

Russian and Eurasian Studies

The majors and minors in Russian and Eurasian studies are administered by the Department of Russian and Eurasian Studies: Professors Cruise (*chair*), Jones; Associate Professor Scotto; Five College Lecturer Evgeny Dengub.

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Department Website

<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/russian>

From Pushkin to Putin, from Balanchine to Lake Baikal, from caviar to commissars, from yurts to *baba yaga*—Russia and Eurasia offer a glittering array of riches waiting to be discovered. Mount Holyoke's Department of Russian and Eurasian Studies invites you to join with us in our exploration of the vast area of the world that we engage in on a daily basis. Through course work in language, literature, history and politics, our students gain a multidimensional understanding of the diverse peoples and cultures that inhabit this region—its past, its present, as well as its prospects for the future.

As the world reconfigures itself at the beginning of the twenty-first century, a reenergized Russia will play a major role in shaping the political and economic futures of Europe and Asia, and resolving issues of global importance like resource use, climate change, terrorism, and nuclear proliferation. Indeed, Mount Holyoke graduates who have focused on Russian studies can be found working in nongovernmental organizations in Washington D.C., embassies in Russia and Europe, the oil fields of Siberia, as well as in journalism and business.

Beyond the purely pragmatic, Russia's fundamental cultural achievements—in literature, art, music, theatre, and film—are of permanent value and interest to students of the humanities. Tolstoy and Dostoevsky,

Akhmatova and Pasternak, Tchaikovsky and Shostakovich, Vertov and Eisenstein, Pavlova and Baryshnikov, Gergiev and Rostropovich—the Russian legacy of achievement is profound, and continues to be a living presence in the intellectual, spiritual, and creative life of humanity. Our commitment to this legacy is at once intensely intellectual and deeply personal: until his death in 1996, Nobel Prize laureate Joseph Brodsky was counted among our colleagues.

The Department of Russian and Eurasian Studies is unique among MHC's language departments in that its faculty includes both specialists in language, literature, and culture (Cruise, Dengub, Scotto,) and specialists in history and politics (Jones, Pleshakov). Various trained in Russia, Europe, and the United States, we strive to bring a balance and a perspective to our subject area that is challenging, engaging, thoughtful—and never dull.

For students with a strong interest in the non-Russian nations of Eurasia, a working knowledge of Russian and a grasp of Russia's historical role on the Eurasian continent are essential to understanding the peoples and places that have lived or continue to live under Russian influence (the Caucasus, Central Asia, Siberia). The Mount Holyoke Department of Russian and Eurasian Studies stands out among Russian departments in the Five Colleges in that it includes a specialist who is uniquely qualified to interpret events in Eurasia beyond the borders of Russia itself (Jones). Our students study not only in European Russia, but in Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Siberia, and experience the multicultural expanse of Eurasia.

Beyond regular course work, the department sponsors spring and fall festivals of Russian food, a film series, lectures, and other events (like building a Mongolian yurt).

Getting Started in Russian

A student coming to Mount Holyoke with no background in Russian language should en-

roll in Russian 101-102, a yearlong introduction to Russian language and culture.

Students who have previously studied Russian and plan to elect Russian language should consult with the department for individual placement.

(For other courses recommended for study in the first year, see below, after the "Study Abroad" section.)

Study Abroad

Study abroad is highly recommended and may be used toward fulfillment of major requirements.

There are numerous summer, semester, and yearlong programs offered for undergraduates. Since admission to many Russian study abroad programs is competitive, students are advised to consult early in their academic careers with members of the department. We have had great success in getting our students into these competitive programs.

Opportunities to study the non-Russian languages of Eurasia are rapidly expanding. Summer immersion programs and summer and academic-year programs abroad offer instruction in Armenian, Georgian, Azeri, Uzbek, Tajik, Polish, Czech, Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Estonian, and others. In some cases, applicants may be expected to have an intermediate-level command of Russian.

