

# RUSSIAN LITERATURE IN ENGLISH (RULE)

## **RULE205 Murder and Adultery: Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and the 19th-Century Russian Novel**

The 19th-century novel is widely regarded as the supreme achievement of Russian literature. This course will trace its development from Pushkin's elegant, witty novel in verse, *EUGENE ONEGIN*, through the grotesque comedy of Gogol, to the realist masterpieces of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, with their complex depiction of human psychology and the philosophical struggles of late 19th-century society. We will consider the historical background in which the novels were produced and the tools developed by Russian critical theory, especially the Russian formalists and Mikhail Bakhtin, for understanding 19th-century Russian prose.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-REES**

Identical With: **RUSS205, REES205**

Prereq: **None**

## **RULE206 A Matter of Life and Death: Fiction in the Soviet Era**

The great Russian writers of the 20th century risked their lives insisting on moral absolutes to counter Soviet doctrine. Zamyatin's *WE* inspired *BRAVE NEW WORLD* and 1984; Bulgakov's *MASTER AND MARGARITA* remained hidden for 27 years; Solzhenitsyn dared to submit *IVAN DENISOVICH* during Khrushchev's Thaw--each decade has its characteristic masterpiece. (Students who wish to read excerpts from the course readings in the original Russian should see the instructor to enroll in a 0.5 credit tutorial.)

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-REES**

Identical With: **RUSS206, REES206**

Prereq: **None**

## **RULE208F Otherness & Belonging (FYS)**

One of the many haunting utterances of Fyodor Dostoevsky's most famous antihero, the Underground Man, is "I am alone, I thought, and they are everyone." Like him, the other protagonists of this course are outcasts, dissidents, and strangers - jaded office clerks and repressed misanthropes, queer activists and "enemies of the state" - who refuse to conform to societal norms, disrupt conventions by saying the unsayable, and write and make art from the margins, the realm of undesirables. Focusing mainly on Russia and Eastern Europe, we will analyze representations of otherness and belonging in fiction, non-fiction, and film. We will explore narratives of undesirability through the thematic prisms of exile and immigration; gender and sexuality; mental illness; prison writing; ethnic difference; religion; and unrequited love. The concept of undesirability will also be our point of entry for constructing arguments about community, privilege, and a society without outsiders.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-REES**

Identical With: **REES208F, RUSS208F**

Prereq: **None**

## **RULE220 Speak, Memory: The Russian Memoir**

Memoirs offer a chance for individuals to make sense of their relationship to larger historical forces and allow writers of fiction and poetry to reflect on the tensions between biography and the creative process. We will read

memoirs of prison and of Stalinist terror by Fyodor Dostoevsky and Nadezhda Mandelstam; visions of childhood by Lev Tolstoy, Vladimir Nabokov, and poets Osip Mandelstam and Marina Tsvetaeva; and works of autobiography by Viktor Shklovsky and Sergey Gandlevsky that create their own worlds of literary experimentation. The course will also consider the theoretical problems of autobiographical writing. Students will write a memoir of childhood (3-5 pages) to better understand the technical problems faced by Tolstoy in writing about his childhood. Students will also write a piece of memoiristic prose, or a parody or imitation of one of the writers in the course (minimum 10 pages), as one of their three papers. We will devote one class session to a writing workshop session on the creative project.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-REES**

Identical With: **RUSS220, REES220**

Prereq: **None**

## **RULE233 Introduction to Russian and Soviet Cinema**

This course provides an introduction to the history and poetics of Soviet and Russian cinema. From the avant-garde experimentation of Lev Kuleshov, Sergei Eisenstein, and Dziga Vertov to the masterpieces of Andrei Tarkovsky, Sergei Parajanov, and Kira Muratova, the course will explore the development of Russian film as artistic medium and as national tradition. The discussion and comparative analyses of different forms and genres, including silent cinema, propaganda films, blockbusters, and auteur cinema, will be situated within the cultural, political, and aesthetic contexts of the Soviet Union and contemporary Russia.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-REES**

