This course will introduce students to Russian history through its visual culture. It will also introduce visual culture through Russian history. By comparing a variety of visual and verbal sources, we will analyze the ways in which different kinds of sources shape our views of history and our views of the world around us. We will read widely in Russian visual culture and contemporary visual theory. Each student will write a research paper on a topic of his or her own choice.

The goals of this course include:
- Improving students’ ability to read visual documents analytically
- Improving students’ ability to write coherent, persuasive essays
- Gaining an appreciation for Russian history and culture
- Thinking about the role of visual culture in history, politics, public ethics, and everyday life

Requirements and Grading

**Participation** (30%) Regular participation in discussion and weekly blog writing
  Each week students will write one blog in response to the reading and one in response to another student’s comments. Due by midnight each Sunday night. (More on this below)

**Research Project:**
Prospectus (5%)
Source review (5%)
1000-word excerpt-draft (10%)
Peer-review (10%)
Oral presentation (10%)
15-page (4500 word) completed paper (30%)

**Reading**
Valerie Kivelson and Joan Neuberger, eds *Picturing Russia: Explorations in Visual Culture*
Richard Howells and Joachim Negreiros, *Visual Culture*
Roger Bartlett, *A History of Russia*
Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*
*Other chapters and articles posted on Blackboard as pdfs (marked with *)
COMMUNICATION

All students are required to have functioning email addresses registered with the university. Information about the course will be posted on Blackboard and I will send information via Blackboard’s email. All students are required to have access to Blackboard and to keep their email addresses updated on Blackboard.

BLOG: Each student will have a blog set up on Blackboard for weekly writing. Regular reading and responding to one another’s blog posts is an important part of creating intellectual community in this class. Regular writing is one of the best ways to hone your writing skills and to activate and remember what you are learning. Each week, students will post two 250-word essays on our class Blackboard site under “blogs.” One post must respond to something we have read for that week (and in some weeks you will write to a specific prompt as noted in the syllabus), and the other must respond to a post from that week or a previous week by one of your classmates. Both short posts must be date-stamped no later than Sunday at midnight in order to receive credit for that week. It’s a good idea to write out your post in Word or Pages or Google Docs first and then cut and paste it into the blog, as Blackboard is not hospitable to editing or to saving your work. Also please paste a copy of your comment BOTH in the other student’s thread and in your own blog (easier for me to keep track). Blogs can be informal or conversational in tone but they are “real” writing and therefore must have correct grammar, word usage, and spelling. Blogs are due by Sunday at midnight each week, but don’t wait until the last minute to write them. Write soon after reading or after class discussion for fresher more thoughtful work.

OFFICE HOURS: I have scheduled office hours once a week but I am happy to meet with you at any other time during the week to discuss any aspect of the course. Please feel free to schedule an appointment via email or phone.

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE

Attendance: Come to every class. Students are required to attend each class meeting. Absences will be excused only for documented family or medical emergencies or specific religious holidays. If you miss more than two meetings you are required to talk to me about passing the class.

Readings: Read the assignment before the class period for which it is assigned. Read and look at images actively and critically. Come to every class prepared to discuss that week’s reading and/or screening.

Participation: Join in discussion. Raise questions you had while reading or viewing or questions that occur to you during discussion. This class will be run in seminar format and you will be graded on participation. If you are naturally shy or for any other reason feel uneasy joining the discussion, please come talk to me.

If you find yourself falling behind, please come see me or email me; don’t just give up and disappear. Alternatively, don’t download a paper from the internet. We can find ways to solve any academic problem except plagiarism, which will be prosecuted. Read on...

Academic Integrity: I take Academic Integrity very seriously. When we begin writing, we will discuss academic integrity, plagiarism, and cheating. If you have any questions about plagiarism or other issues of academic dishonesty please feel free to raise such questions with me. University policies are available at: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs
Accommodations:
Students with special needs (documented by the Services for Students with Disabilities Office) should notify me to set up accommodations.

READING, LOOKING, & WRITING: CLASS SCHEDULE

*indicates a post on Blackboard: Documents

1a. Jan 15 Introduction:
What do we learn from pictures?
How do we see pictures?
*Elkins, excerpt from The Object Stares Back

1b. Jan 17: How to look at pictures and things
READ:
*Elkins, excerpts from Pictures and Tears, 1-19, 182-95
BLOG: Think about all the different ways we look at things: how do we make meaning out of what we see? What comes from within us? What role does context play? How are we “trained” to look? What other questions can be asked about looking at things?

