

Queens College CUNY
Department European Languages and Literatures
Russian 280 Dostoevsky

Section 01: Class Meetings: M/W, 3:10 PM-4:25 PM
3 hours, 3 credits
Queens Hall 245G

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Office hours: MW, 12:00PM-1:00PM
or by appointment

The course satisfies the LIT requirement of the QC option for the PATHWAYS

Course Description

A close study of the author's life, major works, and their influence on Russian literature. Lectures and readings in English.

Dostoevsky is known as an eye-opener on the human psyche, in particular, and, for many, on Russia, in general. One of the reasons for Dostoevsky's enduring appeal rests in his singular probing of human conflicts, its sources, and its consequences. We will focus on this aspect of his work as we place Dostoevsky in the context of 19th century Russian culture. That context includes debates about the purpose of art, the intellectual movements of Slavophiles and Westernizers, the notion of the "superfluous man," the reforms of the 1860s, European influences on Russian literature, Russian nihilism, social utopianism, and revolutionary violence. We will discuss the writer's ethical, religious, philosophical, and political vision. Through intensive study of Dostoevsky's most representative fictive works, we will seek to refine our own views of this writer, and to observe how these views correspond with certain foundational assumptions about realism as a literary style.

Required textbooks

1. Dostoevsky. *The Best Short Stories*. Trans. by David Magarshak. Modern Library, NY, 2001. ISBN 0-375-75688-4. Ordered at the QC bookstore, also available at Amazon.com: https://www.amazon.com/Stories-Fyodor-Dostoevsky-Modern-Library/dp/0375756884/ref=sr_1_3?dchild=1&keywords=Dostoevsky.+The+Best+Short+Stories.&qid=1612650031&sr=8-3
2. Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment. A Novel in Six Parts With Epilogue*, Vintage Classics Series, tr. Richard Pevear, ed. Larissa Volokhonsky, ISBN-13: 9780099981909. Ordered at the QC bookstore, also available at: https://www.amazon.com/Punishment-Vintage-Classics-Fyodor-Dostoevsky/dp/0099981904/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=ISBN-13%3A+9780099981909&qid=1612650192&sr=8-1
3. Dostoevsky. *The Brothers Karamazov*. Trans. Constance Garnett. Rev. by Ralph E. Matlaw and Susan McReynolds. Norton, 2011, ISBN: 978-0-393-92633-0. Ordered at the QC bookstore, also available at: https://www.amazon.com/Brothers-Karamazov-Everymans-Library/dp/0679410031/ref=sr_1_4?crid=6XBN8E1XQH10&dchild=1&keywords=brothers+karamazov&qid=1612650387&sprefix=brothers+ka%2Caps%2C165&sr=8-4

Students who can read the texts in Russian (not required) are expected to read them in English as well and should also bring both texts to class. The following websites has many of Dostoevsky's texts in Russian:

www.lib.ru and http://az.lib.ru/d/dostoewskij_f_m .Single copies of both the English and the Russian texts will be placed on reserve in the library for use in the reserve room.

Learning Outcomes

Specific to this course:

Our course will concentrate on the critical reading, textual analysis, critical writing, discussion, and debate. Upon a successful completion of this course you will be able to:

- LO1. Learn about the *oeuvre* of Fyodor Dostoevsky, his impact on the development of the 19th- and 20th-century Russian literature and society, and his place in the world literature and culture;
- LO2. Improve your critical skills through close engagement with the primary texts and make your own conclusions about Dostoevsky's works, their characters and the events described in the texts;
- LO3. Formulate informed questions and hypotheses about literary texts;
- LO4. Identify the characteristics of different literary genres (short story, novel), literary and philosophical movements (19th-century realism, critical realism, Russian religious philosophy, and European philosophic concepts) and literary periods (the Golden Age of Russian literature);
- LO5. Make your own conclusions about the stories, characters, and events described in them;
- LO6. Appreciate cultural, historical, class, religious, and gender differences;
- LO7. Expand your understanding of different world cultures, and understand Russian literature as a discipline, in particular, and Russian studies, in general.

