SLAV-R 264/564 Russian Literature: Tolstoy to Solzhenitsyn
Spring 2014

Time: TR 2:30-3:45 pm
Room: WH 007
Sections: 20116 (R264, undergraduates)
          20120 (R564, graduate students)

Professor: Sara Stefani
E-mail: samastef@indiana.edu
Office: BH 509
Office phone: 855-3351
Office Hours: TR 1:00–2:15 pm & by appt.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

During the semester, we will examine the period of Russian literature and culture beginning with the
great writer Leo Tolstoy (mid- to end of the nineteenth century) and continuing slightly past Alexander
Solzhenitsyn (to late-1960s/early-1970s). Along the way, we will examine some of the major novels,
short stories, poetry, and drama that have both shaped and reflected the whirlwind of drastic changes in
Russian and Soviet culture from the end of the nineteenth century to about the middle of the twentieth.
We will look at particular literary movements, such as Symbolism, Acmeism, Futurism, and the
beginnings of Postmodernism. We will also place the works under consideration in their historical and
cultural context. Some historical themes to be considered are: pre-Revolutionary artistic ferment and
yearning for revolution, reactions to the subsequent new Soviet society, the effect of Stalinism, and the
period of Thaw and Stagnation.

Because the twentieth century in general – not just in Russia – was often concerned with literary and
artistic experimentation, students are encouraged to shift the way they normally read literature and
what they view as the “purpose” and form of a literary work. In order to better understand the exciting
changes taking place in Russian literature during this time, we will do close analyses of the texts we will
be reading in both classroom discussions and through various written assignments.

TEXTS

There are six books that you need to purchase for the course:

Mikhail Bulgakov, The Master and Margarita, trans. Diana Burgin and Katherine Tiernan O’Connor
(Vintage)
Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, trans. H. T. Willetts (Farrar, Straus and
Giroux)
Leo Tolstoy, Anna Karenina, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (Penguin)
Yevgeny Zamyatin, We, trans. Natasha Randall (Modern Library)

Other readings will be available via Oncourse (under “Resources”). Graduate students enrolled in R564
who are majors in the Slavic Department (as well as anyone else who so desires) should plan to obtain
and read as many of the texts as possible in the original Russian.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your grade for the course will be based on five factors:

- Participation in class discussions
- Quizzes (best 3 of 5)
- Three short writing assignments
- Take-home midterm exam
- One final paper, due at the end of the semester

Class Participation and Attendance Policy:

Although I will often give mini-lectures in order to give you historical and contextual background information, you should view class time primarily as a forum for you to discuss your questions, ideas, and observations about the materials. Active discussion is absolutely essential for developing a thorough understanding of the reading, as it concretizes hitherto nebulous thoughts in your own mind and the minds of your classmates. Your grade for participation will depend on your constructive contributions to class discussion and participation in all in-class activities. Keep in mind that I will keep track of attendance as well as everyone’s level of contribution to class discussion. If you are concerned about your participation grade (because you don’t speak in class very often), or if you just want extra credit, you can post to the Forum or write a Blog – both available on Oncourse. This will give you partial extra credit for the day, as long as you post your comment(s) or blog entry on Oncourse before that day’s class.

Attendance policy: You are allowed three unexcused absences during the course of the semester. For every absence over three, your final grade will be reduced by one point. If you have an excused absence (a death in the family, military orders, university functions, religious holidays or illness with a written note from your doctor), please let me know so that I don’t penalize you unnecessarily.

Quizzes:

There will be 5 unannounced (“pop”) quizzes during the semester. These will be brief, factual quizzes about the material to be read for that class day, although I may ask some less-than-factual, more interpretive, questions as a “warm-up” for class discussion (“What do you see as one of the more interesting images in this story and how do you interpret it?”). The purpose behind the quizzes is, yes, to make sure you’re keeping up with the reading and that you’re reading for details, but also to help you process some of the information from your reading. Your three best scores will be factored into your grade, the other two will be discarded.

Quiz make-up policy: If you miss class for any reason (excused or unexcused), it will be your responsibility to find out from me what you missed that day. Make-up quizzes will be granted only if you had an excused absence, but you still must take the quiz within two days of “being back in commission.”

Writing Assignments:

Three times during the course of the semester (due dates are listed on the syllabus), you will need to complete short (800 words, about 2-3 pages) writing assignments. The topics for each writing
assignment will be posted to Oncourse (under “Resources”). Writing Assignments will be due in class on the date listed. Please be sure to put the word count and the page numbers on your assignments before you turn them in.

