

Course Goals

Folk beliefs are a rich and enduring component of Russian culture. This course introduces students to a wide selection of Russian fairy tales, and examines the aesthetic, social, and psychological values that they reflect. Students will develop or enhance their understanding of the continuing cultural influence of fairy tales and folk beliefs in literature, in orchestral music, opera, and ballet, in painting, posters, and folk art, as well as in film. The course also provides a general introduction to the study of folklore and fairy tales, presenting a broad spectrum of approaches to the interpretation of fairy tales, including psychoanalysis, Marxism, sociology, structuralism, and feminism. For both contextual and critical reasons, the course introduces and analyzes Russian fairy tales against a background of and in comparison with the Western fairy tale tradition (the Grimms, Perrault, Disney, etc.).

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to discuss several approaches to the study of fairy tales, especially as they apply to the body of texts contained in Afanas'ev's *Russian Fairy Tales*. In particular, students will be able to:

- Interpret the symbolic meaning of Russian pagan and Christian customs and rituals, tracing this meaning to fairy tale images and motifs;
- Classify Russian fairy tale narratives according to thematic cycles;
- Identify the main structural components of Russian fairy tale narratives;
- Explain the function of fairy tales in a child's psychological development and the means by which this function is fulfilled;
- Explain the treatment of traditional gender roles in fairy tale narratives and judge the extent to which these narratives may reflect or influence the acculturation of men and women;
- Explain the role of fairy tale texts in economic, social, and political contexts;
- Explain the means by which fairy tale and folk motifs are transferred to other artistic media, such as the visual arts and music;
- Recognize similarities and differences between Russian and Western fairy tale texts.

Most students who complete this course agree that by the end of the semester they are able to approach fairy tales very differently from the way they dealt with them previously.

Credit and Prerequisites

This course carries three credits. All participants are required to enroll in lecture and in one recitation section. There are no prerequisites; in particular, no knowledge of Russian language is required.

Course Methodology

Reading assignments are a principal source of information for this course. In order to derive full benefit from class meetings (and also to perform well in recitation and on weekly quizzes), it is important to complete assignments by the indicated days.

In addition to readings, students are also responsible for any material presented in class. Lecture meetings will involve the introduction of new information, analysis of assigned readings, and the presentation of visual and audio materials (slides, video clips, and audio recordings). Students who are absent from a lecture meeting should find out from their classmates about information or materials they may have missed.

The lecture/recitation format of this course reflects the notion that education should involve “active learning,” in which students do more than just memorize and regurgitate what their instructors or textbooks tell them. For example, your instructors may analyze a fairy tale for you from a particular theoretical perspective as a way of illustrating how the theory works, but you actually learn the theory not from reading about it or listening to our analysis, but from applying it yourself. In other words, you learn most by doing, and what you read and what we tell you are intended primarily to prepare you to do your own thinking.

Recitation sections are designed to facilitate this type of original student participation. Unlike in many courses, recitation is not a review of lecture, but an opportunity for students to work originally and critically with course materials. *Participating actively in recitation will improve your grade, and will also help you learn more and find class more interesting and more satisfying.*

In order to better facilitate “active learning” it is strongly recommended that you refrain from using computers and iPads during lecture and recitation. If you must use one of these devices to take notes you MAY NOT use it to engage in other activities, such as checking e-mail, reading the newspaper, playing games, or posting on facebook. All cellular phone use is strictly prohibited.

Your instructors will often use PowerPoint slides to highlight key points during lecture, and we will post those slides on CourseWeb (Blackboard). Whenever possible, we will try to make the slides available by early afternoon on the day of the lecture, so that you can print them out, bring them to class, and take notes directly on the printout, although at times last-minute changes may make this impossible. The PowerPoint slides are deliberately designed to be outlines, rather than detailed summaries of the lecture; they can help you follow the lecture, organize your own notes, and review for quizzes and examinations, but they are not a substitute for attending lecture and taking notes yourself.

