

# RUS 283 SYLLABUS

**Course:** RUS 283—Russian Literary Misfits (taught in English)

**Term:** 5-19

**Class Meeting Times:** Monday-Thursday 9:00-11:00 & 1:00-3:00, Friday 9:00-11:30

**Instructor:** Prof. Lynne Ikach, 316 College Hall, office: 319-895-4114; cell: 319-331-4024

**Office Hours:** M, T, Th 3:00-4:30 p.m. (I am also available at other times by appointment.)

## Course Description and Objectives

In this course you will read, discuss, and write about Russian literary works whose main characters are out of sync with their surroundings as a result of their political or philosophical views, social status, personality, or behavior. The resulting conflicts not only reveal much about the Russian society in which the works were created, but also allow us to see reflections of these conflicts in our own time and place. Particular emphasis will be given to how these writers and their works were influenced by, and in turn influenced, the ideas and artistic works of others within and beyond Russia. Whether or not you have a lot of experience studying literature, you will be able to contribute to the class. I ask that you approach the texts with an open mind, and I encourage you to use your knowledge of other fields you discuss and write about them.

The design of this course emphasizes many of Cornell's [Educational Priorities and Outcomes](#). The course readings and discussions will provide information about Russian literary history and how Russian literature and has intersected and continues to intersect with other cultures (**Knowledge, Intercultural Literacy**). Course activities and assignments will require you to read, write, conduct research, analyze, listen, engage in dialogue, give oral presentations, and work cooperatively with classmates (**Inquiry, Communication**). You are expected to act with personal and academic integrity in and out of the classroom as you complete assignments and interact with others in the course (**Ethical Behavior**).

## Required Texts

Not all translations are the same! I encourage you to obtain the specific translations I have indicated; if you already have other translations, you can use them, but obviously the page numbers will be different.

- Pushkin, Alexander, *Eugene Onegin* (translator: **Falen**)
- Lermontov, Mikhail, *A Hero of Our Time* (translator: **Nabokov**)
- Turgenev, Ivan, *Fathers and Sons* (translator: **Katz**)
- Dostoevsky, Fyodor, *Crime and Punishment*, (translator: **Katz**)
- Tolstoy, Leo, *The Cossacks* (translator: **Louise & Aylmer Maude** or **David McDuff**)
- Gippius, Zinaida, "The Madwoman" (available via Moodle; translator: **Temira Pachmuss**)

## Attendance and Class Participation (10%)

This is a discussion-based course, so daily attendance and participation are required. To prepare for class, you should take notes as you read the assigned texts and be willing to ask and answer questions and make thoughtful comments about the reading assignments. **Each day you should bring a copy of the text along with the written comments and questions you have prepared.** I expect you to contribute actively and effectively to class discussions. This includes not only sharing your own thoughts, but also listening carefully and responding to one another without dominating the discussion. Class discussions succeed when the whole group works together, so even if you are not serving as a discussion facilitator (see below), you should volunteer to share your own reflections and questions, and respond to the

comments of others. Disagreements and debates about interpretation are perfectly acceptable, but you must express your differences of opinion respectfully. You should monitor yourself and your level of participation. Put away and silence cell phones and other communication devices when class is in session. If you miss class it will be difficult for you to succeed in the course, and you will not be allowed to make up any in-class work you miss (e.g., presentations, essay examination) as a result of an unexcused absence. If you are too ill to attend class or some emergency arises, you should contact me to explain the situation, preferably before the class period you miss. To contact me, send an e-mail ([likach@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:likach@cornellcollege.edu)) or leave a voice mail on my cell (319-331-4024) or office phone (319-895-4114). It is your responsibility to get notes from another student for any class period you miss.

Assessment: You will receive participation points for each class session based on the following scale:

- 3=attended class and participated actively and effectively, including listening and responding to other students without dominating the discussion (multiple, substantial comments and responses to others)
- 2=attended class and participated moderately (several substantial comments)
- 1=attended class, but participated minimally (1 or 2 brief comments)
- 0 =did not attend class or exhibited disrespectful behavior (e.g., dominated discussion, responded rudely to others; did not pay attention to discussion; used cell phone or computer unrelated to class)

Goals: 1) to practice effective oral communication, 2) to develop your analytical and interpretative skills, 3) to generate ideas for papers, and 4) to prepare for the final examination.

