Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures

Discussions about the structure of the program are currently in progress.

The Department will not admit graduate students into its program for matriculation in the Autumn quarter of 2017.

Chair

- Robert Bird

Professors

- Bozena Shallcross

Associate Professors

- Robert Bird
- William Nickell
- Malynne Sternstein

Senior Lecturers

- Valentina Pichugin

Lecturers

- Mark Baugher
- Erik Houle
- Angelina Ilieva
- Kinga Kosmala
- Nada Petkovic

Emeritus Faculty

- Howard I. Aronson
- Bill Darden
Admissions

The Department is not currently accepting applications to the PhD program. Those interested working with our faculty in their PhD studies should apply to PhD programs in related fields such as Comparative Literature, Cinema and Media Studies, and Linguistics.

Students seeking a master’s degree should apply to the Master of Arts Program in the Humanities (MAPH). In this one-year program, students build their own curriculum with graduate-level courses in any humanities department (including Slavic Languages and Literatures) and complete a thesis with a University of Chicago faculty advisor. MAPH students take courses with students in the Ph.D. programs. Further details about the MAPH program are available at http://maph.uchicago.edu/

Contact Information

For additional information about the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, please see http://slavic.uchicago.edu/ or e-mail <slavic-department@uchicago.edu>.

Courses

The actual offerings for the year will be found on the University Registrar website (http://registrar.uchicago.edu/).
Slavic Languages and Literatures - Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian Courses

**BCSN 31101. Advanced Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian: Language through Fiction. 100 Units.**

Advanced BCS courses encompass both the 3rd and 4th years of language study, with the focus changed from language structure and grammar to issues in interdisciplinary content. The courses are not in sequence. Language through Fiction is designed to help students and instructors over one of the most difficult hurdles in language training—the transition from working through lessons in a textbook to reading unedited texts. Literature represents the greatest development of the expressive possibilities of a language and reveals the bounds within which language operates. The texts will immerse motivated language students in a complete language experience, as the passages and related exercises present the language’s structure on every page. Students will learn how to engage the natural, organic language of a literary text across a variety of styles and themes. The course assumes that students are familiar with basic grammar and vocabulary, as well as both the Latin and Cyrillic alphabets. It is particularly appealing to students who are interested in the literature, history, and anthropology of the region.

Instructor(s): Nada Petkovic
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): REES 31103, BCSN 21101, REES 21100

**BCSN 31203. Advanced Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian: Language through Film. 100 Units.**

Advanced BCS courses encompass both the 3rd and 4th years of language study, with the focus changed from language structure and grammar to issues in interdisciplinary content. The courses are not in sequence. This course addresses the theme of Yugoslav and Post-Yugoslav identity through discussion and interpretation based on selected films, documentaries, images, and related texts—historical and literary, popular press, advertisements, screenplays, and literature on film. Emphasis is on interpersonal communication as well as the interpretation and production of language in written and oral forms. The course engages in systematic grammar review, along with introduction of some new linguistic topics, with constant practice in writing and vocabulary enrichment. The syllabus includes the screening of six films, each from a different director, region, and period, starting with Cinema Komunisto (2012), a documentary by Mila Turajlic. This film will be crucial for understanding how Yugoslav cinema was born and how, in its origins, it belongs to what a later cinephile, Fredric Jameson, has called a “geopolitical aesthetic.” We shall investigate the complex relationship between aesthetics and ideology in the Yugoslav and Post-Yugoslav cinema, and pay close attention to aesthetic conceptions and concrete formal properties, and more importantly, to language, narrative logic, and style.

Instructor(s): Nada Petkovic
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): REES 21200, REES 31203, BCSN 21200
BCSN 31303. (Re)Branding the Balkan City: Contemp. Belgrade/Sarajevo/Zagreb. 100 Units.
The course will use an urban studies lens to explore the complex history, infrastructure, and
transformations of these three cities, now the capitals of Serbia, Bosnia and Hercegovina,
and Croatia. Drawing on anthropological theory and ethnography of the city, we will
consider processes of urban destruction and renewal, practices of branding spaces and
identities, urban life as praxis, art and design movements, architectural histories and styles,
metropolitan citizenship, and the broader politics of space. The course is complemented by
cultural and historical media, guest speakers, and virtual tours. Classes are held in English.
No knowledge of BCS is required. However, this module can fulfill a language requirement
or simply further the study of BCS with additional weekly sections, materials, discussions,
and presentations in the target language.
Instructor(s): Nada Petkovic Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): REES 21300, REES 31303, BCSN 21300

