SLAVIC LANGUAGES & LITERATURES (SLAVIC)

SLAVIC 128. Literature of the former Yugoslavia. 3-5 Units.

What do Slavoj Žižek, Novak Djokovic, Marina Abramovic, Melania Trump, Emir Kusturica, and the captain of the Croatian national football team have in common? All were born in a country that no longer exists, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1945-1992). This course will introduce masterpieces of Yugoslav literature and film, examining the social and political complexities of a multicultural society that collapsed into civil war (i.e., Bosnia, Kosovo) in the 1990s. In English with material available in Serbo-Croatian and Slovenian.

Same as: COMPLIT 128, REES 128

SLAVIC 129. Russian Versification: History and Theory. 3-4 Units.

A survey of metric forms, rhyming principles and stanzaic patterns in the Russian poetry of the 18th - 21st centuries. Taught in Russian. Prerequisite: Two years of Russian.

Same as: SLAVIC 329

SLAVIC 145. Survey of Russian Literature: The Age of Experiment. 3-5 Units.

This course discusses the transition from predominantly poetic to predominantly prosaic creativity in the Russian literature of the first half of the 19th century Russian literature and the birth of the great Russian novel. It covers three major Russian writers — Alexander Pushkin, Mikhail Lermontov and Nikolai Gogol — and examines the changes in the Russian literary scene affected by their work. An emphasis is placed on close reading of literary texts and analysis of literary techniques employed in them. Taught in English.

Same as: SLAVIC 345

SLAVIC 146. The Great Russian Novel: Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. 3-5 Units.

The two giant novels we will read and discuss closely were above all urgent actions taken in the heat of present crisis. War and Peace (1865-1869), Leo Tolstoy’s epic family saga of Russia’s historic resistance to Napoleon and the modern “will-to-power,” and The Brothers Karamazov (1878-1880), Dostoevsky’s tragicomic investigation into the roots of familial perversion, crimes of individual thought and collective performance, fascinate us with the striking contrasts of their novels’ aesthetic responses and innovations. The final focus of the course will be on several of Anton Chekhov’s short stories that re-play the themes of the Russian novel with compressed indirectness, pushing the great realist novel’s dominance firmly into “history”.

Same as: SLAVIC 346

SLAVIC 148. Slavic Literature and Culture since the Death of Stalin. 3-5 Units.

The course offers a survey of Soviet and post-Soviet literary texts and films created by Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian artists and marginalized or repressed by the Soviet regime. The first part of the course will focus on the topics of opposition and dissent, generational conflict, modernization, Soviet everyday life, gender, citizenship and national identity, state-published and samizdat literature, “village” and “cosmopolitan” culture, etc. The second part of it will be devoted to the postmodernist aesthetics and ideology in the dismantlement of totalitarian society, as well in the process of shaping post-Soviet identities. The reading materials range from the fictional, poetic, and publicistic works written by Noble-prize (Solzhenitsyn, Brodsky, Alexieivich) and other major writers of the period to the drama, film, and popular culture.

Same as: REES 348, SLAVIC 348

SLAVIC 155. St. Petersburg: Imagining a City, Building a City. 1-2 Unit.

St. Petersburg, the world’s most beautiful city, was designed to display an 18th-century autocrat’s power and to foster ties between Russia and the West on the tsar’s terms. It went through devastating floods and a deadly siege; it birthed the “Petersburg myth,” poems and prose that explore the force of the state and the individual’s ability to resist. This class addresses the struggle between the authorities and the inhabitants; the treacherous natural environment; the city as a node in national and international networks of communication; the development of urban transportation networks; and the supply of goods. NOTE: This course is required of students attending the overseas seminar to St. Petersburg in September 2018. Class times to be determined upon the availability of all enrolled students. Please contact instructor(s) via email if you have any questions.

Same as: URBANST 156

SLAVIC 156. Vladimir Nabokov: Displacement and the Liberated Eye. 3-5 Units.

How did the triumphant author of “the great American novel” <em>Lolita</em> evolve from the young author writing at white heat for the tiny sad Russian emigration in Berlin? We will read his short stories and the novels <em>The Luzhnick Defense, Invitation to a Beheading, Lolita, Lolita</em> and <em>Pale Fire</em>, to see how Nabokov generated his sinister-playful forms as a buoyant answer to the “hypermodern” visual and film culture of pre-WWII Berlin, and then to America’s all-pervading postwar “normalcy” in his pathological comic masterpieces <em>Lolita</em>, <em>Pale Fire</em>.

