RUS150: Russian Culture (in English)  
Fall 2016

Instructor: Jenny Kaminer, Associate Professor (jekaminer@ucdavis.edu)  
Time/place: TR 3:10-4:30P; 235 Wellman Hall  
CRN 53264  
GE Credit (New) / GE 3: Arts & Humanities, Oral Skills, Visual Literacy, World Cultures and Writing Experience.  
GE Credit (Old) / GE 2: Arts & Humanities, Social-Cultural Diversity, and Writing Experience.

Course Description: This course will examine Russian culture of the 19th-21st centuries through the prism of the comedic tradition. We will explore how writers, dramatists, and filmmakers have responded to the varying historical and political contexts of both Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union, as well as the post-Soviet period, with works of humor and satire. We will also read some texts by those Russian thinkers (such as Mikhail Bakhtin) who have theorized about the nature of humor and comedy. No knowledge of Russian required.

Works discussed will include:  
- “The Nose” (story by N. Gogol; opera by D. Shostakovich)  
- short stories by A. Chekhov and M. Zoshchenko  
- “The Fatal Eggs” by M. Bulgakov  
- texts by Russia’s “writers of the Absurd,” D. Kharms and A. Vvedenskii  
- Soviet-era film comedies, such as Volga Volga (1938) and The Irony of Fate (1975)

Required texts:  
- A course reader