



July 2023

Degrees including an East/Central European Language

Dear New Students,

Congratulations on your place on a degree at The School of Slavonic and East European Studies (UCL-SSEES). This letter gives you information about some of the modules that you will take in your first year.

If you are taking a programme with more than one language, then the East/Central European modules will be taught by SSEES, and the modules in the other language will be taught at SELCS (the School of European Languages, Culture and Society), who will send you information about that side of your programme separately.

You do not need to choose your modules now, since you will meet with tutors in the first week of term who will give you more advice.

On the following pages we have included information on your compulsory language and culture modules, and also some general reading. Information about optional modules will be available in the first week of teaching from the relevant module leader or on the UCL virtual learning platform, Moodle.

We very much look forward to meeting you when you start your degree programme in September.

If you have any queries about your modules or other aspects of your course, please do not hesitate to contact Ben Chatterley, the Programmes Administrator on 020 7679 8771 or on his email ssees-lc@ucl.ac.uk.

Sarah Young
Programmes Coordinator

Compulsory Language Modules

If you are a beginner, or near-beginner you will take Level 1 of your chosen language, and if you already know the language up to A level, or equivalent, you will take Level 2A and 2B of your chosen language.

The module leader of your chosen language will be in contact with you over the summer to give you preliminary information on any coursebooks or other reading that you need.

Compulsory Culture Module – Literature and Memory

This module is compulsory for all programmes apart from Finnish and East European Studies or Modern Languages programmes including Finnish

Below are the main set texts for the module, separated into topics.

Further bibliographies of secondary reading and some PDFs of key secondary reading will be provided on Moodle.

Most of the reading below will be provided once teaching begins but you will need to get hold of the longer works, where only excerpts will be provided, since you are expected to read the entire texts

The translations/editions listed below are recommendations, other editions may be available and you are free to read those as you wish.

Topic 1: What is memory?

- Jan Assman, 'Cultural memory and collective identity', *New German Critique*, No. 65, Cultural History/Cultural Studies (Spring - Summer, 1995), pp. 125-133. **(Provided in PDF)**

Topic 2: Nation and memory.

- Nikolai Gogol 'Christmas Eve'; Taras Shevchenko, selected poems **(provided in PDF)**

Topic 3: Bruno Schulz: Mythologizing Childhood

- Bruno Schulz, 'The Cinnamon Shops', 'The Street of Crocodiles', 'The Book', 'The Sanatorium Under the Hourglass' in Bruno Schulz, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, transl. Celia Wieniawska, Penguin, 2008. **(PDFs provided)**

Topic 4: Remembering the Unthinkable: Imre Kertész

- Imre Kertész, *Fatelessness*, transl. Tim Wilkinson, Vintage, 2007 (or any other edition). **(provided on Ebook)**

Topic 5: The Holocaust in Polish literature

- Stories and poems by Tadeusz Borowski (from *This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen*, transl. Barbara Vedder, Jonathan Cape, 1967)

- Zofia Nałkowska (*Medallions*, transl. Diana Kuprel, Northwestern UP, 2000) Marek Edelman, Anna Swirszczynska, Tadeusz Różewicz (**PDFs provided**)

Topic 6: State Socialism and the Politics of Memory and Forgetting: Kundera

- Milan Kundera, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*, transl. Michael Henry Heim, Faber, 1982. (**Excerpts provided but please obtain this work before starting the module**)

Topic 7: Svetlana Alexievich: Nuclear disaster and the end of the Soviet Union

- Svetlana Alexievich, *Chornobyl Prayer: A Chronicle of the Future*, transl. Anna Gunin, Arch Tait, Penguin, 2016. (**Excerpts provided but please obtain this work before starting the module**)

Topic 8: Danilo Kiš: Collecting the Memory of Totalitarianism

- Danilo Kiš, *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich*, transl. Duška Mikić-Mitchell, Dalkey, 2001. (**Excerpts provided but please obtain this work before starting the module**)

Topic 9: Dubravka Ugrešić: Memory and Migration, Nationalism and Nostalgia

- Dubravka Ugrešić, *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender*, transl. Celia Hawkesworth, New Directions, 2002. (**Excerpts provided but please obtain this work before starting the module**)

General Reading

The titles given below are not compulsory to buy, but are recommended as introductions to the study of language, literature and culture in general, as well as of Eastern Europe in particular.

Attridge, D. *The Singularity of Literature*, London: Routledge, 2004.

Crystal, D. *Rediscover Grammar*, London: Longman, 1988.

Hann, C.M. *The Skeleton at the Feast. Contributions to East European Anthropology*. Canterbury: Centre for Social Anthropology and Computing, University of Kent, 1995.

Hobsbawm, E. J. *The Age of Revolution: Europe 1789-1848*, London: Cardinal (first edition) 1962, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973.

Kearney, R. *On Stories*, London and New York: Routledge, 2002.

Kolarz, W. *Myths and Realities in Eastern Europe*, London: Drummond, 1946.

Mazower, M. *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century*, London: Penguin, 1998.

Preminger, A., and T.V.F. Brogan (eds). *The New Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.

- Pynsent, R.B., and S. I. Kornikova, *The Everyman Companion to East European Literature*, London, Dent, 1993.
- Rayfield, Donald. *Stalin and his Hangmen*, New York, Random House, 2004 (Penguin edition also available).
- Todorova, Maria. *Imagining the Balkans*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Trask, R.L. *Language: the Basics*, (second edition), London: Routledge, 1999.
- Frucht, Richard (ed.) *Eastern Europe: An introduction to the people, lands and culture*, 2005
- Hilson, M. *The Nordic Model: Scandinavia Since 1945*, London: Reaktion, 2008