
 BERKELEY DAVIS IRVINE LOS ANGELES MERCED RIVERSIDE SAN DIEGO SAN FRANCISCO



 SANTA BARBARA SANTA CRUZ

DEPARTMENT OF SLAVIC LANGUAGES, EAST EUROPEAN, AND EURASIAN LANGUAGES & LITERATURES

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March 1, 2016

To: Muriel McClendon, Chair
General Education Governance Committee

Attn: Myrna Dee C. Kikuchi, Program Representative
A265 Murphy Hall
Mail Code: 157101

From: Ronald Vroon, Chair
Vadim Shneyder, Assistant Professor
Slavic, East European and Eurasian Languages and Cultures

RE: Russian 31: Introduction to Russian Film

Dear Professor McClendon:

The Department of Slavic, East European and Eurasian Languages and Cultures would like to submit the course Russian 31: Introduction to Russian Film for consideration as a General Education course that would satisfy the requirements in the area of Foundations of the Arts and Humanities and the following two subgroups: Visual and Performance Arts Analysis and Practice and Literary and Cultural Analysis. The proposed course is a new version of an existing undergraduate course, which has been re-designed to meet the General Education requirements.

In putting together the proposal contained in this packet, we have consulted with the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, which has offered its own GE film course, Chinese 80, Chinese Cinema: Pictures, Prisms, Products, Projections, since the 2014-2015 academic year. We have drawn on the experience of our colleagues in that department to make sure that our proposed course fulfills the GE requirements. Russian 31 would complement the GE cinema courses that are already offered by the Department of Italian (Italian 46, Transgressing Stereotypes: Ethnicity and Gender in Italian and Italian-American Movies), the Department of French (French 41: French Cinema and Culture), Department of German (German 57: Hollywood and Germany), and Department of Classics (Classics 42: Cinema and the Ancient World). The new syllabus, new course title, and the proposal to upgrade Russian 31 to GE credit were discussed and approved unanimously at a faculty meeting on February 24.

Russian 31 presents Russian cinema both as a profoundly creative artistic tradition and as a powerful lens through which to engage in a multi-disciplinary examination of Russian history and culture in the twentieth century. The course provides an overview of the cinematic tradition

of the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia through a series of thematically organized units, each of which emphasizes a salient aspect of Russian cinema in its cultural and historical context. Each week, students will watch a film and read a series of texts that illuminate the film both as a work of cinematic art and as a cultural artifact. The thematic units will introduce students to various frames of reference for examining Russian film; topics explored in the course include: the ambivalent attitudes of early Soviet filmmakers to Hollywood and American culture; the role of cinema in articulating narratives of Soviet history; Soviet cinema and Cold War anti-colonialism; the attempt by cultural authorities during the Stalin era to produce a popular “cinema for the millions”; and Soviet women filmmakers and the commemoration of World War II. While the thematic units demonstrate the many different ways in which film played a formative role in twentieth-century Russian culture, theoretical texts, including classic works by major Russian film theorists, will introduce students to the main methods and categories of film analysis, including formalism, genre theory, and auteur theory. Finally, the course’s two written assignments will reinforce the dual focus on film as a medium with corresponding methods of close analysis and on film as a culturally conditioned art form through which one can gain insight into the major national and historical narratives, ideological projects, and cultural controversies that have shaped Russian life in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Lectures will continuously emphasize this dual focus and will introduce students to the guiding questions and methodologies of film studies and cultural history while providing them with a robust foundation in the specifics of Russian cinema in its cultural, historical, aesthetic, economic, and technological contexts.

Broadly speaking, this course offers students an introduction to the foundational theories, methods, questions, and “ways of knowing” utilized by scholars working in film studies and area studies. Students will come away from the course with an understanding of the different methods and levels of analysis available to scholars studying the complex interactions of texts and contexts, as well as specific knowledge about a number of the outstanding works of the Russian cinematic tradition.

Thank you for your consideration,



Ronald Vroon, Chair



Vadim Shneyder

General Education Course Information Sheet

Please submit this sheet for each proposed course

Department & Course Number Russian 31
 Course Title History of Russian Cinema
 Indicate if Seminar and/or Writing II course _____

1 Check the recommended GE foundation area(s) and subgroups(s) for this course

Foundations of the Arts and Humanities

- Literary and Cultural Analysis X
- Philosophic and Linguistic Analysis _____
- Visual and Performance Arts Analysis and Practice X

Foundations of Society and Culture

- Historical Analysis _____
- Social Analysis _____

Foundations of Scientific Inquiry

- Physical Science _____
With Laboratory or Demonstration Component must be 5 units (or more) _____
- Life Science _____
With Laboratory or Demonstration Component must be 5 units (or more) _____

2. Briefly describe the rationale for assignment to foundation area(s) and subgroup(s) chosen.

This course will introduce students to a range of significant Russian films. These will be examined both as works of cinematic art—works conditioned by the specific nature of film as a medium and best understood with the analytical tools of film studies—and as cultural artifacts of the Russian (and Soviet) twentieth century, which, therefore, can only be understood in light of social, cultural, and political history. In this course, the formal analysis of film is therefore inseparable from a range of broader artistic, ideological, technological, and economic considerations.

