

# RUSSIAN (RUS)

---

## **RUS 1013 (c) The Red World: Socialism as Imagined and Lived in Russia, 1917-1932**

Page Herrlinger.

Non-Standard Rotation. Fall 2023. Enrollment limit: 16.

Just over a century ago, Russian revolutionaries promised to turn the capitalist world upside down and replace it with a modern socialist order based on the equality and dignity of all working people. Explores socialism in practice between 1917 and 1932, with an emphasis on both the utopian imagination and "lived" experience. Discussions and assignments will draw heavily on visual sources (art, posters, film, photography) to examine the radical transformation of Soviet culture and society. Topics include labor practices, education, family and gender roles, religious culture, science and technology, healthcare, housing and urban planning, and fashion and the arts. No previous knowledge of Russian history is necessary. Note: This course is part of the following field(s) of study: Europe. (Same as: HIST 1013)

Previous terms offered: Fall 2020.

## **RUS 1101 (c) Elementary Russian I**

Mira Nikolova.

Every Fall. Fall 2023. Enrollment limit: 18.

Introduction to the Cyrillic writing system and to the fundamentals of the Russian language. Emphasis on the gradual acquisition of active language skills: speaking, understanding, reading and writing. Students will learn to introduce family members and explain what they do for a living; describe their room, possessions, city, and culinary preferences; discuss their daily activities and travels; talk about their studies and what languages they speak; ask simple questions, voice opinions, make invitations, and engage in basic everyday conversations. Authentic multimedia cultural materials (cartoons, songs, poems, videos) supplement the textbook and serve as a window onto the vibrant reality of Russian culture today. Conversation hour with native speaker.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2022, Fall 2021, Fall 2020, Fall 2019.

## **RUS 1102 (c) Elementary Russian II**

Mira Nikolova.

Every Spring. Spring 2024. Enrollment limit: 18.

Continuation of Russian 1101. Introduction to the case and verbal systems of Russian. Emphasis on the acquisition of language skills through imitation and repetition of basic language patterns and through interactive dialogues. The course includes multimedia (video and audio) materials. Conversation hour with native speaker.

Prerequisites: RUS 1101.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2021, Spring 2020.

## **RUS 2117 (c, IP) Fallen Women and Superfluous Men: Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and the Great Russian Novel**

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

Introduces students to two giants of Russian literature, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, and explores their significance to Russian cultural history and European thought. The course surveys the aesthetic contributions, literary styles, and artistic innovation of both authors through the close reading of their early and mature works. Themes of religion, philosophy, modernity, and art are examined through the complex lens of gender dynamics in nineteenth-century Russian literature. Special emphasis is placed on each novelist's approach to questions of gender roles, masculinity, femininity, sexuality, prostitution, motherhood, free will, and social and familial duty. Sexual violence, suffering, spirituality, and redemption are further topics of interest. Studied texts include Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and *Notes from Underground*, as well as Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, *The Cossacks*, and "The Kreutzer Sonata," among others. Class is conducted in English. . (Same as: GSWS 2217)

Previous terms offered: Spring 2021.

## **RUS 2203 (c) Intermediate Russian I**

Mira Nikolova.

Every Fall. Fall 2023. Enrollment limit: 18.

Continuation of Elementary Russian. Emphasis on the continuing acquisition of active language skills: speaking, understanding, reading and writing. Students will improve their facility in speaking and understanding normal conversational Russian and will read increasingly sophisticated texts on a variety of topics. Authentic multimedia cultural materials (cartoons, songs, poems, videos, websites, short stories, newspaper articles) supplement the textbook and serve as a window onto the vibrant reality of Russian culture today. Conversation hour with native speaker.

Prerequisites: RUS 1102.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2022, Fall 2021, Fall 2020, Fall 2019.

## **RUS 2204 (c) Intermediate Russian II**

Reed Johnson.

Every Spring. Spring 2024. Enrollment limit: 18.

Continuation of Russian 2203. Emphasis on developing proficiencies in listening, speaking, reading, and writing and on vocabulary development. Builds upon the basic grammatical competencies acquired in first-year Russian and completes a thorough introduction to the case and verbal systems of the language. The course includes multimedia (video and audio) materials. Conversation hour with native speaker.

Prerequisites: RUS 2203.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2021, Spring 2020.