Identical With: **REES233, RUSS233**

Prereq: **None**

## **RULE235 Queer Russia**

Russia is accustomed to playing the role of the "evil empire." The current ongoing war in Ukraine has resurrected the Cold War-era narratives about Russia as a dark, aggressive, and ruthless military power. The notorious legislation of recent years--whose functions range from barring Americans from adopting Russian orphans to criminalizing the so-called "gay propaganda"--have further solidified Russia's reputation as a country with little regard for human rights. Yet generations of Russian poets, artists, and writers have transformed the country's systematic oppression and violence into spectacular forms of protest and self-expression. This course focuses on gender and sexuality in exploring an alternative cultural history of Russia, which highlights its queer legacy from the nineteenth century to the present. We will examine poetry, fiction, art, memoirs, plays, films, performances, and discursive texts that showcase uniquely Russian conceptions of marriage, gender relations, gender expression, and sexual identity. Attention will be paid to the ways in which Russian and Western narratives of queerness align and diverge. In English. No knowledge of Russian is required or expected.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-REES**

Identical With: **REES235, RUSS235, FGSS234**

Prereq: **None**

## **RULE240 Reading Stories: Great Short Works from Tolstoy to Petrushevskaya**

This course is designed to help students improve their writing through the close reading and analysis of short stories and novellas by Russian masters of the form. In each class, we will discuss one or two literary works. Students will be asked to bring to each class their ideas on how to construct an argument that could

be developed into a written interpretation of the work. These discussions, along with work on English grammar and style as elucidated by Strunk & White and R. L. Trask, will inform students' own writing (four 5-page papers). We will read works in the realist tradition from the mid-19th century to the late 20th century that include Tolstoy's novellas of faith, adultery, and facing death; Chekhov's subtle psychological tales; Bunin's reflections from exile on a lost Russia; Babel's stories of the Civil War and of Jewish Odessa; Bulgakov's sketches of life as a country doctor; and Petrushevskaya's modern stories of the tortured lives of women in the late Soviet period.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-REES**

Identical With: **RUSS240, REES240**

Prereq: **None**

#### **RULE251 Dostoevsky**

Dostoevsky is widely recognized as one of the world's greatest novelists. His career begins at the end of Russian Romanticism, is interrupted by nine years of prison and exile in Siberia, and resumes at the beginning of the age of the great realist novel. Dostoevsky's major works grapple with the themes of sin and crime, the disintegration of the family, and the difficulty of believing in God in a world full of evil.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-REES**

Identical With: **RUSS251, REES251**

Prereq: **None**

#### **RULE252 Tolstoy**

During the 19th century when Tolstoy wrote his novels and stories, literature was viewed in Russia as the intelligentsia's primary medium for debating its big questions (such as how to resolve the inequalities that had been institutionalized under serfdom, or how to choose between new and old values as Russia experienced modernization). Writers like Tolstoy and Dostoevsky willingly assumed the responsibility to address a broad range of political, historical, and philosophical-religious questions in their fiction, and they wrote novels with radical formulations as well as solutions to these questions. However, they also viewed literature, particularly the novel, as a medium with rich potential for innovative formal experimentation, and so they resisted the call for conventional ideological novels. Each of Tolstoy's best works is an innovative formal experiment that creates an unprecedented, new type of novel. This course will study how Tolstoy's writings both responded to and transcended their times by creating new novelistic forms and new truths within those forms.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-REES**

Identical With: **RUSS252, REES252, COL262**

Prereq: **None**

#### **RULE254 Nobel Laureates: The Politics of Literature**

The course examines key cultural and socio-historical moments in the development of twentieth-century Russian literature by focusing on the prose and poetry of authors awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature-Ivan Bunin (1933), Boris Pasternak (1958), Mikhail Sholokhov (1965), Alexander Solzhenitsyn (1970), Joseph Brodsky (1987), and Svetlana Alexievich (2015). Additionally, the students will read Lev Tolstoy, who rejected being nominated for the prize, as well as Vladimir Nabokov and Anna Akhmatova, who arguably merited the award but never received it. On the broader level, the class will ponder literature's relevance for shaping public discourse on cultural policies, national identities, and international relations.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-REES**

