

## Department of Russian

Professor: *Hodge*

Associate Professor: *Weiner (Chair)*

Lecturer: *Bishop*

Lecturer in Russian Language: *Epsteyn*

Since its founding in the 1940s by Vladimir Nabokov, the Russian Department has dedicated itself to excellence in literary scholarship and undergraduate teaching. Our four faculty members specialize in different areas of Russian language and literature and incorporate a broad range of cultural material—including history, music, and visual art—into their courses. Numerous activities both inside and outside the classroom are designed to enrich students' appreciation of the achievements and fascinating traditions of Russian civilization. At the same time, we give our students critical skills that will serve them outside the Russian context.

### **RUSS 101 Elementary Russian I**

*Hodge*

Introduction to Russian grammar through oral, written, and reading exercises; special emphasis on oral expression. *Four periods.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: None

Semester: Fall, Wintersession Unit: 1.0

### **RUSS 102 Elementary Russian II**

*Weiner*

Continued studies in Russian grammar through oral, written, and reading exercises; special emphasis on oral expression; multimedia computer exercises. *Four periods.*

Prerequisite: 101 or equivalent

Distribution: None

Semester: Spring Unit: 1.0

### **RUSS 125/WRIT 125 Great Short Stories from Russia (in English)**

*Bishop*

Russian literature has given the world some of the best stories ever told, and this course surveys two centuries' worth of them. Someone once quipped that all of twentieth-century Russian literature came out of Nikolai Gogol's "Nose." And so we begin with "The Nose" and other ridiculous stories by Gogol. We will go on to read some of the finest short stories of Chekhov, and the Nobel Prize winner Ivan Bunin. The grotesque realism of Isaac Babel's stories and the magical realism of Vladimir Nabokov's also lie within the scope of this course. We will conclude with the late- and post-Soviet stories of Tatiana Tolstaia and Liudmila Petrushevskaja. *No prior knowledge of Russian language or literature is required. This course satisfies the requirements for Writing 125 and counts as a unit towards a major in Russian Language and Literature. Three periods.*

Prerequisite: None. Open only to first-year students.  
Distribution: Language and Literature  
Semester: Fall                      Unit: 1.0

### **RUSS 201 Intermediate Russian I**

*Weiner*

Conversation, composition, reading, music, comprehensive review of grammar; special emphasis on speaking and writing idiomatic Russian. Students learn and perform a play in Russian in the course of the semester. *Four periods.*

Prerequisite: 102 or equivalent  
Distribution: Language and Literature  
Semester: Fall                      Unit: 1.0

### **RUSS 202 Intermediate Russian II**

*Bishop*

Conversation, composition, reading, popular music, continuation of grammar review; special emphasis on speaking and writing idiomatic Russian. Students read unadapted short stories by Pushkin and Zamiatin and view classic films such as *Brilliantovaia ruka*. *Four periods.*

Prerequisite: 201 or equivalent  
Distribution: Language and Literature  
Semester: Spring                      Unit: 1.0

### **RUSS 203W/303W Russian in Moscow**

*Epsteyn*

This course is offered as an immersion experience, designed to improve students' oral proficiency in Russian while introducing them to the literary treasures of Russia's capital. Mornings students study language with a Wellesley College instructor and a Muscovite instructor. Afternoons and evenings they visit literary sites associated with Moscow's great writers. On selected evenings, students attend plays, operas and concerts based on literary sources. *This course may be taken as either 203W or, with additional assignments, 303W. Not offered every year. Subject to Dean's Office approval.*

Prerequisite: 203: 201 or permission of the instructor; 303: 301 or permission of the instructor. Application required.  
Distribution: Language and Literature  
Semester: Wintersession                      Unit: 1.0

### **RUSS 250 Research or Individual Study**

Prerequisite: Open by permission to qualified students.  
Distribution: None  
Semester: Fall, Spring      Unit: 1.0

### **RUSS 250H Research or Individual Study**

Prerequisite: Open by permission to qualified students.

