

**Slavic 360**  
**Screening Minorities: Representations of the Other in Slavic Film**  
**5 credit hours**

Meeting days and times: two 1 hour 48-minute meetings per week

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The course will explore film representations of ethnic and religious "others" in East European cinema, providing knowledge of both East European cinematic traditions and diverse cultural space.

**Course Objectives:**

- ✓ Gaining knowledge of major works of East European cinema
- ✓ Understanding constructions of "othering" (the process by which societies/dominant groups dehumanize or demonize members of non-mainstream groups in order to subordinate, control, or exclude them) and their film representations
- ✓ Acquiring knowledge of various national, ethnic, and religious communities in Eastern Europe
- ✓ Mastering important terms and concepts of filmmaking and film criticism
- ✓ Applying these terms and concepts to internationally acclaimed East European films both verbally (in classroom discussions) and in writing (assigned writing exercises)
- ✓ Understanding the socio-historical context that produced these films as well as the prevailing aesthetic philosophies that guided these directors and their critics
- ✓ Learning how film expresses social and cultural issues
- ✓ Learning critical thinking through written and oral expression

This course fulfills the requirements for the **2. Breadth; C. Arts and Humanities; (2) Visual/Performing Arts category of the GEC**. Arts and Humanities coursework develops students' capacities to evaluate significant writing and works of art, and for aesthetic response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing; and experiencing the arts and reflecting on that experience. The expected learning outcomes are:

- Students develop abilities to be enlightened observers or active participants in the visual, spatial, musical, theatrical, rhetorical, or written arts.
- Students describe and interpret achievement in the arts and literature.
- Students explain how works of art and literature express social and cultural issues.

The learning outcomes of courses in the Visual/Performing Arts category are as follows:

1. Students develop abilities to analyze, appreciate, and interpret significant works of art.
2. Students develop abilities to be informed observers or active participants in a discipline within the visual, spatial, and performing arts.

How do the course goals address the general and specific expected learning outcomes above?

- By watching, reading, and discussing social and cultural issues of othering as reflected in outstanding cinematic examples, which belong to diverse East European tradition of cinema, students develop abilities to analyze, appreciate, and interpret significant works of art as well as learn about mechanisms of cultural/cinematic construction.

How do the assigned readings address the general and specific expected learning outcomes above?

- The assigned types of readings teach 1) appreciation and analysis of film as form of art and the specific social and cultural issues it expresses 2) knowledge about East European cinema and its diverse national traditions; 3) knowledge about cultural constructions and minorities in Eastern Europe.

How do course topics address the general and specific expected learning outcomes above?

- The course content is organized geographically in order to address the issues of minorities in the various regions of Eastern Europe. The selection of readings and films for analysis for each region addresses each of the above mentioned learning objectives.

How do the written assignments address the general and specific expected learning outcomes above?

- Assignments of various kinds (quizzes on film terminology and East European cinema readings, clip analysis, essays) are designed to teach students 1) master important terms and concepts of filmmaking and film criticism that will empower them to engage in critical analysis of the issues involved; 2) apply these terms and concepts to analysis of work of art, i.e. internationally acclaimed East European films both verbally (in classroom discussions) and in writing (assigned writing exercises); 3) understand the socio-historical and cultural context that produced these films as well as the prevailing aesthetic philosophies that guided the directors and their critics.

Slavic 360 is also a **GEC International Issues course, non-Western focus**. The goal of this GEC is to help students become educated, productive, and principled citizens of their nation and the world. The expected learning outcome is that students will exhibit an understanding of political, economic, cultural, physical, and social differences among the nations of the world, including a specific examination of non-Western culture.

How do the course goals address the general and specific expected learning outcomes above?

- Students will examine some of the aspects of ethnic, religious, sexual, and political diversity in several non-Western cultures in East Central and Eastern Europe. In particular, by watching, reading, and discussing social and cultural issues of othering as reflected in outstanding cinematic examples, students will learn how the identity of diverse groups is constructed and manipulated both from outside the groups (the process of "othering" by the mainstream) and from within.
- Among the diverse groups to be considered are Jews in Russia and Central Europe; Muslim Chechens and other non-Russian groups in Russia; sexual minorities in Russia; Roma, Albanian, and Turkish Muslim minorities in the Balkans; and Muslim women in the Balkans.

How do course topics address the general and specific expected learning outcomes above?

- The course content is organized geographically in order to address the issues of minorities in the various regions of Eastern Europe. The selection of readings and films for analysis for each region addresses each of the above mentioned learning objectives.
- Among the constructions of the identity of others to be examined and discussed through films, readings, and writing assignments are enforced assimilations, ranging from modifications in dress codes and cultural rituals to compulsory changes of names, alteration of genital markers of ethnic/religious identity, and banning of minority languages.