Midterm Exam:

On Friday, February 28, I will post to Oncourse (under “Resources”) a take-home midterm exam on the topics and texts that we will have covered to that point in the semester. The exam will be a combination of short essays, analysis of passages from the texts, and analysis of poems from the major poetry movements that we will discuss. The exam will be due on Monday, March 3, by 5:00 pm (late exams will be marked down one point for every half-hour they are late). You will need to both send me an electronic copy of your answers (through “Messages” on Oncourse) and turn in a hard copy either to my mailbox in the Slavic Department office in BH 502 or my office at BH 509.

Final Paper:

The nature of the course paper will vary, depending on your section.

R264   20116   Undergraduate Section

Students in this section must write a 2500-2800 word paper (approximately 8-9 pages) dealing with at least one work on the syllabus. The paper is due by 5:00 pm on Thursday, May 8. You must put the final word count on your paper. For your papers, you should both submit an electronic copy to me via “Messages” on Oncourse and submit a hard copy to either my mailbox in BH 502 or my office at BH 509.

The choice of topic for the final paper is up to you, although I will be happy to meet with you to discuss a topic. Closer to the end of the semester, I will also post a list of paper topic suggestions that you might find useful. On April 24, you must turn in a brief statement of your topic (ideally, even your thesis statement) that I will look at and then give you feedback on.

Late policy: The final paper is due as listed. Papers turned in after the 5:00 pm deadline will lose one-third of a letter grade for each 12 hours that they are late. However, please don’t push this “each 12 hours.” Remember that I have to turn in grades within three days, so if I am ready to turn in grades and I don’t have your paper, you will receive a 0 on it.

R564   20120   Graduate Section

Graduate students must write a 5000-5500 word paper (approximately 15-16 pages, not counting footnotes or endnotes) dealing with at least one work on the syllabus and using at least 3-4 secondary or tertiary sources. On April 24, you must turn in a short statement of your topic to me; please see me if you have questions about which sources to consult. The paper is due by 5:00 pm on Thursday, May 8.
# GRADES

Course grades will be calculated as follows:

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<td>Quizzes</td>
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<td>Midterm Exam</td>
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<td>Final Paper</td>
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For the college-wide policy on withdrawals, and about grades like FX, Extended “X” and FN, see [http://www.indiana.edu/~college/ado/policies.shtml](http://www.indiana.edu/~college/ado/policies.shtml). The policy as defined there will be followed in this course.

# OTHER BUREAUCRATIC ISSUES

I’m sorry, but bitter experience has led me to make the following pronouncement: no laptops in class! And for that matter, no cell phones, PDA’s, blackberries, etc. I’m the only person who gets to use technology in the classroom. You will have to resort to the old-fashioned method of taking notes with a writing implement and a piece of paper. The one exception that I will make in terms of technology is that you can bring a Kindle, Nook, or other e-reader to class.

If you have a documented disability that I should be aware of, please see me and I will be happy to work with you. Please note, however, that only disabilities that have been officially documented through IU’s office of Disability Services for Students can be accommodated.

I know this seems a million years away at the moment, but when the semester looms to a close, please keep in mind that incompletes will not ordinarily be granted. Also, after you receive your final course grade I will consider making changes to it only if I have made a mistake in calculation. If, as the time for
the course paper draws near, you are concerned about your writing skills and its potential impact on
your grade, please see me – I’m happy to help you with your paper, and there are also several resources
at the university that you can use for assistance with your writing. You can view some of these services
by going to the webpage for the IUB Campus Writing Program: http://www.indiana.edu/~cwp/. More
specifically, check out the CWP’s Writing Tutorial Services (WTS).

Students are reminded of university regulations, particularly those pertaining to cheating and
plagiarism. For plagiarism, see the excellent new IU website devoted to explaining what plagiarism is
and how to avoid it: http://www.indiana.edu/~college/plagiarism/index.shtml. As far as cheating and
other issues of academic dishonesty, see the Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct:
http://www.dsa.indiana.edu/Code/. Any suspected infractions will be handled according to the official
rules and policies of the University.

THE STANDARD DISCLAIMER

All information in this syllabus, including course requirements and tentative schedules for the test,
papers, etc., is subject to change and should not be considered a substitute for attending class or for any
information that is provided to you by your instructor in class.