**RUS 2232 (c, IP) Structures of the Short Story**

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 18.

Explores fundamentals of narrative construction through reading short masterworks of Russian literature alongside a variety of creative writing assignments. What makes a story compelling—or, for that matter, what makes it a story at all? This course focuses on the complex machinery producing what John Gardner called the “vivid and continuous dream” of fiction, moving from what a story means to how it means. Our guides in this process will be the Russian writers who helped innovate and fine-tune the modern short story, from Pushkin to Turgenev to Chekhov, and whose legacies continue to hold sway over the form. In response to readings, students write short creative or analytical assignments on the narrative techniques under study. This course is meant for writers and literature students alike; no previous creative writing experience required. All course materials are in English. Note: Fulfills the creative writing concentration requirement for English majors. (Same as: ENGL 2865)

Previous terms offered: Fall 2021.

**RUS 2234 (c, IP) Spy vs. Spy: Cold War Espionage in Literature and Film**

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

Examines the complex and dynamic relationship between the US and the Soviet Union/Eastern Bloc through the lens of espionage-themed literature and film from the early 20th century to the present day, with a special focus on the Cold War period. Using a comparative approach, the course explores the role of literature and film in shaping ideas and depictions of the threatening “other” and the ramifications of such depictions in the US and Soviet contexts. Major themes of discussion include national and cultural identity, constructed images and stereotypes of the other and enemy in the popular imagination in the States and Eastern Bloc, deviations from such depictions (specifically in the case of double agents), and changing gender roles and prominent women in espionage. Conducted in English. No previous background in Russian or Soviet history required. IP.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2023.

**RUS 2240 (c, IP, VPA) One Thousand Years of Russian Culture**

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

Winston Churchill famously called Russia “a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma.” This introduction to the mysteries of Russian culture from medieval times to the present includes the study of Russian art, music, architecture, dance, cinema, folk culture, and literature. Explores the ways in which Russians define themselves and their place in the world, and how they express their cultural uniqueness as well as their ties to both East and West. Literary readings will range from the ancient historical chronicles to short works by such classic Russian authors as Chekhov, Dostoevsky, Pushkin, and Tolstoy, as well as works by several contemporary authors. All course content is in English.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2020.

**RUS 2250 (c, IP) Futures Past and Present in Russian and Eastern European Science Fiction**

Reed Johnson.

Non-Standard Rotation. Fall 2023. Enrollment limit: 35.

Overview of Russian and Eastern European utopian, dystopian and post-apocalyptic literature and film set in imaginary futures, from the late nineteenth century to the present. In this course, we will examine science fiction as a form of creative thought experiment, allowing writers and readers to consider sweeping questions about our place in a changing world. What does Yevgeny Zamyatin’s *We*, which presaged the rise of twentieth-century totalitarianism, say about social organization? What does Karel Capek’s *R.U.R.*—a work that gave us the word “robot” from the Czech—say about technological progress? What does Stanislaw Lem’s *Polaris* and its renowned Soviet film adaptation by Andrei Tarkovsky tell us about what it means to be human? We will explore these and other questions through a mix of analytical and creative assignments. All course readings and other materials in English; no previous experience in the language or region required.

**RUS 2255 (c, DPI, IP) The Egalitarian Empire: Ethnicity and Otherness in the Soviet Union (and Beyond)**

Mira Nikolova.

Non-Standard Rotation. Spring 2024. Enrollment limit: 35.

Examines the lived experience of the Soviet Union’s underrepresented ethnic groups through film and literature, including works by indigenous Siberian peoples, Central Asians, and Eastern Europeans (specifically in Ukraine and Belarus) from the early 20th century to the present. Using a postcolonial lens, the course investigates how the complex interactions between power, privilege, policy, colonizer, and colonized shaped the experience of Soviet “others” (who did not identify as ethnic Russians) and encourages reflection on difference, diversity, and inclusion in the US and Russian contexts. Themes include the Soviet multiethnic project and its shifting policies on indigenization, affirmative action, and ethnic cleansing, the history of contact and conflict between individual ethnic groups and Russians, changing gender dynamics, and the diverse sociogeographic and experiential reality of being the “other” in the Soviet Union. Conducted in English. No previous background in Russian or Soviet history required.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2022.