### **Discussion Facilitation (10%)**

Two times during the block you will facilitate the discussion of a reading assignment for 45-50 minutes. You are responsible for starting the discussion and keeping it going. The idea is to share your own ideas and questions about the work and to enable and encourage your classmates to take part in the discussion. You should not dominate the discussion, but guide it, and find ways to help others to participate as fully as possible in the discussion. Design the class period to make it interesting for you. You are free to use a variety of techniques, such as asking other students to respond in writing to a prompt prior to the discussion, or to do pair or group work in addition to whole class discussion. To help you prepare, think about the types of activities you have liked best in previous classes, and/or what types of activities you have always wanted to try. On the day you will be facilitating the class period, you must submit a hard copy of your list of questions and activities to me at the start of the class.

### **Assessment**

A= Developed a varied set of questions and prompts that required students to comprehend, analyze, and evaluate the reading; responded to fellow students' comments and questions thoughtfully; found creative ways to involve all students in the class, kept the discussion going throughout the period, demonstrating the ability to improvise when necessary.

B=Developed a set of questions and prompts, but not as varied as those described above; responded to students' comments; involved students and kept the conversation going, but perhaps with a few rough spots.

C=Developed questions that were too similar in type (e.g., all comprehension questions); did not find ways to involve all students in the conversation; managed to keep the discussion going, but with some difficulty and awkward moments.

D=Developed a minimal set of questions; was not able to respond adequately to fellow students' comments and questions; was not able to keep the discussion going for the entire period.

F=Did not prepare a set of questions or failed to maintain a discussion.

Goals: (1) to practice organizing your thoughts about a work into a coherent set of questions, comments, and activities that stimulate thoughtful discussion, (2) to reflect on and put into practice what you consider to be the most effective methods of initiating and sustaining a discussion among your peers.

### **Image Gallery (5%)**

Once during the block you will find and present to the class 3 images that relate to one of the works. These can be any images that you think illuminate the text in some way **except** illustrations that were created specifically for a published edition of the work. For example, you might find an image of clothing the characters would have worn, an activity the work describes, such as a formal ball, or a landscape similar to one described in the work. You will create a brief PowerPoint presentation that contains the images, their sources, and any brief notes you think would be helpful. When you show the images you should explain what prompted you to choose them, how they helped you achieve a deeper understanding of the work, and the strengths and limitations of written and visual communication. You must submit your presentation via Moodle.

### **Assessment**

A=Presented appropriate and informative images, and provided thoughtful comments about why you chose them and what they contribute to your understanding of the work.

B= Presented appropriate images, and provided comments about why you chose them and what they contribute to your understanding of the work, but without the depth of an “A” presentation.

C= Presented appropriate images, but comments about them lacked thoughtfulness and depth.

D= Images did not contribute substantially to an understanding of the work, and comments were not organized or thorough.

F= Failed present images or was unable to communicate useful information to the class.

Goals: (1) to enhance your understanding of the texts by learning about Russian society and cultural norms of the past, (2) to develop research and information literacy skills, (3) to think about texts and images convey information, and (4) to practice effective oral communication skills.

### **Article Presentation (10%)**

Once during the block you will prepare a 20-30-minute presentation of a scholarly article about one of the course texts or authors. For your presentation you must find an article from a scholarly source (i.e., a refereed journal or article in a book) that interests you and helps you to understand the author and literary work. Your task is to read and critique the article to the best of your ability. In your presentation you should discuss the main ideas of the article (i.e., thesis and supporting evidence), describe how the article contributes to a deeper understanding of the works, and critique the style, organization, and content of the article. Since more than one student will be presenting on each work, you should be in contact with the other person to make sure you do not choose the same article. You must send me a copy of (or link to) the article no later than 2 days before your presentation.