BCSN 40100. Advanced Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian I. 100 Units.
Instructor(s): Nada Petkovic Terms Offered: Autumn

BCSN 40200. Advanced Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian II. 100 Units.
Instructor(s): Nada Petkovic Terms Offered: Winter

BCSN 40300. Advanced Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian III. 100 Units.
Instructor(s): Nada Petkovic Terms Offered: Spring

Slavic Languages and Literatures - Czech Courses

CZEC 37700. Kafka in Prague. 100 Units.
The goal of this course is a thorough treatment of Kafka's literary work in its Central
European, more specifically Czech, context. In critical scholarship, Kafka and his work
are often alienated from his Prague milieu. The course revisits the Prague of Kafka's time,
with particular reference to Josefov (the Jewish ghetto), Das Prager Deutsch, and Czech/
German/Jewish relations of the prewar and interwar years. We discuss most of Kafka's major
prose works within this context and beyond (including The Castle, The Trial, and the stories
published during his lifetime), as well as selected critical approaches to his work.
Instructor(s): Malynne Sternstein Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): FNDL 22207, GRMN 29600, GRMN 39600, CZEC 27700
Slavic Languages and Literatures - East European Courses

EEUR 33400. Introduction to the Musical Folklore of Central Asia. 100 Units.
This course explores the musical traditions of the peoples of Central Asia, both in terms of historical development and cultural significance. Topics include the music of the epic tradition, the use of music for healing, instrumental genres, and Central Asian folk and classical traditions. Basic field methods for ethnomusicology are also covered. Extensive use is made of recordings of musical performances and of live performances in the area.
Instructor(s): K. Arik
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 25905, EEUR 23400, MUSI 23503, MUSI 33503, NEHC 30765, NEHC 20765

Slavic Languages and Literatures - General Slavic Courses

SLAV 32000. Old Church Slavonic. 100 Units.
This course introduces the language of the oldest Slavic texts. It begins with a brief historical overview of the relationship of Old Church Slavonic to Common Slavic and the other Slavic languages. This is followed by a short outline of Old Church Slavonic inflectional morphology. The remainder of the course is spent in the reading and grammatical analysis of original texts. Texts in Cyrillic or Cyrillic transcription of the original Glagolitic.
Instructor(s): Y. Gorbachov
Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Knowledge of another Slavic language or good knowledge of another one or two old Indo-European languages. SLAV 20100 recommended.
Equivalent Course(s): SLAV 22000

SLAV 32303. Prosody and Poetic Form: An Introduction to Comparative Metrics. 100 Units.
This class offers (i) an overview of major European systems of versification, with particular attention to their historical development, and (ii) an introduction to the theory of meter. In addition to analyzing the formal properties of verse, we will inquire into their relevance for the articulation of poetic genres and, more broadly, the history of literary (and sub-literary) systems. There will be some emphasis on Graeco-Roman quantitative metrics, its afterlife, and the evolution of Germanic and Slavic syllabo-tonic verse. No prerequisites, but a working knowledge of one European language besides English is strongly recommended.
Instructor(s): Boris Maslov
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 32303, CLCV 21313, CLAS 31313, SLAV 22303, ENGL 22310, ENGL 32303, GRMN 22314, GRMN 32314, CMLT 22303
SLAV 42802. Conceptual History and Greek Literature. 100 Units.
In this seminar, we will approach conceptual history (a.k.a. Begriffsgeschichte) as a resource for philologically-informed study of cultural interaction, continuity, and change. We will begin by developing a theoretical background in historical semantics, conceptual history, Metaphorologie, and history of ideas (focusing on the work of Nietzsche, Spitzer, Koselleck, Blumenberg, and Hadot); the second part of the quarter will be dedicated to historical and theoretical problems in the study of concepts in literary texts and across cultures. Reading knowledge of two (or more) foreign languages is a strong desideratum. As a final project, seminar participants will be expected to choose a particular concept and trace its history and uses in literary texts, ideally in more than one language.
Instructor(s): Boris Maslov Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): CLAS 42813, CMLT 42802

Slavic Languages and Literatures - Polish Courses
POLI 30103. Third-Year Polish I. 100 Units.
No description available.
Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): POLI 20303 or equivalent

POLI 30200. Third-Year Polish II. 100 Units.
No description available.
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): POLI 20600