**RUS 2302 (c, IP) Russian Demonology**

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

Restless corpses, malevolent forest demons and giant talking black cats: Russian storytelling is suffused with the uncanny light of black magic, from popular superstitions to vampires at the modern-day multiplex. In this course, we’ll investigate this abiding interest in the demonic, starting with Russian folk beliefs and tracing how these traditions were transformed by the great nineteenth-century writers like Dostoevsky and Gogol in their explorations of the darker recesses of the human heart. We’ll also look at how fictional portrayals of Satan in twentieth-century Soviet works convey the existential terror of life in Stalin’s Moscow, and how contemporary horror reflects cultural anxieties around nation and self in Russia today. Course themes include fears of otherness and gendered depictions of supernatural evil, the dread of death and the undead, the seductiveness of sin, and the complex mechanisms of redemption. All course materials are in English.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2020.

**RUS 2315 (c, IP) Love, Sex, and Desire in Russian Literature and Culture**  
Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

Russian culture is rich with depictions of the fundamental human experiences of love, sex, and desire. And while these depictions have often been subject to various forms of censorship, they have just as often served as expressions of dissent against rigid social, political, and artistic norms. This course explores the ideological and aesthetic significance of such themes as romance, lust, yearning, sexual violence, adultery, prostitution, religious passion, poetic inspiration, unrequited love, celibacy, gender identity, sexuality, masturbation, pornography, body image, sexual frustration, castration, and witchcraft in Russian literature and the arts from medieval times to the present day. Not only do the works studied inscribe "difference" on the bodies of their subjects, but Russia also functions as a social "other" against which students examine their own cultural assumptions. Authors may include Avvakum, Bulgakov, Chekhov, Dostoevsky, Gogol, Nabokov, Pushkin, Tolstoy, Tsvetaeva, Turgenev, and Zamyatin. Taught in English. (Same as: GSWS 2315)

Previous terms offered: Fall 2019.

**RUS 2413 (c, IP, VPA) Memory in Contemporary Russian and East European Cinema**

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

Examines the subject of collective memory and reconstructions of the past in post-socialist Eastern European cinema, focusing primarily on Russian-language films. How does this area of the world, with its fraught histories of wars, revolutions and other social upheavals, describe or inscribe the past in recent films, from the historical blockbuster to more intimate contemporary narratives haunted by past events? And how do these films about the darkest episodes of the region's history shed light on the ways in which we either commemorate or repress historical traumas in our own culture(s) today? Scholarship on nostalgia, cultural taboos, repressed memory, reconciliation, and collective memory will help us to form a complex understanding of how filmmakers not only represent the past in their work, but also recreate it anew on the screen in order to fit the needs of the current moment. (Same as: CINE 2603)

Previous terms offered: Fall 2022.

**RUS 3005 (c, IP) Advanced Russian Language and Society I**

Reed Johnson.

Every Fall. Fall 2023. Enrollment limit: 10.

Building on the language skills developed in the Intermediate Russian I and II sequence, this course allows students to move beyond everyday language use to develop advanced lexical, grammatical and cultural knowledge on a variety of topics relevant to Russian speakers today. Within the context of a four-skills approach to language acquisition (writing, speaking, listening, reading), students engage with a wide variety of course materials in the target language, including Russian mass media, film, music, and literature. Individual units focus on specific issues or problems in modern Russian society, such as politics, art, health, identity and belonging, youth culture, economic development, technology and society. By the end of the course, students will be able to summarize and analyze different viewpoints on complex issues and articulate their own arguments both orally and in written Russian, from formulating clear theses to providing logical reasoning and evidence for their ideas.

Prerequisites: RUS 2204.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2022, Fall 2021, Fall 2020.

**RUS 3006 (c, IP) Advanced Russian Language and Society II**

Reed Johnson.

Every Spring. Spring 2024. Enrollment limit: 10.

Continuation of Advanced Russian Language and Society I. This course allows students to move beyond everyday language use to develop advanced lexical, grammatical and cultural knowledge on a variety of topics relevant to Russian speakers today. Within the context of a four-skills approach to language acquisition (writing, speaking, listening, reading), students engage with a wide variety of course materials in the target language, including Russian mass media, film, music, and literature. Individual units focus on specific issues or problems in modern Russian society, such as politics, art, health, identity and belonging, youth culture, economic development, technology and society. By the end of the course, students will be able to summarize and analyze different viewpoints on complex issues and articulate their own arguments both orally and in written Russian, from formulating clear theses to providing logical reasoning and evidence for their ideas.

