Syllabus  
Russian 245: LEC 001  
**Russian Life and Culture**  
Fall 2018  
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11 a.m. -12:15 p.m.  
Lubar Hall N130

**Instructor:** Dr. Nina Familian  
**Office:** 822 Curtin Hall  
**Telephone:** 414-229-4949 (for emergencies only: 414-737-1328)  
**Email:** familian@uwm.edu  
**Office hours:** Thursdays, 12:30 p.m. – 2:20 p.m. and by appointment

**Course Description:**  
The objective of this course is to provide you an introduction to the fundamentals of Russian culture as well as to develop your skills in humanistic inquiry. The assignments provide you a broad range of primary texts, from poems to chronicles, and from feature films to recipes. Our objective in class discussion and in our research and writing is to figure out how all these pieces come together to tell the story of Russian culture: how, why, when, and where it came to be what it is.

We will examine Russia’s cultural life through the country’s historical progression. Even though this is not a history class, students are expected to become familiar with major ground-breaking historical events in each century, their repercussions and impact on Russia’s cultural life and its further development. Students will learn about themes, trends, patterns in Russian culture expressed in literature, folklore, art, religion, daily life, architecture, and music. Also, each week we will look closer at a specific area of Russian culture (“Aspect of culture” in the syllabus). Areas will vary from grand and complex like Russian iconography to more down-to-earth like Russian hospitality and drinking traditions.

**General Education Requirements:**

**Prerequisite:** Satisfaction of OWC-A GER

**Humanities Component:**  
This course satisfies the Humanities component of the UWM General Education Requirements (GER). It approaches the study of Russian culture through humanistic means of inquiry (e.g., critical use of sources and evaluation of evidence, exercise of judgment and expression of ideas, organization, logical analysis, and creative use of knowledge). It introduces students to substantial and coherent bodies of historical, cultural, literary, and philosophical knowledge as a means of increasing your understanding of the complexities and varieties of human events. You will gain a fundamental knowledge of Russian culture over the last millennium. You also will analyze and critique the information presented with the goal of identifying elements of all these topics that speak to a uniquely Russian character. You will acquire a refined understanding of the historical readings, literary texts, films, etc. covered in the
course, and will be asked to demonstrate thoughtful, original, and creative approaches to the course material in your projects, presentations and exams.

All UWM courses with Humanities GER designation have the following learning outcome: “Students will be able respond coherently and persuasively to the materials of humanities study; this may be through logical, textual, formal, historical, or aesthetic analysis, argument and/or interpretation.”

In addition, this course addresses the following learning UW System Shared Learning Goal: “Effective Communication Skills including listening, speaking, reading, writing, and information literacy.” I will use your final projects – both the paper and the presentation – to assess your achievement of these outcomes according to the rubrics under “Coursework Details” below.

**Materials:**
All materials for the course are posted on D2L, including the main reference source

In case anyone is interested in owning the Hingley book instead of reading it off screen or making Xerox copies, he/she could purchase it on Amazon at a very low price. Any edition would be acceptable for the course.

**Coursework:**
Your grade will be determined as follows:

- 25% -- Preparation and participation
- 10% -- 4 response papers posted to the Discussion Forum
- 10% -- Weekly quizzes (10 quizzes +1 quiz on the syllabus)
- 5% -- Power Point presentation on a historical personality (cultural influencer)
- 15% -- Midterm
- 15% -- Final Exam
- 20% -- Research project

**Coursework Details**

1. **Preparation and participation.** In order to have meaningful and productive discussions, it is crucial that you come to class prepared to discuss ALL assigned readings and other materials. If you do not contribute to class discussions and activities or do not attend class, I cannot give you credit for participation. Likewise, I cannot give you credit for participation if you have not completed the readings and assignments due and are not prepared to discuss them. Forms of participation include: group and pair activities; asking questions; thinking aloud; respectfully disagreeing; making observations; expanding on other students’ contributions; cracking jokes; criticizing the authors; etc. Part of your participation grade
reflects whether or not you contribute to a productive and positive classroom atmosphere. Let’s keep these discussions friendly and fruitful! Being disrespectful of your classmates or me will hurt your grade. I will drop your two lowest participation scores when calculating your final grade.