Other than the three required books, all materials will be available to students on CourseWeb or through the University of Pittsburgh library electronic reserves. The password will be announced in lecture and recitation.

Overview of Course Requirements and Grading

You will be required to:

1. Complete the assignments scheduled for each class meeting, which normally means reading 25–50 pages and being prepared to discuss them in an informed manner in class;
2. Attend all lecture and recitation meetings;
3. Take the three scheduled examinations (120 points= 60%);
4. Take at least eight of the ten online quizzes (40 points = 20%);
5. Participate actively and intelligently in recitation (40-41 points = 20-20.5%).

Your course grade will be determined initially by your performance on exams and quizzes and in recitation, as follows:

Component	Max Points	Percentage
Total of all three exams	120	60%
Total of best eight quizzes	40	20%
Recitation Participation	40-41	20-20.5%
Maximum possible score	200	100%

Point totals will be converted to percentages and then to letter grades, and a curve may be implemented if necessary. For conversion to letter grades the following scale will be used (the number represents the minimum score required to receive the grade).

GRADING SCALE

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
98 and above	93 and above	90	87	83	80	77	73	70	67	63	60	0

Examinations

There will be three examinations, each consisting of forty multiple-choice questions (one point each). They will all be taken during our regular scheduled lecture time (12-12:50pm) in our regular room (David Lawrence 120). There is no separate midterm or final examination. They will be held as follows:

- Exam 1: Monday, February 5
- Exam 2: Monday, March 19
- Exam 3: Wednesday, April 18

Examinations are focused on the material covered in class since the previous exam, but may require cumulative knowledge. For example, a question on the last examination about a tale read toward the end of the semester may require you to analyze this tale through the lens of an analytical method introduced in a theoretical reading toward the beginning of the semester. Alternatively, a question about a theoretical or methodological approach to fairy tales introduced toward the end of the semester may require you to compare this approach to one introduced earlier.

For all examinations, you should be prepared to write out your PeopleSoft number and bring at least one No. 2/HB pencil.

Students may take a make-up examination ONLY if they missed an examination because of an emergency. These students need to contact the instructor and schedule a makeup exam. A makeup examination for the third exam will be given at the time officially allocated for the course final examination (note that **the course does not have a regular final examination**). Examinations are not returned to students, but we'll post your grade on Courseweb as soon as it is available. You are also welcome to meet with any of us during office hours or by appointment to review your answers.

Quizzes

Quizzes will be given each week via CourseWeb. Quizzes can be found in the week's folder. They will be online live to take from 1pm Friday through 12pm Monday. They will cover the previous week's theoretical readings, fairy tale readings, and lecture. Questions will be multiple choice but analytical in nature, just like examination questions. If you have any problems with CourseWeb while taking a quiz, contact your instructor. You will have 5 minutes to complete each quiz before the quiz automatically times out.

There will be ten quizzes given. We will drop the two lowest quiz grades and take the average of the top eight quizzes for your grade. Quizzes are like dry runs for the exam; they are of similar format to exams, and their importance is reflected in their weight being 20% of your final grade.

Recitation Participation

As is described under Course Methodology, above, this course requires active participation in recitation sessions. There are fourteen recitation meetings during the semester, and students receive a letter grade at each meeting. Each student will receive a grade between 0 and 5 (0 for a missed recitation, 5—for very active, intelligent participation). We drop your two lowest recitation grade and average the remaining twelve, which collectively amount to 1/5 of the final course grade. For the final calculation, this grade will be transferred to the scale 0-100%.

Because there are approximately twenty five students per recitation and recitation meetings last fifty minutes, the opportunity for speaking is limited. Accordingly, *contributions are evaluated*

on the basis of quality, rather than quantity (for example, it is possible—although difficult—to earn an A for the day with just one knock-your-socks-off contribution). You can improve your recitation grade by preparing carefully and participating seriously, thoughtfully, and intelligently.