POLI 30300. Third-Year Polish III. 100 Units.
No description available.
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): POLI 20700

POLI 35302. Kieslowski: The Decalogue. 100 Units.
In this course, we study the monumental series “The Decalogue” by one of the most influential filmmakers from Poland, Krzysztof Kieślowski. Without mechanically relating the films to the Ten Commandments, Kieślowski explores the relevance of the biblical moral rules to the state of modern man forced to make ethical choices. Each part of the series contests the absolutism of moral axioms through narrative twists and reversals in a wide, universalized sphere. An analysis of the films will be accompanied by readings from Kieślowski’s own writings and interviews, including criticism by Zizek, Insdorf, and others.
Instructor(s): B. Shallcross Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Each half-hour long film will be viewed separately. All materials in English.
Equivalent Course(s): FNDL 24002, POLI 25302
POLI 35303. Kieślowski’s French Cinema. 100 Units.
Krzysztof Kieślowski’s long-lived obsession with parallel histories and repeated chances is best illustrated by his *The Double Life of Veronique*. The possibility of free choice resulting in being granted a second chance conjoins this film with his French triptych *White, Blue, Red*, all co-written by Krzysztof Piesiewicz. In this course we discuss why and how in the Kieślowski/Piesiewicz virtual universe the possibility of reconstituting one’s identity, triggered by tragic loss and betrayal, reveals an ever-ambiguous reality. We also analyze how these concepts, posited with visually and aurally dazzling artistry, shift the popular image of Kieślowski as auteur to his viewers’ as co-creators. We read selections from current criticism on the “Three Color Trilogy.” All materials in English.
Instructor(s): B. Shallcross Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): FNLD 25312, REES 27025, REES 37025, POLI 25303

POLI 40100-40200-40300. Polish Through Literary Readings I-II-III.
An advanced language course emphasizing spoken and written Polish. Readings include original Polish prose and poetry as well as nonfiction. Intensive grammar review and vocabulary building. For students who have taken Third Year Polish and for native or heritage speakers who want to read Polish literature in the original. Readings and discussions in Polish.

**POLI 40100. Polish Through Literary Readings I. 100 Units.**
Instructor(s): Kinga Kosmala Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): POLI 24100

**POLI 40200. Polish Through Literary Readings II. 100 Units.**
No description available.
Instructor(s): Kinga Kosmala Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): POLI 30300 or equivalent.
Equivalent Course(s): POLI 24200

**POLI 40300. Polish Through Literary Readings III. 100 Units.**
Instructor(s): Kinga Kosmala Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): POLI 30300 or equivalent
Equivalent Course(s): POLI 24300

Slavic Languages and Literatures - Russian Courses

**RUSS 30102-30202-30302. Advanced Russian through Media I-II-III.**
This course, which is designed for fifth-year students of Russian, covers various aspects of Russian stylistics and discourse grammar in context. It emphasizes the four communicative skills (i.e., reading, writing, listening comprehension, speaking) in culturally authentic context. Clips from Russian/Soviet films and television news reports are shown and discussed in class. Classes conducted in Russian.

**RUSS 30102. Advanced Russian through Media I. 100 Units.**
No description available.
Instructor(s): Valentina Pichugin Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Four years of Russian, or equivalent, or consent of instructor.
Equivalent Course(s): RUSS 21302
RUSS 30202. Advanced Russian through Media II. 100 Units.
No description available.
Instructor(s): Valentina Pichugin Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Four years of Russian, or equivalent, or consent of instructor.
Equivalent Course(s): RUSS 21402

RUSS 30302. Advanced Russian through Media III. 100 Units.
No description available.
Instructor(s): Valentina Pichugin Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Four years of Russian, or equivalent, or consent of instructor.
Equivalent Course(s): RUSS 21502

RUSS 33300. Reading Russian for Research Purposes. 100 Units.
This course prepares students to read and do research in Russian. Students will gain a fundamental knowledge of Russian grammar and a basic vocabulary while learning to work intensively with primary and secondary texts in their area of academic interest. Reading Russian for Research Purposes has a limited number of spots available for participation via electronic course sharing, intended for students who are unable to be in Chicago physically for the course.
Instructor(s): Staff Terms Offered: Summer. Summer 2017 dates: 6/19-7/27
Prerequisite(s): One year of college-level Russian or equivalent; or knowledge of another Slavic language; or consent of instructor.
Equivalent Course(s): RUSS 23300