This course satisfies the following two Queens College General Education criteria:

- QC 1: Address how, in the discipline (or disciplines) of the course, data and evidence are construed and knowledge is acquired; that is, how questions are asked and answered.
- QC 2: Position the discipline(s) in the liberal arts curriculum and the larger society.

In Addition, this QC College Option LIT course satisfies the following four learning outcomes:

- LIT 1: Understand and be able to express the advantages of reading literature.
- LIT 2: Engage in the practice of reading.
- LIT 3: Appreciate different genres, including narratives, poetry, essays, or drama in their original language or in English translation.
- LIT 4: Through discussion and writing, develop and improve upon skills used in understanding and appreciating literature.

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance and active participation in informed discussions are deemed vital for this course. Attendance will be taken each class period and together with participation will determine a significant portion of your grade. More than two absences may negatively affect your participation grade. A reasonable excuse should be provided by email or in person prior to your absence unless it is an emergency. In either case, valid documentation will be required before an absence is considered excused.

Grading Policy

Evaluation will be based on the following criteria:

- active participation in class discussions - 15%,
- paper #1 - 15 %,
- paper #2 - 20%,
- oral presentation – 5%,

- midterm - 20%,
- final exam - 25%.

College Resources

All students should be aware of the Writing Center in 229 Kiely Hall, which offers feedback and support to student writers. Students who need ongoing support for their writing should set up a “standing” weekly appointment for tutoring at the Writing Center. Students who want help on a specific assignment or for a particular problem can stop by the Writing Center or call 718-997-5676 to schedule a one-hour drop-in session. Students may also submit work online using the Center’s e-tutoring option. More information is available at the website: <http://writingatqueens.qc.cuny.edu/the-writing-center/>.

Students with disabilities that may require accommodation or additional support should register with the Office of Special Services in 111 Frese Hall:

<http://www.qc.cuny.edu/StudentLife/services/specialserv/Pages/default.aspx>

Description of Assignments and Exams

Readings

Read the assigned texts before coming to class. Keep a little ahead of the reading assignments in order to be prepared to take part and to fully benefit from what is said in class. Be sure to set aside sufficient time for the substantial reading required.

Doing well in the course means reading critically and engaging thoughtfully with the texts and our discussion of them. Reading critically involves (1) considering the text in its historical, biographical and cultural context, (2) asking yourself questions about content and being prepared to respond in class to questions about content, (3) examining your personal response to issues that arise in the text, (4) identifying the main ideas of the text and of class discussion and restating them in your own words, (5) evaluating the author's argument in the text, and (6) comparing and contrasting the author’s treatment of a given subject in different works. The requirements of LIT 1-4, QC 1, 2, LO 1-7 will be met.

Discussions

Following the instructor’s lecture presentation in the beginning of a class, much of class time will be spent in class discussion of the reading assignments. Discussions are very important components of this course. Your participation in the discussion is important; therefore, your attendance is required. During the first class, there will be an introductory discussion, during which the students will introduce themselves. Literary discussions throughout the semester will be based on the course readings. Both the in-class discussions and those continued on the discussion board (on the course site on the Blackboard, if assigned) are a place where students can demonstrate their understanding and their knowledge of the subject, their ability to analyze the literary works and to prove their arguments. Students are expected to participate in each a discussion in order to demonstrate their knowledge of the material and their active engagement in this course.

How to prepare for a discussion:

- Read the assigned materials, including stories, instructor’s lecture and critical materials from the textbook or posted in the *Course Materials*;
- Answer instructor’s questions provided in advance;
- On the Blackboard – discussion board (if assigned): read all posts made by other classmates;
- Comment on your classmates’ posts;
- Demonstrate a good and excellent knowledge of the stories, lectures, and readings;
- Show the ability to analyze literary characters and to compare and contrast the ideas, expressed by different authors;

- Proofread your posts and comments - please do not “text,” use the literary language instead. The requirements of LIT 1-4, QC 1, 2, LO 1-7 will be met.