In addition to RES 101–102, recommended courses for first-year study include:

- RES 151f (02), Fire and Sword in the Caucasus: A Family Saga (first-year seminar) (III-A)
- *RES 205s, Russia (I-B)
- RES 210f, Great Books: The Literature of Nineteenth-Century Russia (I-A)
- RES 211s, Topics in Twentieth-Century Russian Literature (I-A)
- *RES 212s, Russia (I-B)
- RES 241f (01), Russia and the West (III-A)
- *RES 244s (01), Topics in the Recent History of Europe: Red Star over Russia: The Totalitarian Regime of Lenin and Stalin, 1917-1953 (I-B)

Courses on Russian literature and culture may be used to satisfy the distribution requirement in the humanities—arts, language, and literature. Courses on Russian history satisfy distribution requirements in the humanities (I-B). Courses on Russian and Eurasian Politics satisfy distribution requirements in the social sciences (III-A)

The Majors

The Department of Russian and Eurasian Studies offers two majors:

- Russian Literature and Culture
- Russian and Eurasian Studies

These are distinct but connected majors. In both majors, students will learn about the interconnections between language, literature, politics, and history.

The major in Russian literature and culture explores Russia's rich cultural heritage and its unique contributions to world culture, especially during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Departmental offerings concentrate on Russia's achievements in culture and literature, but students are encouraged to take elective courses in Russian film, religion, and art at Mount Holyoke and the Five Colleges.

The interdisciplinary major in Russian and Eurasian studies explores the historical, economic, political, and cultural interconnections among the peoples of the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. In addition to offerings within the department, courses that count toward the major are regularly offered by other departments (economics, geography, history, politics, and international relations), in addition to courses in the Five Colleges. Students are urged to take advantage of these opportunities. The interdisciplinary major exempts students from the College's minor requirement.

Both majors place emphasis on the analysis of texts, on effective oral and written argumentation, and on cooperative learning and independent work. Students who wish to focus their study on the non-Russian areas of northern Eurasia (Ukraine, Caucasus, Central

Asia, the Baltics, the non-Russian peoples of Siberia) are invited to design a special major in consultation with the department. Early consultation is strongly advised.

Requirements for the Major in Russian Literature and Culture

Credits

- When a student has completed two courses at the 200 level, she may, with the permission of the instructor and in consultation with her advisor, enroll in a 200-level course for 300-level credit.

Courses

- Three courses in Russian beyond 201, normally 202, 251, and 252
- RES 205, Russia under the Tsars or 212, Russia
- RES 210, Great Books: The Literature of Nineteenth-Century Russia
- RES 211, Topics in Twentieth-Century Russian Literature
- Three elective courses, one each from literature, culture, and politics/history, to be completed at the 300 level

Requirements for the Major in Russian and Eurasian Studies

Credits

- A minimum of 40 credits, of which 12 must be at the 300 level, divided among three or more disciplines
- When a student has completed two courses at the 200 level, she may, with the permission of the instructor and in consultation with her advisor, enroll in a 200-level course for 300-level credit.

Courses

- Proficiency in Russian language demonstrated by completion of 202 or equivalent
- A one-semester survey of Russian history, to be chosen in consultation with the advisor
- RES 210, Great Books: The Literature of Nineteenth-Century Russia

- RES 240, Russian Politics: From Communism to Capitalism
- RES 241, Russia and the West

Russian and Eurasian studies is an interdisciplinary major. Students who complete an interdisciplinary major automatically fulfill the College's "outside the major" requirement (see p. 8).

Requirements for the Minors

The Minor in Language

The minor in language requires 12 credits above the 100 level, ordinarily drawn from 201, 202, and 251.

The Minor in Language and Literature

The minor in language and literature requires 12 credits above the 100 level, ordinarily drawn from 201, 210, and 211.

The Minor in Culture and Literature

This minor in culture and literature is designed for students who have an interest in Russian literature and culture, but have not studied the language. It requires 20 credits and is not recommended for anyone who wishes to focus on Russia at the graduate level.

The minor ordinarily includes a one-semester course in Russian history, 210, 211, and two additional courses to be chosen in consultation with the Russian department, including one at the 300 level.

The Minor in Russian and Eurasian Studies

The minor in Russian and Eurasian studies is designed to encourage an interdisciplinary approach to the study of the former Soviet Union and its peoples and cultures and to develop intermediate-level proficiency in the Russian language.