2a. Jan 22 Picturing pre-modern Russia
READ: Picturing Russia, chapters 1 (Kivelson & Neuberger), 2 (Franklin), 3 (Goldfrank), 4 (Chernetsoy), 5 (Ostrowski), 6 (Rowland), 7 (Kollmann), 8 (Flier), 9 (Kivelson), pp 1-50. Bartlett, A History of Russia, 1-63.
BLOG: write approximately 250 words on what you and/or the author learned about pre-modern Russian from looking at and analyzing visual documents. You can focus on a specific detail or write something broad and synthetic but you must use specific examples. I am not looking for a deeply analytical essay. I am asking you to think about visual depictions of basic institutions and everyday life and you have learned by looking at pictures of pre-modern Russia (or comparing what you learn from reading the text and what you (and the author) learn from looking at the pictures). Think about what you can and can’t learn from looking at images.

2b. Jan 24 SHOW AND TELL
READ: Writing in History, 6-21
Visual Culture, “Iconology,” 1-34
Bring an image to class. Speak for 5 minutes about 4 things:
• what it is (and whether it’s a primary or secondary source)
• what we learn (or don’t learn) by looking at it.
• how “Iconology” helps you see more in your image
• how it could be a document or source for a research paper.

3a. Jan 29 How do we know what we see? Case Study: Icon Painting
Picturing Russia: 6 (Rowland), 8 (Flier), 12 (Marker)
*Hans Belting, “Introduction,” Likeness and Presence,” 1-16
*Wendy Salmond, excerpts from Russian Icons at Hillwood, 17-19, 29-59

3b. Jan 31 Orthodox Icons as sacred and secular images
READ:
*Daniel Rowland, “Two Cultures, One Throne Room,” *Orthodox Russia: Belief and Practice*, 33-57

**BLOG:** anything you wish about how icons, as visual texts, function in individual and collective life.

4a. Feb 5 Research Topics

**READ:** *Writing in History*, pp. 77-97
Come to class prepared to talk about the research topic you are considering and the images you are considering using. Bring images if you wish.

4b. Feb 7 Pictures as Signs in 18c Russia

**READ:** *Visual Culture*, “Ideology,” 83-111
*Picturing Russia*: 10 (Hughes), 11 (Zitser), 12 (Marker), 13 (Smith), 14 (Newlin)

--> **WRITE:** One Paragraph describing your proposed research and the visual images you intend to use as sources. Email to me before class.

**BLOG:** write something about applying concepts connected with ideology to images in the articles in *Picturing Russia* that we are reading this week. And comment.

5a. Feb 12 Picturing Russian People

**READ:** *Picturing Russia*: 15 (Ransel), 18 (Wortman), 19 (Hilton), 17 (Engelstein), 22 (Norris)
Bartlett, *A History of Russia*, 115-153
*W Bruce Lincoln, “Russia’s Romantic Age,”* 126-52

**LOOK:** “Russian Types” on Flickr
Siberian peasants

5b Feb 14: Picturing Russia Modernizing

**READ:** *Visual Culture*, “Fine Art,” 157-82
Bartlett, *A History of Russia* 154-93
*W. Bruce Lincoln, “The Rise of Realism,”* 153-97, (but you can skim 157-187 about the novelists), and “Art in the Name of the People,” 221-40
Elizabeth Valkenier, “Politics in Russian Art: The Case of Repin”
*Paintings: The Wanderers* (hi-res reproductions)

**BLOG:** your choice

6a. Feb 19: Photographs and meaning in history

**READ:** *Visual Culture*, “Photography,” 183-206
*Julia Adeney Thomas, “The Evidence of Sight,”* 151-68
*Picturing Russia*, 23 (Evtuhov) 24 (Ruane), 26 (Steinberg), 27 (McReynolds), 29 (Rosenberg)

**BLOG:** problems photographs (vs painting) pose as evidence for understanding the past

6b. Feb 21 Research: Sources

--> **WRITE:** Annotated bibliography (texts and images)
**Bring:** an image you are using in your research project
7a. Feb 26 Revolutionary Iconoclasm and Revolutionary myth-making
READ: Roger Bartlett, A History of Russia, 194-253
*Richard Stites, “Revolutionary Iconoclasm,” 61-78
MOMA Constructivism
MOMA Malevich
Suprematism