### **Assessment**

A=Chose an appropriate and informative article, and provided a thoughtful, organized, and smoothly executed presentation that helped students understand the relevance of the article, was able to answer reasonable questions.

B= Chose an appropriate and informative article, and provided a solid, organized, presentation that helped students understand the relevance of the article, but without the depth of an “A” presentation.

C= Chose an appropriate article, but presentation lacked the thoughtfulness and organization of an “A” or “B” presentation.

D= Article did not contribute to an understanding of the text, and the presentation was not organized or thorough.

F= Failed to prepare a presentation or was unable to communicate useful information to the class.

Goals: (1) to develop research and information literacy skills, (2) to become familiar with and enter into the scholarly conversations about the writers and works we are covering, (3) to practice critiquing, summarizing, and synthesizing a scholarly analysis, and (4) to practice effective oral communication skills.

### **Analysis Papers (25% each)**

You are required to write 2 analysis papers, each 1500 words (~5 pages) in length. Each paper should present your own interpretation and analysis of some aspect of a work or works(s). You may not write about the same work for both papers. Your starting point should be something about the text that you find interesting. For example, you might focus on a character, theme, or stylistic element. The topic should be limited in scope such that you can explore it thoroughly in ~5 pages. As you read the text of the work you will analyze, I recommend that you note observations, questions, and quotations that stand out to you on 3x5 cards (one idea or quotation per card). These quotations and observations will serve as evidence to support your argument. Give proper citations for all quotations and format your papers according to MLA style. Revision is a critical part of the writing process, so your paper should go through several iterations before you submit the final version. I encourage you to meet with me and/or Writing Studio Director Laura Farmer ([lfarmer@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:lfarmer@cornellcollege.edu), ext. 4509) throughout the process of writing and revising your papers. **You must submit your papers via Moodle by the due date and time listed on the Daily Schedule below. Papers submitted late will be graded down, unless you receive special permission.**

### **Assessment**

A = The paper presents a thoughtful, memorable, and in-depth analysis of the text(s) with convincing evidence to back up all assertions. The paper's organization is clear and logical, and the writing is smooth, clear, and concise. The format conforms precisely to MLA guidelines.

B = The paper contains a solid development of ideas with examples to prove assertions, solid organization, and good writing overall, but without the sophistication and depth of an "A" paper. The format conforms to MLA guidelines.

C = The paper presents ideas and gives examples, but the argument is not fully developed and sustained. The analysis is less thorough, and the writing is generally coherent, but may contain writing and formatting errors.

D = The paper presents a rudimentary development of ideas and incomplete evidence to prove assertions. The writing contains serious writing and formatting errors.

F = The paper lacks a clear focus, the ideas are undeveloped, the organization is disjointed, and there are multiple, serious errors in writing and format.

Goals: 1) to develop a narrowly focused topic, 2) to practice developing and sustaining an argument using evidence from the text to support your claims, and 3) to refine your writing through the process of revision.

### **Essay Examination (15%)**

This will be an in-class, written examination consisting of essay questions based on the readings and class discussions. You will receive study questions to help you prepare for the examination. The examination will take place on the third Friday of the course.

### Assessment

I will use guidelines similar to those for the paper, except that the essays do not have to be formatted in MLA style, and do not need to contain direct quotations from the works or a list of sources. In these essays you should aim to provide a “big picture” of the works, noting their main features and the similarities and differences among them. Also, allowances will be made for the fact that the essays are written within a limited time frame.

Goals: (1) To gain an overview of the works and writers covered in the course and make comparisons among them, and (2) to practice organizing and conveying your ideas in writing within a limited time frame.

### Grading Components

- Attendance & Class Participation 10%
- Discussion Facilitation 10%
- Image Gallery 5%
- Article Presentation 10%
- 1st Paper 25%
- 2nd Paper 25%
- Essay Examination 15%

### Accommodations

Cornell College makes reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. Students should notify the Coordinator of Academic Support and Advising and their course instructor of any disability related accommodations within the first three days of the term for which the accommodations are required, due to the fast pace of the block format. For more information on the documentation required to establish the need for accommodations and the process of requesting the accommodations, see the “[Disability Services and Resources](#)” page.