A minor in Russian and Eurasian studies ordinarily includes Russian 201 or its equivalent, and two courses in Russian studies, including one course at the 300 level.

Teacher Licensure

Students interested in pursuing licensure in the field of Russian and Eurasian studies can combine their course work in Russian and Eurasian studies with a minor in education. In some instances course work in the major coincides with course work required for licensure; in other cases, it does not. For specific course requirements for licensure within the major of Russian and Eurasian studies, please consult your advisor or the chair of the Russian and Eurasian studies department. For information about the requirements for the minor in education, please consult “Teacher Licensure” in the Other Degree and Certificate Programs chapter and Ms. Lawrence in the psychology and education department. Licensure also requires a formal application as well as passing scores on the Massachusetts Test of Educator Licensure (MTEL) in both the literacy component and the subject matter component. Copies of the test objectives for the MTEL are available in the Russian and Eurasian studies department and in the Department of Psychology and Education. Licensure application information and materials are available in the Department of Psychology and Education.

Language and Distribution Requirements

Elementary Russian (101–102) or Intermediate Russian (201 or 202) fulfills the College language requirement. Advanced Russian (251) does not satisfy distribution in the humanities (I-A). Advanced Russian (252) satisfies distribution in the humanities (I-A).

Courses Taught in Russian

- 101/102 Elementary Russian
- 201/202 Intermediate Russian
- 251/252 Advanced Russian
- 295/395 Independent Study

Advanced courses also taught at Amherst and Smith Colleges

Courses Taught in English

- 151 First-year seminar (Topics course) (III-A or I-A)
- 205 The Romanovs: Triumph and Tragedy (I-B)
- 210 Great Books: The Literature of Nineteenth-Century Russia (I-A)
- 211 Topics in Twentieth-Century Russian Literature (I-A)
- 212 Russia (I-B) (History 212)
- 213 Tolstoy’s *War and Peace* (I-A)
- 215 Dostoyevsky and the Problem of Evil: *The Brothers Karamazov* (I-A)
- 240 Russian Politics: From Communism to Capitalism (III-A) (Politics 209)
- 241 Russia and the West (III-A) (Politics 264)
- 242 Oil and Water Don’t Mix: Geopolitics, Energy, and the Environment (III-A) (Politics 242)
- 244 Red Star Over Russia: The Totalitarian Regime of Lenin and Stalin, 1917-1953 (I-B) (History 260)
- 312 Silk Roads: Ancient and Modern Highways Across the Eurasian Continent
- 313 The New Democracies (Politics 300)
- 330 Nationalism
- 350 Revolutions (Politics 350)
- 395 Independent Study

Note: If the course satisfies a distribution requirement, it is indicated in parentheses. Language courses are taught every year. Please check the course offerings (below).

Course Offerings

Taught in Russian

101f Elementary Russian

A four-skills (understanding, speaking, reading, and writing) introduction to the Russian language with a focus on aural-oral training. Major topics include: pronunciation and intonation, all cases, basic conjugation patterns and tenses, and verbal aspect. The textbook, *Beginner’s Russian*, includes an interactive

website of diverse oral and written exercises, music and video clips.

Meets language requirement; does not meet a distribution requirement

S. Nazarova

Students must complete both RES-101 and RES-102 to fulfill the language requirement. Five class meetings plus one conversation hour weekly.; 4 credits

102s Elementary Russian

Continuation of Russian 101. A four-skills course, with increasing emphasis on reading and writing, that completes the study of basic grammar. Major topics include: predicting conjugation patterns, unprefix and prefixed verbs of motion, complex sentences, time expressions, and strategies of vocabulary building.

Meets language requirement; does not meet a distribution requirement

The department, S. Nazarova

Students must complete both RES-101 and RES-102 to fulfill the language requirement; five class meetings plus one conversation hour weekly.; 4 credits

201f Intermediate Russian

Emphasis on command of grammar with attention to conversational topics. Readings include poetry, short stories, and magazine and newspaper articles. Classes are conducted mostly in Russian.

