

THE FIELD

The major in Russian, Eurasian, and Polish studies offers an interdisciplinary approach to the study of a large and important portion of the world: Russia, Central and Eastern Europe, and Eurasia. The historic events that have occurred in the region since the 1980s, and continue today, make it crucial that people in the United States remain informed about all aspects of life in the region. The rapid changes and increased contacts with people in the region impel us to continue to work harmoniously with these countries and to communicate with the inhabitants of the region in their languages rather than ours.

The program regularly offers Russian and Polish language instruction. Russian is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, spoken by over 143 million people in the region, and it has been recently designated by the Department of State as a critical language, indicating its continuing importance to international relations, business, and development work. It provides access to one of the world's major literature traditions and to vast amounts of professional literature in all fields. Polish is key to the cultural riches of a country that is part of the heritage of many Americans and which plays a very important role in world events.

Students can elect to major or minor in Russian, Eurasian, and Polish studies (REPS). Courses relevant to the program are regularly available in at least six UMass Amherst departments, and students may also enroll in Five College courses and participate in study abroad programs. Public lectures and other events augment formal study. The W.E.B. Du Bois Library has an extensive collection of books, journals, digital media, and microforms related to the region.

The program is guided by a group of core faculty—representing anthropology, history, legal studies, political science, comparative literature, Judaic and Near Eastern studies, languages, literatures and cultures—committed teachers and researchers, who maintain lively research agendas in the region.

THE MAJOR

The major in Russian, Eurasian, and Polish studies requires three years of Russian or Polish language study; six courses dealing with the Russian, Eurasian, and Polish studies area in a minimum of three disciplines chosen from anthropology, comparative literature, economics, history, Judaic studies, political science, sociology, or Russian; and the Junior Year Writing and Integrative Experience requirements.

THE MINOR

The minor in Russian, Eurasian, and Polish studies requires one year of Russian or Polish language study and four courses focusing on the Russian, Eurasian, and Polish studies area as outlined in the description of the major above.

For further information about the major and minor, about study abroad, and about departmental honors, please consult program director Professor Regine Spector.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Graduates with an REPS major have gone on to careers in diplomacy, government service, Peace Corps, development and nongovernment work, business, policy research, and translation. Students interested in pursuing graduate study related to the area would be well advised to combine the major with a minor in a relevant discipline since most graduate programs are in single academic disciplines.

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND FINE ARTS

The humanities focus on human creativity, endeavor, and culture. The imaginative and creative arts—literary and performing—derive from life and teach about human behavior and constructs of social reality. The history of social, political, and economic systems illuminates and shapes the present and the future. Students in the College of Humanities and Fine Arts are expected to broaden their perspectives on individual and cultural expression within their own and other societies, to understand the development and evolution of the discipline of study in relation to the culture from which it emanates, and to learn the methods which knowledge in the discipline is gained.

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