Papers

Two papers of critical analysis and commentary on the texts will be assigned. These papers are not to be about the author or things external to the text. They should reflect your own careful reading and analytical reaction to the texts and related class discussion. The papers should be given brief informative titles, indicating the content. Use a 12-inch font and double-space. Include at the end of the paper a list of works cited (following proper bibliographic form) even if the only work you used was the primary text. (If you are reading the text in translation, always indicate the translator in addition to the author.) Follow the guidelines for papers (including bibliographic entries) elaborated in The MLA (Modern Language Association) Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. Keep a copy of papers submitted for your protection. Late papers will be accepted in the case of a documented health issue. Papers must be delivered in class or via e-mail on or by the due date (TBA). Further instructions regarding the papers will follow. The requirements of LO 1-7, LIT 3,4 will be met.

Oral Presentation

During the first two classes, an oral presentation on a specific topic/questions will be assigned to each student (or to a group of students) for a certain date. This presentation should be 10-15 minutes long (equal approximately to 3-4 typewritten pages) and should represent student's own analysis of the work under the discussion. It may also be done as a PowerPoint presentation. Absence during a scheduled presentation will result in the grade 0% for this assignment. The requirements of LIT 1-4, QC 1, 2, LO 1-7 will be met.

Exams

The midterm exam will consist of essay questions, short answer questions (including definitions of key terms) and commentary on selected key passages from the texts.

The final exam will include essay questions and commentary on key passages. The final exam is cumulative. (covers all the material read in the course). Exams can be made up only in the case of documented illness or circumstances. The requirements of LIT 1,3, LO 1-7 will be met.

Policy on Plagiarism

Like any form of academic dishonesty, plagiarism can result in a failing grade in the course and further disciplinary action such as suspension or dismissal from the College. Plagiarism is cheating. Plagiarism means passing another's ideas off as one's own or using some source without properly crediting it. In writing papers or exams, indeed, in all classwork, you must document direct quotations, paraphrases, information and ideas.

Feedback to Students

Feedback on your grades, participation, assignments and exams will be provided upon completion of each assignment and/or upon your request in person or via the email. Please visit me during my office hours, call and/or email me at svetana.cheloukhina@qc.cuny.edu , if you have any questions about the course content or about your course standing.

Additional Recommended Readings

Historical Background

Acton, Edward. *Russia: The Tsarist and Soviet Legacy*. Longman, 1996

Gooding, John. *Rulers and Subjects. Government and People in Russia 1801-1991*. 1996

Hosking, Geoffrey. *Russia and the Russians: A History*. Harvard, 2001

On Dostoevsky

Apollonio, Carol. *Dostoevsky's Secrets. Reading Against the Grain*. Northwestern University, 2009.

Bakhtin, Mikhail. *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. University of Minnesota Press, 1984

Belknap, Robert L. *The Structure of The Brothers Karamazov*. Northwestern, 1989

Berdyaev, Nicholas. *Dostoevsky*. 1974

Carr, E.H. Dostoevsky (1821-1881). *A New Biography*. 1949

Catteau, Jacques. *Dostoevsky and the Process of Literary Creation*. Cambridge, 1989

Cox, Roger. *Between Earth and Heaven: Shakespeare, Dostoevsky, and the Meaning of Christian Tragedy*. New York, 1969

Dostoevsky, Anna. *Dostoevsky: Reminiscences*. New York, 1975

Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *The Notebooks for The Brothers Karamazov*. Ed. by Edward Wasiolek. Chicago, 1971

Dowler, Wayne. *Dostoevsky, Grigor'ev and Native Soil Conservatism*. Toronto, 1982

Gibson, A. Boyce. *The Religion of Dostoevsky*. 1974

Griffiths, Frederick & Rabinowitz, Stanley. *Novel Epics: Gogol, Dostoevsky and National Narrative*. 1990

Frank, Joseph. *Dostoevsky* (five volumes)

_____. *Through the Russian Prism. Essays on Literature and Culture*, 1990

Fanger, Donald. *Dostoevsky and Romantic Realism. A Study of Dostoevsky in Relation to Balzac, Dickens, and Gogol*. 1965

Holquist, Michael. *Dostoevsky and the Novel*, 1977.