Meets language requirement; does not meet a distribution requirement

E. Cruise

Prereq. Russian and Eurasian Studies 101 or 111 or permission of department; 3 meetings (75 minutes) plus 1 meeting (50 minutes) to be arranged; 4 credits

202s Intermediate Russian

Emphasis on increasing active command of grammar while focusing on conversational topics. Readings include poetry, short stories, and magazine and newspaper articles. Classes are conducted in Russian.

Meets language requirement; does not meet a distribution requirement

E. Cruise

Prereq. Russian and Eurasian Studies 201 or permission of department; 4 credits

251f Advanced Russian Language: From Reading to Speaking

We will study a variety of texts and set them into the cultural context that marks them as distinctly Russian. Texts will be selected from a broad range of genres and sources. Readings, discussions, short oral and written reports. Special attention to complex grammatical constructions and vocabulary building. Taught in Russian.

The course is intended for students who have completed at least four semesters of Russian or the equivalent. Heritage learners of Russian (those who speak the language) will also benefit from the course. With a strong emphasis on integrating vocabulary in context, this course aims to help students advance their lexicon and grammar, increase fluency, and overcome speaking inhibitions. Texts will include short stories, films, and interviews. Frequent short writing assignments.

Meets language requirement; does not meet a distribution requirement

E. Dengub

Prereq. Russian & Eurasian Studies 202 or permission of instructor; Does not satisfy Humanities I-A requirement; 4 credits

252s Advanced Russian Film and Literature

(Same as Film Studies 220) Students will view films, read excerpts from Soviet and Russian prose about childhood and coming of age, and study the sociocultural aspects of becoming an adult in Russia. Films will include: *Ivan's Childhood, The Scarecrow, The Thief, The Return*. Readings will include literary texts and film reviews. We will continue to work on oral and writing skills, and vocabulary. Russian 252 prepares students to express opinions, ideas, points of view, and critiques on films, social issues and cultural phenomena using more complex and rich language

Meets either language requirement or Humanities I-A requirement

E. Dengub

Prereq. Russian and Eurasian Studies 251 or the equivalent, or permission of the instructor; Taught in Russian.; 4 credits

295fs Independent Study

*Does not meet a distribution requirement
The department*

1-4 credits

***302s Advanced Studies in Russian: "Russian in Use": A Practicum**

Advances language skills by exploring topics of general interest such as geography, education, politics, ecology, and Russian perceptions of America. Practice using external resources, authentic texts, and unscripted listening. Students examine topics from diverse perspectives and are encouraged to develop their own opinions in clear, colloquial standard Russian. Text: S. Rosengrant *Russian in Use: An Interactive Approach to Communicative Competence*.

Meets language requirement; does not meet a distribution requirement

The department

Prereq. Russian and Eurasian Studies 221 or permission of the instructor; 4 credits

395fs Independent Study

Does not meet a distribution requirement

The department

1-8 credits

Taught in English

***131s Introduction to Peoples and Cultures of Eurasia**

(Taught in English) Explores the past and present of the diverse peoples and cultures inhabiting the territory once dominated by the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. How has this region been imagined and mapped? How useful are conventional definitions of the boundary between "Europe" and "Asia"? What is meant by "Eastern Europe," "Central Europe," and "Eurasia"? Topics to be considered will include the struggle for a usable past and the emergence of national identity; techniques of imperial rule and colonial domination; formation and dissemination of knowledge about Eurasia; cultural traditions of the region. Designed to help students navigate the world of post-Soviet and post-socialist Eurasia.

Meets multicultural requirement; meets Social Sciences III-A requirement

S. Glebov

4 credits

151fs First-Year Seminar

Fall 2011

151f(1) Fire and Sword in the Caucasus: A Family Saga

(First-year seminar; writing-intensive course; taught in English; Same as Politics 151, European Studies 100f(04)) Situated between the Black and Caspian Seas, and squeezed between Europe and Asia, the political and cultural landscape of the Caucasus is an intriguing reflection of over 2,000 years of imperial contestation, migration, and occupation. Tracing the fate of one Georgian family through empire, war, revolution, and independence, we explore the politics and culture of everyday life in the Caucasus. This is an interdisciplinary course, which will incorporate music, literature, history, and politics to understand the comprehensive and complex nature of change in this region, its connection with global developments, and its impact on ordinary citizens' lives over the last 200 years.

