New Courses Offered by the German, Russian & Asian Languages & Literatures Department
Fall 2007

ARB 91-02 Contemporary Arabic Novel
Alwan L+ TR 4:30-5:45

The course surveys major themes in the contemporary Arabic novel. The most important themes will be: ethnic, religious, and social conflict, identity, alienation and contemporary politics. To accomplish this, a critical reading of a selection of Arabic novels across the Arab world will be presented. The selection will cover major writers such as Najib Mahfuz, Yusuf Idres, Ilyas Khuri, Hanan ash-Shayk, Sahar Khalifa and others. In English.

ARB 91-03 Narrating War Zones: Cinematic and Literary Gulf and Chechen War Representations
Anishchenkova 11+ T 6:00-9:00

By the end of the 20th century, the discourse on war has become an integral part of our daily lives: in Leon Trotsky’s words, “you may not be interested in war, but war is interested in you.” In contemporary culture, diverse representations of war – in media, film and literature – appear to be as important as the war itself. This course aims to produce a comparative study on how various political, cultural and religious perspectives on the Gulf and Chechen military conflicts of the 1990s construct “war fictions,” which are manipulated according to different ideological agendas. We will examine the mythology of war in a number of Arab, Western and Russian sources, including motion pictures, documentaries, and literary production (both fiction and non-fiction). All course materials are in English. No prerequisites.

ARB 191-02 Arabic Media
El-Zein J+ TR 3-4:15

This course relies on a variety of media sources, such as TV, films, radio, and articles from the Arab press. It discusses cultural themes such as identity, globalization, relations with the West, religion, and women’s rights. It boosts students’ oral and written proficiency through commenting on the news and written editorials in Arabic. It reinforces students’ ability to debate and argue in groups in Arabic and expands their social and political lexis. In Arabic. Prerequisite ARB 122 or instructors permission.

GER 59/159 German Theater From Lessing to Brecht
Martin E+ MW 10:30-11:45

From the period of the Enlightenment to the present, playwrights in the German speaking countries like Gottsched, Lessing, Schiller, Kleist, Brecht, Frisch, Dürrenmatt, and Müller have tried to influence social and political developments by means of theater. Based on a selection of theoretical writings as well as plays, the course will analyze concepts of theater/drama by German speaking writers, the political/social function they assigned to theater, and the role of theater in current cultural politics. In English. Cross-listed with DR 59/159. If taken at the 100-level: Extra assignments and class meetings. Prerequisite: senior or graduate standing. Upper level taught in German.

ILVS/RUS/CIV 91 Film and Nation: Russian and Central Asia
Johnson L+N TR 4:30-6:50

After the breakup of the Soviet Union, Russia and some former Central Asian republics, now the independent countries of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan have embarked on a nation-building project through cinema. We will explore national identity, national space, new heroes and new national myths in films ranging from the Russian mega-hits, Peculiarities of the National Hunt and Brother to the international art-cinema favorites, The Adopted Son (Kyrgyzstan) and The Hunter (Kazakhstan). No prerequisites. All films with English subtitles. Cross listed RUS 91, CIV 91.
Every week, in Jewish congregations throughout the world, scriptural text is chanted in the synagogue in a ritual that dramatically re-enacts the revelation of the Law on Mount Sinai. In many congregations, across denominational lines, busy lay congregants spend hours every week preparing to "read Torah" at Sabbath services. Many understand this proper performance of sacred text as a way to position themselves at the core of authentic religious experience. Increasingly, these oral traditions are not learned through face to face interaction with cantors, rabbis or other teachers, but from computer programs such as "Haftutor," “CyberTropes,” or “Navigating the Bible.” As students learn how to lead prayer from computers and download their Torah readings onto their ipods, the locus of instruction, review and practice has transitioned from the synagogue and study hall to their car, the Stairmaster in their gym and the subway during their daily commute. In this course, we will examine the nature of oral tradition and its customary transmission. We will consider why certain men and women increasingly see the performance of text as a key to authentic religious expression and how the application of new technology is changing the transmission, performance and understanding of these sacred oral traditions. Co-list with MUS 195

**RUS 123 Russia Today**

Language course for advanced students of Russian, including native/near-native speakers, focusing on issues of contemporary Russia (e.g., politics, the economy, youth, gender, crime). Course material includes mass media, pop culture, TV, documentaries, journalism and the Internet. Work includes essays, oral reports and an independent research project. All work and materials are in Russian. Prerequisites: Rus 122 or permission of instructor