Distribution: None  
Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 0.5

**RUSS 251 The Nineteenth-Century Russian Classics: Passion, Pain, Perfection (in English)**

*Hodge*

Survey of Russian fiction from the Age of Pushkin (1820s–1830s) to Tolstoy’s mature work (1870s) focusing on the role of fiction in Russian history, contemporaneous critical reaction, literary movements in Russia, and echoes of Russian literary masterpieces in the other arts, especially film and music. Major works by Pushkin (*Eugene Onegin*, “The Queen of Spades”), Lermontov (*A Hero of Our Time*), Gogol (*Dead Souls*, “The Overcoat”), Pavlova (*A Double Life*), Turgenev (*Fathers and Sons*), Tolstoy (*Anna Karenina*), and Dostoevsky (*Crime and Punishment*) will be read. *Taught in English. Two periods.*

Prerequisite: None  
Distribution: Language and Literature  
Semester: Fall Unit: 1.0

**RUSS 255 Soviet and Russian Film (in English)**

*Bishop*

The masterpieces of Russian film from the 1920s to the present day will be screened, analyzed, and discussed. Students will explore the famous techniques and themes developed by legendary Russian/Soviet filmmakers, including Eisenstein, Vertov, Tarkovsky and Mikhalkov. We will treat these films as works of art, examining the ways in which directors, like authors of novels and other literary genres, create a fictional world. Guest lecturers will comment on specific issues. *Taught in English. Two periods.*

Prerequisite: None  
Distribution: Arts, Music, Theatre, Film, Video  
Semester: Spring Unit: 1.0

**RUSS 272 Politically Correct: Ideology and the Nineteenth-Century Russian Novel (in English)**

*Hodge*

**NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. OFFERED IN 2009-10.** Is there a “politically correct” set of responses for artists active under a repressive regime? We examine various Russian answers to this question through an intensive analysis of the great ideological novels at the center of Russia’s historic social debates from the 1840s through the 1860s. The tension between literary Realism and political exigency will be explored in the fictional and critical works of Herzen, Turgenev, Chernyshevsky, Goncharov, Dobroliubov, Dostoevsky, and Pisarev. Representative works from the nonliterary arts will supplement reading and class discussion. *Taught in English. Two periods.*

Prerequisite: None  
Distribution: Language and Literature  
Semester: N/O. Offered in 2009-10. Unit: 1.0

### **RUSS 276 Fedor Dostoevsky: The Seer of Spirit (in English)**

*Weiner*

Probably no writer has been so detested and adored, so demonized and deified, as Dostoevsky. This artist was such a visionary that he had to reinvent the novel in order to create a form suitable for his insights into the inner life and his prophecies about the outer. To this day readers are mystified, outraged, enchanted, but never unmoved, by Dostoevsky's fiction, which some have tried to brand as "novel-tragedies," "romantic realism," "polyphonic novels," and more. This course challenges students to enter the fray and explore the mysteries of Dostoevsky themselves through study of his major writings. *Taught in English. Two periods.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Language and Literature

Semester: Fall                      Unit: 1.0

### **RUSS 277 Lev Tolstoy: Russia's Ecclesiast (in English)**

*Hodge*

An odyssey through the fiction of the great Russian novelist and thinker, beginning with his early works (*Sevastopol Stories*) and focusing on *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*, though the major achievements of Tolstoy's later period will also be included (*A Confession, The Death of Ivan Ilich*). Lectures and discussion will examine the masterful techniques Tolstoy employs in his epic explorations of human existence, from mundane detail to life-shattering cataclysm. Students are encouraged to have read the Maude translation of *War and Peace* (Norton Critical Edition) before the semester begins. *Taught in English. Two periods.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Language and Literature