Note that you can earn recitation credit not just by giving “right” answers, but also by asking good questions or by making intelligent comments even when they may happen to be “wrong.” On the other hand, no credit is awarded for bluffing, and it is important to be prepared and thoughtful. If you are shy about raising your hand, tell your instructor, who will make a point of calling on you even when you do not have your hand raised.

Because your participation in recitation affects the experience of other students, it is emphasized in the final grade. Students with a perfect recitation score will be given an extra point, which is worth 1/2 of a percent on the final grade. Thus, a student with perfect participation who receives a grade of 89.5 will end up with a 90 and be given an A- rather than a B+.

Attendance and Class Participation

There is a strong correlation between regular attendance and success in the course. In addition to earning participation points in recitation, if you attend regularly and participate as actively as possible, you will perform better on your quizzes and examinations. *Almost all of the students who receive failing grades in this course miss a significant number of class meetings.*

Absences from recitation means that you are unable to actively participate in that week’s discussion, and as a result absent students will receive a grade of 0 for that week’s recitation. *There is no distinction between excused and unexcused absence* because it isn’t possible or reasonable for your instructors to determine fairly when an absence is unavoidable, understandable but not unavoidable, or frivolous. The dropped recitation grades are intended to allow two absences without penalty, and you are encouraged to save those free absences in case of illness, religious holidays, personal or family emergencies, or other truly unavoidable circumstances. Students who miss a significant amount of class because of hospitalization or other prolonged, unusual, and serious circumstances must discuss their situation with one of the instructors as early as possible. We will make reasonable accommodations for genuine emergencies, but if you miss a significant amount of class, we may ask you to take a G grade (a type of incomplete) and complete the course the following semester. This strategy is not punitive; it reflects the reality of your not having completed the course requirements, which include regular attendance at lecture and recitation.

If you know that you will have to miss two or more recitations (due to participation in the university’s athletics programs, religious holidays, etc.) you should bring this to your instructor’s attention before the end of the third week of class (January 22).

Instructor and Student Responsibilities

Every semester a small number of students habitually arrive late to class, leave class early, talk in class, read newspapers in class, solve crossword puzzles in class, send and receive text messages

in class, sleep in class, etc. We understand that students may find some materials less interesting than others (so do we!), that it is sometimes difficult to remain attentive during lecture, and that a large classroom is an alienating environment that creates the impression that whatever you do in your seat is invisible.

In fact, no matter how unobtrusive you may try to be, the non-participatory activities described above are distracting, disruptive, and inconsiderate to both instructors and other students. Furthermore, according to University policy, students do not have a right to engage in behavior that interferes with classroom activities. That is, *paying tuition confers a right to participate constructively in a course, but not to engage in activities that are distracting, disruptive, or inconsiderate.*

With this in mind, the following list outlines mutual responsibilities of instructors and students:

1. *Instructors are required to conduct classes in a prepared and organized manner and students are required not to do anything in the classroom that will be distracting, disruptive, or inconsiderate.* Your instructors are responsible for not wasting your time in class: we will always be prepared and we will do our best to make our contributions as interesting as possible. Attendance is required, but whether you actually come to class is up to you, and if you decide to skip class and accept the grade-related consequences, that's your business. If you come to class, though, you may not engage in any distracting, disruptive, or inconsiderate behavior. If you are bored in class and think we could make the meetings more effective, tell us how during office hours or by email. We may not agree with your suggestions, but if you make a serious suggestion, we'll give it serious consideration and you'll get a serious response.
2. *Instructors and students are required to be respectful of one another's time.* Your instructors will start class on time and will end on time, even if that means that we stop talking in the middle of a sentence. (This should be a welcome respite from professors who think that whatever they are saying is so important that they have a right to make you late to your next class.) You are expected to arrive on time and not to start collecting your books and papers until your instructors stop talking. *Collecting books and papers in the last few minutes of lecture is the single most common disruptive behavior in this course.* It isn't invisible. It isn't unobtrusive. You cannot do it quietly, no matter how hard you try. Other students complain about it. A lot. Your instructors don't do it, and you are not permitted to do it either.
3. *Instructors are required to be accessible outside the classroom and students are required to get in touch with instructors if they encounter problems with the course.* Your instructors will keep their regularly-scheduled office hours. If for some reason there is an occasion when we can't keep our office hours, we'll announce this in class and on the course web site in advance (if possible), and we'll try to arrange for another instructor to sit in for us. You do not need an appointment to come to office hours; except in case of emergency or previously-announced cancellation, we are guaranteed to be there (although you may have to wait a bit if someone else arrives first). We prefer to see students during office hours, but if you cannot make it then, we will work with you to schedule an appointment. We will also answer email messages from students promptly. You are expected to take the initiative to get in touch with us if you have any problems with the course.