RUSS 33333. Reading Russian for Research Purposes. 100 Units.
This course prepares students to read and do research in Russian. Students will gain a fundamental knowledge of Russian grammar and a basic vocabulary while learning to work intensively with primary and secondary texts in their area of academic interest. Reading Russian for Research Purposes has a limited number of spots available for participation via electronic course sharing, intended for students who are unable to be in Chicago physically for the course.
Instructor(s): Staff Terms Offered: Summer. Summer 2017 dates: 6/19-7/27
Prerequisite(s): One year of Russian or equivalent; or knowledge of another Slavic language; or consent of instructor.
Equivalent Course(s): RUSS 23333

RUSS 39600. Pale Fire. 100 Units.
This course is an intensive reading of Pale Fire by Nabakov.
Instructor(s): Malyne Sternstein Terms Offered: Winter

RUSS 39901. 6th Year Russian. 100 Units.
Instructor(s): Valentina Pichugin Terms Offered: Autumn

RUSS 39902. 6th Year Russian - Part 2. 100 Units.
Instructor(s): Valentina Pichugin Terms Offered: Winter
Slavic Languages and Literatures - South Slavic Courses

Slavic Languages and Literatures – Russian and East European Studies Courses

**REES 30020. Pale Fire. 100 Units.**
This course is an intensive reading of *Pale Fire* by Nabokov.
Instructor(s): M. Sternstein Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 29610, REES 20020, FNDL 25311

**REES 31103. Advanced Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian: Language through Fiction. 100 Units.**
Advanced BCS courses encompass both the 3rd and 4th years of language study, with the focus changed from language structure and grammar to issues in interdisciplinary content. The courses are not in sequence. Language through Fiction is designed to help students and instructors over one of the most difficult hurdles in language training—the transition from working through lessons in a textbook to reading unedited texts. Literature represents the greatest development of the expressive possibilities of a language and reveals the bounds within which language operates. The texts will immerse motivated language students in a complete language experience, as the passages and related exercises present the language’s structure on every page. Students will learn how to engage the natural, organic language of a literary text across a variety of styles and themes. The course assumes that students are familiar with basic grammar and vocabulary, as well as both the Latin and Cyrillic alphabets. It is particularly appealing to students who are interested in the literature, history, and anthropology of the region.
Instructor(s): Nada Petkovic Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): BCSN 21101, BCSN 31101, REES 21100

**REES 31203. Advanced Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian: Language through Film. 100 Units.**
Advanced BCS courses encompass both the 3rd and 4th years of language study, with the focus changed from language structure and grammar to issues in interdisciplinary content. The courses are not in sequence. This course addresses the theme of Yugoslav and Post-Yugoslav identity through discussion and interpretation based on selected films, documentaries, images, and related texts—historical and literary, popular press, advertisements, screenplays, and literature on film. Emphasis is on interpersonal communication as well as the interpretation and production of language in written and oral forms. The course engages in systematic grammar review, along with introduction of some new linguistic topics, with constant practice in writing and vocabulary enrichment. The syllabus includes the screening of six films, each from a different director, region, and period, starting with Cinema Komunisto (2012), a documentary by Mila Turajlic. This film will be crucial for understanding how Yugoslav cinema was born and how, in its origins, it belongs to what a later cinephile, Fredric Jameson, has called a “geopolitical aesthetic.” We shall investigate the complex relationship between aesthetics and ideology in the Yugoslav and Post-Yugoslav cinema, and pay close attention to aesthetic conceptions and concrete formal properties, and more importantly, to language, narrative logic, and style.
Instructor(s): Nada Petkovic Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): BCSN 31203, REES 21200, BCSN 21200
REES 31303. (Re)Branding the Balkan City: Contemp. Belgrade/Sarajevo/Zagreb. 100 Units.
The course will use an urban studies lens to explore the complex history, infrastructure, and transformations of these three cities, now the capitals of Serbia, Bosnia and Hercegovina, and Croatia. Drawing on anthropological theory and ethnography of the city, we will consider processes of urban destruction and renewal, practices of branding spaces and identities, urban life as praxis, art and design movements, architectural histories and styles, metropolitan citizenship, and the broader politics of space. The course is complemented by cultural and historical media, guest speakers, and virtual tours. Classes are held in English. No knowledge of BCS is required. However, this module can fulfill a language requirement or simply further the study of BCS with additional weekly sections, materials, discussions, and presentations in the target language.
Instructor(s): Nada Petkovic
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): BCSN 31303, REES 21300, BCSN 21300