Semester: Spring                      Unit: 1.0

### **RUSS 282 From Russia With Love: Family and Sexuality in Twentieth-Century Russian Literature (in English)**

*Bishop*

**NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. OFFERED IN 2009-10.** Tolstoy famously wrote, "All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." Beginning with his controversial novella, *The Kreutzer Sonata*, we will discuss love and family in Russian literature, a problem which becomes particularly complicated in the twentieth century. We will explore issues of androgyny in the writings of the symbolists, the regimentation of sex in Zamiatin's anti-utopian novel *We*, questions of disease and sterility in Solzhenitsyn's *Cancer Ward*, and adultery in Pasternak's *Dr. Zhivago*. We will revisit the eternal literary theme of generational conflict, specifically in the form of mothers and daughters in the writings of Tsvetaeva and Petrushevskaya. We will also view and analyze films such as *Bed and Sofa* and *Commissar*. *Taught in English. Two periods.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Language and Literature

Semester: N/O. Offered in 2009-10. Unit: 1.0

### **RUSS 286 Vladimir Nabokov (in English)**

*Weiner*

**NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. OFFERED IN 2009-10.** An examination of the artistic legacy of the great novelist, critic, lepidopterist, and founder of the Wellesley College Russian Department. Nabokov's works have joined the canon of twentieth-century classics in both Russian and English literature. Students will explore Nabokov's English-language novels (*Lolita*, *Pnin*, *Pale Fire*) and the authorized English translations of his Russian works (*The Defense*, *Despair*, *Invitation to a Beheading*). *Taught in English. Two periods.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Language and Literature

Semester: N/O. Offered in 2009-10. Unit: 1.0

### **RUSS 301 Advanced Russian**

*Epsteyn*

**Topic for 2008-09: Moscow.** Students will become experts in one of the great overarching themes of Russian culture: Moscow. We will read and discuss texts, view films, listen to music, and compose essays on the theme of Russia's historic capital. The course includes study of grammar, vocabulary expansion with strong emphasis on oral proficiency and comprehension. At the end of the semester each student will write a final paper and present to the class her own special research interest within the general investigation of Moscow's history, traditions, culture, and art. *Taught in Russian. Three periods.*

Prerequisite: 201-202 or the equivalent

Distribution: Language and Literature

Semester: Fall Unit: 1.0

### **RUSS 302 Advanced Russian II**

*Epsteyn*

**Topic for 2008-09: Children and Laughter in Russia.** Students will enter the world of Russian children's folklore, literature, songs, film, and animation. From lullabies to folktales, from Pushkin's skazki, animal fables by Krylov, didactic stories by Tolstoy we will move on to examine the contribution of Soviet authors from the early 1920s to the present (V. Maiakovsky, K. Chukovsky, S. Marshak, D. Kharms, M. Zoshchenko, A. Gaidar, N. Nosov, E. Uspensky, G. Oster) and their effect on the aesthetic development and ethical upbringing of children in Russia. The course emphasizes oral proficiency, extensive reading and weekly writing assignments. Students will create and present a final project on their own special research interest. *Taught in Russian. Two periods.*

Prerequisite: 301 or the equivalent

Distribution: Language and Literature

Semester: Spring Unit: 1.0

**RUSS 333 Nineteenth-Century Russian Narrative Poetry: Tales of Mystery and Adventure (in Russian)**

*Hodge*

**NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. OFFERED IN 2009-10.** Students will immerse themselves in the famous *poemy* of Derzhavin, Zhukovskii, Pushkin, Baratynskii, Kozlov, Lermontov, and Nekrasov, analyzing ballads and verse tales devoted to the natural and the supernatural. Exotic “Oriental” cultures as well as high and low Russian culture serve as the backdrop for these dramatic verse narratives. Russian painting, music, and history will enrich our discussions of Russian Romanticism in the poetry.

Prerequisite: 301 or 302 as prerequisite or corequisite.

Distribution: Language and Literature

Semester: N/O. Offered in 2009-10. Unit: 0.5

**RUSS 350 Research or Individual Study**

Prerequisite: Open by permission to qualified students.

Distribution: None

Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 1.0

**RUSS 350H Research or Individual Study**

Prerequisite: Open by permission to qualified students.

Distribution: None

Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 0.5

**RUSS 360 Senior Thesis Research**

Prerequisite: By permission of department. See Academic Distinctions.

Distribution: None

Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 1.0

**RUSS 370 Senior Thesis**

Prerequisite: 360 and permission of department.