How do the assigned readings address the general and specific expected learning outcomes above?

- The assigned types of readings teach knowledge about cultural constructions and minorities in Eastern Europe.

How do the written assignments address the general and specific expected learning outcomes above?

- Assignments of various kinds (quizzes on East European cinema readings, clip analysis, essays) are designed to help students to understand the socio-historical and cultural context that produced major works of East Central and Eastern European cinema.

### Course policies

In addition to viewing films, the students will be assigned readings that will guide and stimulate class discussions. There will be one film clip analysis, two quizzes, midterm and final exams. Detailed instructions on the writing assignments and final examination will be given in class.

### Grading scale

93–100: A	88–89: B+	78–79: C+	68–69: D+
90–92: A–	83–87: B	73–77: C	65–67: D
	80–82: B–	70–72: C–	65 and below: E

### Grading policies

Attendance and participation:	15%
Quizzes:	20% (10% each)
Clip analysis	10%
Midterm	25%
Final exam	30%

### Required Texts:

There are two required texts for this course: *Understanding Movies*, by Louis Giannetti and a course packet (with all readings in the syllabus pertaining to specific films and their cultural contexts) that will be sold at the Foreign Languages Publications (198 Hagerty Hall). *Understanding Movies* can be found at SBX on High Street.

**\*\*NOTE\*\*** The bookstore has ordered the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of *Understanding Movies* and it retails at \$65. I would encourage those who are not inclined to purchase such an expensive textbook to find used copies and/or to visit online booksellers (bestbookbuys.com is a good one). **\*\*HERE'S THE CATCH\*\*** Most campus-area bookstores will only buy back the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of this book.

### Attendance & Participation – 15%

Your regular attendance and constructive participation will be a crucial component of this course; thus, attendance will be taken regularly. If you have more than one unexcused absence, you will receive a 3% deduction from your total course grade for each additional class you miss without an excuse. No more than two absences can be excused with the proper documentation (i.e., doctor's note). You will be responsible for viewing any missed film on your own. What do we mean by 'professionalism'? Your attendance grade only reflects that you were present in class on a given day; your professionalism grade will reflect that you were (or were not) attentive during the screening and lecture/discussion (i.e., not sleeping, doing homework, reading the newspaper, playing

games on one's phone, etc.), that you were (or were not) well-prepared for that day's lesson, and/or that you were willing and able to offer constructive observations/questions to that day's lecture/discussion. In other words, your professionalism grade should sound very much like a typical participation grade. The following criteria are used in establishing participation grades:

**A (15%):** there is clear evidence of preparation, frequent voluntary participation, and significant contribution to class discussions. (Frequent participation means participation in 70% of class discussions during the quarter. Students make significant contribution to discussions when their answers relate to the topic and their arguments are based on class material).

**B (10%):** there is clear evidence of preparation and some participation (in 50% of class discussions during the quarter).

**C (5%):** there is evidence of preparation, but no voluntary participation. (In one-third of the discussions, I check students' preparation by posing questions to individual students. If these students show evidence of preparation, but otherwise do not volunteer to participate, this amounts to a "C" for participation.)

#### **Quiz on film terminology**

The quiz will take place in-class. Students will be asked to provide definitions for film terms and give examples from the films watched in class. A study guide will be given out in class.

#### **Quiz on East European cinema readings**

The quiz will be in-class. Students will be asked to provide brief explanations of certain ideas and arguments pertaining to the East European films and their social and political context. A detailed study guide will be given out in class.

#### **Midterm and Final Examination**

Both exams will be in-class and will consist of short answers questions and an essay question. The final will be cumulative. A detailed study guide will be passed out in class.

#### **Late assignments**

There will be a 1% deduction from the overall grade for each late assignment.

#### **Academic Misconduct**

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct ([http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info\\_for\\_students/csc.asp](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp)).

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu>.