REES 33137. Narrative Suspense in European/Russian Lit/Film. 100 Units.
This course examines the nature and creation of suspense in literature and film as an introduction to narrative theory. We will question how and why stories are created, as well as what motivates us to continue reading, watching, and listening to stories. We will explore how particular genres (such as detective stories and thrillers) and the mediums of literature and film influence our understanding of suspense and narrative more broadly. Close readings of primary sources will be supplemented with critical and theoretical readings. Literary readings will include work by John Buchan, Arthur Conan Doyle, Feodor Dostoevsky, Graham Greene, Bohumil Hrabal, and J.M. Coetzee. We will also explore Alfred Hitchcock’s take on 39 Steps and the Czech New Wave manifesto film Pearls of the Deep. With theoretical readings by Roland Barthes, Viktor Shklovsky, Erich Auerbach, Paul Ricoeur, and others.

Instructor(s): Esther Peters
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): HUMA 26901, CMST 35102, ENGL 26901, CMLT 22100, ENGL 46901, CMST 25102, REES 23137

REES 35600. Realism in Russia. 100 Units.
From the 1830s to the 1890s, most Russian prose writers and playwrights were either engaged in the European-wide cultural movement known as "realistic school" which set for itself the task of engaging with social processes from the standpoint of political ideologies. The ultimate goal of this course is to distill more precise meanings of "realism," "critical realism," and "naturalism" in nineteenth-century Russian through analysis of works by Gogol, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Aleksandr Ostrovsky, Goncharov, Saltykov-Shchedrin, and Kuprin. Texts in English and the original. Optional Russian-intensive section offered.
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): REES 25600
REES 36053. The Aesthetics of Socialist Realism. 100 Units.
Socialist Realism was declared the official mode of Soviet aesthetic culture in 1934. Though it has been dismissed within the totalitarian model as propaganda or kitsch, this seminar will approach it from the perspective of its aesthetics. By this we mean not only its visual or literary styles, but also its sensory or haptic address to its audiences. Our premise is that the aesthetic system of Socialist Realism was not simply derivative or regressive, but developed novel techniques of transmission and communication; marked by a constant theoretical reflection on artistic practice, Socialist Realism redefined the relationship between artistic and other forms of knowledge, such as science. Operating in an economy of art production and consumption diametrically opposed to the Western art market, Socialist Realism challenged the basic assumptions of Western artistic discourse, including the concept of the avant-garde. It might even be said to offer an alternate model of revolutionary cultural practice, involving the chronicling and producing of a non-capitalist form of modernity.

The seminar will focus on Soviet visual art, cinema and fiction during the crucial period of the 1930s under Stalin (with readings available in translation), but we welcome students with relevant research interests that extend beyond these parameters.

Course meetings will be divided evenly between the campuses of Northwestern University and the University of Chicago.

Instructor(s): Robert Bird and Christina Kiaer Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 44502

REES 36064. Revolution. 100 Units.
Revolution primarily denotes radical political change, but this definition is both too narrow and too broad. Too broad, because since the late eighteenth century revolution has been associated specifically with an emancipatory politics, from American democracy to Soviet communism. Too narrow, because revolutionary political change is always accompanied by change in other spheres, from philosophy to everyday life. We investigate the history of revolution from 1776 to the present, with a particular focus on the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, in order to ascertain how social revolutions have been constituted, conducted, and enshrined in political and cultural institutions. We also ask what the conditions and prospects of revolution are today. Readings will be drawn from a variety of fields, from philosophy to social history. Most readings will be primary documents, from Rousseau and Marx to Bill Ayers, but will also include major statements in the historiography of revolution.
Instructor(s): Robert Bird and Sheila Fitzpatrick Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 23707,HIST 33707,REES 26064
REES 36075. For Science Fiction in Eastern Europe and Russia. 100 Units.
In this course we will examine the cultural, historical, and political contexts of some of the
great works of science fiction from Eastern Europe and Russia through literature like (but not
limited to) Karel Čapek’s R.U.R. (origin of the robot), Evgenii Zamiatin’s dystopian novel
We (the inspiration for George Orwell’s 1984), and Stanislaw Lem’s Solaris (the inspiration
for several film versions including Andrei Tarkovsky’s in 1972). Our primary objective will
be to examine how these writers used science fiction to interpret, comment upon, or critique
their historical moment. How did these works propose alternate realities? Or how did they
engage with the new and changing realities of the 20th century? All readings in English.
Instructor(s): Esther Peters Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): REES 26075

