Class code: MAP-UA 9510-001

Instructor Details
Dr Janusz Salamon
janusz.salamon@nyu.edu
Tel: (+420)731816202
Office hours immediately before and after class, and by arrangement via e-mail

Class Details
Russia Between East and West
Tue & Thu, 15:00-16:20
Location to be confirmed.

Prerequisites
None

eClass Description
The course examines the key ideas, beliefs, and values that have shaped the identities and worldviews of past and present generations of Russians. Due to its geographic location and historical circumstances, the problem of its cultural identity vis-à-vis Europe (the West) and Asia (the East) has always been on the minds of the Russian thinkers, writers, artists, religious leaders and policy makers. As one of the primary goals of the course is to provide students with an opportunity for improving their skills to analyze complex dynamics of the processes of identity formation at cultural crossroads, the intellectual and cultural history of Russia will be explored in juxtaposition to parallel developments of Russia’s European and Asian neighbors. The students will be encouraged to think critically and with a historically informed sensibility about the diverse perceptions of reality expressed in the principal textual and artistic images of Russian culture, including those which constitute Russia’s unique contribution to world culture.

Lectures, discussion, video and audio resources.

Desired Outcomes
On completion of the course, students should be able to:
1. Demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of key issues in the Russian intellectual and cultural history
2. Analyze critically and with a historically informed sensibility the principal textual and artistic images of Russian culture
3. Compare and contrast the key ideas, beliefs, and values that have shaped the cultural identities of Russians and their European and Asian neighbors

Assessment Components
A. 2 Short Papers (1200 words each): 2 x 15%

Short Paper 1: Sources of Russian Cultural Identity – due on October 18 (before Session 15)

Short Paper 2: Russia’s Cultural Space In-Between East and West – due on November 15 (before
B. Research Essay (2500 words): 30% - due on December 6 (before Session 28)

The topics of the research essays will be formulated in the course of individual consultations, taking into account the content of the course and each student’s academic background.

C. Final Exam: 30% - Final week. (The exam will last 75 minutes and will contain 6 questions explored in the course, answerable in five to ten sentences.)

D. Individual contribution to class discussions: 10% (Students will be expected to have read the assigned literature prior to class and to participate actively in the discussion.)

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.

Assessment Expectations

**Grade A:** Excellent work. Shows a full mastery of the topic and an ability to express thoughts cogently and persuasively. It shows the stamp of an individual approach to the problem set.

**Grade B:** Very good work but falling short of the highest level

**Grade C:** Satisfactory and sufficiently accurate work, lacking in clarity and individual insights.

**Grade D:** Passable work. Meets minimum requirements but not very well focused. Probably based on very limited reading

**Grade F:** Failure to achieve a passable standard. Muddled, poorly presented written work.

Grade conversion

A=94-100
A-=90-93
B+=87-89
B=84-86
B-=80-83
C+=77-79
C=74-76
C-=70-73
D+=67-69
D=65-66
F=below 65
Grading Policy

NYU Prague aims to have grading standards and results similar to those that prevail at Washington Square. At the College of Arts and Sciences, roughly 39% of all final grades are in the B+ to B- range, and 50% in the A/A- range. We have therefore adopted the following grading guideline: in any non-Stern course, class teachers should try to ensure that no more than 50% of the class receives an A or A-. A guideline is not a curve. A guideline is just that—it gives an ideal benchmark for the distribution of grades towards which we work.

Attendance Policy

Each unexcused absence will result in your final grade being reduced by 3%. Absences only for medical reasons will be excused. To obtain an excused absence, you are obliged to supply either a doctor’s note or corroboration of your illness by a member of the housing staff (either an RA or a Building Manager). Absences due to travel will not be excused.

Late Submission of Work

(1) Work submitted within 5 weekdays after the submission time without an agreed extension receives a penalty of 5 points on the 100 point scale.
(2) Work submitted after 5 weekdays after the submission date without an agreed extension fails and is given a zero.

Plagiarism Policy

Required Text(s)

Nearly all required texts (drawn from the sources listed below) are included in the Reader “Russia Between East and West” available in the library.


Supplemental Text(s) (not required to purchase as copies are in NYU-P Library)

Internet Research Guidelines

Additional Required Equipment

Session 1
Course Overview and Introduction. (Our) Stereotypes of Russia
(Discussion and Quiz)
Tuesday, September 4

Session 2
Russia in Pictures and Sounds
(Video and Audio Presentation)
Thursday, September 6

Session 3
Defining Vectors of Russian Destiny: Geopolitics and Religion

Supplementary Readings: (a) G. Freeze (ed.), *Russia. A History*, Chapter 1.

