

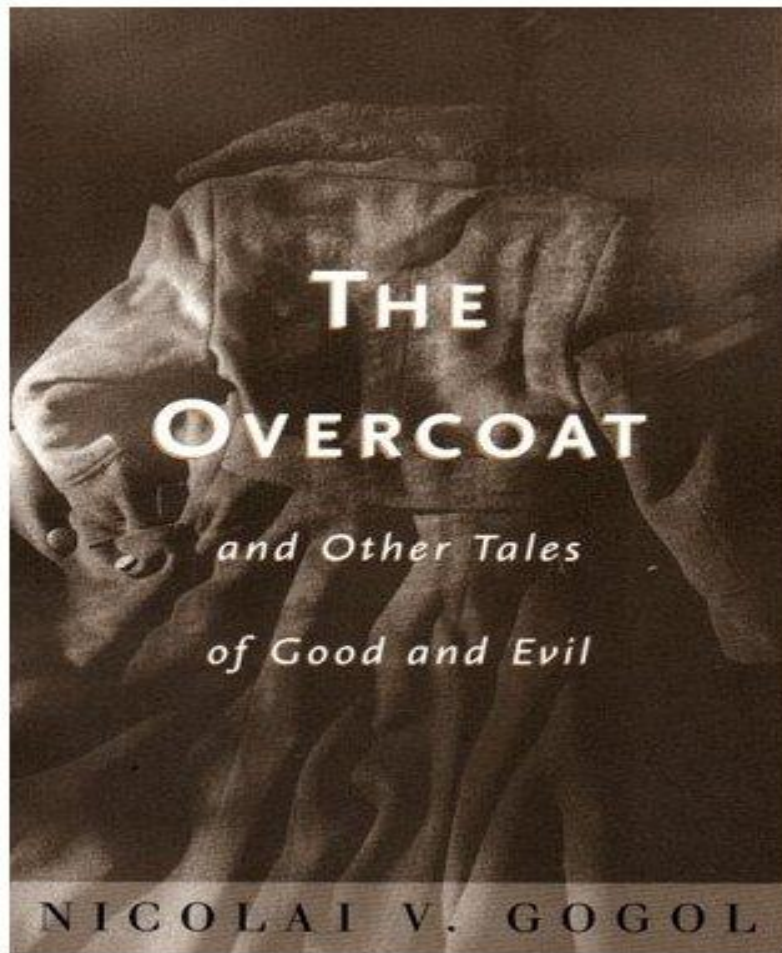
# RUSSIAN SHORT FICTION

(Carries the A&H distribution credit and fulfills the College Topics requirement)

Summer Session I: May 13 – June 17, 2009 (six weeks)

Mondays and Wednesdays 4-7 p.m., Ballantine Hall 322

Prof. Justyna Beinek, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures



**This is a course about stories in general and about Russian short stories and novellas in particular. We all tell stories. We listen to stories. We read stories. We watch stories when we go to the movies. Our dreams are stories. Why do we construct narratives and how do we do it? Why does culture need stories?**

**How can we define “fiction”? What characterizes the genre of “short fiction”? What are the elements of a “good” story? What part do plot, character, narrator, setting, and point of view play in short fiction?**

**We will read thirty-five Russian short stories and novellas from the last two hundred years. From the 19<sup>th</sup>-century bizarre tales of noses detached from human bodies and leading their own lives to poignant love stories to realistic vignettes of life under communism in the Soviet Union, Russian short stories are imaginative masterpieces of impeccable form, and a pleasure to read. Texts by Pushkin, Gogol, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Nabokov, Solzhenitsyn, Tolstaia, Petrushevskaja, and others. (All texts available in English; no knowledge of Russian needed.)**