

# RUSSIAN AND EURASIAN STUDIES

## Overview and Contact Information

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 and specialists in history and politics. 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).

## 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.

Every January, the department sends students to Georgia (the country) for a three week January term where both Georgian and Russian are spoken.

## See Also

- Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/russian-east-european-eurasian-studies>)

## Contact Information

**Peter Scotto, Chair**

**Dominique Rampton, Academic Department Coordinator**

103 Ciruti Center  
413-538-2648  
<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/russian>

## Faculty

**This area of study is administered by the Department of Russian and Eurasian Studies:**

Stephen Jones, Professor of Russian Studies, On Leave 2016-2017

Peter Scotto, Professor of Russian

Irina Kogel, Five College Lecturer of Russian

Susanna Nazarova, Five College Lecturer in Russian

## 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. It prepares students for careers in international affairs and global development, including the foreign service, media work, education, energy issues, and the environment. We offer internships and study abroad programs that provide the practical experience that employers value. 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.

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

A minimum of 36 credits:

Three courses in Russian beyond RES-201, normally RES-202 and advanced Russian language courses in the Five Colleges	12
One of the following:	4
RES-240 Contemporary Russian Politics	
RES-241 Russia and the West	
RES-242 Oil and Water Don't Mix: Geopolitics, Energy, and the Environment	
RES-210 Great Books: The Literature of Nineteenth-Century Russia	4
RES-211 Topics in Twentieth-Century Russian Literature	4
Three 300-level courses, one each from literature, culture, and politics/history	12
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>36</b>

### Additional Specifications

- 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.

## Requirements for the Major in Russian and Eurasian Studies

A minimum of 40 credits:

Proficiency in Russian language demonstrated by completion of the following:	4
RES-202 Intermediate Russian (or equivalent)	
A one-semester survey of Russian history, to be chosen in consultation with the advisor	4
RES-210 Great Books: The Literature of Nineteenth-Century Russia	4
RES-240 Contemporary Russian Politics	4
RES-241 Russia and the West	4
12 credits at the 300 level, divided among three or more disciplines	12

8 additional credits in Russian and Eurasian studies	8
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>40</b>

### Additional Specifications

- 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.
- The major in Russian and Eurasian Studies is interdisciplinary. Students who complete this major automatically fulfill the College's "outside the major" requirement.

## Requirements for the Minor in Language

A minimum of 12 credits above the 100 level, ordinarily drawn from the following:

RES-201 Intermediate Russian	4
RES-202 Intermediate Russian	4
RES-251 Advanced Russian	4
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>12</b>

## Requirements for the Minor in Culture and Literature

A minimum of 20 credits, which ordinarily include:

A one-semester course in Russian history	4
RES-210 Great Books: The Literature of Nineteenth-Century Russia	4
RES-211 Topics in Twentieth-Century Russian Literature	4
Two additional courses to be chosen in consultation with the Russian department, including one at the 300 level	8
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>20</b>

### Additional Specifications

- The 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.

## Requirements for the Minor in Russian and Eurasian Studies

A minimum of 12 credits, which ordinarily include:

RES-201 Intermediate Russian (or its equivalent)	4
Two courses in Russian studies, including one course at the 300 level	8
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>12</b>

### Additional Specifications

- 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.

## 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. Further information about the minor in education (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/psychology-education/#minortext>) and the Teacher Licensure program (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/psychology-education/#teacherlicensuretext>) is available in other sections of the catalog, or consult 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.

Additional information about the Licensure Program, including application materials, can be found on the Teacher Licensure Program website (<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/teach>).

## Course Advice

### Getting Started in Russian

A student coming to Mount Holyoke with no background in Russian language should enroll in RES-101-RES-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.

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

RES-210	Great Books: The Literature of Nineteenth-Century Russia (Humanities I)	4
RES-211	Topics in Twentieth-Century Russian Literature (Humanities I)	4
RES-240	Contemporary Russian Politics (Social Sciences III)	4
RES-241	Russia and the West (Social Sciences III)	4

As listed, courses on Russian history or literature and culture may be used to satisfy the Humanities distribution requirement, while courses on Russian and Eurasian Politics satisfy the Social Science distribution requirement.