Identical With: **REES254, RUSS254**

Prereq: **None**

#### **RULE255 Prague, Vienna, Sarajevo: 20th-Century Novels from Central and Eastern Europe**

This course is a survey of 20th-century prose fiction of Central and Eastern Europe, with an emphasis on the Czech novel. The novels we will read make history come alive through the eyes of vividly individual characters. In Joseph Roth's *RADETSKY MARCH*, the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire is viewed through the lens of a single heartbroken family; in Bohumil Hrabal's *I SERVED THE KING OF ENGLAND*, the Czech experience in World War II and postwar Stalinization is embodied in the figure of a diminutive hotel waiter; Milan Kundera's *THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING* refracts the Soviet domination of Czechoslovakia through the traumas and love affairs of a quartet of characters; in Witold Gombrowicz's *TRANS-ATLANTYK* and Aleksandar Hemon's *THE QUESTION OF BRUNO*, the main characters find themselves in a foreign land when their home countries (Poland and Yugoslavia, respectively) are torn apart by war. All the works we will read exemplify the high level of narrative sophistication, in realist, absurdist, and experimental modes, that is a hallmark of Central and Eastern European literature.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-REES**

Identical With: **RUSS255, REES255**

Prereq: **None**

#### **RULE256 The Soviet Century**

This course begins and ends with two of the most important dates of the 20th century. On November 7, 1917, the Bolshevik party launched a revolution against the government of the Russian Empire with the aim of overthrowing not just the state but capitalism, the economic and social system that defined modern civilization. Over the coming decades, the state they created (eventually named the USSR) embarked on an unprecedented project to transform human beings and remake the world. On December 26, 1991, the Soviet Union collapsed into 15 European and Asian countries.

The Soviet project raises fundamental questions about political systems, economics, and human nature--questions that are a long way from being answered. It also shaped modern history all over the world, including in the United States, which confronted the Soviet Union as its political and ideological archenemy during the Cold War. In charting the USSR's trajectory from pariah nation after World War I to global superpower following World War II, we will move beyond the clichéd view of the Soviet Union as the Evil Empire. Instead, we will examine the ways in which socialist modernity offered an alternative to its capitalist twin.

In an effort to understand the contradictions of Soviet life leading up to and during the Cold War, the class will examine how the Soviets sought to rethink issues of class struggle, family structure, education, gender dynamics, race, religion, sexuality, and patriotism. We will consider the theoretical writings of Marx, Lenin, and Trotsky in addition to poetry and prose by Babel, Mayakovsky, Akhmatova, Platonov, Pasternak, Tsvetaeva, Berggolts, and Nabokov, among others. Particular attention will be paid to underground cultures that arose in response to the repression of free speech, ethnic discrimination, and the Gulag prison system. All readings are in the English translation.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **SBS-REES**

Identical With: **REES256, RUSS256**

Prereq: **None**

**RULE263 Nabokov and Cultural Synthesis**

This course will trace the development of Nabokov's art from its origins in Russian literature by close readings of the motifs that spiral outward through his (principally English-language) novels.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-REES**