Meets Social Sciences III-A requirement

S. Jones

Prereq. fy; 4 credits

**151f(2) To the Last Station: Tolstoy after Anna Karenina*

(First-year seminar; writing-intensive course; taught in English) 2010 marks the centenary of the death of Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910). We will read fiction, essays, and letters that Tolstoy wrote after his masterworks *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*. Readings include: *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, *The Power of Darkness*, *Kreutzer Sonata*, *Why Do Men Stupefy Themselves?*, *The Devil*, *Hadji Murat*, and *I Cannot Be Silent*. We will concurrently read Jay Parini's novel, *The Last Station*, a portrait of the final years of Tolstoy's life, as well as memoirs by Tolstoy's family and friends. These diverse texts offer contradictory evidence about what happened in Tolstoy's final years.

Meets Humanities I-A requirement

E. Cruise

Prereq. fy; 4 credits

Spring 2012

151s(1) *Anna Karenina: Loving to Death
(First-year seminar; writing-intensive course; taught in English) Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* is an action-packed drama about love and passion, personal freedom and societal expectations, and the costs of living. We will read the text slowly, with attention to the ambiguities that defeat a clear or simple interpretation of the novel's message. We will screen films of *Anna Karenina* and assess interpretations of the novel.

Meets Humanities I-A requirement

E. Cruise

Prereq. fy; 4 credits

210f Great Books: The Literature of Nineteenth-Century Russia

(Taught in English) In no other culture has literature occupied the central role it enjoyed in nineteenth-century Russia. Political, social, and historical constraints propelled Russian writers into the roles of witness, prophet, and sage. Yet, far from being limited to the vast, dark "Big Question" novels of legend, Russian literature offers much humor, lyricism, and fantasy. We will focus on the Russian novel as a reaction to western European forms of narrative and consider the recurring pattern of the strong heroine and the weak hero. Authors will include: Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and Chekhov.

Meets Humanities I-A requirement

E. Cruise

4 credits

211s Topics in Twentieth-Century Russian Literature: Literature and Film on Trial

(Taught in English) Art and artists in twentieth-century Russian society were especially challenged by cataclysmic violence—revolutions, wars, and totalitarian oppression. We will study major works of literature and film and place them in the aesthetic and political contexts that influenced their creation and their reception in Russia. Artists to be studied include Chekhov, Vertov, Babel, Eisenstein, Kupreyanva, Zamyatin <i>(We)</i>, Solzhenitsyn, Tarkovsky, Erofeev, Brodsky.

Meets Humanities I-A requirement

E. Cruise

4 credits

213s Tolstoy's *War and Peace

(Taught in English) Throughout his life and in his art, Tolstoy sought to shape experience into a single and all-embracing philosophical principle, but he was never able to suppress his extravagant intuition that existence, being contradictory, fragmentary, and ultimately subject to forces beyond human control, defeated attempts at codification. We will read *War and Peace* in an attempt to understand how that irresolvable conflict fuels Tolstoy's intellectual pursuits and informs his theories on art.

Meets Humanities I-A requirement

E. Cruise

4 credits

215s Dostoevsky and the Problem of Evil: *The Brothers Karamazov

(Taught in English) Perhaps no other novelist has delved as deeply into the psychological and metaphysical dimensions of evil as the Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky. This course will be devoted to a close reading of Dostoevsky's landmark novel of murderous passion and parricide, *The Brothers Karamazov*. Why should crime and transgression be a privileged avenue of access into the human interior? How is psychology tied to the metaphysical aspect of human existence? What are the sources of evil—and redemption?

Meets Humanities I-A requirement

P. Scotto

4 credits

240s Russian Politics: From Communism to Capitalism

(Taught in English; Same as Politics 209, European Studies 240) Russia was transformed by communist revolution into a global superpower that challenged the dominant ideologies of liberalism and nationalism. It became a powerful alternative to capitalism. In 1991, this imperial state collapsed and underwent an economic, political, and cultural revolution. What explains the Soviet Union's success for 70 years and its demise in 1991?