Ivanov, Viacheslav. *Freedom and the Tragic Life. A Study in Dostoevsky*. Introduction by Robert L. Jackson, 1989.

Jackson, R.L. *Dostoevsky's Underground Man in Russian Literature*. 1958

_____. *Dostoevsky's Quest for Form. A Study of His Philosophy of Art*, 1978

_____. *The Art of Dostoevsky*, 1981

_____. *Dialogues with Dostoevsky*, 1993.

_____. *A New Word on The Brothers Karamazov*. 2004

Jones, John. *Dostoevsky*. Oxford, 1983

Jones, Malcolm and Terry, Garth, eds. *New Essays on Dostoevsky*. 1983

Kabat, Geoffrey. *Ideology and Imagination. The Image of Society in Dostoevsky*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1978

Kjetsaa, Geir. *Fyodor Dostoevsky. A Writer's Life*. 1987.

Knapp, Liza. *The Annihilation of Inertia: Dostoevsky and Metaphysics*. Northwestern Univ. Press, 1996

Krag, Erik. *Dostoevsky. The Literary Artist*. Oslo, 1976

Lantz, Kenneth. *The Dostoevsky Encyclopedia*. Greenwood Press, 2004.

Linner, Sven. *Dostoevsky's Concept of Realism*. 1962

Martinsen, Deborah and Maiorova, Olga. *Dostoevsky in Context*. Cambridge, 2015

Meerson, Olga. *Dostoevsky's Taboos*. Dresden: Dresden University Press, 1998

Miller, Robin Feuer. *Critical Essays on Dostoevsky*. Boston, 1986

_____. *The Brothers Karamazov: Worlds of the Novel*. 1992

Mochulsky, Konstantin. *Dostoevsky: His Life and Work*. Princeton University Press, 1967

Morson, G. S. *The Boundaries of Genre. Dostoevsky's Diary of a Writer and the Traditions of Literary Utopia*, 1981

_____. *Narrative and Freedom*. Yale, 1994

Murav, Harriete. *Dostoevsky and the Holy Foolishness: Dostoevsky's Novels and the Poetics of Cultural Critique*. Stanford, 1992.

Panichas, George. *The Burden of Vision. Dostoevsky's Spiritual Art*. 1977

Peace, Richard (ed). *Fyodor Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment. A Casebook*. Oxford, 2006

Thompson, Dianna Oenning. *The Brothers Karamazov and the Poetics of Memory*. Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Wasiolek, Edward. *Dostoevsky, The Major Fiction*. 1964.

Wellek, Rene. "Bakhtin's View of Dostoevsky: 'Polyphony' and 'Carnavalesque'." *Dostoevsky Studies* 1, 1980.

Williams, Rowan. *Dostoevsky: Language, Faith + Fiction*. Baylor University Press, 2008.

Useful Online Resources

1. A study guide to *Crime and Punishment*:

<http://www.middlebury.edu/~beyer/courses/previous/ru351/novels/cp/CPstudy.shtml>

2. "Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky" (a documentary): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MMmSdxZpseY>

3. "The Meek Woman" ("Krotkaia," a contemporary film version based on the story by Dostoevsky, with English subtitles): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uUcLe8GjwhI>

4. "The Meek Woman" (a subtitled part of "Krotkaia," 1960, dir. Alexander Borisov

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TjVBV8KRfuk&list=PLvB1QibYqLp9Q_pwu2HkbRVM_TpRt2H3l&index=4 ; a full version - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X-5Z017VFuo>

4. "Crime and Punishment" (audiobook): Book 1 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H1Mzqdig-4w>

Book 2- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1xhghJVj2KE>

5. "Crime and Punishment" ("Prestuplenie i nakazanie," film, director Lev Kulidzhanov, 1970, with English subtitles): part I - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wM5rDIgTor0> and part II

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RpiHYpvlGxA>

6. "The Brothers Karamazov" ("Brat'ia Karamazovy," a recent screen version, 12 parts, by Central Partnership, 2007-2009, dir. Yurii Moroz, with English subtitles):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pu5aa1b8rDo&list=PLxMqWUL9d15TnbHQhaPj5D1mP_tg2stTw

