

**Russian 484**  
**Russian and Soviet Cinema**  
**Fall 2009**  
3 credits (74991) GRUE 413

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Office Hours: M-W 2:00-3:00  
& by appointment

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**Course Overview**

This is a lecture/discussion course that will examine award-winning films by major Russian/Soviet directors such as Eisenstein, Tarkovskii, and Mikhalkov, and study the impact cinema continues to have on Russian society today. The course will enrich students' understanding and appreciation of a different culture and people through cinema and they will learn how to "read a film" by examining cinema theory. A brief outline in twentieth-century Soviet/Russian history will be given in order to place the films in context. Students will also be familiarized with trends and genres in world cinema. Assigned readings elucidating the films will be followed by in-depth class discussions.

**Textbook:** *Insiders and Outsiders in Russian Cinema* (eds. Norris & Torlone). Other textbooks and readings are on Rasmuson library reserve and also on e-res.

**Course Policies**

Students will be assigned texts for every session which will guide and stimulate class discussion. You will be randomly called upon to discuss the reading assignment. Class discussions should not be dominated by one or two students; participation should be relevant and constructive. There will be four reviews (3-4 pages each) of the assigned readings and a 6-8 page term paper will be due at the end of the semester. Instructions on the writing assignments will be given. For the oral presentation students will present one or two directors and their film(s) in their cultural, social, and political contexts and discuss the genre

and other points of cinematic interest (the presentation must have an angle, it cannot be just the summary of the film). In addition you will also prepare questions for a discussion which will shed light on the work and the period under discussion. (Handouts and PowerPoint presentations are encouraged.)

**Important** : Films shown in this class have mature content (nudity, violence, and strong language). If you have any objections to it, then you are advised not to enroll in this course. I will not be able to substitute "family friendly" films for the ones we will be watching.

### **Grading Policy**

Attendance -	5%
Participation -	10%
Reviews -	40% (10% each)
Presentation -	15%
Term paper -	20%
Quizzes -	10%

**Students will not be graded on a curve.**

### **Support Services**

If you have questions please see me during my office hours; if you have a conflict, I will set up an appointment with you. I will work with the Office of Disabilities Services (203 WHIT, 474-7043) to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities.

Please keep a respectful attitude in class; be considerate of your fellow students and your professor. **No food, cell phones and beepers are allowed while class is in session.**

### **Tentative Schedule (Reading assignment due for following week)**

Week 1 (09/03)  
Introduction to Russian/Soviet cinema; historical outline; cinema theory.  
Eisenstein, *Battleship Potemkin*

Reading Assignment (R.A.). Eisenstein, "Eisenstein on Eisenstein" (64-6); Eisenstein, "The Fourth Dimension in Cinema" (111-23) in *The Eisenstein Reader*. [e-res]

Week 2 (09/10)

Discussion of assigned material. Review 1 due W3.

Eisenstein, *Ivan the Terrible*

R.A. "Eisenstein's Cosmopolitan Kremlin" (81-95) in *Insiders and Outsiders in Russian Cinema* and "Time of Mass Terror" (95-119) in *Soviet Cinematography, 1918-1991*. [On library Reserve]

Week 3 (09/17)

Discussion of assigned text.

Eisenstein, *Ivan the Terrible*

R.A. "The Russian Film Comedy" (34-58) in *Russian Cinema*. [e-res]

**Review 1.**

Week 4 (09/24)

Discussion of assigned text.

Vertov, *The Man with a Movie Camera*

R.A. "Under the big Top" (68-80) in *Insiders and Outsiders in Russian Cinema*

Week 5 (10/01)

Discussion of assigned text.

Aleksandrov, *Circus*

R.A. "The Russian War Film" (124-45) in *Russian Cinema*. [e-res]

Review 2 due W6.

Week 6 (10/08)

Discussion of assigned text. Lecture on the Soviet war film.

Bondarchuk, *War and Peace*

**Review 2.**

Week 7 (10/15)

Tarkovskii, *Steamroller and Violin*

R.A. "Dressing the Part" (48-67) in *Insiders and Outsiders in Russian Cinema* and "Women and Russian Film" (82-102) in *Russian Cinema*. [e-res]

Week 8 (10/22)

Menshov, *Moscow Does Not Believe In Tears*

R.A. "In Search of an Audience: The New Russian Cinema of Reconciliation" (192-216) in *Consuming Russia: Popular Culture, Sex, And Society Since Gorbachev*. Review 3 due W9.

Week 9 (10/29)

Discussion of assigned text.

Chukrai, *The Thief*

R.A. "The Past of the Fatherland Reviewed" (91-114) in *Russia on Reels: The Russian Idea in Post-Soviet Cinema*. [On library Reserve]. **Review 3.**

Week 10 (11/05)

Discussion of assigned text.

Mikhalkov, *Burnt By The Sun*

R.A. "Identifying the Enemy in Contemporary Russian Film" (113-126) in *Insiders and Outsiders in Russian Cinema*

Outline of term paper (about 2 pages) due W11.

Week 11 (11/12)

Discussion of assigned text.

Wargnier, *East-West*

R.A. "About Killers, Freaks, and Real Men" (127-141) in *Insiders and Outsiders in Russian Cinema* and "To Moscow! To Moscow?" (76-87) in *Russia on Reels: The Russian Idea in Post-Soviet Cinema*.

[On library Reserve]

**Outline of term paper due.** Review 4 due W12.

Week 12 (11/19)

Discussion of assigned text.

Presentations due Weeks 13 and 14.

Balabanov, *Brother*

R.A. "Fools and Cuckoos" (142-162) in *Insiders and Outsiders in Russian Cinema*

**Review 4.**

(11/26) **Thanksgiving**

Week 13 (12/03)

**Presentations**

Discussion of assigned text.

Konchalovskii, *House of Fools*

Week 14 (12/10)

**Presentations**

Rogozhin, *Cuckoo*. **Term paper due.**