If you arrive late to lecture, *enter and take a seat as quietly as possible*. If you know that you have to leave lecture early on a particular day, sit near a door and leave as quietly as possible. Turn off your cell phones (don't just switch them to "vibrate") and put them away; cell phones should not be placed on desks. If you are an emergency medical technician or for some other reason may receive emergency telephone calls that you cannot ignore, sit near a door, switch your phone to "vibrate," and leave the room as quickly and quietly as possible when you get a call.

Academic Integrity

The University's Academic Integrity Code may be found at <http://www.as.pitt.edu/faculty/policy/integrity.html>. It is the students' responsibility to familiarize themselves with these regulations and to observe them, and any infraction will be penalized according to these rules.

Students often commit academic integrity violations (such as plagiarism) through ignorance or inexperience. To prevent inadvertent plagiarism, your instructors have prepared a guide to avoiding plagiarism, which is available at <http://clover.slavic.pitt.edu/tales/plagiarism.html>. *Even if you would never knowingly commit plagiarism, you should read this document*. If you are uncertain about any matter concerning academic integrity, please ask your instructors.

Note that with one exception (see immediately below), the *minimum* sanction for violating the University's academic integrity guidelines is an F in the course. Not an F on the quiz or exam or paper, but an *F for the course*. The maximum sanction, as described in the documents mentioned above, is dismissal from the University without the possibility of readmission.

Exception: Students sometimes cheat impulsively on examinations or quizzes and then regret doing so immediately afterwards. If this happens to you and you turn yourself in before the instructors leave the room at the end of the session, we will assign you a zero for the examination or quiz and we will report the offense, as required, to the Dean's office, but we will not assign a failing grade for the course or any other additional penalty.

Recording Lectures and Recitations

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

Special Problems

Students experiencing problems in this course should discuss those problems with any one of the instructors. We check our email regularly, and are available to discuss any aspect of the course or

of general study habits.

Accommodations

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services (DRS), 216 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890 or 412-383-7355 (TTY) as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course. No accommodations can be made without verification by DRS.

Required Books

- Afanas'ev, Aleksandr. *Russian Fairy Tales*. New York: Pantheon. 1973.
- Bettelheim, Bruno. *The Uses of Enchantment*. New York: Random House/Vintage. 1977.
- Ivanits, Linda J. *Russian Folk Belief*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe. 1992.
- Additional materials are available in a PDF format on CourseWeb.

Recommended Texts

- Balina, Marina et al. *Politicizing Magic: an Anthology of Russian and Soviet Fairy Tales*. Chicago: Northwestern University Press. 2005.
- Haney, Jack V. *An Anthology of Russian Folktales*. M.E.Sharpe, Inc. 2009. This can be purchased with a discount student price at <http://www.mesharpe.com/folktalesdiscount.htm>.
- Lüthi, Max. *The European Folktale: Form and Nature*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 1986.
- Propp, Vladimir. *Morphology of the Folktale*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975.
- Warner, Marina. *From the Beast to the Blonde*. NY: Noonday Press/Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1996.
- Zipes, Jack. *Fairy Tale as Myth, Myth as Fairy Tale*. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky. 1994.

Syllabus

The course syllabus is available on CourseWeb under Course Documents. The syllabus may be modified in minor ways during the semester, but assignments and examination dates will not be changed.