7. "The Brothers Karamazov" ("Brat'ia Karamazovy," dir. Kirill Lavrov, 1969)

8. Lecture series on Dostoevsky by Professor Irwin Weil:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w8YTFPtUac&list=PLxBcpgR5O2YUSyxBITf7D06lGqnVWG9E>

- on *Crime and Punishment* (a lecture): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9e4JK1v5dg>

9. "Somebody Else's Wife and A Husband Under the Bed" ("Chuzhaia zhena i muzh pod krovat'iu," a film based on F.Dostoevsky's early short stories, dir. Vitalii Melnikov):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GvugzRQ5GPg&list=PLO7FUJHSsKrCTggEATO0xYJSmxXIWvAUv>

Course Calendar

Class Meeting	Day & Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments	Objectives/ Criteria Met
1	Mon., Jan 27, 20XX	Introductory lecture. Syllabus. General Requirements and Expectations. Students' oral presentations assigned. A brief documentary on Fyodor Dostoevsky.	For the next class: Read Part I of "Notes from Underground." Familiarize yourselves with discussion questions posted on the Bb.	LIT 1, QC 1,2
2	Wed., Jan.29,20XX	"Notes from Underground" (Part I) Russian society in the time of	Throughout semester: Reading assignment for the following class - see topic.	LIT 1, 2,3,4 for all reading assignments and

		Dostoevsky. The Slavophiles and Westernizers. The “superfluous man.”	Discussion: questions posted on the Bb. Students’ oral presentations on assigned topics.	discussions. LO 1-7 for all students’ presentations QC 1,2 Addressed in discussion throughout semester
3	Mon., Feb. 3, 20XX	“Notes from Underground” Part II The reforms of 1860s and European influences.		
5	Mon., Feb. 10:	<i>Crime and Punishment</i> (Part II)		
6	Wed., Feb. 12:	College is closed. No classes		
7	Mon., Feb. 17:	College is closed. Presidents' Day.		
8	Wed., Feb. 19:	<i>Crime and Punishment</i> (Part III) Existentialism, Nietzsche, Dostoevsky and Kierkegaard abstracts.	Paper 1 is due	Paper LO 1-7, LIT 1-4
9	Mon., Feb. 24:	<i>Crime and Punishment</i> (Part IV)		
10	Wed., Feb. 26:	<i>Crime and Punishment</i> (Part IV)		\
11	Mon., March 2:	<i>Crime and Punishment</i> (Part V)		
12	Wed., March 4:	<i>Crime and Punishment</i> (Part VI)		
13	Mon., March 9:	<i>Crime and Punishment</i> (Part VI, cont., and Epilogue). Conclusions and overview of the novel.		
14	Wed., March 11:	“The Meek One,” or “The Meek Woman” (1876). Film abstracts from “The Meek One” (“Krotkaia”), dir. Alexander Borisov.		
15	Mon., March 16:	“The Meek One,” cont. Conclusions.	Paper 2 is due	Paper LO 1-4, LIT 1-4
16	Wed., March 18:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> (Part I)		
17	Mon., March 23:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> (Part I)		

18	Wed., March 25:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> (Part I)		
19	Mon., March 30:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> (Part II).		
20	Wed., April 1:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> (Part II)		
21	Mon., April 6:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> (Part II) Preparation for the midterm	No presentations scheduled	
22	Wed., April 8:		Midterm exam	QC 1,2; LO 1-7
23	April 9-17	Spring Recess		
24	Mon., April 20	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> (Part III)		
25	Wed., April 22:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> (Part III)		
26	Mon., April 27:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> (Part III)		
27	Wed., April 29:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> (Part IV) "The Grand Inquisitor"		
28	Mon., May 4:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> (Part IV)		
29	Wed., May 6:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> (Part IV)		
30	Mon., May 11:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> . Dostoevsky and the World Literature. Conclusions.	Last presentation.	
31	Wed., May 13:	Final class. Course review. Preparation and for the final exam.		
32	Monday, May 18, 1.45 PM -3.45 PM	Final Exam		LIT 1,3 LO 1-7