Buy texts in translation at the Bookstore; Slavic grad students will supplement with reading and extra sessions in original Russian.

Same as: COMPLIT 115, COMPLIT 315, SLAVIC 356

SLAVIC 15N. “My Life Had Stood - A Loaded Gun”: Dostoevsky, Dickinson, and the Question of Freedom. 3-5 Units.

As far apart as Dickinson and Dostoevsky are in terms of national contexts, gendered possibilities of life, and their choice of minimalistic or maximalist forms, their experiences of constriction and freedom bore significant similarities. Dostoevsky penned his vow to love life on the day that he was manacled as a political prisoner and marched off to thirteen years of forced labor and exile in Siberia. He exploded back on the Petersburg literary scene in the early 1860’s with three block-busters, <em>Notes from the Underground</em>, <em>Crime and Punishment</em>, establishing himself forever as Russia’s most controversial explorer of the violence of human thought. In these same years Emily Dickinson was sequestering herself in her family’s Amherst house for the remainder of her life, yet she announced her rebel’s credo in these enigmatic lines: <em>My Life Had Stood, a Loaded Gun</em> - until the Day... In this class we will explore the idea that Emily Dickinson and Fyodor Dostoevsky may be seen as original shifters of modern literary art and philosophy. We will unpack the agonizing relationship of freedom, action, and language that both authors explore. Classes will be organized around presentations, debates in pairs, the exploration of “scandalous scenes,” and finally a symposium in which students will present and contribute to each other’s paper projects. There are no prerequisites for this course apart from a desire to read poems and novels closely and in tandem.
SLAVIC 181. Philosophy and Literature. 3-5 Units.
What, if anything, does reading literature do for our lives? What can literature offer that other forms of writing cannot? Can fictions teach us anything? Can they make people more moral? Why do we take pleasure in tragic stories? This course introduces students to major problems at the intersection of philosophy and literature. It addresses key questions about the value of literature, philosophical puzzles about the nature of fiction and literary language, and ways that philosophy and literature interact. Readings span literature, film, and philosophical theories of art. Authors may include Sophocles, Dickinson, Toni Morrison, Proust, Woolf, Walton, Nietzsche, and Sartre. Students master close reading techniques and philosophical analysis, and write papers combining the two. This is the required gateway course for the Philosophy and Literature major tracks. Majors should register in their home department.
Same as: CLASSICS 42, COMPLIT 181, ENGLISH 81, FRENCH 181, GERMAN 181, ILAC 181, ITALIAN 181, PHIL 81

SLAVIC 183. Jews in the Contemporary World: The Jewish Present and Past in Film, Television and Popular Culture. 4-5 Units.
(Same as HISTORY 85B.) This course explores the full expanse of Jewish life today and in the recent past. The inner workings of religious faith, the content of Jewish identify shorn of belief, the interplay between Jewish powerlessness and influence, the myth and reality of Jewish genius, the continued pertinence of antisemitism, the rhythms of Jewish economic life, all these will be examined in weekly lectures, classroom discussion, and with the use of a widely diverse range of readings, films, and other material. Explored in depth will the ideas and practices of Zionism, the content of contemporary secularism and religious Orthodoxy, the impact Holocaust, the continued crisis facing Israel and the Palestinians. Who is to be considered Jewish, in any event, especially since so many of the best known (Spinoza, Freud, Marx) have had little if anything to do with Jewish life with their relationships to it indifferent, even hostile?.
Same as: CSRE 185B, HISTORY 185B, HISTORY 385C, JEWISHST 185B, REES 185B

SLAVIC 188. 20th century Russian Poetry: From Aleksandr Blok to Joseph Brodsky. 3-4 Units.
Developments in and 20th-century Russian poetry including symbolism, acmeism, futurism, and literature of the absurd. Emphasis is on close readings of individual poems. Taught in Russian.
Same as: SLAVIC 388

SLAVIC 195. Russian and East European Theater. 3-5 Units.
Evolution of modernist Russian/Eur. dramaturgy, theatrical practices, landmark productions from Chekhov-Meyerhold-Grotowski to present; re-performance of classics; techniques of embodiment. Taught in English.
Same as: SLAVIC 395

SLAVIC 196. Readings in Yiddish Literature 1. 2-4 Units.
Yiddish literature, at a second-year language level. Readings chosen based on student interest; contact instructor with questions.
Same as: SLAVIC 396

SLAVIC 197. Readings in Yiddish Literature 2. 2-4 Units.
Yiddish literature, at a second-year language level. Continuation of SLAVIC 196. Readings chosen based on student interest; contact instructor with questions.
Same as: SLAVIC 397

SLAVIC 199. Individual Work for Undergraduates. 1-5 Unit.
Open to Russian majors or students working on special projects. May be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: consent of instructor.

