

Russian Film School Students Forced to Attend Culture Minister's Lecture

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Vladimir Medinsky **Andrei Lyubimov / Moskva News Agency**

Students at a prestigious Russian film school have reportedly been threatened with “disciplinary action” if they skip a lecture by Russia's Culture Minister Vladimir Medinsky.

Students are routinely forced to [attend](#) rallies, [collect](#) signatures and [vote](#) for incumbents in Russia. Opposition activists complain that authorities coerce students and public servants into attending pro-Kremlin rallies.

Related article: [Russia's Culture Minister Vladimir Medinsky Keeps PhD, Despite Plagiarism Allegations](#)

Gerasimov Russian State University of Cinematography (VGIK) director Vladimir [Malyshev](#) ordered deans to corral their students to attend the minister's lecture, according to documents shared by an online group associated with opposition leader Alexei Navalny.

“Attendance of Medinsky’s lecture is mandatory. Dean’s orders. Strict disciplinary measures will be taken against absentees,” reads a text [message](#) circulated online by the “Protesting Moscow” movement on Wednesday.

Malyshev canceled afternoon lectures to ensure higher attendance at the cinematography lecture on Thursday, reads the order dated Feb. 9 bearing his signature.

Medinsky’s lecture titled “Russian Cinema’s Progress” comes two days after he [pushed back](#) a major Hollywood premiere that coincided with a Russian movie about World War II.

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