Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies Program

Why study Russian, East European, and Eurasian studies?

The interdisciplinary study of Russia, Eastern Europe, and Eurasia creates culturally informed citizens who can act on national and international issues.

Undergraduate Programs

The interdisciplinary bachelor's degree is available only as a co-major or minor in conjunction with a major in one of the traditional academic disciplines. The co-major or minor also can be combined with a bachelor's degree in such schools as business or journalism.

Graduate Programs

A Master of Arts degree is offered in 3 tracks:

- Russian
- East European
- Ukrainian

Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies

The Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies is one of 16 comprehensive National Resource Centers funded by Title VI of the U.S. Higher Education Act for the study of Russia, Ukraine, Central Asia, East Central Europe, and the Balkans. It promotes language and area study in an integrated, interdisciplinary framework and in traditional academic disciplines. Languages taught include Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, Czech, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, Slovenian, Turkish, and Yiddish. The center administers B.A. co-major and M.A. degree programs in Russian, East European, and Eurasian studies and supports study abroad in Russia, Poland, Croatia, and Ukraine. Each year, visiting scholars from the region join KU's 50 area faculty members in exchange, instructional, and research activities. The center also coordinates and sponsors conferences, lectures, theatre, and outreach activities of interest to KU students, faculty members, K-12 teachers, and the community. It serves as a resource to the state, the Great Plains, and the nation.

Courses

REES 110. Understanding Russia and Eastern Europe. 3 Hours. SC AE42 / S.
A multidisciplinary introduction to the former communist states of Russia, the western Newly Independent States, Central Europe, and the Balkans. The course addresses the geography and history of the region, as well as the cultures of its peoples, as presented in literature, film, and music. Special attention is devoted to the current political, economic, and social situations, as they are reflected by the transition from communism and the rise of nationalism. LEC.

REES 111. Understanding Russia and Eastern Europe, Honors. 3 Hours. SC AE42 / S.
A multidisciplinary introduction to the former communist states of Russia, the western Newly Independent States, Central Europe, and the Balkans. The course addresses the geography and history of the region, as well as the cultures of its peoples, as presented in literature, film, and music. Special attention is devoted to the current political, economic, and social situations, as they are affected by the transition from communism and the rise of nationalism. Prerequisite: Open only to students in the University Honors Program, or by permission of instructor. LEC.

REES 177. First Year Seminar: ____. 3 Hours. GE11 / U.
A limited-enrollment, seminar course for first-time freshmen, addressing current issues in Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies. Course is designed to meet the critical thinking learning outcome of the KU Core. First-Year Seminar topics are coordinated and approved by the Office of First-Year Experience. Prerequisite: First-time freshman status. LEC.

REES 220. Societies and Cultures of Eurasia. 3 Hours. NW AE42 / S.
A broad, survey-type course that examines all the former Soviet republics-Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan-with additional coverage of neighboring regions. The course addresses the history of the region, literature, culture, geography, religion, and the building of post-Soviet states and societies. LEC.

REES 221. Societies and Cultures of Eurasia, Honors. 3 Hours. NW AE42 / S.
Examines the unique cultures and societies of the Eurasian region (Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and to a lesser degree, Russia, Mongolia and Afghanistan). For the better part of the 20th Century, this distinct region of the world was hidden beneath the communist veneer of the Soviet Union. With the collapse of the USSR, the countries of this region are returning to their historic roots, and this course introduces students to the history, politics, economics, literature and general culture of these countries. Open only to students admitted to the University Honors Program or by permission of instructor. LEC.

REES 480. Topics in Russian and East European Studies: ____. 1-3 Hours. H.
Interdisciplinary examination of topics involving two or more disciplines in Russian, East European, and Eurasian studies. LEC.

REES 485. War and Peace in Russian Culture. 3 Hours. H/W.
Lectures, readings, oral discussion, and written analyses of selected major works of Russian writing and other modes of creative expression and discourse that treat the subject of war and peace, such as imaginative literature, works of history, memoirs, cinema, music, and painting. Reading examples are The Song of Igor’s Campaign, Alexander Pushkin’s The Captain’s Daughter and A History of Pugachev, Leo Tolstoy’s War and Peace, Nadezhda Durova’s The Notes of a Girl-Cavalryman, Boris Pasternak’s Doctor Zhivago, and George Kennan’s Russia Leaves the War. Not open to students who have taken REES 685. LEC.

