



## **CIEE St. Petersburg, Russia**

**Course name:** Mentality, Social Behavior and the Representations of Russia  
**Course number:** RUSI 3010 RLPR  
**Programs offering course:** Russian Language Program  
**Language of instruction:** Russian  
**U.S. semester credits:** 3  
**Contact hours:** 45  
**Term:** Spring 2019

### **Course Description**

This course analyzes issues of social behavior as they emerge in the representation of contemporary Russia. Topics covered include intellectual life, religion, gender, living conditions, Us/Them Mentality as well as some topical current events. The course focuses mainly on specific patterns that shape individual values and attitudes of the Russians, such as: Just, Family, Communal Survival and others.

### **Learning Objectives**

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Discuss issues of social behavior in Russian;
- Demonstrate understanding of language of Russian newspapers and magazines as presented in class and in home reading texts.

### **Methods of Instruction**

Class meetings consist of lectures, question-and-answer sessions, class discussions, and screenings.

### **Assessment and Final Grade**

Students will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- 1) in-class participation 20%
  - 2) quizzes 20%
  - 3) midterm test 20%
  - 4) essay 20%
  - 5) final test 20%
- TOTAL: 100%

### **Course Requirements**

#### **Participation**

Taking part in class discussions is essential for learning. It is important that all students prepare course readings for the assigned date and come to class ready to analyze and debate issues raised by the readings.



Quizzes. There will be two quizzes during the term. These quizzes will be a combination of multiple choice and short answer questions, and they will check the students' knowledge of facts and data, presented at lectures and in the readings.

Essay. The goal of the essay is to provide an in-depth look at one of the topics covered in this course, i.e. intellectual life, religion, gender, everyday life in Russia. Please, discuss your choice of the topic with the instructor before the Midterm. Your essay should seek to explore the intersection between your individual, first-hand experience of living in Russia and larger patterns of Russian culture and mentality.

The midterm test and the final test will gauge the students' knowledge of the main concepts and ideas presented at the lectures and in the visual and verbal texts. Both tests will consist of short answer questions and one large essay question.

### **Class Attendance**

Attendance is crucial for successful completion of the class. Students are allowed to have two unexcused absences for each course for the whole semester program. These allowed unexcused absences should be used for situations such as minor illnesses without a doctor's note or personal situations that prevent the student from attending the class. Allowed unexcused absences should not be used in a planned way for travel or other activities.

Unexcused absences beyond the limit of two will lower a student's grade by 2 points on the 100-point scale each. For example, if your overall score in the class is 90 (an equivalent of A-) and you have had three unexcused absences, your final score will be 88 (B+).

### **Weekly Schedule**

#### **Week 1**

Class 1. Seminar Syllabus, practical matters.

Class 2. Lecture: "Russian Mindset Part1: Geography and Culture

Film: *Born in the USSR: 28 Up* (dir. Sergey Miroshnichenko, 2008)

Readings: Andrei Sinyavskiy "Holy Fools", "Skomorokh"

#### **Week 2**

Class 1. Lecture: Russian Mindset Part 2: Politics, Philosophy and Religion

Class 2. Seminar: Cultural determinism of Russian Mindset

Film: *Island* (dir. Pavel Lungin, 2006)

Reading: Nancy Ries, "Our Fairy-Tale Life"

#### **Week 3**

Class 1. Lecture: Anthropology of Russian Childhood

Class 2. Seminar: Political, Philosophic and Religious Determinism of Russian Mindset

Film: episodes from TV Series: *Fizruk, School*

Reading: Yurchak, *Alexei Everything Was Forever Until It Was No More*, pp. 13-27.



