

Приложение
к рабочей программе учебной дисциплины,
реализуемой на английском языке



Russian Studies (None-degree)

Degree program (code and name)

Bachelor (semester program)

Level of qualification (bachelor, master, specialist)

Culture of the Russian North

Course (code and name)

ECTS credits	5
Workload: total/contact/independent	180/72/108
Duration (1 semester/ 1 year)	1 semester
Semester/trimester when the course is delivered (fall, spring)	Fall
Study place / Location (Arkhangelsk, Severodvinsk, Koryazhma)	Arkhangelsk
Responsible institute and chair	Institute of Humanities, Social and Political Sciences
Responsible chair / department	Department of World History
Language of instruction	English
Mode of study (full time, part time)	full time
Type of course unit (compulsory, optional, elective)	Optional
Mode of delivery (face-to-face, blended, distance learning)	face-to-face
Name of lecturer(s) / course responsible person	Anna Soloviova/ Anna Soloviova
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Course overview / general description

The course will be particularly focused on a variety of different local cultures and meanings attached to (the concept of) culture in the context of the Northern Russian territories. It provides students with knowledge on and aims to enable them to analyse the key practices, ideas, beliefs, and values that have shaped the worldviews and cultural identities of the Russian inhabitants of the European North. The Northern Russian culture, as presented in the course, refers to skilled human activities through which the severe northern nature is transformed, but also to historically and ethnically varied ways of understanding the relationship between spirituality, humanity and nature based on the daily life of local populations. The course presents both the material and the immaterial features (artefacts and symbols), artistic products and conventions attached to them (paintings, design, photography, fiction and travel literature), a way of life and a system of shared values, reflecting the unique cultural system of the Russian North. One of the primary goals of the course is to provide students with an opportunity to analyse the dynamics of interaction between northern Russian local and other ethnic cultures and the processes of the Russian identity formation at the northern margins of the Russian state.

Learning outcomes

After the studies, a student must be able to:

- Show a basic knowledge of all aspects of the Northern Russian culture, as expressed in folklore, art, religion, daily life, architecture, music, and their historical development.
- Demonstrate a historically informed sensibility about the diverse forms of Russian adaptive strategies and patterns developed at the marginal Northern territories.
- Recognise the major figures and movements in Russia's cultural history, gaining special expertise in their connection to the Northern European region of the state.
- Define and evaluate the religious, spiritual, intellectual and aesthetic ideas that make up the Northern Russian culture, and trace their development over time.
- Identify the northern symbols and images expressed in the textual and artistic representations of Russian culture.

Course contents

The course is divided to four modules. Module I focuses more on general understanding of the “Russian North” cultural phenomenon, Modules II, III are more oriented to description of material and symbolic features of its culture, developed in the course of Russian history, Module IV is aimed at critical interpretation of the “northern images”, represented in the modern Russian artistic and intellectual context.

Module I. “The Russian North” as geographic, cultural and historic phenomenon.

The module aims to introduce the concept of “Russian North” as both the unique anthropological and historical space, which is socially inherited and culturally produced. It brings forward the complexity of regional ethnic traditions of the European North of Russia that are represented at the national and the transnational cultural scene as one of the main sources of the Russian authentic natural and spiritual experience. The special symbolic status of the European North is based on positive interpretation of its marginal genuine traits and archaic forms in the context of national Russian culture.

Module II. The Northern Russian ethnic traditions and folk cultures.

A key focus for the module is the formation of local Russian rural subcultures, that transformed the core elements of Slavic peasantry to adapt to the new conditions of northern climate and nature. The folk (rural) culture is represented as the two main parts combination: a model of the World («vision of the World») and a life-support system. The cases, presented to students, reflect the Russian folk rituals, beliefs, symbols and worldviews, reflected in the unique northern rural landscapes: combination of architecture, lifestyle, and household traditions, as well as community communication patterns. Particular emphasis is given to a wide range of traditional plans and wooden architecture of the northern villages (preserved since the 18th century until the modern time), folk costume, cuisine, crafts, calendar and family holidays. Students are involved in the discussion of the ways in which historical, cultural and natural complex of the northern Russian folk culture and traditional way of life acquires all-Russian and international importance.

Module III. Russian orthodox traditions and cultural heritage of the European North.

Within this module, students will learn about the sacral (religious) components of the northern Russian cultural landscapes: Orthodox architecture, icon painting, literature and music. The cases presented will show how the Russian orthodox «vision of the World» had transmuted in the northern Russian population mentality and reflected in the local traditions of church building, icon painting and calendar rituals. The authenticity of the Russian Orthodox heritage is interpreted as the result of the unique “northern” history of Christianity, revealing the existential experiences of the spiritual revelation of different local communities (monks, pilgrims, peasants, seamen, merchants and so on).

Module IV. Modern artistic and intellectual representations of the Russian North.

The module concentrates mainly on the mytho-poetic dimension of the North: the ‘edge phenomenon’ - elaborated within the modern renewal in Russian literature, music, visual arts and multi-media performances (end of the 19th – beginning of the 21 century). In the modernity

context, the Russian North reemerged as a critical voice from the margins, as an existing alternative to rational and industrial 'land and life' order. The cases, presented to students, demonstrate, how artistic and academic texts of the 19th – 20th century represented the Northern Russian culture as the territory revealing secret, shadowed and gradually disappearing Russian archaic worldview and lifestyle. Students are involved in the discussion of the ways in which traditional northern villages and cities meet the network communities of artists and researchers.

Planned learning activities and teaching methods: lectures, seminars, group work, presentations and individual work. Classes will integrate lecture and discussion. For each discussion, students are presented with a set of questions that will prompt them to explore connections between historical and ethnographic material and the works of art, literature, architecture, design, or music. Students will also develop skills of reaching meaningful conclusions from analysis of a variety of sources (text, film, music, visual art, architecture, objects). Each week we will explore readings, sometimes from historical anthologies, other times from works of literature. In addition, many weeks include film screenings and excursions (to local museums) both inside and outside of ordinary class meetings.

Prerequisites

Assessment methods and criteria.

Class participation: 20% (Students will be expected to have read the assigned literature prior to class and to participate actively in the discussion.)

2 Short Papers (min. 5 pages each): 2 x 15%: "Russian cultural sources of northern identity"; "Northern Russian cultural landscape: artifacts and symbols"

Midterm Paper (min. 7 pages): 20%

Lecturer will present the list of topics, organized around the main cultural themes explored in class, to students.

Final Paper (min. 10 pages): 30%

The topics will be appointed as the result of individual consultations with the lecturer, taking into account both the content and character of the course, and each student's academic background.

Formal demands:

Use **Times New Roman** font and the letter size 12. Line spacing format is 1,5. **List of References** line spacing must be 1,0. Some of the references used have to be among the titles in the reading list.

Grading:

A-F / Fail (A-E means 'approved', F means 'not approved')

Mandatory and recommended reading

Figes, Orlando, *Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia*, Picador, 2003.

Links to fragments of the relevant texts and video fragments in the public domain will be provided in class.