Identical With: **RUSS263, COL265, REES263**

Prereq: **None**

**RULE267 Parody: Humor, Artistic Evolution, and Restoration of the Sacred**

Parody is a form of artistic expression that has played a major role in literary history, largely through its power of critical revision. According to Russian formalist theorists of the early 20th century, parody is a driving force in literary evolution. Linda Hutcheon's formulation, that parody is "repetition with critical distance, which marks difference rather than similarity," provides perhaps the broadest and most fruitful point of departure. The course will consider various definitions of parody offered by Russian and Western theorists. After examining parody as pure humor (Woody Allen, MAD magazine, Hot Fuzz) and parody as a tool of literary evolution (Gogol and Dostoevsky), we will study the more complicated case of "restorative parody," as exemplified in the medieval practice of *parodia sacra* (sacred parody), discussed by theorists Mikhail Bakhtin and Olga Freidenberg. We will look at the modern manifestation of *parodia sacra* in Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice's *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and of restorative parody in Lin-Manuel Miranda's *Hamilton*. The course will also include discussion of legal issues raised by parody, in the case of *2 Live Crew / Roy Orbison* (which led to a 1994 Supreme Court decision, *Campbell v. Acuff-Rose Music*, in which Justice David Souter offered his own definition of parody). At the end of the semester, students will present their own research or creative projects related to parody.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-REES**

Identical With: **RUSS267, REES267**

Prereq: **None**

**RULE277 Gogol and His Legacy: Witches, Con Men, and Runaway Noses**

Nikolai Gogol (1809-1852), hailed as one of Russia's greatest and most distinctive writers, created a phantasmagorical world of devils and witches coexisting with the gritty details of life in Ukraine, St. Petersburg, and the Russian provinces. Gogol's satirical observations delighted socially conscious contemporary critics, while his linguistic experimentation and subversion of the rules of logic inspired later modernist writers. Roughly half of the course is devoted to major writers of the twentieth century. We will consider Gogol's interest in the demonic; his complex identity as a bilingual writer claimed by both Ukraine and Russia as one of their greatest cultural figures; the influence of his formal and linguistic experimentation on later writers such as Dostoevsky, Nabokov, and Bulgakov, with his vision of the Devil visiting Soviet Moscow; and Gogol's reception by modern Russian and Western writers and critics. The course is conducted in English.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-REES**

Identical With: **RUSS277, REES277**

Prereq: **None**

**RULE321 Moscow/Berlin: Socialist Modernity and the Transnational Avant-Garde**

The October Revolution of 1917 in Russia and the November Revolution of 1918 in Germany ushered in an era of imagining and building an anti-capitalist world based on the ideals of universal equality, freedom, and comradeship. Between World War I and World War II, Soviet Moscow and Weimar Berlin developed into centers of the international leftist movement that was committed to the cause of global proletarian revolution. While the revolutionary cause proved to be unattainable and costly, the period's artistic and intellectual achievements, known as the avant-garde, offer an extraordinary archive of utopian experimentation across borders.

Focusing on Moscow and Berlin, this course maps the socialist modernist aesthetic in interwar Europe and provides a comparative review of the transnational circulation of leftist and reactionary ideas registered in a variety of -isms: dadaism, expressionism, futurism, suprematism, and constructivism, as well as the New Objectivity, Bauhaus, and the practice of factography. The alignment of art and ideology will be explored through literature, art, and film and will consider the entanglements of egalitarian aspirations with nationalist agendas and emancipatory ideals with patriarchal residues. The course will also review the cultural production of Russian exiles living in Weimar Berlin and their conception of an "off-modern" path. The course will conclude with a discussion of the revolutionary avant-garde's legacy in the East Berlin underground and post-Soviet Moscow.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **SBS-CHUM**

Identical With: **CHUM321, REES321, GRST221, RUSS321**

Prereq: **None**

**RULE340 Reading Theories**

In this survey of theories that have shaped the reading of literature and the analysis of culture, emphasis is on key concepts—language, identity, subjectivity, gender, power, and knowledge—and on key figures and schools such as Marx, Freud, Nietzsche, Saussure, Barthes, Gramsci, Benjamin, Althusser, Foucault, Lacan, Deleuze, Jameson, postmodernism, and U.S. feminism.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ENGL**

Identical With: **ENGL295, COL339, CCIV393, CEAS340, RL&L290, GRST231, RUSS340, REES340**

Prereq: **None**

**RULE401 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate**

Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: **Host**

Grading: **OPT**

**RULE402 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate**

Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: **Host**

Grading: **OPT**