7b. Feb 28 1920s: Building Socialism: Art Into Life
*Margaret Tupitsyn, The Soviet Photograph, 35-98
*Osip Brik, “What the Eye Does Not See”
Soviet design: fabrics
Gustav Klutsis & Valentina Kulagina (click on gallery too) posters
Film Editing: Montage: clip from Eisenstein’s Battleship Potemkin
Dziga Vertov, Man with a Movie Camera (in class)
BLOG: your choice

8a Mar 5: Game Over?
READ: Picturing Russia: 34 (Wolf)
*Margarita Tupitsyn, The Soviet Photograph, 127-74
*Christina Kiaer, “Aleksandr Deneika”

USSR in Construction (this isn’t the easiest site to use)
USSR in Construction (easier to use but less complete)
Some images from USSR in Construction
BLOG: your choice

8b Mar 7: Picturing Russia’s New Rulers
READ: Picturing Russia: 40 (Neuberger)
The Criterion Contraption: Ivan the Terrible, Parts I & II
WATCH (in class): Ivan the Terrible (Sergei Eisenstein, director) part II

->WRITE: reading report: one major source and its contribution to your research

SPRING BREAK

9a. Mar 19 Picturing (and Constructing) Power
*Jan Plamper, “The Spatial Poetics of the Personality Cult”
Picturing Russia: 35 (Widdis), 37 (OMahoney), 38 (Dobrenko), 39 (Petrone), 42 (Bassin)

9b. Mar 21 ->WRITE: Research Prospectus Due
NO BLOG this week

10a. Mar 26: Picturing Russian Empires
**READ:** Picturing Russia 4 (Chernetsov) 20 (Ely), 21 (Sunderland), 32 (Hirsch), 33 (Northrup), 41 Shneer

**10b March 28. Picturing Russian Empires**
**READ:** Visual Cultures, “Film”
*Elena Prokhorova, on White Sun of the Desert*
**WATCH (in class)** White Sun of the Desert
**BLOG:** your choice

11a April 2 Neither Fish Nor Fowl: Late-Soviet socialism
**READ:** Bartlett, A History of Russia, 254-87
43 (Reid), 44 (Woll), 45 (Solaris), 46 (Sharp), 47 (McMichael), 48 (Robson)
*Khrushchev and the Manege Affair*

11b: April 4 “Unofficial” or “Nonconformist” Art
Matthew Jesse Jackson, excerpt from Ilya Kabakov, Moscow Conceptualism, Soviet Avant Gardes
**BLOG:** your choice

12a April 9 Post-Soviet: Looking Back and Moving Forward
Bartlett, A History of Russia, 288-97
Picturing Russia, 49 (Goscilo), 50 (Kunichika)
*Serguei Alex. Oushakine "We're Nostalgic but We're Not Crazy": Retrofitting the past in Russia Russian Review* Vol. 66, No. 3 (Jul., 2007), pp. 451-482
*Alexander Borovsky, “Between Past and Future,” excerpt from Russia: 900 Years of Masterpieces

12b April 11 Zviagintsev, The Return
**BLOG:** your choice

13a & b. April 16-18 RESEARCH WEEK – NO CLASS
13a April 18:
**WRITE:** 1000 word section

14a & b. April 23-25 RESEARCH WEEK – PEER REVIEW OF 1000 w sections.

15a & b. April 30-May 2 STUDENT PRESENTATIONS OF RESEARCH

**FINAL RESEARCH PAPERS DUE:** MAY 6, 5pm.

Random collection of interesting websites:

Exploratorium (San Francisco) on seeing:
[http://www.exploratorium.edu/seeing/links.html](http://www.exploratorium.edu/seeing/links.html)

Journal of Visual Culture
[http://vcu.sagepub.com/](http://vcu.sagepub.com/)

Russian Visual Arts Project
http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/rva/index.html

Photos of Soviet Industrialization
http://www.katardat.org/russia/pictures/photos-industrialisation.html

The story behind Dorothea Lange’s Migrant Mother
http://www.press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/316062.html

Early Visual Media
http://www.visual-media.be/publications.html

17th century drawings of Moscow
http://faculty.washington.edu/dwaugh/rus/mayerb.html

Prokudin-Gorskii: early 20c color photos of Russian Empire
http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/empire/

The Georgian Museum of Photography
http://www.photomuseum.org.ge/index_en.htm

Photographs of WWII in the USSR (from Russian Information Agency Novosti on Wikimedia Commons)
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Special:Search?search=world+war+II&prefix=File%3ARIAN+archive&fulltext=Search+all+RIAN+archive+files&fulltext=Search&uselang=en

Facebook pages:

Russian History
Moscow History
St Petersburg History
The History of war on Russia