REES 492. Research Methods in Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies. 3 Hours. AE61 / H.
Development of interdisciplinary research skills and familiarity with resources and issues in the study of Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies. Preparation for REES 496. LEC.
REES 496. Capstone Research Seminar in Russian and East European, and Eurasian Studies. 3 Hours. AE61 / H.
Interdisciplinary original research conducted using at least one REES language and resulting in a research paper. Prerequisite: REES 492. LEC.

REES 498. Directed Readings. 1-3 Hours. H.
Individual and supervised readings in selected areas of Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies. Prerequisite: Prior permission of instructor and either CREEES director or associate director. LEC.

REES 499. Capstone Research Seminar in Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies, Honors. 3 Hours. AE61 / H.
Research and writing of a substantial paper, involving interdisciplinary original research and use of sources in at least one REES language, and presentation of this paper to an Honors committee of three REES faculty members. This thesis must be substantially different from any other Honors thesis. Prerequisite: REES 492. LEC.

REES 510. Understanding Central Asia. 3 Hours. NW AE42 / S/W.
An intensive, multidisciplinary survey of Central Asia, focusing on the former Soviet republics-Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan-with additional coverage of neighboring regions (the Caucasus and the Caspian basin, Afghanistan, and western China). The course addresses the history of the region (from the Silk Road to Soviet rule), geography, religion, and the building of post-Soviet states and societies. (Same as GEOG 590.) LEC.

REES 512. Siberia: Yesterday and Today. 3 Hours. NW AE42 / H/W.
An interdisciplinary course examining the development of Siberia from its beginnings to the present day. Topics to be covered are selected from the following list: topography and natural resources; conquest and exploitation by Russian and other European settlers; Siberia’s role as a place of imprisonment and exile; the development of towns and transportation systems; Siberian historiography; Siberian Russian literature; and Siberia’s place in Russia’s economy and national defense. LEC.

REES 513. Siberia: Russia’s Eastern Frontier. 3 Hours. NW AE42 / H/W.
An interdisciplinary course examining the terrain, peoples, and cultures of the vast expanse in northern Asia known as Siberia. Areas of inquiry include geology, archeology, ethnography, religions, folk culture, the arts, science and education, politics, and environmental problems. With an emphasis on the natural and social sciences, and exploration of the relationship between Siberia and its neighbors in all directions, including the United States (Alaska, “Russian America”), this course can be taken without duplication by students who have already taken REES 512 (or SLAV 512) Siberia Yesterday and Today. LEC.

REES 532. Russian Strategy and Military Power. 3 Hours. H.
Examines the central role the Russian military has played in its country’s politics, society, and culture in the modern period. Treats Russia’s victories and defeats in war, the course highlights the continuities in Russian strategic practices and illuminates the current and future strategic policies and military developments of the contemporary Russian state. LEC.

REES 573. Borderland Between Russia & Europe. 3 Hours. H/W.
Examines the history of relations between the governments, emerging national elites, and populations of Russia, Ukraine, Poland, and other East European countries, and the different regional perceptions and stereotypes, including the new post-Soviet states and their European neighbors. LEC.

REES 574. Ethnicity and Nationalism in Eastern Europe. 3 Hours. H/W.
Examines the emergence and evolution of regional ethno-cultural and national identities in Eastern Europe. Discusses the theories and definitions of ethnicity, nationality, and nationalism, and offers a practical approach to understanding nationalism’s and nationalist movements in Eastern Europe. LEC.

REES 646. Translation in Theory and Practice. 3 Hours. H.
Students undertake substantial work in the translation of non-technical writing, (e.g. poems, short stories, novels, essays, works of history, scientific treatises), from any REES language into English, and examine the practical and theoretical problems encountered in translation from the source to the target language. Prerequisite: BCRS 508, PLSH 508, RUSS 508, or permission of instructor. LEC.

REES 685. War and Peace in Russian Culture (in Russian). 3 Hours. H/W.
This course is taught in Russian. Lectures, readings, oral discussion, and written analyses of selected major works of Russian writing and other modes of creative expression and discourse that treat the subject of war and peace, such as imaginative literature, works of history, memoirs, cinema, music, and painting. Reading examples are Slovo o polku Igoreve. Pushkin’s Kapitanskaya dochka and Istoriiia Pugacheva, Tolstoy’s Voina i mir, Evgenii Tarle’s Napoleon, Pasternak’s Doktor Zhivago and Andrei Petukhov’s Pamiat’ o sluzhbe. Not open to students who have taken REES 485. Prerequisite: 3 years of Russian at the college level. LEC.