3. "List faculty member(s) who will serve as instructor (give academic rank):

Vadim Shneyder (Assistant Professor)
 Ronald Vroon (Professor)

Do you intend to use graduate student instructors (TAs) in this course? Yes X No _____
 If yes, please indicate the number of TAs 2

4. Indicate when do you anticipate teaching this course over the next three years:

2015-16	Fall	_____	Winter	_____	Spring	_____
	Enrollment	_____	Enrollment	_____	Enrollment	_____
2016-17	Fall	_____	Winter	_____	Spring	<u>X</u>
	Enrollment	_____	Enrollment	_____	Enrollment	<u>100</u>
2017-18	Fall	_____	Winter	_____	Spring	<u>X</u>
	Enrollment	_____	Enrollment	_____	Enrollment	<u>100</u>

5. GE Course Units

Is this an **existing** course that has been modified for inclusion in the new GE? Yes X No _____
 If yes, provide a brief explanation of what has changed. This course has been thoroughly revised

with a dual focus on introducing students to the formal analysis of film and to the study of films in a multiplicity of contexts, so that students are exposed to the methods and guiding questions of film studies and Russian cultural history.

Present Number of Units: 5 Proposed Number of Units: 5

6. Please present concise arguments for the GE principles applicable to this course.

- General Knowledge

This course introduces students to the following methodologies and areas of inquiry: analysis of film form in its general theoretical aspects and film history in Russia and the Soviet Union; Russian culture in its relation to the West and to the non-Russian cultures of the former Soviet Union; Russian history in the twentieth century, particularly in the contexts of industrialization and the Cold War. Broadly, students will learn about the ways in which scholars discuss films as self-contained works of art, as cultural artifacts belonging to a particular place and time, and as elements of a tradition, to which individual films respond and which they in turn transform.
- Integrative Learning
- Ethical Implications
- Cultural Diversity
- Critical Thinking

Students will learn how to approach films—and often films whose aesthetics differ radically from what they are used to seeing—through a number of interpretive lenses. They will learn how to negotiate between different conceptual and analytical levels when talking and writing about films; they will develop the critical skills to understand films as expressions of individual vision, as products of artistic schools, ideological discourses, political projects, genres, and economic forces. They will learn to analyze the rhetoric of films and to understand how they have been used to entertain, persuade, and manipulate audiences.
- Rhetorical Effectiveness

The course’s writing assignments will require students to draw on formal analysis, interpretation of narrative, and examination of cultural and historical forces to craft arguments supported by visual and contextual evidence. The final paper assignment will require students to integrate the ideas of scholars into their own work as they craft a comparative argument.
- Problem-solving
- Library & Information Literacy

(A) STUDENT CONTACT PER WEEK (if not applicable write N/A)

- 1. Lecture: 3 (hours)
- 2. Discussion Section: 1 (hours)

- | | | |
|---|------------------|---------|
| 3. Labs: | 2 (film | |
| | viewings) | (hours) |
| 4. Experiential (service learning, internships, other): | | (hours) |
| 5. Field Trips: | | (hours) |

(A) TOTAL Student Contact Per Week **6** **(HOURS)**

(B) OUT-OF-CLASS HOURS PER WEEK (if not applicable write N/A)

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|---------|
| 1. General Review & Preparation: | 2 | (hours) |
| 2. Reading | 4 | (hours) |
| 3. Group Projects: | | (hours) |
| 4. Preparation for Quizzes & Exams: | 1 | (hours) |
| 5. Information Literacy Exercises: | | (hours) |
| 6. Written Assignments: | 2 | (hours) |
| 7. Research Activity: | | (hours) |

(B) TOTAL Out-of-class time per week **9** **(HOURS)**

GRAND TOTAL (A) + (B) must equal at least 15 hours/week **15** **(HOURS)**

Russian 31 | UCLA, Fall 2016 Survey of Russian Film

Sample syllabus

Course Description and Objectives

Lecture, three hours; discussion, one hour; film screening, two hours. Knowledge of Russian not required.

Vladimir Lenin famously remarked that cinema was the “most important art” in the Soviet Union. From the early film experiments of Lev Kuleshov to the internationally acclaimed cinematic work of post-Soviet Russian filmmakers such as Aleksei Balabanov and Andrei Zviagintsev, the Russian cinematic tradition has played a defining role in the global history of film. This course offers a thematically organized introduction to some of the major films produced in the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia from the early 1920s to the present. Films are discussed in a broad cultural, social, and aesthetic context, with a focus on images as carriers of cultural value and ideological meaning, capable of shaping identities and constructing historical narratives. Theoretical and historical readings will serve to broaden and deepen our understanding of the films and help us develop a critical language capable of analyzing these works and grasping their historical significance.