2. **Power Point Presentation.** On the first day of classes you will learn about a nationwide TV project *The Name of Russia* that took place a few years ago. Based on the official list of the “finalists” who “competed” to be recognized as the symbol of Russia, each student will prepare a 20-25-slide Power Point presentation on a historical personality of his/her choice. (See Power Point Guidelines on D2L.) Times of presentations will vary depending on when the “finalists” lived. (For example, if you present on Catherine the Great, your presentation is due during the week when we will be discussing *The Age of Empresses.*)

3. **Discussion Forum.** Each week Friday (beginning the week of September 9th), the instructor will post one question to the discussion forum on D2L. Throughout the semester, each student will have to post a 250-word response to four discussion questions. Responses to peers’ responses to discussion questions would also count. There is no make-up assignment for this activity.

   **Responses are to be posted no later than 9 a.m. on Tuesday, before the class.**

Students will follow up on their responses during in-class discussion. Those who didn’t post any responses are expected to participate in discussion too.

   **Class discussions will be held on all assigned readings in addition to the question of the week.**

4. **Research Project.** This is a semester-long research project on a topic of your choosing, which will result in a 7-page (1750+ words) paper. You will select a topic of interest to you (e.g., the origins of borscht, Pushkin’s ethnic background, vodka-drinking culture, Stalin’s purges, communal apartments, etc.), formulate a question about it (e.g., “Why beets?”), and conduct research online and in the library to find an answer to your question. In your paper, you will present an argument with a clear thesis and use your research findings to support your point of view. You will also present a brief oral summary of your paper in class. The research project consists of four parts:

   1) a prospectus form,
   2) a rough draft,
   3) an oral presentation, and
   4) a final copy

Your project grade will be based on a 60-point scale (we’ll go over the expectations and rubrics in more detail in class).

✓ 10 points: Prospectus form (available on D2L under “Content”/ “Research Project”).

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1 The word count does not include bibliography.
✓ 15 points: Complete rough draft. (See Rough Draft Guidelines on D2L.) Quality and quantity of research; clarity of writing, organization and argumentation. (See “Guidelines” on D2L under “Content”/“Research Project.”) Rough draft must be submitted by the deadline indicated in the “Guidelines.” 2 points per day would be deducted for late submissions.

I will schedule an individual conference with each student for rough draft revisions.

✓ 5 points: Presentation. A 10-minute summary of your research findings and the argument you present in your paper.

For the final draft:
✓ 10 points: Quality and quantity of research; quality of sources. For full points, you need at least five sources, three of which must be books or scholarly journals.
✓ 10 points: Writing. Structure and organization, style, argumentation, originality, clarity. Incorporation of my comments and suggestions on your rough draft.

An additional ten points will be linked to the Humanities GER learning outcome and the UW System Shared Learning Goal described above. I will assess your achievement of these outcomes using your oral presentation and your final draft according to the following rubrics:

5 points: “Students will be able to identify the formation, traditions, and ideas essential to major bodies of historical, cultural, literary, or philosophical knowledge.”

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<tr>
<th>5 points</th>
<th>3 points</th>
<th>1 point</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student connects detailed and specific knowledge of her/his research topic with the larger themes and trends of Russian cultural history explored over the semester. S/he is able to effectively field questions during her/his oral presentation.</td>
<td>Student demonstrates detailed and specific knowledge of her/his research topic but is unable to connect it with the larger themes and trends of Russian cultural history explored over the semester. S/he is able to effectively field most questions during her/his oral presentation.</td>
<td>Student does not demonstrate detailed and specific knowledge of her/his research topic and is unable to connect it with the larger themes and trends of Russian cultural history explored over the semester. S/he is unable to effectively field most questions during her/his oral presentation.</td>
<td>Not completed.</td>
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5 points: “Effective Communication Skills including listening, speaking, reading, writing, and information literacy.”