#### **Week 4**

Class 1. Lecture: Radicalism and Hooliganism in Russia. Part 1: Political Radicalism

##### **Quiz# 1**

Class 2. Seminar: Russian Childhood: Games, Toys, Habits

Film: episodes from TV Series: *Fizruk, School*

Reading: from Yurchak Alexei, *Everything Was Forever Until It Was No More*, pp. 45-67

#### **Week 5.**

Class 1. Lecture: Radicalism and Hooliganism in Russia Part 2: Religious Radicalism, Street Art

Class 2. Seminar: Brain-drain, emigration and “image of the future”

Film: *Revolution that wasn't* (dir. Anna Polunina, 2008)

Reading: articles from Russian press

#### **Week 6.**

Class 1. Seminar: Radicalism in Russia

Reading: articles from Russian press

Class 2. **Midterm test**

#### **Week 7**

Class 1. Lecture: Us/ Them Mentality: Russia and Former Soviet Republics

Class 2. Seminar: Russia after 2014

Film: *Maidan* (dir. Sergey Loznitsa, 2014)

Reading: articles from Russian press

#### **Week 8**

Class 1. Lecture: Us/ Them Mentality: Russia and “the West”

Class 2. Seminar: Inferiority Complex in Russian Society

Film: *Brother-2* (dir. Alexei Balabanov, 2000)

Reading: articles from Russian press

#### **Week 9**

Class 1. Lecture: The Emergence of Civil Society in Russia

Class 2. Seminar: Patriots and Foreign Agents

Film: *The Event* (dir. Sergei Loznitsa, 2015)

Reading: Sinyavsky Andrei, “Soviet Civilization”

#### **Week 10**

Class 1. Seminar: Russian Society: Trust and Confrontation



Reading: articles from Russian press

## Class 2. Quiz# 2

### Week 11

Class 1. Lecture: Problems of civil society in contemporary Russia

Film: *Leviathan* (dir. Alexei Zvaizgintsev, 2016)

Reading: Mitrokhin Nikolai *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia tserkov: sovremennoje sostojanie i aktualnie problemi*

Kaariainen Kimmo, Furman Dmitry (ed.) *Novye tserkvi, starie veruyuschie: religia v postsovetskoj Rossii*

Class 2. Seminar: Religion in Contemporary Russia

Film: *Pussy Riot: A Punk Prayer* (dir. Mike Lerner and Maxim Pozdorovkin, 2013)

### Week 12

Class 1. Seminar: Religion in Contemporary Russia

Reading: from Mitrokhin Nikolai "Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov: sovremennoje sostojanie i aktualnie problemi"

Seminar: Russian Orthodoxy and Human Rights

## Class 2. Final Test

## Course materials

### **Readings**

Articles from Russian press (in Russian)

Юрчак Алексей «Это было навсегда, пока не кончилось. Последнее советское поколение». М., НЛО 2014 / American edition: Yurchak Alexei "Everything Was Forever Until It Was No More" Chicago, 2006

Бойм Светлана «Общие места. Мифология повседневной жизни». М., НЛО 2002 / American edition: Boym Svetlana *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia* (Harvard University Press, 1994)

Рис Нэнси. Русские разговоры. Культура и речевая повседневность эпохи перестройки М., НЛО 2005/ American edition: Ries Nancy *Russian talk: culture and conversation during Perestroika* Cornell University Press, 1997

Каариайнен Киммо, Фурман Дмитрий (ред.) «Новые церкви, старые верующие - старые церкви, новые верующие: религия в постсоветской России» СПб «Летний сад» 2007 / Kaariainen Kimmo, Furman Dmitry (ed.) *Novye tserkvi, starie veruyuschie: religia v postsovetskoj Rossii* SPb 2007



Митрохин Николай «Русская православная церковь: современное состояние и актуальные проблемы» М., НЛО 2006 / Mitrokhin Nikolai "Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov: sovremennoje sostojanie I aktualnie problemi M, 2006

Синявский Андрей «Основы советской цивилизации» М., 2001 / American edition: Sinyavsky Andrei "Soviet Civilization: A Cultural History" Arcade pub., 1991