Distribution: None

Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 1.0

**RUSS 376 Fedor Dostoevsky’s Short Stories (in Russian)**

*Weiner*

A Russian-language course designed to supplement 276 above, though 376 may be taken independently. Students will read and discuss, in Russian, major short works by Dostoevsky. *One period.*

Prerequisite: 301 or 302 as prerequisite or corequisite.

Distribution: Language and Literature

Semester: Fall Unit: 0.5

### **RUSS 377 Lev Tolstoy's Short Stories (in Russian)**

*Hodge*

A Russian-language course designed to supplement 277 above, though 377 may be taken independently. Students will read and discuss, in Russian, major short works by Tolstoy. *One period.*

Prerequisite: Prerequisite or corequisite: 301 or 302

Distribution: Language and Literature

Semester: Spring. Unit: 0.5

### **RUSS 386 Vladimir Nabokov's Short Stories (in Russian)**

*Weiner*

**NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. OFFERED IN 2009-10.** A Russian-language course designed to supplement 286 above, though 386 may be taken independently. Students will read and discuss, in Russian, major short works by Nabokov. *One period.*

Prerequisite: 301 or 302 as prerequisite or corequisite.

Distribution: Language and Literature

Semester: N/O. Offered in 2009-10. Unit: 0.5

## **Related Courses**

*For Credit Towards the Major*

**CPLT 284** Magical Realism: Russia and Beyond

## **Directions for Election**

Students majoring in Russian should consult the chair of the department early in their college career. For information on all facets of the Russian department, please visit [www.wellesley.edu/Russian/rusdept.html](http://www.wellesley.edu/Russian/rusdept.html).

Students who cannot take RUSS 101 during the fall semester are strongly encouraged to take 101 during Wintersession; those interested in doing so should consult the chair early in the fall term.

Advanced courses on Russian literature and culture are given in English translation at the 200 level; corresponding 300-level courses offer supplemental reading and discussion in Russian. Please refer to the descriptions for 376, 377, 382, and 386 above.

### **The Major in Russian Language and Literature**

A student majoring in Russian Language and Literature must take at least eight units in the department above RUSS 102, including:

1. language courses through 302;
2. RUSS 251;
3. two 200-level courses above 251; and
4. one unit of 300-level coursework above 302 other than 350, 360, and 370.

RUSS 101 and 102 are counted toward the degree but not toward the Russian major.

Thus, a student who begins with no knowledge of Russian would typically complete the following courses to major in Russian: 101 and 102, 201 and 202, 301 and 302; 251; two 200-level literature courses above 252; and one unit from 300-level literature courses.

### **The Minor in Russian Language**

A student minoring in Russian must take at least five units in the department above RUSS 102, at least one of which must be at the 300 level.

### **Honors**

Students may graduate with honors in Russian either by writing a thesis or by taking comprehensive examinations. To be admitted to the thesis program, a student must have a grade point average of at least 3.5 in all work in the major field above the 100-level; the department may petition on her behalf if her GPA in the major is between 3.0 and 3.5. Students electing to take comprehensive examinations have a series of non-credit-bearing weekly tutorials on four special topics in Russian literature or culture (or both) over the entire course of their senior year; these topics must be chosen under the guidance of the chair and will normally be related to the coursework the student has completed; at the end of the student's final semester at Wellesley, she takes six written examinations over the course of one week: four on her special topics, and two language examinations. Students who wish to attempt either honors exercise should consult the chair early in the second semester of their junior year. See Academic Distinctions.

### **Study Abroad**

Majors are encouraged to enroll in summer language programs to accelerate their progress in the language. Credit toward the major is normally given for approved summer or academic-year study at selected institutions in the U.S. and Russia. Major credit is also given for approved junior year abroad programs.

### **Russian Area Studies**

Students interested in an interdepartmental major in Russian area studies are referred to the following and should visit the Russian area studies Web pages at [www.wellesley.edu/Russian/RAS/rashome.html](http://www.wellesley.edu/Russian/RAS/rashome.html). Attention is called to Russian area studies courses in history, economics, political science, anthropology, and sociology.