SLAVIC 222. Andrei Platonov’s “Chevengur”: Text and Contexts. 3-5 Units. TBD.

SLAVIC 225. Communist and Capitalist Fantasies: Science Fiction in the Soviet Union and the United States. 3-5 Units.
What can science fiction tell us about life and art in the 20th century, in the Soviet Union and the United States? Speculative fiction (including sci-fi, fantasy, utopia, dystopia) combines irony and idealism, belief in science and skepticism about it. It appealed to people living under communism and capitalism. The course will relate fiction to the specific culture and politics in both countries, while also drawing transnational connections. We ask why writers and readers, filmmakers and viewers loved this art so much, despite living in what seemed to be very different places. Soviet and Eastern-European writers and filmmakers will include Mikhail Bulgakov, Stanislaw Lem, and Andrei Tarkovsky. The Americans may include Kurt Vonnegut, Philip K. Dick, Isaac Asimov, and Octavia Butler. Additional readings in Marx, Lenin, and H.G. Wells.

SLAVIC 226. Bakhtin and his Legacy. 3-5 Units.
“Quests for my own word are in fact quests for a word that is not my own, a word that is more than myself,” writes Mikhail Bakhtin towards the end of his life. It was this ceaseless pursuit of another word that allowed Bakhtin, one of the most distinguished literary critics of the twentieth century, to author several influential literary theory concepts, many of which deal with the ideas of multiplicity, diversity and unfinalizability. The seminar explores these core concepts through close reading of key texts in English and investigates their reverberations in the writings of other thinkers such as Kristeva, de Man and Derrida.

SLAVIC 230. 18th Century Russian Literature. 3-4 Units.
For graduate students and upper-level undergraduates. Russian literature of the long 18th century, from the late 1600s to 1800. Readings in the Baroque, Neoclassicism and Sentimentalism. Major works are examined in their literary and historical context and also in relation to the principal subcultures of the period, including the court, academy, church and Old Believer diaspora.

SLAVIC 231. Tarkovsky. 3-5 Units.
The relatively slim body of work produced by the great Russian director Andrei Tarkovsky helped redefine the possibilities of the art of cinema. Older and younger generations of directors continue to be inspired by his trademark long shot, unconventional narrative techniques, evence for landscape and nature, and by general spatio-temporal discontinuity. The course provides a systematic examination of the director’s complete oeuvre (seven feature films and his works for radio and opera) along with his main theoretical treatise Sculpting in Time.

SLAVIC 237. Boris Pasternak and the Poetry of the Russian Avant-garde. 3-4 Units.
An emphasis is made on close reading of the poetry of Boris Pasternak, Marina Tsvetaeva and Vladimir Mayakovsky. Taught in Russian.
Prerequisite: 3rd Year Russian Language.

SLAVIC 239. Russian Versification: History and Theory. 3-4 Units.
A survey of metric forms, rhyming principles and stanzaic patterns in the Russian poetry of the 18th - 21st centuries. Taught in Russian.
Prerequisite: Two years of Russian.
Same as: SLAVIC 129

SLAVIC 345. Survey of Russian Literature: The Age of Experiment. 3-5 Units.
This course discusses the transition from predominantly poetic to predominantly prosaic creativity in the Russian literature of the first half of the 19th century Russian literature and the birth of the great Russian novel. It covers three major Russian writers – Alexander Pushkin, Mikhail Lermontov and Nikolai Gogol – and examines the changes in the Russian literary scene affected by their work. An emphasis is placed on close reading of literary texts and analysis of literary techniques employed in them. Taught in English.
Same as: SLAVIC 145

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SLAVIC 346. The Great Russian Novel: Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. 3-5 Units.
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Same as: SLAVIC 146