## Course Offerings

### Taught in Russian

#### RES-101 Elementary Russian

*Fall. Credits: 4*

The four-skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) introduction to the Russian Language with the focus on communicative skills development. Major structural topics include pronunciation and intonation, all six cases, basic conjugation patterns, and verbal aspect. By the end of the course the students will be able to initiate and sustain conversation on basic topics, write short compositions, read short authentic texts and comprehend their meaning, develop an understanding of the Russian culture through watching films and listening to songs.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language*

*Other Attribute(s): Speaking-Intensive*

*S. Nazarova*

*Coreq: RES-101L.*

#### RES-102 Elementary Russian

*Spring. Credits: 4*

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. Students watch Russian films, read and discuss authentic texts.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language*

*Other Attribute(s): Speaking-Intensive*

*I. Kogel*

*Prereq: RES-101. Coreq: RES-102L.*

#### RES-201 Intermediate Russian

*Fall. Credits: 4*

In-depth review of grammar topics and expansion of vocabulary with the goal of developing communicative proficiency. Readings include short stories, poetry, and newspaper articles. Students watch Russian films and discuss them orally and in writing. Classes are conducted mostly in Russian.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language*

*Other Attribute(s): Speaking-Intensive*

*S. Nazarova*

*Prereq: RES-101.*

#### RES-202 Intermediate Russian

*Spring. Credits: 4*

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

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language*

*Other Attribute(s): Speaking-Intensive, Writing-Intensive*

*I. Kogel*

*Prereq: RES-201.*

#### RES-251 Advanced Russian

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This course aims at expansion of students' vocabulary and improvement of both writing and speaking skills. 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. We will read and discuss a variety of texts including short stories, films, and articles.

*S. Nazarova*

*Prereq: RES-202.*

#### RES-252 Advanced Russian Film and Literature

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Students will read and discuss short stories and poems written by Russian writers in the 20th century and watch films based on literary works of that time. They will continue to work on oral and writing skills, and vocabulary. This course prepares students to express opinions, ideas, points of view, and critiques on prose and films, social issues and cultural phenomena using more complex and rich language.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*E. Dengub*

*Prereq: RES-251.*

*Notes: Taught in Russian.*

## Taught in English

### RES-210 Great Books: The Literature of Nineteenth-Century Russia

Fall. Credits: 4

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, Turgenyev, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and Chekhov.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

P. Scotto

*Notes: Taught in English*

### RES-211 Topics in Twentieth-Century Russian Literature

#### RES-211MM Topics in Twentieth-Century Russian Literature: 'Diabolic Carnival: Bulgakov's Master and Margarita and Its Contexts'

Spring. Credits: 4

Mephistopheles in Moscow? The Gospel retold? At turns both wildly comic and metaphysically profound, Bulgakov's novel has been a cult classic since its unexpected discovery in 1967. This course will consider Bulgakov's masterpiece together with some of its literary, historical, and social contexts. Additional readings from Goethe, Gogol, E.T.A. Hoffman, Akhmatova, and others.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

P. Scotto

*Notes: Taught in English*

#### RES-213 War and Peace

Fall. Credits: 4

We will be engaged in a close reading of a translation of Tolstoy's epic novel *War and Peace*. Tolstoy's sweeping account of men and women caught up in Russia's desperate struggle to survive against the onslaught of Napoleon's army is often considered among the greatest novels. We will focus on Tolstoy's literary strategies, philosophy, and historical contexts.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

P. Scotto

*Notes: Taught in English.*

#### RES-215 Dostoevsky and the Problem of Evil: *The Brothers Karamazov*

Spring. Credits: 4

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?

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

P. Scotto

*Notes: Taught in English*

### RES-231 Anna Karenina and Contexts

#### RES-231FA *Anna Karenina* and Contexts: 'Tolstoy on Love, Death, and Family Life'

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

*Anna Karenina* (1873) is one of a series of important works Tolstoy wrote pondering love, death, the nature of happiness, and the foundations of family life. Our reading of *Anna Karenina* will be the centerpiece of this course which will also include works ranging from *Childhood* (1852) to *The Kreutzer Sonata* (1889), which shocked and repelled readers with its unsparing depictions of human sexuality and murderous jealousy. Film versions of works will be screened.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

P. Scotto

*Notes: Taught in English*

### RES-240 Contemporary Russian Politics

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

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? How has Russia's transformation affected ordinary people and Russia's relationship to the West?

*Crosslisted as: POLIT-209*

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

S. Jones

*Notes: Taught in English*

### RES-241 Russia and the West

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Since its creation at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Soviet Union dominated the minds of Western foreign policymakers. None of the West's policies in the Middle East, the Third World, Europe, or China after World War II can be understood without the study of Soviet foreign policy. We will examine the development of Soviet foreign policy since 1917 and, following the collapse of the USSR in 1991, the role played by Russia and Russia and the former Soviet republics in the far more complex and multipolar 'New World Order.' What should U.S. policy be toward the emerging new states of the Baltics, Central Asia, and Caucasia?