REES 37019. Holocaust Object. 100 Units.
In this course, we explore various ontological and representational modes of the Holocaust
material object world as it was represented during World War II. Then, we interrogate the
post-Holocaust artifacts and material remnants, as they are displayed, curated, controlled,
and narrated in the memorial sites and museums of former ghettos and extermination
and concentration camps. These sites which—once the locations of genocide—are now
places of remembrance, the (post)human, and material remnants also serve educational
purposes. Therefore, we study the ways in which this material world, ranging from
infrastructure to detritus, has been subjected to two, often conflicting, tasks of representation
and preservation, which we view through a prism of authenticity. In order to study
representation, we critically engage a textual and visual reading of museum narrations and
fiction writings; to tackle the demands of preservation, we apply a neo-materialist approach.
Of special interest are survivors’ testimonies as appended to the artifacts they donated. The
course will also equip you with salient critical tools for future creative research in Holocaust
studies.
Instructor(s): Bozena Shallcross Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): JWSC 29500, ANTH 23910, ANTH 35035, REES 27019

REES 37025. Kieslowski’s French Cinema. 100 Units.
Krzysztof Kieślowski’s long-lived obsession with parallel histories and repeated chances is
best illustrated by his The Double Life of Veronique. The possibility of free choice resulting
in being granted a second chance conjoins this film with his French triptych White, Blue,
Red, all co-written by Krzysztof Piesiewicz. In this course we discuss why and how in
the Kieślowski/Piesiewicz virtual universe the possibility of reconstituting one’s identity,
triggered by tragic loss and betrayal, reveals an ever-ambiguous reality. We also analyze
how these concepts, posited with visually and aurally dazzling artistry, shift the popular
image of Kieślowski as auteur to his viewers’ as co-creators. We read selections from
current criticism on the “Three Color Trilogy.” All materials in English.
Instructor(s): B. Shallcross Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): FNDL 25312, POLI 35303, REES 27025, POLI 25303
REES 37026. Kiełowski: The Decalogue. 100 Units.
In this class, we study the monumental series “The Decalogue” by one of the most influential filmmakers from Poland, Krzysztof Kiełowski. Without mechanically relating the films to the Ten Commandments, Kiełowski explores the relevance of the biblical moral rules to the state of modern man forced to make ethical choices. Each part of the series contests the absolutism of moral axioms through narrative twists and reversals in a wide, universalized sphere. An analysis of the films will be accompanied by readings from Kiełowski’s own writings and interviews, including criticism by Zizek, Insdorf, and others.
Instructor(s): Bozena Shallcross Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): FNDL 24003, REES 27026

REES 39009. Balkan Folklore. 100 Units.
Vampires, fire-breathing dragons, vengeful mountain nymphs, 7/8 and other uneven dance beats, heart-rending laments, and a living epic tradition. This course is an overview of Balkan folklore from historical, political, and anthropological perspectives. We seek to understand folk tradition as a dynamic process and consider the function of different folklore genres in the imagining and maintenance of community and the socialization of the individual. We also experience this living tradition firsthand through visits of a Chicago-based folk dance ensemble, “Balkan Dance.”
Instructor(s): A. Ilieva Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 25908, ANTH 35908, CMLT 23301, CMLT 33301, NEHC 20568, NEHC 30568, REES 29009