REES 687. Biography of a City: St. Petersburg. 3 Hours. AE42 / H.
Examination in depth of the historical, social, intellectual, and artistic development of St. Petersburg as a major urban center. LEC.

REES 704. Russian Orthodoxy in Historical Perspective. 3 Hours.
This course examines Russian Orthodoxy as a religious system and the institution of the Russian Orthodox Church from its first appearance in Russia to the present. It focuses on beliefs and practices of the clergy and laity; institutional structures; the relationships between Church and State; interactions with non-Orthodox religious communities; responses to Soviet atheist policies; Orthodox influences on political theory, philosophy, literature, and the fine arts. (Same as REL 704.) LEC.

REES 715. Seminar in the History of Russian Thought. 3 Hours.
Topics in the development of social radicalism and of philosophical positivism and materialism from Radischev through the Russian Marxists. A reading knowledge of Russian is desirable but not required. Prerequisite: REES 723 or PHIL 580. LEC.

REES 799. Directed Readings in Russian and East European Studies. 1-5 Hours.
RSH.

REES 895. Special Problems in Area Studies: _____ 3 Hours.
Interdisciplinary examination of topics involving two or more of the cooperating disciplines in Russian and East European studies. LEC.

REES 897. Research. 1 Hour.
Enrollment to fulfill Masters continuous enrollment rule. Prerequisite: Completion of all degree requirements except submission of seminar paper or comprehensive examination. RSH.

REES 898. Seminar in Russian and East European Studies. 3 Hours.
Mastery of interdisciplinary research skills, and knowledge of resources and scholarship on the study of Russian, east European, and Eurasian Studies. LEC.
REES 899. Capstone Research Seminar in Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies. 3 Hours.
Research, write, and present a professional-quality paper, involving interdisciplinary original research, consultation with REES faculty, and substantial use of sources in at least one REES language. Prerequisite: REES 898. SEM.

TAJ 110. Elementary Tajik I. 5 Hours. U.
Vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, grammar, and writing. Course includes reading of simple texts. Five hours of class per week. LEC.

TAJ 120. Elementary Tajik II. 5 Hours. U.
Continuation of TAJ 110. Vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, grammar, and writing. Course includes reading of simple texts. Five hours of class per week. Prerequisite: TAJ 110 or departmental permission. LEC.

TAJ 210. Intermediate Tajik I. 3 Hours. U.
A continuation of TAJ 120. Course emphasizes oral and written work in Tajik. Systematic review of grammar and introduction to reading in cultural texts. Prerequisite: TAJ 120 or departmental permission. LEC.

TAJ 220. Intermediate Tajik II. 3 Hours. U.
A continuation of TAJ 210. Course emphasizes oral and written work in Tajik. Systematic review of grammar and introduction to reading in cultural texts. Prerequisite: TAJ 210 or departmental permission. LEC.

TAJ 310. Advanced Tajik I. 3 Hours. U.
Enhancement of speaking, comprehension, reading and writing abilities in Tajik. Readings from Tajik literature introduced. Prerequisite: TAJ 220 or placement exam that establishes a level of proficiency in Tajik suited to Advanced Tajik I. LEC.

TAJ 320. Advanced Tajik II. 3 Hours. U.
Enhancement of speaking, comprehension, reading and writing abilities in Tajik. Readings from Tajik literature introduced. Prerequisite: TAJ 220 or placement exam that establishes a level of proficiency in Tajik suited to Advanced Tajik II. LEC.

TAJ 510. Tajik for Geographers. 1 Hour. H.
The course is designed to facilitate the use of primary sources in Tajik for carrying out research in human geography of Tajikistan. TAJ 510 compliments REES 510. Prerequisite: TAJ 220, or consent of instructor. LEC.

TAJ 532. Tajik For Sociologists. 1 Hour. H.
The course is designed to facilitate the use of primary sources in Tajik for carrying out research in sociology of Tajikistan. TAJ 532 compliments SOC 532. Prerequisite: TAJ 220, or consent of instructor. LEC.