*Crosslisted as: POLIT-264*

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

S. Jones

*Notes: Taught in English*

### RES-242 Oil and Water Don't Mix: Geopolitics, Energy, and the Environment

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

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?

*Crosslisted as: POLIT-242*

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

S. Jones

*Notes: Taught in English*

**RES-244 Topics in the Recent History of Europe****RES-244CW Topics in the Recent History of Europe: 'The Cold War: Perspectives from East and West'***Spring. Credits: 4*

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the social, cultural, and political history of both Western and Eastern Europe since 1945. By exploring the permeability of the "Iron Curtain," the course encourages students to critically assess conceptions of division and unity in European history. We will explore ways in which borders were both reinforced and transcended. Topics include the legacy of the Second World War, migration, science, the division of Germany and its reunification, tourism and the experience of the "other," sport as a unifying culture, the power of media, social protest, transatlantic relations, and the end of the Cold War.

*Crosslisted as: HIST-260CW**Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**C. Roeder***RES-244PW Topics in the Recent History of Europe: 'Postwar Societies: USSR and Eastern Europe'***Fall. Credits: 4*

What was it like to be a hipster in the Soviet Union? What does rock music have to do with political dissent? This course offers a critical inquiry into the fascinating and vibrant societies of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe from 1945 to 1989, with a focus on the former. While gaining an understanding of the major political developments from late Stalinism to the end of Communism, we will explore the creative ways in which citizens of the Eastern bloc expressed their agency and initiated societal change. Using a range of primary and secondary sources, including film and literature, we will study themes such as postwar childhood, fashion, music, political dissent, and environmentalism.

*Crosslisted as: HIST-260PW**Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**C. Roeder***RES-312 Silk Road, Old and New***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

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 seeking 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.

*Crosslisted as: POLIT-312**Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences**S. Jones**Prereq: 8 credits in Politics, International Relations, Russian and Eurasian Studies, or History.**Notes: Taught in English***RES-316 European Studies Seminar****RES-316FR European Studies Seminar: 'Foreigners Within, Foreigners Without: The EU and its New Neighbors'***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

The enlargement of the European Union (EU) to Central and Eastern European countries has generated new neighbors to the east and south - the Western Newly Independent States (WNIS) of Russia, Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine, and Southern Mediterranean countries (SMCs) Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia. Europe's new neighbors make up 410 million inhabitants, but their GDP capita is barely one tenth of the European Union's. This has brought problems for the EU, including migration pressures, human trafficking, and refugees. How is the EU dealing with these issues and how will relations with the new neighbors affect the domestic and foreign policies of the EU?

*Crosslisted as: POLIT-316FO**Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences**S. Jones**Restrictions: This course is open to Juniors and Seniors.**Prereq: 4 credits at the 200 level in a Division III +**Advisory: Students not meeting the prerequisite but with a 200-level Division I course may contact the instructor for permission.***RES-327 Russian Literature in the 21st Century***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Werefoxes in Moscow? Growing up Post-Soviet in Queens? Faking a trip to the moon? All this and more in Russia's uninhibited, profane, and sometimes disturbing literature of the twenty-first century. This seminar will sample writing from the vibrant Russian literary scene of the 2000's, including translingual literature and graphic novels. They can still write!

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**P. Scotto**Prereq: 8 credits in the department.**Notes: Taught in English. Trigger warning: students should be prepared for controversial themes and content.***RES-330 Nationalism***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

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?

*Crosslisted as: POLIT-308**Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences**S. Jones**Prereq: 8 credits in politics, international relations, or Russian and Eurasian studies.*

**RES-350 Revolutions**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

By the 1980s, after the failure of Marxist revolutions, scholars and politicians declared that "history" and with it, the age of revolution was over. From now on, they said, all states will move toward the model of market capitalism. But the last decade of the 20th century and the first fifteen years of the 21st century have shown that history, and with it, revolution, is far from over. We will look at the American and Russian revolutions, at Nazism, the Iranian revolution of 1979, Eastern Europe in 1989, the 'colored revolutions,' and the Arab Spring. Revolutions are still with us, and we will study why.

*Crosslisted as: POLIT-350*

*Applies to requirement(s): Social Sciences*

*S. Jones*

*Notes: Taught in English*

**Independent Study**

**RES-295 Independent Study**

*Fall and Spring. Credits: 1 - 4*

*The department*

*Instructor permission required.*

**RES-395 Independent Study**

*Fall and Spring. Credits: 1 - 8*

*The department*

*Instructor permission required.*