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<th>5 points</th>
<th>3 points</th>
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<th>0 points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Student demonstrates the ability to distinguish between all the different categories of information (e.g. primary vs. secondary sources; popular vs. scholarly works) used in her/his research.</td>
<td>Student demonstrates the ability to distinguish between some, but not all categories of information (e.g. primary vs. secondary sources; popular vs. scholarly works) used in her/his research.</td>
<td>Student does not demonstrate the ability to distinguish between the categories of information (e.g. primary vs. secondary sources; popular vs. scholarly works) used in her/his research.</td>
<td>Not completed.</td>
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</table>
Student demonstrates wide and careful reading in her/his research.

Student delivers a clear and concise summary of her/his project in the presentation and is able to effectively and clearly field questions during her/his oral presentation.

Student has not completed substantial reading on her/his topic.

Student’s presentation is difficult to follow due to deficiencies in organization, sentence-level linguistic structures, and/or manner of delivery. S/he is unable to effectively field questions during her/his oral presentation.

The final copy of your research paper (completed, revised, edited, and proofread) is due on the last day of the exam week, which is Saturday, December 22nd. **5 points per day will be deducted for late submission.** No paper will be accepted after December 25th.

5. **Weekly quizzes.** The first quiz will take place on Tuesday, September 11th. It will consist of several multiple-choice questions based on the content of the course syllabus.

Beginning the week of September 16th, each Tuesday you will write a short factual quiz based on the material read and studied at home, as well as discussed in class during the previous week. Quizzes are meant to check your understanding and retention of the material.

6. **Midterm and Final Exam.** The midterm is a cumulative one-hour exam given during a regular class session. The final is a cumulative two-hour exam. It will take place during the week of the finals. Both exams consist of short-answer questions (e.g., “What is the signature ingredient of borscht?”), short essays (e.g., “What are the principle differences between Moscow and St. Petersburg?”), and one long essay on a broader question (e.g., “How has the legacy of slavery (serfdom) in Russia affected its political culture?”).

7. **Voluntary class project** for 2 points to be added to the final: *A Day in the Life of Russia.* Interested students should find a recent piece of news from a reputable English-language news source (e.g., New York Times, The Moscow Times, The Guardian, LATimes, BBC, Reuters, etc.) and share your findings with the class. Students should also provide their opinion on the news. On the day of the assignment, each participating student should submit an index card with the following information: name of the news source, name of the contributor(s), date of publication, and topic (e.g., “Dangers of working as a journalist in Russia”).

**Course Policies** (in alphabetical order)

**Absences:** If you miss a class, your preparation and participation score for that day will be zero regardless of a reason.
Alternative exam dates: The midterm and the final exam could be rescheduled for a later or an earlier date in exceptional cases only (e.g., medical or family emergency). Proper documentation is required for rescheduling.

Disabilities: If you have any kind of disability that might affect your performance in this class, please notify me immediately so that we can accommodate your needs. If you wait until the semester is already half-over, I may not be able to accommodate you.

Grading:

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<th>Grading Scale Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>93 – 100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90 – 92</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<td>87 – 89</td>
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<td>60 – 62</td>
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<tr>
<td>59 and below</td>
<td>F</td>
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Harassment: No harassment of any kind will be tolerated. If you feel you are being harassed or if you think one of your classmates is being harassed in any way, please inform either me or our departmental chair (Professor Andrew Porter, portera@uwm.edu) immediately so that we can get the problem taken care of.

“I” (Incomplete) Grade Policy: An Incomplete may be given to a student who has carried a subject successfully until near the end of the semester but, because of illness or other unusual and substantiated cause beyond that student’s control, has been unable to take or complete the final examination or to complete the rough draft or the final copy of the research paper. An Incomplete is not given unless the student proves to the instructor that s/he was prevented from completing course requirements for just cause as indicated above. A course marked Incomplete must be completed during the next succeeding semester, excluding summer sessions and UWinteriM. If the student does not remove the Incomplete during this period, the report of “I” will lapse to “F.” It is the student’s responsibility to work with his/her instructor regarding course completion.

