

University of Pittsburgh
Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures

MASTERPIECES OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY RUSSIAN LITERATURE

Spring 2018: RUSS 0800
Tue, Thu 2:30 – 3:45
CL 330
Instructor: Olga Kim olk11@pitt.edu

Office hours:
Mon, Tue 4:00-5:00
or by appointment
Office: CL 1228



COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course is devoted to a close reading and cultural interpretation of the works by four masters of nineteenth-century Russian literature: Alexander Pushkin, Nikolai Gogol', Feodor Dostoevsky, and Lev Tolstoy. Pushkin and Gogol' represent the novel's origins in Russian Romanticism, while Dostoevsky and Tolstoy represent the pinnacle of the novel's development in the age of Realism. Given the century's predilection toward the novel as a literary form, the course will revolve around the following questions: what is a (Russian) novel? What does a novel do, and how does it evolve through time? What is the novel's connection to the politics and society of nineteenth-century Russia? Among the central concerns of the course will be the questions of particularity of Russian modernity and Russian national/imperial identity vis-à-vis Europe.

At the end of this course, students will have:

- acquired a basic understanding of the history and politics of nineteenth-century Russian literary culture, as well as its general legacy.
- become able to understand and employ several theories of the novel.
- strengthened their reading and writing skills through training to read primary texts closely and analytically.

REQUIREMENTS

Texts:

Dostoevsky, Feodor. *Crime and Punishment* [Norton Critical Edition]. Trans. Jessie Coulson. New York: Norton, 1989.

Gogol, Nikolai. *Dead Souls* [Norton Critical Edition]. Trans. George Reavey. New York: Norton, 1985.

Pushkin, Alexander. *Eugene Onegin*. Trans. James E. Falen. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009.

Tolstoy, Leo. *Anna Karenina*. Trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky. New York: Penguin, 2000.

***To facilitate in-class discussion, all students are required to obtain the same editions**

Attendance:

Students are required to attend all class meetings. Absent students are responsible for acquiring notes and handouts. Any student that misses more than **three** classes will have their final grade lowered one full letter grade (e.g., B+ to C+). **Five** missed classes automatically result in failure for the course.

Excused absences, such as illness or death in the immediate family, must be documented (e.g., a doctor's letter or the program of the funeral), stating that **on the day at the time class meets you were unable to attend**. The student must provide the instructor with documentation **within a week of the student's return to the class** in order for such absences to be excused.

Participation:

Students are required to complete all assignments scheduled for each class meeting, and to be prepared to summarize and intelligently discuss them in class on the pertinent day. Class participation grades are determined based on regular participation in classroom discussions and activities. Note: some reading and writing assignments are more time-consuming than others. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance for lengthier assignments. Every student **must** bring a copy of the assigned text to class each day. Texts distributed by the instructor via email should be printed out and brought to class as well.

Classroom etiquette:

This course adheres to a **"no screens"** policy, which means you are kindly requested to keep your phones on silent in your pocket and your laptops packed away for the duration of the class session. This policy is intended primarily to protect your colleagues from unwanted distraction; but it is also in response to the ever-growing scientific evidence that handwritten notes are more effective than typed notes in building knowledge.

- <http://www.wsj.com/articles/can-handwriting-make-you-smarter-1459784659>
- <http://www.npr.org/2016/04/17/474525392/attention-students-put-yourlaptops-away>
- <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/>
- <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2014/09/25/why-a-leading-professor-of-new-media-just-banned-technology-use-in-class/>

Reading response:

For each class session students are required to submit a reading response that consists of two short quotations of choice from the assigned reading portion for that class (1 – 10 sentences; page number should be indicated). Each quote should be accompanied by 2-4 sentences of rationale that explains why the particular quote was chosen. You may choose a quote for various reasons: its pertinence to the work as a whole, as an example of a noteworthy literary device, as an indication of a particular cultural or historical context, or for a reason that speaks to your personal thinking or concerns. Students should submit at least **20 reading responses out of 24** possible. Each reading response should be submitted via email to olk11@pitt.edu by **12 pm on the day of class**. No late submission will be accepted.

Midterm exam:

During Week 8 of the semester, there will be a take-home midterm exam. The midterm examination will consist of three long-answer essay questions (300-500 words) based on the content of lectures and class discussion. Students will select and answer three questions out of five possible. These questions will be distributed via email by 2:30 pm on March 1st (Thursday). There will no class on March 1st. Students will have to submit their responses to olk11@pitt.edu by **11:59 pm, March 2nd (Friday)**. No late submission will be accepted.

Close-reading paper:

In order to prepare for the long paper, students will choose one passage of writing (no more than two pages) from a novel of their choice for an extended close reading of **2-3 pages**. A close reading should **not summarize** the passage at hand but should analyze the textual details of the writing: language choice, literary techniques, sentence structure, word flow, et cetera. Students should keep in mind how smaller features of the passage affect its overall composition. A successful close reading will remain attentive to detail throughout and will conclude with some sort of argument about the passage and its language. **Due March 15th (Thursday) 11:59 pm**.