Students will learn the key works, names, events, and concepts of the Russian cinematic tradition. They will develop skills in analyzing and interpreting films and will acquire the critical terminology of film studies. They will learn how film form and aesthetics are conditioned by technology, ideology, economics, theory, tradition, and culture. They will see how cinema in Russia has created and contested narratives of history and identity, how cinema has served the interests of the state, and how it has defied them.

Required Materials

1. Rimgaila Salys, ed. *The Russian Cinema Reader. Volume 1:1908 to the Stalin Era* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2013).
2. Course reader, to be purchased at the UCLA bookstore. The course reader contains texts written by Soviet filmmakers, including Sergei Eisenstein, Vsevolod Pudovkin, Lev Kuleshov, Dziga Vertov, and Andrei Tarkovsky, as well as selections from the work of contemporary scholars of Russian film and culture.

Highly Recommended

1. Timothy Corrigan, *A Short Guide to Writing about Film*, 9th ed. (Harlow, England: Longman, 2014).

The required books are available for purchase from the UCLA Store. Additional readings, images, and video recordings will be posted to the course site on CCLE.

All readings for a given class are to be completed before that day's lecture.

Course Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

1. Attendance and active participation in discussion sections; 15% of your final grade.
2. Short film analysis paper: You will select a scene from one of the films we have discussed up to this point in the quarter and analyze it, paying attention to such factors as: mise-en-scène, shot composition, editing, and sound. You will need to explain how the formal and thematic features you have identified contribute to the film's message; 4-5 pages; 20% of your final grade.
3. Quizzes: During the quarter, we will have three unannounced quizzes. These will test your knowledge of theoretical and technical aspects of film, as well as aspects of Russian history and culture that are pertinent to Russian cinema; 10% each for a total of 30% of your final grade.
4. Final research paper: In your final paper, you will build on your scene analysis to carry out a wider-ranging research project in which you will compare at least two Russian films. You will develop a topic in consultation with me, your TA, and your peers, in which you will examine such issues as: the historical development of a theme or formal element in Russian film; differences in the representation of certain characters, social/ethnic groups, or settings, whether between filmmakers or over time; or the relationship between the film practice of a chosen director and a larger Russian cinematic tradition. These are just suggestions, but the topic must examine at least two films and must draw on and cite at least three scholarly works; 7-8 pages; 35% of your final grade.

Grades will be lowered (from A to A-, etc.) for each day that an assignment is late.

Film Viewings

Unless otherwise noted, all films listed in the syllabus are required viewing. You should watch each week's film before the first lecture for that week. All films will be available for streaming on your personal computer through Video Furnace (accessible from the course website on CCLE) or for viewing on DVD in the Instructional Media Lab, located in Powell Library.

Writing Help from the Undergraduate Writing Center

The Undergraduate Writing Center offers UCLA undergraduates one-on-one sessions on their writing. The Center is staffed by peer learning facilitators (PLFs), undergraduates who are trained to help at any stage in the writing process and with writing assignments from across the curriculum. PLFs tailor appointments to the concerns of each writer.

The Center accepts both scheduled and walk-in appointments.

Locations and times:

Main Campus – A61 Humanities	M-Th, 10:00-6:00; F, 10:00-3:00
UWC on the Hill – Rieber 115 (for dorm residents)	Sun-Th, 7:00-9:00
Powell Library Inquiry Specialists – Reiber 115	Sun-Th, 7:00-9:00
Powell Library – Powell 228	Sun-Th, 6:00-9:00

Contact information:

The Undergraduate Writing Center
 Phone: 310-206-1320; e-mail: wcenter@ucla.edu
 Appointments: www.wp.ucla.edu/uwc

Policy on Academic Dishonesty

From the office of the Dean of Students:

“UCLA is a community of scholars. In this community, all members including faculty, staff and students alike are responsible for maintaining standards of academic honesty. As a student and member of the University community, you are here to get an education and are, therefore, expected to demonstrate integrity in your academic endeavors. You are evaluated on your own merits.

Cheating, plagiarism, collaborative work, multiple submissions without the permission of the professor, or other kinds of academic dishonesty are considered unacceptable behavior and will result in formal disciplinary proceedings usually resulting in **suspension** or **dismissal**.”

Plagiarism is the use of someone else’s words or ideas without proper attribution. If you are ever unsure whether a particular action would constitute academic dishonesty or how to attribute words or ideas properly, you have a number of resources.