Make-up policy: This course has no make-up policy on single quizzes. However, some arrangements could be in case of a prolonged absence (e.g., illness or family circumstances) if you have proper documentation.
Phones: Turn them off and stow them during class! Using your phone during class is the same as being absent: you will get a zero for your participation grade that day. If you have an emergency and need to be able to check your phone, let me know before class starts to avoid a zero for participation.

Plagiarism: Any cases of suspected plagiarism will be referred immediately to the Dean of Students for investigation and disciplinary action (which might include expulsion from the University). Generally speaking, plagiarism is the act of presenting other people’s ideas or language as your own (e.g. quoting a website without citation). If at any point you are at all unsure as to whether you might be committing plagiarism, please just ask! The consequences of plagiarism are unpleasant for everyone, so let’s avoid it at all costs. For policies on academic misconduct, complaint procedures, and grade appeal procedures, see http://uwm.edu/secu/syllabus-links/

UWM Credit hour policy:
A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally-established equivalency and reasonably approximates not less than:

1) one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or
2) ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or
3) the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time.

Because this is a 3-credit hour class, this means that over the course of the semester you should spend 144 hours on this course (9 hours x 16 weeks). For each week, this should break down approximately as follows:

1) 3 hours for class including written exams and quizzes
2) 3 hours for homework and preparation for classroom activities
3) 2 hours for preparations for quizzes and tests
4) 1 hour for research and presentation

FINAL EXAM will take place on Saturday, December 15th, 7:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m., in our regular classroom. (Arrive 10 minutes earlier!)

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND ASSIGNMENTS

Please note: Readings and assignments are due on the date listed.

All audio/video materials listed in the syllabus will be listened to/watched in class unless specified otherwise.

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2 Reading assignments may be changed at the instructor’s discretion to meet the needs and pace of the class.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Preparation</th>
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</table>
| Week 1 | 09/04 Tuesday | **Welcome to 245! Добро пожаловать!**  
- Introductions  
- Syllabus overview  
- Assignments of Power Point presentations | Research of Power Point Guidelines  
In-class discussion:  
What is culture?  
Cultural models  
- Hingley, pp.7-10  
Video *What is Russia?*  
In-class mock quiz (no grade) “How well you know Russia” |
|       | 09/06 Thursday | Research project: Begin to think about a topic for your research paper. |                                                 |
| Week 2 | 09/11 Tuesday | Quiz on the syllabus  
**What is Russian Culture?** |  
- Fedor Dostoevsky, “On Russian Distinctiveness and Universality”  
- Power Point demo |
|       | 09/13 Thursday | **The “Before”**  
- Aleksandr Blok, “The Scythians”  
- “A Mummy Unearthed from the Pastures of Heaven” | **Aspect of culture:**  
Stereotypes about Russians and by Russians |
| Week 3 | 09/18 Tuesday | Quiz 1 | • Hingley, 11-22  
• “The Beginning of the Russian State” (RPC)  
• “The Founding of the City of Kiev” (RPC)  
• Aleksandr Pushkin, *The Ballad of Oleg the Wise*  
• Andreyev, “Pagan and Christian Elements in Old Russia” |
| 09/20 Thursday | Kievan Rus’ and Christianization of Rus’ |  |
|  |  | (Research Project: Email your Prospectus Form to familian@uwm.edu no later than Sunday, September 23rd.) |  |
| Week 4 | 09/25 Tuesday | Quiz 2 | • Hingley, 23-31  
• Frazier, *Travels in Siberia*  
• “The Tale of the Destruction of Riazan” (RPC)  
• Movie *Mongol* (dir. Sergei Bodrov) |
| 09/27 Thursday | The Tatars |  |
|  | Rise of Moscow | Movie *Aleksandr Nevsky* (dir. Sergei Eisenstein) | Aspect of culture: Superstitions  
Eralash Show video skits |

