-WWII Soviet Union. Impact of ideologies and policies upon daily life. All readings and discussions in English. WR, HU

* RSEE 240a / CZEC 246a / FILM 264a, Milos Forman and His Films  Karen von Kunes
An in-depth examination of selected films by Milos Forman and representatives of the New Wave, cinémathèque in Czech filmmaking. Special attention to Forman’s artistic and aesthetic development as a Hollywood director in such films as Hair, One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest, Ragtime, and Amadeus. Screenings and discussion in English. HU

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 312a / HUMS 255a / RUSS 312a, 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

* RSEE 320b / ENGL 266b / HUMS 334b / LITR 223b / RUSS 320b, The Russian and American Twentieth Century in Literature  Michael Weinstein
A prehistory to the current political moment, tracing the relationship between the United States and Russia from the pre-revolutionary years to the fall of communism through both countries’ forms of aesthetic production, including literature, film, and the visual arts. WR, HU

RSEE 350b / ENGL 198b / FILM 394b / LITR 409b / WGSS 394b, Internet Cultures, Histories, Networks, and Practices  Marijeta Bozovic and Marta Figlerowicz
Examination, through the lenses of histories, network studies, and cultural studies, of how human beings have seemingly overnight learned to use and depend on computer networks for various kinds of work, military operations, pursuits of scientific knowledge, religious proselytizing, political organization, searches for mates and social communities, illegal activities, and infinite varieties of play. HU

* RSEE 351b / ER&M 417b / HIST 232b / HUMS 309b / RUSS 350b, Russia Between Empire and Nation  Edyta Bojanowska
Throughout its modern history, Russia has been an imperial state. Like the United States, Russia expanded across a continent inhabited by various ethnic groups, claiming its own version of Manifest Destiny. To this day, as a result of imperial processes, the Russian Federation remains a multiethnic state and, territorially, the biggest country on Earth. This seminar explores Russia’s imperial culture, history, and politics from the nineteenth century to the present day from an interdisciplinary perspective. It focuses on how modern Russian culture reflected, shaped, and challenged imperial reality; on how empire figured in negotiations of Russian national identity; and on Russian versions of Orientalism and colonialism. Cultural materials include fiction, poetry, travel writing, painting, monuments, and films. Additional readings in history, political science, anthropology, postcolonial studies, and contemporary journalism, as well as some evening film screenings. All readings, films, and class discussions in English. HU

* RSEE 355a / EVST 294a / HUMS 294a / RUSS 355a, Ecology and Russian Culture  Molly Brunson
Interdisciplinary study of Russian literature, film, and art from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries, organized into four units—forest, farm, labor, and disaster. Topics include: perception and representation of nature; deforestation and human habitation; politics and culture of land-ownership; leisure, labor, and forced labor; modernity and industrialization; and nuclear technologies and disasters.
Analysis of short stories, novels, and supplementary readings on ecocriticism and environmental humanities, as well as films, paintings, and visual materials. Several course meetings take place at the Yale Farm. Readings and discussions in English.  

RSEE 360b / PLSC 432b, The Politics of Russia and the Post-Soviet Successor States  
Stephen Hanson  
The evolution of political institutions in the Soviet Union, Russian Federation, and other post-Soviet states. Topics include the impact of communist legacies, design of constitutions and electoral systems, regionalism, economic performance, regime change, and state-society relations in East Europe and Eurasia. Exposure to the discipline of political science and/or Russian, East European, and Central Asian studies is helpful.  

RSEE 400a / PLSC 400a, Legacies of Communism and Conflict in Europe  
Andrea Aldrich  
The challenges of democratic transition and consolidation in Europe. Exploration of authoritarianism, state collapse, nationalism and ethnic conflict, transitional justice, and democratic development through the turbulent and violent political history of southeastern Europe. Study of communist legacies and democratic transitions of the Balkans (Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and the states of the former Yugoslavia) to understand the complex nature of regime change and political transition.  

* RSEE 490a and RSEE 491b, The Senior Essay  
Staff  
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.  

* ANTH 438b, Culture, Power, Oil  
Douglas Rogers  
The production, circulation, and consumption of petroleum as they relate to globalization, empire, cultural performance, natural resource extraction, and the nature of the state. Case studies include the United States, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Venezuela, and the former Soviet Union.  

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, 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.