You can direct any questions to the Office of the Dean of Students:
 1206 Murphy Hall
 Phone: (310) 825-3871
www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu

Or, you can always ask me or your TA.

Class Schedule

NB: RCR = *The Russian Cinema Reader*; an asterisk (*) indicates that the text is to be found in the course reader.

Week 1: Introduction. American ideology through a Soviet Lens:

Topics: Cinema and society in the 20th century; cinema as mass art; mass art, propaganda, and Soviet culture; Soviet film and Hollywood; Charlie Chaplin and Soviet film

Film: *The Extraordinary Adventures of Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks* (Kuleshov, 1926)

Reading: excerpts from Viktor Shklovskii, *Journey to the Land of Cinema**; Lev Kuleshov, “Americanitis”*; Vance Kepley, “Mr. Kuleshov in the Land of the Modernists” (RCR); Sergei Eisenstein’s letters to Hollywood filmmakers*

Week 2: Revolutionary Cinema:

Topics: Anti-bourgeois cinema; film and the construction of Soviet history; revolutionary aesthetics: montage cinema vs. the classical Hollywood style

Film: *Battleship Potemkin* (Eisenstein, 1925)

Reading: Eisenstein, “The Fourth Dimension in Cinema”*; Boris Eikhenbaum, “Problems of Cine-Stylistics”*; Richard Taylor, from *Battleship Potemkin: The Film Companion**; David Bordwell, “Monumental Heroics: The Silent Films” (RCR)

Week 3: Film and Reality:

Topics: Russian documentary film; cinema and Soviet construction; Dziga Vertov and the campaign against melodrama in film; cinema and ethnography in the multi-ethnic Soviet Union

Film: *Three Songs of Lenin* (Vertov, 1934)

Reading: writings of Dziga Vertov*; Elizabeth Papazian, from *Manufacturing Truth: The Documentary Moment in Early Soviet Culture**; Walter Benjamin, from “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”*

Week 4: Cinema for the Millions

Topics: Socialist realism and the culture of the Stalin period; the Stalinist musical

Film: *Circus* (Aleksandrov, 1936)

Reading: Boris Shumiatskii, from *Cinema for the Millions**; Slavoj Žižek, “Toward the Theory of the Stalinist Musical”*; Lilya Kaganovsky, “Stalinist Cinema, 1928-1953” (RCR); Rimgaila Salys, “*Circus*: The Spectacle of Ideology” (RCR)

Week 5: Cinema and the Nation

Topics: National cinema; *Russian* cinema vs. *Soviet* cinema; Silent film vs. sound film.

Film: *Alexander Nevsky* (Eisenstein, 1938)

Reading: David Quint, “Ossian to Eisenstein”*; Eisenstein, “Form and Content: Practice” and “Alexander Nevsky and the Rout of the Germans”*; Eisenstein, Pudovkin, Aleksandrov, and Vertov, “Statement on Sound”*

Week 6: Soviet Cinema and Soviet Women at War

Topics: Women directors in Soviet cinema; World War II and Soviet culture; Soviet war film; collective memory in the post-Stalin period

Film: *Wings* (Shepitko, 1966)

Reading: Tatiana Mikhailova and Mark Lipovetsky, “Flight without Wings”*; Denise Youngblood, from *Russian War Films**

Week 7: Soviet Cinema and the Cold War

Topics: The Cold War; cinema as technological showcase; Soviet internationalism after the war; cinema and colonialism

Film: *I am Cuba* (Kalatozov, 1964)

Reading: Stuart Klawans, from *Film Follies**; Frantz Fanon, “On National Culture”*; Edward Said, from *Orientalism**; Geoffrey Roberts, “Coexistence, Crisis and Schism”*

Week 8: The Waning of the Soviet Experiment

Topics: cinema and literary adaptation; science fiction film; film and landscape; historical memory and the legacy of the Gulag; auteur theory and Soviet film

Film: *Stalker* (Tarkovsky, 1978)

Reading: Andrei Tarkovsky, from *Sculpting in Time**; Vida T. Johnson and Graham Petrie, from *The Films of Andrei Tarkovsky: A Visual Fugue**

Week 9: Cinema and the Post-Soviet Cultural Landscape

Topics: *Chernukha* and post-Soviet Russian culture; film genre: Balabanov the auteur vs. Balabanov the creator of Russian action blockbusters

Film: *Brother* (Balabanov, 1997)

Reading: Nancy Condee, from *The Imperial Trace**; Eliot Borenstein, from *Overkill: Sex and Violence in Contemporary Russian Popular Culture**

Week 10: Russian Cinema in the Age of Putin

Topics: national cinema vs. transnational cinema: the international film circuit; intertextuality in film: Zviagintsev and Tarkovsky

Film: *Leviathan* (Zviagintsev, 2013)

Reading: TBA