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3 Russian Primary Chronicle
| Week 5          | 10/02 Tuesday | Quiz 3 | • Hingley, 31-40  
               |              |        | • Afanasy Nikitin, *Journey Across Three Seas* |
|----------------|---------------|--------|----------------------------------|
| 10/04 Thursday | Quiz 3        |        | • Hingley, 41-51  
               |              |        | • Att. Monk Sylvestr, *Rules for Russian Households*  
               |              |        | • Ivan IV, *My Early Life* |
|                | Early Muscovy |        | • Hingley, 31-40  
               |              |        | • Afanasy Nikitin, *Journey Across Three Seas* |
|                | Ivan the Terrible |        | • Hingley, 41-51  
               |              |        | • Att. Monk Sylvestr, *Rules for Russian Households*  
               |              |        | • Ivan IV, *My Early Life* |
|                | Movie *Tsar* (dir. Pavel Lungin) |          | • Hingley, 31-40  
               |              |        | • Afanasy Nikitin, *Journey Across Three Seas* |
|                | Ballet *Ivan the Terrible* (comp. Sergei Prokofiev) |        | • Hingley, 41-51  
               |              |        | • Att. Monk Sylvestr, *Rules for Russian Households*  
               |              |        | • Ivan IV, *My Early Life* |
|                | Aspect of culture: Iconography |          | • Hingley, 31-40  
               |              |        | • Afanasy Nikitin, *Journey Across Three Seas* |
| Week 6         | 10/09 Tuesday | Quiz 4 | • Hingley, 52-58  
               |              |        | Movie *Boris Godunov* (dir. Sergei Bondarchuk)  
               |              |        | Opera *Boris Godunov* (comp. Modest Mussorgsky)  
               |              |        | Opera *Ivan Susanin* (dir. Mikhail Glinka) |
|                |               |        | • Hingley, 52-58  
               |              |        | Movie *Boris Godunov* (dir. Sergei Bondarchuk)  
               |              |        | Opera *Boris Godunov* (comp. Modest Mussorgsky)  
               |              |        | Opera *Ivan Susanin* (dir. Mikhail Glinka) |
|                | 10/11 Thursday |        | • Hingley, 59-68  
               |              |        | *The Life of the Archpriest Avvakum, by Himself* |
|                |               |        | • Hingley, 59-68  
               |              |        | *The Life of the Archpriest Avvakum, by Himself* |
|                | Muscovy under the First Romanovs |          | • Hingley, 31-40  
               |              |        | • Afanasy Nikitin, *Journey Across Three Seas* |
|                | Aspect of culture: (Folk) Fairy Tales  
               |        | • Hingley, 41-51  
               |              |        | • Att. Monk Sylvestr, *Rules for Russian Households*  
               |              |        | • Ivan IV, *My Early Life* |
|                | • “Baba Yaga and Vasilisa the Fair”  
               |        | • Hingley, 31-40  
               |              |        | • Afanasy Nikitin, *Journey Across Three Seas* |
|                | • “At Pike’s Command”  
               |        | • Hingley, 41-51  
               |              |        | • Att. Monk Sylvestr, *Rules for Russian Households*  
               |              |        | • Ivan IV, *My Early Life* |
|                | • Grigory Milliar, *Baba Yaga of Soviet cinematography*  
               |        | • Hingley, 41-51  
               |              |        | • Att. Monk Sylvestr, *Rules for Russian Households*  
               |              |        | • Ivan IV, *My Early Life* |
### Week 7

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/16</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Quiz 5</td>
<td>• Hingley, 69-81</td>
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<td>• Pushkin, <em>The Bronze Horseman</em></td>
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<td>• John Perry, <em>Peter’s Social Reforms</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>10/18</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>The Age of Empresses</td>
<td>• Hingley, 82-96</td>
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<td>• Catherine the Great, <em>Memoirs</em></td>
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<td><strong>Aspect of culture</strong>: Drinking</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Dostoevsky, <em>Crime and Punishment</em>, Chapter on Marmeladov family</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• “Do Russians really drink as much as people think they do?” (<em>Russia Beyond</em>)</td>
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### Week 8