Session 4
The Key to the Russian Soul: Russian Orthodox Christianity

Supplementary Readings: N. Riasanovsky, *A History of Russia*, Ch. 3-9

Session 5
An Enemy from the East: the “Mongol Yoke”

Supplementary Readings: N. Riazanovsky, Chapters 11-15.

Session 6
“Acquainted with Grief”: Terror under Ivan the Terrible and during the Great Schism

Watching fragments of a film about the reign of Ivan the Terrible

Supplementary Readings: ‘The Correspondence between Ivan the Terrible and Prince Kurbsky’, in Riha,

**Session 7**
Tuesday, September 25

*An Enemy from the West: Defending Identity in the “Time of Troubles”*

*Required Readings:* N. Riazanovsky, Chapter XVI, pp. 157-175 – (total: 18 pages)

*Watching* fragments of Vladimir Chotinenko’s “1612”

**Session 8**
Thursday, September 27

*The Long Middle Ages: Missing the Boat of the Renaissance and Reformation*


**Session 9**
Tuesday, October 2

*“Old Russia” in the Mirror of the Arts (I): Painting and Architecture*


*Video presentation* of the great works of Russian painting and architecture with a commentary

**Session 10**
Thursday, October 4

*“Old Russia” in the Mirror of the Arts (II): Opera*

*Required Readings:* (a) Libretto of the opera *Boris Godunov* by M. Mussorgsky; (b) poem *The Lay of Igor’s Campaign* - (total: 45 pages)

*Listening* to excerpts from the operas *Boris Godunov* by M. Mussorgsky and *Prince Igor* by I. Borodin with a commentary

**Session 11**
Friday, October 5

*Russia’s New Beginning: Peter the Great’s “Revolution from Above”*

[Click and enter topic, weekly reading assignment chapters/page numbers]


*Supplementary Readings:* G. Freeze, Chapters 3-4.

**Session 12**
Tuesday, October 9

*Sankt Petersburg: Russia’s “Window on Europe” or Russia’s “European Theater” (de Custine)?*


*Watching* fragments of Aleksandr Sokurov’s film “Russian Ark” (2002)

*Supplementary Readings:* N. Riasanovsky, Chapters 11-19.

**Session 13**
Tuesday, October 16

*The Age of Empresses: The Russian Enlightenment*
Thursday, October 11


**Supplementary Readings**: N. Riasanovsky, Chapters 21-22.

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**Session 14**

Tuesday, October 16

**War and Peace : The Process of National Maturation during the Napoleonic Era**

**Required Readings**: N. Riasanovsky, Chapter 25, pp. 300-323 – (total: 23 pages)

**Supplementary Readings**: L. Tolstoy, *War and Peace*

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**Session 15**

Thursday, October 18

**Russian Romanticism and the Call of Liberty: Challenging Tsarist Autocracy**


**Supplementary Readings**: N. Riasanovsky, Chapter 26.

**Short Paper 1 Due**

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**Fall Break**

October 22-26

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**Session 16**

Tuesday, October 30

**Superfluous Men (I) : The Post-Decembrist Identity Crisis**


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**Session 17**

Thursday, November 1

**Superfluous Men (II) : Between Nihilism and Fatalism**


**Listening** to excerpts from Tchaikovsky’s opera Eugene Onegin with a commentary

**Supplementary Readings**: A. Pushkin’s poem “Eugene Onegin”

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**Session 18**

**Westernizers vs Slavophiles : Enlightened Rationalism vs Romantic Nationalism**
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<th>Session 19</th>
<th>Defining Russia’s Uniqueness: Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality</th>
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<th>Session 20</th>
<th>Light from the East: Dostoyevsky on Russia and the West</th>
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<td>Friday, November 9</td>
<td>(make-up for Thursday classes)</td>
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<th>Session 21</th>
<th>Between Messianism and Imperial Hubris: Russia’s Expansion into Siberia, Caucasus and Central Asia</th>
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<td><strong>Supplementary Readings:</strong> F. Dostoyevsky, <em>Memoirs from the House of the Dead</em>; L. Tolstoy, <em>Hadji-Murat</em></td>
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<th>Session 22</th>
<th>Listening to Subordinate Voices: Serfs and Industrial Workers in the Imperial Russia</th>
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<th>Session 23</th>
<th>The Bolshevik Revolution and the Soviet Golden Age of the 1920s</th>
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<td>Tuesday, November 20</td>
<td><strong>Required Readings:</strong> G. Freeze, Chapter 10, pp. 263-290 (total: 28 pages)</td>
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<th>Session 24</th>
<th>The Soviet Experience: Revolutionary Transformations of Identities in the Soviet Russia</th>
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<td>Date</td>
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