RUSSIAN 356: THE RUSSIAN NOVEL
Meets T/Th 12:30-1:45 in Parlin 201
Office Hours: T/Th 10:30-12 and by appointment
Office: Calhoun 404
Professor Michael Pesenson

The Russian novel represents Russia’s most fundamental contribution to world culture. This course surveys classic authors and experimental works from the 19th and 20th centuries. Students in the course will deepen their understanding of the context for writers, including Dostoevsky and Tolstoy. They will gain familiarity with literary movements and genres including romanticism, realism, modernism, and the postmodern as they developed in Russia. We will highlight issues including the relationship of Russia to the West, national identity, and the complex relationship of literature to politics.

Reading List: (These novels are all available in the bookstore or on Blackboard)
M. Lermontov, A Hero of Our Time
I. Turgenev, Fathers and Son
F. Dostoevsky, Crime and Punishment
L. Tolstoy, Anna Karenina
M. Bulgakov, Master and Margarita
A. Solzhenitsyn, One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich
V. Grossman, Everything Flows
V. Sorokin, Day of the Oprichnik
V. Pelevin, Yellow Arrow

Syllabus:

Thu, 8/25  Introduction

Tue, 8/30  Hero of Our Time (Preface, Bela, MM, Taman)
Peter Scotto, "Prisoners of the Caucasus: Ideologies of Imperialism in Lermontov's 'Bela'." *PMLA*, vol. 107, no. 2.;

Thu, 9/1  Hero of Our Time (Princess Mary, Fatalist)
V. Golstein, "Futile, Fatal, or Heroic: Pechorin in the 'Fatalist'": "Lermontov versus Marlinsky; or Why Grushnitsky Had to be Thrown off the Cliff" in Lermontov's Narratives of Heroism, Evanston: Northwestern, 1998. (Blackboard)

Tue, 9/6  Fathers and Sons (Chs. 1-18)

Thu, 9/8  Fathers and Sons (Chs. 19-28)

Tue, 9/13  Crime and Punishment (Parts 1-2)
E. Wasiolek, "On the Structure of Crime and Punishment." *PMLA*, vol. 74, no. 1. (JSTOR)

Thu, 9/15  Crime and Punishment (Parts 3)

**Tue, 9/20**  
**Crime and Punishment (Part 4)**  

**Thu, 9/22**  
**Crime and Punishment (Part 5)**  

**Tue, 9/27**  
**Crime and Punishment (Part 6-Epilg.)**  

**Thu, 9/29**  
**Anna Karenina (Parts 1-2)**  

**Tue, 10/4**  
**Anna Karenina (Part 3)**  
V. Alexandrov, "Relative Time in Anna Karenina." Russian Review, vol. 41, no. 2. (JSTOR)

**Thu, 10/6**  
**Anna Karenina (Part 4)**

**Tue, 10/11**  
**Anna Karenina (Parts 5-6)**  

**Thu, 10/13**  
**Anna Karenina (Part 7)**

Tue, 10/18 Anna Karenina (Part 8)  

Thu, 10/20 Master and Margarita (Chs. 1-10)  

Tue, 10/25 Master and Margarita (Chs. 11-16)

Thu, 10/27 Master and Margarita (Chs. 17-23)  

Tue, 11/1 Master and Margarita (Chs. 24-Epilogue)  

Thu, 11/3 A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich  
S. Kobets, "Subtext of Christian Asceticism in Alexander Solzhenitsyn's A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich." (JSTOR)

Tue, 11/8 A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich

Thu, 11/10 Everything Flows

Tue, 11/15 Everything Flows

Thu, 11/17 Yellow Arrow  
S. Dalton-Brown, "Ludic Nonchalance or Ludicrous
Despair? Viktor Pelevin and Russian Postmodernist Prose.” (JSTOR)

Tue, 11/22 Day of the Oprichnik
Thu, 11/24 Thanksgiving Break
Tue, 11/29 Day of the Oprichnik
Thu, 12/1 Last Day of Class

Course Requirements:

1. Attend the class regularly. Three unexcused absences permitted; additional unexcused absences will result in lowered attendance grade.
2. Read the required pages and be prepared for class discussion.
3. Write position papers (1-2 pages) in response to questions handed out by the instructor (3-4 over the course of the semester).
4. Write two critical papers (6-8 pages) on a topic of your choice. For the Final Paper you must incorporate at least two secondary sources.

Grading

1. Attendance and Class Participation 10%
2. Position Papers 30%
3. Midterm Paper 30%
4. Final Paper 30%