“Rebels and Revolutionaries in Russian History and Literature”

**Instructor Information:** Marina Potoplyak  
Class Meetings: Tu, Thu 9:30 – 11:00 AM in GAR 3.116  
Office: CAL 436C  
Office Hours: Tu, Thu 11:00 AM – 12:00 noon and by appointment  
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**Course Description:** Spanning almost a century of Russian literature, this course highlights a gallery of fictional and real rebels and revolutionaries. What was their cause? Who supported them? How were they portrayed in popular novels of the time? From Pushkin’s portrayal of Emelian Pugachev’s rebellion in the 1770s to highly organized revolutionary groups of the nineteenth century described by Dostoevsky to last centuries’ Petersburg terrorists immortalized by Andrei Bely, the literary representations of rebels and revolutionaries simultaneously served as a reflection of their popular perception and formed the reading public’s opinion on these issues. We will supplement textual analysis of prose and poetry with the study of historical documents in order to understand the complex historical, moral, and cultural dimensions of such enduring phenomena as revolution, rebellion, and terrorism.

**Course Materials:**  
Pushkin, Aleksandr. *The Captain’s Daughter* (1836)  
Pushkin, Aleksandr. “In the Depths of Siberian Mines” (1827)*  
Bakunin, Mikhail. *The Revolutionary Catechism* (1865) vs. Nechaev's *Catechism of the Revolutionary* (1869) (excerpts)*
Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *The Demons* (1873)
Kovalevskaya, Sofya. *Nihilist Girl* (1884)
Vera Zasulich's memoirs (excerpts from *Five Sisters: Women against the Tsar*)
Bely, Andrei. *Petersburg* (1913)

Related documents and articles on Blackboard

**Class Attendance:** Twice-weekly class attendance is required. You are expected to read all assigned texts before the class and to participate actively in the discussion. According to the *General Information* catalog, “[a] student who is absent from a class or examination for the observance of a religious holy day may complete the work issued within a reasonable time after the absence, if proper notice has been given” (page 71). The deadline for notification of such an absence is fourteen days prior to the class absence or the first class day for religious holy days that fall within the first two weeks of the semester.

**Deadlines:**
- February 15 – First exam
- March 1 – Response paper #1 due
- March 10 – Revised paper due
- March 31 – Second exam (take-home)
- April 7 – Response paper #2 due
- April 19 – Revised paper due
- May 5 – Third exam
- May 15 – Final paper due

*Deadlines are subject to change. Please consult Blackboard for latest announcements!*

**Special Accommodations:** At the beginning of the semester, students with disabilities who need special accommodations should notify the instructor by presenting a letter prepared by the Services for Students with Disabilities Office. To ensure that the most appropriate accommodations can be provided, students should contact the SSD Office at 471-6259 or 471-4641 TTY.

**Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty:** Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. Refer to the Student Judicial Services website for official University policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty.

**Grade Evaluations:**

**a. Two Response Papers (10% each):** Response papers should reflect your thinking on assigned reading. Format: 2-3 pages (at least 1,000 words), Times New Roman, 12 pt. You will be evaluated on the depth and quality of your reflections, clarity of style, and cohesive argumentation. After you receive your paper back, you will have about a week to revise and resubmit it. Detailed instructions will be provided two weeks before the draft is due. **Graduate students** are required to write between 4 and 5 pages, same format requirements.

**b. Two In-Class and One Take-Home Exams (10% each):** Each exam will test your knowledge of material discussed in class and studied independently at home.
c. **Presentation (10%)**: In pairs, you will prepare a 10-15-minute oral presentation on one of the topics offered at the beginning of the semester. You will discuss your presentation with your instructor no later than one week in advance. **Graduate students** will prepare to teach or co-teach during one class meeting. Two meetings with your instructor are required (one before the class and one after). More instructions to follow.

d. **Final Paper (30%)**: Your final paper may draw on one of your response papers or explore a completely new set of themes discussed in the course. It should include your reflections on the topic supported by textual evidence from assigned works. Detailed instructions will be available mid-semester. Format: 8-10 pages (at least 2,500 words), Times New Roman, 12 pt. **Graduate students**: 15-20 pages, Times New Roman, 12 pt.

e. **Participation (10%)**: Your instructor will determine this part of the grade based on your preparedness and participation in class. There are three components of success: regular attendance, advance reading/preparation of assigned materials, and insightful, well-formulated comments during discussions.

**Spring 2011 Schedule***


Tuesday January 25: *The Captain’s Daughter*.

Thursday January 27: *The Captain’s Daughter*.

Tuesday February 1: *The Captain’s Daughter*. Pushkin and the Decembrists.

Thursday February 3: Anarchism and its roots in Russia. Bakunin and Nechaev.

Tuesday February 8: Bakunin and Nechaev.

Thursday February 10: Bakunin and Nechaev.

Tuesday February 15: **First In-Class Exam**. Introduction to Dostoevsky.

Thursday February 17: *Demons*.

Tuesday February 22: *Demons*.

Thursday February 24: *Demons*.

Tuesday March 1: **First Response Paper Due**. *Demons*.

Thursday March 3: *Demons*. 
Tuesday March 8:  *Demons*.  

Thursday March 10: **Revised Paper Due. Demons.**

March 15, 17 – Spring Break  

Tuesday March 22: *Demons*.  


Tuesday March 29: Sofya Kovalevskaya’s *Nihilist Girl*.  

Thursday March 31: **Take-Home Exam.**  

Tuesday April 5:  *Nihilist Girl*.  

Thursday April 7: **Second Response Paper Due. The State Counsellor (2005).**  


Thursday April 14: Russian Modernism. Andrei Bely’s *Petersburg*.  

Tuesday April 19: **Revised Paper Due. Petersburg.**  

Thursday April 21:  *Petersburg*.  

Tuesday April 26:  *Petersburg*.  

Thursday April 28:  *Petersburg*.  

Tuesday May 3: Summing up.  

Thursday May 5: **Second In-Class Exam.**  

May 15: Final Paper Due  

*Specific reading assignments, changes to this schedule, and other relevant information will be communicated via e-mail and posted on Blackboard. It is your responsibility to provide a valid e-mail address and check Blackboard announcements regularly.*