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<th>Date</th>
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<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/23</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Quiz 6</td>
<td>• Hingley, 97-132 (long, sorry!)</td>
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<td><em>The 1812 Overture</em> (comp. Petr Tchaikovsky)</td>
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<td>• Pushkin, “Deep in Siberian Mines”</td>
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<td>• Ivan Turgenev, “Mumu”</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>10/30 Tuesday</td>
<td>Quiz 7</td>
<td>11/01 Thursday</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>11/06 Tuesday</td>
<td>Quiz 8</td>
<td>11/08 Thursday</td>
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**Week 9**

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/30</td>
<td>Quiz 7</td>
<td>Post your response to the discussion question before 9 a.m. Tuesday</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/01</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Decline and Fall of the Empire</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1917</strong></td>
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**Aspect of culture:** Food

- “7 Bizarre Foods Every Russian Grew Up With” (Buzzfeed.com)
- Krylov, “Demian’s Fish Soup”

**Cartoon Banquet** (dir. Garri Bardin)

- Hingley, 134-150
- Movie Rasputin: Dark Servant of Destiny (dir. Uli Edel)

**Week 10**

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<th>Activity</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/06</td>
<td>Quiz 8</td>
<td>Post your response to the discussion question before 9 a.m. Tuesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/08</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Soviet Russia</strong> (pre-war)</td>
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</table>

**Aspect of culture:** Living arrangements: kommunalka, khrushchevka, Rublevka

- Hingley, 151-169
- Vladimir Lenin, “Last Testament”
- Mayakovsky, A Slap in the Face of Public Taste
- Bulgakov, Heart of a Dog
| Week 11 | 11/13 Tuesday | Quiz 9 | • Hingley, 182-190  
Kseniia Simonova’s sand art (video)  
• Evgeny Nosov, *The Red Wine of Victory*  
• Victoria Fedorova, *Admiral’s Daughter* (excerpts)  
TV series *Zoia* (dir. Vitaly Pavlov)  
• Hingley, 192-196  
• Anna Akhmatova, *Requiem*  
• Yevgeny Yevtushenko, *March 5th, 1953*  
Movie *Stalin’s Funeral* (dir. Yevgeny Yevtushenko)  
**Aspect of culture:**  
National musical instruments: *bayan* and *balalaika* |
| 11/15 Thursday | Soviet Russia (WWII and post-war) |  |

| Week 12 | 11/20 Tuesday | Quiz 10 | John Reed, Dean Reed, Samantha Smith  
Movie *Reds* (dir. Warren Beatty)  
TV Series *Esenin* (dir. Igor Zaitsev) |
|  | | [Ten] [Americans] that Shook the [Russian/Soviet] World |  |

*Thanksgiving Break November 21-25*
| Week 13 | 11/27 Tuesday | Russians Abroad | • New York Times articles  
• Taskina, *Russian Harbin*  
• Sergey Dovlatov, *A Foreign Woman* (Chapter 1) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 11/29 Thursday | Collapse of the USSR | Post your response to the discussion question before 9 a.m. Tuesday  
Research rough drafts are due no later than Sunday, Sunday, November 18th.  
Individual conferences for rough draft revisions will be scheduled during Week 13 and Week 14. | • Hingley, 196-  
• Orlango Figes, *Burying the Bones* |
| Week 14 | 12/04 Tuesday | Perestroika | • Movie *My Perestroika* (dir. Robin Hessman)  
• Oksana Robski, *Casual*  
BBC Documentary film: *Russian Godfathers* |
*A Day in the Life of Russia*  
Catching up on unfinished discussions, missed presentations, etc.  
**Aspect of culture:** Russian holidays  
Movie *The Irony of Fate, or With Light Steam!* (dir. Eldar Ryazanov) | • News-sharing |
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**Happy New Year!**