REES 39010. Strangers to Ourselves: Émigré Lit from Russia and SE Europe. 100 Units.
“Being alienated from myself, as painful as that may be, provides me with that exquisite distance within which perverse pleasure begins, as well as the possibility of my imagining and thinking,” writes Julia Kristeva in “Strangers to Ourselves,” the book from which this course takes its title. The authors whose works we are going to examine often alternate between nostalgia and the exhilaration of being set free into the breathless possibilities of new lives. Leaving home does not simply mean movement in space. Separated from the sensory boundaries that defined their old selves, immigrants inhabit a warped, fragmentary, disjointed time. Immigrant writers struggle for breath—speech, language, voice, the very stuff of their craft resounds somewhere else. Join us as we explore the pain, the struggle, the failure, and the triumph of emigration and exile. Vladimir Nabokov, Joseph Brodsky, Marina Tsvetaeva, Nina Berberova, Julia Kristeva, Alexander Hemon, Dubravka Ugrešić, Norman Manea, Miroslav Penkov, Ilija Trojanow, Tea Obreht.
Instructor(s): Angelina Ilieva Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 26902, CMLT 36902, REES 29010
REES 39012. Returning the Gaze: The Balkans and Western Europe. 100 Units.
Aware of being observed. And judged. Inferior... Abject... Angry... Proud... This course provides insight into identity dynamics between the “West,” as the center of economic power and self-proclaimed normative humanity, and the “Rest,” as the poor, backward, volatile periphery. We investigate the relationship between South East European self-representations and the imagined Western gaze. Inherent in the act of looking at oneself through the eyes of another is the privileging of that other’s standard. We will contemplate the responses to this existential position of identifying symbolically with a normative site outside of oneself—self-consciousness, defiance, arrogance, self-exoticization—and consider how these responses have been incorporated in the texture of the national, gender, and social identities in the region. Orhan Pamuk, Ivo Andrić, Nikos Kazantzakis, Aleko Konstantinov, Emir Kusturica, Milcho Manchevski.
Instructor(s): Angelina Ilieva
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 23201, CMLT 33201, NEHC 20885, NEHC 30885, REES 29012

REES 39013. The Burden of History: The Nation and Its Lost Paradise. 100 Units.
How and why do national identities provoke the deep emotional attachments that they do? In this course we try to understand these emotional attachments by examining the narrative of loss and redemption through which most nations in the Balkans retell their Ottoman past. We begin by considering the mythic temporality of the Romantic national narrative while focusing on specific national literary texts where the national past is retold through the formula of original wholeness, foreign invasion, Passion, and Salvation. We then proceed to unpack the structural role of the different elements of that narrative. With the help of Žižek’s theory of the subject as constituted by trauma, we think about the national fixation on the trauma of loss, and the role of trauma in the formation of national consciousness. Specific theme inquiries involve the figure of the Janissary as self and other, brotherhood and fratricide, and the writing of the national trauma on the individual physical body. Special attention is given to the general aesthetic of victimhood, the casting of the victimized national self as the object of the “other’s perverse desire.” With the help of Freud, Žižek, and Kant we consider the transformation of national victimhood into the sublimity of the national self. The main primary texts include Petar Njegoš’ Mountain Wreath (Serbia and Montenegro), Ismail Kadare’s The Castle (Albania), Anton Donchev’s Time of Parting (Bulgaria).
Instructor(s): Angelina Ilieva
Terms Offered: Spring, Winter
Equivalent Course(s): REES 29013
REES 39018. Imaginary Worlds: The Fantastic and Magic Realism in Russia and Southeastern Europe. 100 Units.
In this course, we will ask what constitutes the fantastic and magic realism as literary genres while reading some of the most interesting writings to have come out of Russia and Southeastern Europe. While considering the stylistic and narrative specificities of this narrative mode, we also think about its political functions—from subversive to escapist, to supportive of a nationalist imaginary—in different contexts and at different historic moments in the two regions.
Instructor(s): Angelina Ilieva Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Readings in English. Background in Russia and the Balkans will make the course easier, but is not required.
Equivalent Course(s): REES 29018

REES 39020. The Shadows of Living Things: the Writings of Mikhail Bulgakov. 100 Units.
Open these books and step into a world of fanciful possibilities, magic, and creatures produced by scientific experiments. Contemplate the nature of evil and human responsibility in the face of dehumanizing fear, while at the same time rolling with laughter at Bulgakov’s irresistible seduction into the comedic. Laughter, as shadow and light, as subversive weapon but also as power’s whip, the capacity to be comedic, grounds human relation to both good and evil. The Master and Margarita, Diaboliada, Fatal Eggs, Heart of A Dog, Ivan Vasilievich.
Instructor(s): Angelina Ilieva Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): REES 29020

REES 39021. The Shadows of Living Things: the Writings of Mikhail Bulgakov. 100 Units.
“What would your good do if evil did not exist, and what would the earth look like if all the shadows disappeared? After all, shadows are cast by things and people…. Do you want to strip the earth of all the trees and living things just because of your fantasy of enjoying naked light?” asks the Devil.

Mikhail Bulgakov worked on his novel The Master and Margarita throughout most of his writing career, in Stalin’s Moscow. Bulgakov destroyed his manuscript, re-created it from memory, and reworked it feverishly even as his body was failing him in his battle with death. The result is an intense contemplation on the nature of good and evil, on the role of art and the ethical duty of the artist, but also a dazzling world of magic, witches, and romantic love, and an irresistible seduction into the comedic. Laughter, as shadow and light, as the subversive weapon but also as power’s whip, grounds human relation to both good and evil. Brief excursions to other texts that help us better understand Master and Margarita.