## Plan

### Week one

#### East European societies and their others Constructions of Identity

Iver Neumann, "Making Nation: Russia" in *Uses of the Other* (25 pages)

#### Russia

*Seekers of Happiness/ Iskateli schast'ja* (dir. Vladimir Korsh, Iosif Shapiro, Russia 1936)  
(in class screening; selected scenes)

Reading:

David Gillespie, "Film and Ideology" in *Russian Cinema* (30 pages)

### Week two

*Commissar/Komissar* (Aleksandr Askoldov, Soviet Union, 1967) (in class screening)

Readings:

Elena Monastireva-Ansdell, "Redressing the Commissar: Thaw Cinema Revises Soviet Structuring Myths" (23 pages)

Giannetti, "Photography" and "Editing" in *Understanding Movies* (40 pages)

### Week three

*Luna Park/Luna Park* (dir. Pavel Lungin, Russia, 1992) (in class screening)

Readings:

Giannetti, "Ideology" in *Understanding Movies* (30 pages)

**Quiz on film terminology**

### Week four

*War/Voina* (dir. Aleksei Balabanov, Russia, 2000) (selected scenes, in class screening)

Readings:

Yana Hashamova, "The Russian Hero: Fantasies of Wounded National Pride" in *Pride and Panic: Russian Imagination of the West in Post-Soviet Film* (33 pages)

#### **Week five**

##### **Czechoslovakia**

Larks on a String/ Skrivanci na niti (dir. Jiri Menzel, Czechoslovakia, 1969/1990) (in class screening)

Readings:

Peter Hames, "The Czechoslovak Cinematic Tradition," "Political and Cultural Background," and "Jiri Menzel" in *The Czechoslovak New Wave* (65 pages)

**Midterm**

#### **Week six**

##### **Hungary**

The Red and the White/ Csillagosok, katonak (dir. Miklos Jansco, Hungary/Soviet Union, 1967) (in class screening)

Readings:

John Cunningham, "The 1960s: New Directors, New Films, New Wave" in *Hungarian Cinema* (37 pages)

Giannetti, "Drama" in *Understanding Movies* (25 pages)

#### **Week seven**

##### **Poland**

Europe, Europa/ Hitlerjunge Salomon (dir. Agnieszka Holland, Germany/France/Poland, 1990) (in class screening)

Readings:

Paul Coates, "Heroes, Masculinity, 'Feminisation' and 'The Polish School'" and "Walls and Frontiers: representing Polish 'Jewish relations'" in *The red and the White* (75 pages)

**Clip analysis**

#### **Week eight**

##### **Yugoslavia**

Time of the Gypsies/ Dom za vesanje (dir. Emir Kusturica, Yugoslavia/Italy, UK, 1990)

Readings:

Dina Jordanova, "Romanies: Little-known Neighbours" in *Cinema of the Other Europe* (42 pages)

**Quiz on readings**

**Week nine**

**Republic of Macedonia**

Before the Rain/ Pred dozhdot (dir. Milcho Manchevski, Republic of Macedonia/France/UK, 1994) (in class screening)

Readings:

Dina Jordanova, "Narrative and Putative History" in *Cinema of Flames* (28 pages)

**Week ten**

**Bulgaria**

Stolen Eyes/Otkradnati ochi (dir. Radoslav Spassov, Bulgaria, 2005)

Readings:

Mary Neuburger, "The Citizen behind the Veil: National Imperatives and the Re-dressing of Muslim Women" in *The Orient Within: Muslim Minorities and the Negotiation of Nationhood in Modern Bulgaria* (37 pages)

Yana Hashamova, "Stolen Eyes. Review" ([www.kinokultura.com](http://www.kinokultura.com))

**Final**



## **Assessment Plan**

### **Evaluation methods of the learning objectives:**

- 1) Entry and Exit Questionnaires to determine progress in students' knowledge of East European cinema
- 2) Quiz questions are designed to test students' knowledge gained in two specific areas of the course objectives: Acquiring knowledge of various national, ethnic, and religious communities in Eastern Europe and mastering important terms and concepts of filmmaking and film criticism
- 3) Midterm and Final exams test students' knowledge corresponding to the following course objectives:
  - a. Understanding the socio-historical context that produced these films as well as the prevailing aesthetic philosophies that guided these directors and their critics
  - b. Learning how film expresses social and cultural issues
  - c. Learning critical thinking through written and oral expressions

### **Procedures for Data Gathering:**

- 1) All students complete the Entry and Exit Questionnaires. They are distributed and collected by GAs.
- 2) The Carmen website serves as repository for statistics on the quiz questions.
- 3) 25% of midterm and final exams are randomly selected and studied for evidence of each one of the stated objectives.

### **Use of Assessment Data:**

The feedback and data gathered will be examined in the Spring Quarter by the Undergraduate Studies Committee, which will consult as needed with the past instructors and with the Arts and Sciences Film Studies Committee. As a result of that analysis, the USC will identify areas for improvement (in teaching methods, course materials, structure, assignments, etc.), which it will report in the May or June faculty meeting. In that report, the USC will make specific recommendations to the Department Chair on changes to be implemented in the following instantiations of the course.