Prerequisites: RUS 3005.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2021.

**RUS 3100 (c, IP) My Beautiful, Pitiful Epoch: Readings from Modern Russian Literature**

Mira Nikolova.

Non-Standard Rotation. Fall 2023. Enrollment limit: 16.

Russia has experienced a number of staggering transformations since the close of the nineteenth century, and these dramatic upheavals are mirrored in its national literature. This course will serve as an introduction to the evolution of Russian literature from the turn of the twentieth century, through the Revolution and the Soviet decades, to the contemporary post-Soviet period. Students will read and analyze important works of poetry and short prose from this era of radical change and experimentation, paying attention to the texts' social and cultural context, the specifics of their construction as works of verbal art, and the nuances conveyed by their creators' linguistic choices. All primary texts, discussions, and presentations will be in Russian, as will the majority of writing assignments. Emphasis on vocabulary development, stylistics, and the ability to articulate sophisticated arguments in both oral and written Russian.

Prerequisites: RUS 3000 or higher.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2022, Fall 2020.

**RUS 3201 (c, IP) Pushkin**

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 12.

Introduction to the lyric verse, narrative poetry, drama, fairytales, and prose of Alexander Pushkin, the “father of Russian literature.” Students will gain an appreciation for Pushkin’s extraordinary literary imagination and innovativeness, and for the complexity that underlies the seeming simplicity of his works. Attention to Pushkin’s evolving understanding of his role as Russia’s national poet, including such themes as the beauty of the Russian countryside, the poet’s sacred calling, political repression and the dream of civic freedom, the dialectic between chance and fate, St. Petersburg and the specter of revolution, poet as historian, inspiration and eroticism, poet vs. tsar, and the subversive power of art. All primary texts, discussions, and presentations and most writing assignments will be in Russian. Emphasis on learning to read and appreciate complex literary texts, vocabulary development, and the ability to articulate sophisticated arguments in both oral and written Russian.

Prerequisites: RUS 3406.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2019.

**RUS 3210 (c, IP) Petersburg: City, Myth, Text**

Reed Johnson.

Non-Standard Rotation. Spring 2024. Enrollment limit: 10.

St. Petersburg looms large in Russian history, from its creation as Russia’s “window to the West” and its role in World War II to its post-Soviet incarnation as cultural antipode to Moscow. This course focuses on the rich assemblage of myth and literature around what Dostoevsky called “the most artificial city in the world.” How did Petersburg’s creation as a planned city shape its physical space and make it a ready metaphor for European rationality? How do we square this with literary Petersburg—a realm of ghosts, madmen and doubles? We’ll read foundational Petersburg texts by Pushkin, Gogol, and Dostoevsky and trace how they inspired later authors like Blok, Akhmatova, and Tolstaya. We’ll also look at visual representations of Petersburg, from fine art to tourist brochures and contemporary films. All materials and assignments in Russian. Emphasis on reading complex texts, vocabulary development, and ability to articulate arguments in spoken and written Russian.

Prerequisites: RUS 3406.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2023, Fall 2021, Spring 2021.

**RUS 3405 (c, IP) Advanced Russian I**

Every Fall. Enrollment limit: 10.

Continuation of Intermediate Russian. Emphasis on the equal importance of speaking, understanding, reading, and writing for free and expressive communication in the Russian language. Course materials focus on topics in Russian literature, history, film, or culture to provide a broad conceptual base for students to practice and refine their language skills, improve their mastery of advanced grammar concepts, and expand their vocabulary. Course requirements include grammar practice, oral presentations, participation in class discussions, written compositions, and written and oral quizzes and tests. Conversation hour with native speaker.

Prerequisites: RUS 2204.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2019.

**RUS 3406 (c, IP) Advanced Russian II**

Every Spring. Enrollment limit: 10.

Uses a four-skill approach (reading, writing, listening, speaking), emphasizing these skills’ equal importance for free communication in the target language. Course materials focus on topics in nineteenth-century Russian history, advanced grammar concepts, and vocabulary development. While the content of the readings is historical, their language is modern and authentic. Course requirements include oral presentations, written compositions, and oral and written exams.

Prerequisites: RUS 3405.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2020.