SLAVIC 348. Slavic Literature and Culture since the Death of Stalin. 3-5 Units.
The course offers a survey of Soviet and post-Soviet literary texts and films created by Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian artists and marginalized or repressed by the Soviet regime. The first part of the course will focus on the topics of opposition and dissent, generational conflict, modernization, Soviet everyday life, gender, citizenship and national identity, state-published and samizdat literature, "village" and "cosmopolitan" culture, etc. The second part of it will be devoted to the postmodernist aesthetics and ideology in the dismantlement of totalitarian society, as well as in the process of shaping post-Soviet identities. The reading materials range from the fictional, poetic, and publicistic works written by Nobel-prize (Solzhenitsyn, Brodsky, Alexievich) and other major writers of the period to the drama, film, and popular culture.
Same as: REES 348, SLAVIC 148

SLAVIC 356. Vladimir Nabokov: Displacement and the Liberated Eye. 3-5 Units.
How did the triumphant author of "the great American novel" <em>Lolita</em> evolve from the young author writing at white heat for the tiny sad Russian emigration in Berlin? We will read his short stories and the novels <em>The Luzhin Defense, Invitation to a Beheading, Lolita, Lolita</em> the film, and <em>Pale Fire</em>, to see how Nabokov generated his sinister-playful forms as a buoyant answer to the "hypermodern" visual and film culture of pre-WWII Berlin, and then to America's all-pervading postwar "normalcy" in his pathological comic masterpieces <em>Lolita</em>/ and <em>Pale Fire</em>. Emphasis is on close readings of individual poems. Taught in English.
Same as: COMPLIT 115, COMPLIT 315, SLAVIC 156

SLAVIC 36. Dangerous Ideas. 1 Unit.
Ideas matter. Concepts such as race, progress, and equality have inspired social movements, shaped political systems, and dramatically influenced the lives of individuals. Others, like gender identity, universal basic income, and historical memory play an important role in contemporary debates in the United States. All of these ideas are contested, and they have a real power to change lives, for better and for worse. In this one-unit class we will examine these dangerous ideas. Each week, a faculty member from a different department in the humanities and arts will explore a concept that has shaped human experience across time and space. Some weeks will have short reading assignments, but you are not required to purchase any materials.
Same as: ARTHIST 36, COMPLIT 36A, EALC 36, ENGLISH 71, ETHICSOC 36X, FRENCH 36, HISTORY 3D, MUSIC 36H, PHIL 36, POLISCI 70

SLAVIC 370. Pushkin. 3-5 Units.
Pushkin's poems, prose, and drafts in dialogue with contemporaries and cultural milieu. Emphasis on innovation and controversy in genre, lyrical form and personal idiom, shaping a public discourse. Taught in English.

SLAVIC 388. 20th century Russian Poetry: From Aleksandr Blok to Joseph Brodsky. 3-4 Units.
Developments in and 20th-century Russian poetry including symbolism, acmeism, futurism, and literature of the absurd. Emphasis is on close readings of individual poems. Taught in Russian.
Same as: SLAVIC 188

SLAVIC 395. Russian and East European Theater. 3-5 Units.
Evolution of modernist Russian/Eur. dramaturgy, theatrical practices, landmark productions from Chekhov-Meyerhold-Grotowski to present; re-performance of classics; techniques of embodiment. Taught in English.
Same as: SLAVIC 195

SLAVIC 396. Readings in Yiddish Literature 1. 2-4 Units.
Yiddish literature, at a second-year language level. Readings chosen based on student interest; contact instructor with questions.
Same as: SLAVIC 196

SLAVIC 397. Readings in Yiddish Literature 2. 2-4 Units.
Yiddish literature, at a second-year language level. Continuation of SLAVIC 196. Readings chosen based on student interest; contact instructor with questions.
Same as: SLAVIC 197

SLAVIC 399. INDIVIDUAL WORK. 1-15 Unit.
Open to Russian majors or students working on special projects. May be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: consent of instructor.

SLAVIC 680. Curricular Practical Training. 1-3 Unit.
CPT course required for international students completing degree. Prerequisite: Slavic Languages and Literatures Ph.D. candidate.

SLAVIC 77Q. Russia's Weird Classic: Nikolai Gogol. 3-4 Units.
Preference to sophomores. An investigation of the works and life of Nikolai Gogol, the most eccentric of Russian authors and the founder of what is dubbed Fantastic Realism. Our investigation will be based on close reading of works written in various genres and created in various stages of Gogol's literary career. Taught in English.

SLAVIC 801. TGR PROJECT. 0 Units.

SLAVIC 802. TGR DISSERTATION. 0 Units.