### Academic Honesty

Cornell College expects all members of the Cornell community to act with academic integrity. An important aspect of academic integrity is respecting the work of others. A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is her or his work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College’s requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty. The procedures regarding how the College deals with cases of academic dishonesty appear in the *Catalogue*, under the heading “[Academic Honesty](#).”

Academic dishonesty will result at the very least in no credit (0 points) for the particular assignment, and possibly a failing grade in the course. You may (and should) consult Writing Studio personnel and me, and use word processing tools that correct spelling and grammar as you prepare your assignments. However, no one but you should write or revise your work.

## RUS 283 DAILY SCHEDULE

(Additional background articles may be assigned during the block.)

DAY	IN-CLASS ACTIVITY	HOMEWORK
Monday, January 14	Introduction Introduction to Pushkin	Read articles on Pushkin Read <i>Eugene Onegin</i> , “Introduction,” “Note on Translation, vii-xxx, and Chapters 1-2 Read Pushkin Biography (Moodle)
Tuesday, January 15	Discuss <i>Eugene Onegin</i>	Read <i>Eugene Onegin</i> , Chapters 3-5 Read “My Pushkin, Our Pushkin” and article on Pushkin’s African ancestry (Moodle)
Wednesday, January 16	Discuss <i>Eugene Onegin</i>	Read <i>Eugene Onegin</i> , Chapters 6-8
Thursday, January 17	Discuss <i>Eugene Onegin</i>	Read <i>Hero of Our Time</i>
Friday, January 18	Introduction to Lermontov Discuss <i>Hero of Our Time</i>	Read <i>Hero of Our Time</i> Choose topic for 1 <sup>st</sup> paper
Monday, January 21	Discuss <i>Hero of Our Time</i> <b><u>Submit paper topic via email</u></b>	Read <i>Fathers and Son</i> , Chapters I-XX Work on 1 <sup>st</sup> paper
Tuesday, January 22	Introduction to Turgenev Discuss <i>Fathers and Sons</i>	Read <i>Fathers and Sons</i> Work on 1 <sup>st</sup> paper
Wednesday, January 23	Discuss <i>Fathers and Sons</i>	Read <i>Crime and Punishment</i> Work on 1 <sup>st</sup> paper
Thursday, January 24	Introduction to Dostoevsky Discuss <i>Crime and Punishment</i>	Read <i>Crime and Punishment</i> Finish 1 <sup>st</sup> paper
Friday, January 25	Discuss <i>Crime and Punishment</i> <b><u>1st PAPER DUE at 4:00 p.m.</u></b>	Read <i>Crime and Punishment</i>
Monday, January 28	Discuss <i>Crime and Punishment</i>	Read <i>Crime and Punishment</i> Choose topic for 2 <sup>nd</sup> paper
Tuesday, January 29	Discuss <i>Crime and Punishment</i>	Read <i>The Cossacks</i> Choose topic for 2 <sup>nd</sup> paper
Wednesday, January 30	Introduction to Tolstoy Discuss <i>The Cossacks</i> <b><u>Submit paper topic via email</u></b>	Read <i>The Cossacks</i> Finalize topic for and work on 2 <sup>nd</sup> paper
Thursday, January 31	Discuss <i>The Cossacks</i>	Prepare for Essay Examination Work on 2 <sup>nd</sup> paper
Friday, February 1	<b><u>ESSAY EXAMINATION</u></b>	Read “The Madwoman” Work on 2 <sup>nd</sup> paper
Monday, February 4	Introduction to Gippius Discuss “The Madwoman”	Work on 2 <sup>nd</sup> paper
Tuesday, February 5	Discuss “The Madwoman”	<b>Finish 2<sup>nd</sup> paper</b>
Wednesday, February 6	<b><u>2nd PAPER DUE at noon</u></b>	Relax!