Research paper:

April 5th: Topic Proposal (1-2 paragraphs) and Bibliography (5-10 entries, MLA format)

April 12th: Outline (1 page)

April 26th: Final Paper (10-12 pages)

Email to olk11@pitt.edu each assignment by 11:59 pm of the due date

Students are encouraged to discuss their choice of topics with the instructor during office hours or by appointment before submission. The paper should be focused, analytical, and critical, with a clear thesis statement and well-developed conclusion. Try to be concrete and particular instead of abstract and general in your points.

The formatting of the final paper, including all citations and notes, and the abstract must conform with the standard scholarly format as listed in Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th edition (New York: MLA, 2009).

Academic integrity

By remaining enrolled in the course, students not only agree to abide by the above stipulations, but also understand that the instructors will follow rigorously the rules regarding cheating, plagiarism, etc. spelled out in the University's Guidelines on Academic Integrity –

Student and Faculty Obligations and Hearing Procedures (Policy 02-03-02, <http://www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/policy/02/02-03-02.html>). It is the students' responsibility to familiarize themselves with these regulations and to observe them. Any infraction will be penalized according to these rules.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

- 20% Participation
- 20% Reading responses
- 15% Close-reading paper
- 15% Midterm exam
- 30% Research paper (5% abstract and bibliography; 5% outline; 20% paper)

Grades are determined on the following scale:

A+	97-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	
A	93-96	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66	F ≤59
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62	

Special Accommodations

Students who require special accommodations for testing or other classroom situations should notify both the instructor and Disabilities Resources and Services by the second week of the term. I will then work with Disability Resources and Services to meet those requirements for accommodation. Anyone who needs to register a disability should contact DRS at 412-648-7890, or visit their office in William Pitt Union, Room 216. Further information about DRS is available at <http://www.drs.pitt.edu/>.

SCHEDULE*

Date	Assignment	Pages
Week 1		
1/9 Tu	Introduction and Syllabus	None
1/11 Th	Alexander Pushkin, <i>Eugene Onegin</i> , Chapters 1-2	51 pp.
Week 2		
1/16 Tu	Pushkin, <i>Eugene Onegin</i> , Chapters 3-5	72 pp.
1/18 Th	Pushkin, <i>Eugene Onegin</i> , Chapters 6-8	79 pp.
Week 3		
1/23 Tu	Nikolai Gogol, <i>Dead Souls</i> , Part I, Chapters 1-3	60 pp.
1/25 Th	Gogol, <i>Dead Souls</i> , Part I, Chapters 4-6	78 pp.
Week 4		
1/30 Tu	Gogol, <i>Dead Souls</i> , Part I, Chapters 7-9	72 pp.
2/1 Th	Gogol, <i>Dead Souls</i> , Part I, Chapters 10-11 Vladimir Nabokov, "Our Mr. Chichikov" (in book)	60 pp. 10 pp.
Week 5		
2/6 Tu	Romanticism & Realism Close reading practice	
2/8 Th	Feodor Dostoevsky, <i>Crime and Punishment</i> , Part I	74 pp.

Week 6 2/13 Tu	Dostoevsky, <i>Crime and Punishment</i> , Part II	90 pp.
2/15 Th	Dostoevsky, <i>Crime and Punishment</i> , Part III	70 pp.
Week 7 2/20 Tu	Dostoevsky, <i>Crime and Punishment</i> , Part IV Mikhail Bakhtin, "From Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics" (in book)	66 pp. 13pp.
2/22 Th	Dostoevsky, <i>Crime and Punishment</i> , Part V	65 pp.
Week 8 2/27 Tu	Dostoevsky, <i>Crime and Punishment</i> , Part VI + Epilogue	95 pp.
3/1 Th	Take Home Midterm Exam due 3/2 Friday 11:59 pm	
3/6; 3/8	Spring Break: No Class	
Week 9 3/13 Tu	Leo Tolstoy, <i>Anna Karenina</i> , Part I	115 pp.
3/15 Th	Close-reading paper due 11:59 pm Tolstoy, <i>Anna Karenina</i> , Part II, Chapters 1-17	57 pp.
Week 10 3/20 Tu	Tolstoy, <i>Anna Karenina</i> , Part II, Chapters 18-35	64 pp.
3/22 Th	Tolstoy, <i>Anna Karenina</i> , Part III, Chapters 1-15	55 pp.
Week 11 3/27 Tu	Tolstoy, <i>Anna Karenina</i> , Part III, Chapters 16-32	62 pp.
3/29 Th	Tolstoy, <i>Anna Karenina</i> , Part IV	83 pp.
Week 12 4/3 Tu	Tolstoy, <i>Anna Karenina</i> , Part V	112 pp.
4/5 Th	Abstract & Bibliography due 11:59 pm Tolstoy, <i>Anna Karenina</i> , Part VI, Chapters 1-16	59 pp.
Week 13 4/10 Tu	Tolstoy, <i>Anna Karenina</i> , Part VI, Chapters 17-32	61 pp.
4/12 Th	Outline due Tolstoy, <i>Anna Karenina</i> , Part VII	98 pp.
Week 14 4/17 Tu	Tolstoy, <i>Anna Karenina</i> , Part VIII	49 pp.
4/19 Th	Isaiah Berlin, "The Hedgehog and the Fox" excerpt Review	2pp.
4/26 Tu	Final paper due 11:59 pm	

**The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus at any point in the semester, as circumstances demand. Any changes will be announced in class and through e-mail in advance of implementation.*