Instructor(s): Angelina Ilieva Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): FNDL 29020, REES 29021
REES 39024. States of Surveillance. 100 Units.
What does it feel to be watched and listened to all the time? Literary and cinematic works give us a glimpse into the experience of living under surveillance and explore the human effects of surveillance – the fraying of intimacy, fracturing sense of self, testing the limits of what it means to be human. Works from the former Soviet Union (Solzhenitsyn, Abram Tertz, Andrey Zvyagintsev), former Yugoslavia (Ivo Andrić, Danilo Kiš, Dušan Kovačević), Romania (Norman Manea, Cristian Mungiu), Bulgaria (Valeri Petrov), and Albania (Ismail Kadare).
Instructor(s): Angelina Ilieva Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): REES 29024

REES 39700. Reading/Research. 100 Units.
This is a specially designed course not normally offered as part of the curriculum that is arranged between a student and a faculty member.
Instructor(s): TBA. Terms Offered: Autumn, Spring, Winter
Note(s): Requires the consent of the instructor.

REES 39814. Kurosawa and His Literary Sources. 100 Units.
This interdisciplinary graduate and advanced undergraduate course focuses on ten films of Akira Kurosawa which were based on literary sources ranging from Ryunosuke Akutagawa, Georges Simenon, and Shakespeare to Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Gorky, and Arseniev. The course not only introduces some theoretical and intermedial problems of adaptation of literature to film but also address cultural and political implications of Kurosawa’s adaptation of classic and foreign sources. We will study how Kurosawa’s turn to literary adaptation provided a vehicle for circumventing social taboos of his time and offered a screen for addressing politically sensitive and sometimes censored topics of Japan’s militarist past, war crimes, defeat in the Second World War, and ideological conflicts of reconstruction. The course combines film analysis with close reading of relevant literary sources, contextualized by current work of political, economic, and cultural historians of postwar Japan. The course is meant to provide hands-on training in the interdisciplinary methodology of Comparative Literature.
Instructor(s): Olga Solovieva Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 33302, EALC 23312, REES 29814, SCTH 34012, CMST 24922, CMST 34922, EALC 33312, CMLT 23302
REES 43902. Colloquium: Stalinism. 100 Units.
We will explore Stalin as a personality and Stalinism as a political order, an economy, a cultural system, a set of beliefs and rituals, and a way of life. Topics include the dictator, his entourage, and his cult; decision making and the new elite; industrialization, collectivization, and the economy of shortages; revolution and conservatism; nationalism, internationalism, and ethnic cleansing; political terror, mass murder, and the Gulag; communal apartments, survival strategies, and intimate life; media and the socialist-realist dreamworld; legacies and historical consciousness. Readings include classics in the field and newest hits as well as works of fiction.

Instructor(s): E. Gilburd Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Advanced undergraduates with consent of instructor and prior coursework on 20th-C Russia or Russian Civ.
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 43902

REES 43903. The Art of Healing: Medical Aesthetics in Russia & the U.S. 100 Units.
What makes a medical treatment look like it will work? What makes us feel that we are receiving good care, or that we can be cured? How are these responses shaped by the rhetorical practices of doctors, researchers, and pharmaceutical companies, by the physical appearance of hospitals, offices, and instruments, or by smells and sounds? Why does the color of a pill influence its effectiveness, and how can placebos achieve what less inert medication cannot? How do predictions of success or failure effect treatment responses? When does technology instill confidence, and when does it produce a sense of degradation? Is the doctor seen primarily as a caregiver or a scientist, and how does this affect treatment outcomes? What is the aesthetic experience of being “sick”? In this course we will consider these problems from the vantage points of a medical professional and a cultural historian, focusing on material from the United States and Soviet/post-Soviet Russia. Our methodology will combine techniques of aesthetic analysis with those of medical anthropology, history and practice.

Instructor(s): William Nickell Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Consent of instructor required for undergraduates.
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 45100, CDIN 43903
Font Notice

This document should contain certain fonts with restrictive licenses. For this draft, substitutions were made using less legally restrictive fonts. Specifically:

Times was used instead of Trajan.

Times was used instead of Palatino.

The editor may contact Leepfrog for a draft with the correct fonts in place.