What sort of country is Russia as it enters the twenty-first century? Is it a democracy?

Meets Social Sciences III-A requirement

S. Jones

4 credits

241fs Russia and the West

(Taught in English; Same as Politics 264)

Since its creation at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Soviet Union dominated the minds of Western foreign policy-makers. None of the West's policies in the Middle East, the Third World, Europe, or China after World War II can be understood without an understanding of Soviet foreign policy. We will examine the development of Soviet foreign policy since 1917 and the role played by Russia and the former Soviet republics in the far more complex "New World Order" we live in today. How have the expansion of the European Union, the tragedy of 9/11, and the war against terrorism influenced Russia's relations with the West?

Meets Social Sciences III-A requirement

S. Jones

4 credits

242s Oil and Water Don't Mix: Geopolitics, Energy, and the Environment

(Taught in English; Same as Politics 242) Following the collapse of the USSR and the Gulf War, Central Asia and the Caucasus became new centers of geopolitical rivalry. The new states are a source of energy (oil and gas) for Western powers and a vital transit corridor between Eastern Europe and China. While a new "Great Game" is being fought between Western, Far Eastern, and Middle Eastern powers for control over energy pipelines, the region is threatened by environmental catastrophe and water shortages. Is the new oil industry a source of prosperity or an instrument for exploitation, corruption, and instability? How important are the new states to the West's strategic energy interests?

Meets Social Sciences III-A requirement

S. Jones

4 credits

***312s Silk Roads: Ancient and Modern Highways across the Eurasian Continent**

(Taught in English; Same as Politics 312) The silk roads were ancient transportation and trade links that wound their way across the Eurasian continent, or by sea through the South China Sea and Indian Ocean, to Europe. They carried silk, glass, jade, and moved religions and literatures across continents. Today, the new silk roads carry oil, gas, drugs, capitalism, and immigrants seek-

ing better lives. We will investigate the parallels between the ancient and modern silk roads and the contemporary strategic, cultural, and economic significance of these new highways, which link China, Central Asia, the Middle East, South Asia, and Europe.

Meets Social Sciences III-A requirement

S. Jones

*Prereq. 8 credits in Politics, International Relations, Russian and Eurasian Studies, or History; 4 credits***313f The New Democracies**

(Taught in English; Same as Politics 300)

With the collapse of the USSR we were told that history was dead and liberal democracy triumphant. There was a "third wave" of democratic change. How accurate have these optimistic characterizations turned out to be? After an introduction to theories of liberal democracy and to the new discipline of "transitology" we will look at how states and leaders have applied such liberal-democratic ideas in Eastern Europe and the former USSR (with comparative examples from Africa and South America), and with what success.

Meets Social Sciences III-A requirement

S. Jones

*Prereq. any two courses in any combination from politics, international relations, or economics; 4 credits****330s Nationalism**

(Taught in English; Same as Politics 308) Nationalism is one of the greatest challenges to multiethnic states. They have had to create new strategies to deal with the demands of ethnic minorities. Taking the four states of Spain, Canada, Russia, and the former Yugoslavia as examples, we will focus on nationalist movements within these states and the central governments' responses. What has been the effect of the Communist legacy? Are there alternatives to federalism as a way of managing national claims? What socioeconomic policies have governments used to control ethnic tensions? What role can international organizations play in finding solutions to ethnic conflict?

Meets Social Sciences III-A requirement

S. Jones

Prereq. 8 credits in politics, international relations, or Russian and Eurasian studies; 4

credits

***350fs Revolutions**

(Taught in English; Same as Politics 350)

Revolutions have a rich and bloody history on the European continent. In the twentieth century, there were frequent revolutionary upheavals, particularly in Russia and Eastern Europe. We will study two revolutionary periods: Russia in 1917 and the USSR in 1991. These revolutionary events present great contrasts, yet at the same time clarify the nature of revolutions and why they occur. Do they bring the expected fundamental and accelerated change people hope for? Our focus will be on the contrasts and parallels between Russia's early twentieth-century socialist revolution and late twentieth-century capitalist revolution. What was (and is) their impact on European history and thought?

Meets Social Sciences III-A requirement

S. Jones

4 credits