

FIRST YEAR SEMINAR COURSE PROPOSAL

UNIVERSITY OF MARY WASHINGTON

Use this form to submit **FSEM 100 topics** courses for review **or any other existing course** that you wish to have designated to meet the first year seminar requirement.

COURSE NUMBER:	FSEM 100		
COURSE TITLE:	THE RUSSIAN NOVEL		
SUBMITTED BY:	Dr. Steven E. Harris	DATE:	January 22, 2010
<i>This course proposal has the department's approval. (Put a check in the box to the right.)</i>			X

NOTE: Please view the attached Call for Proposals or visit the First-Year Seminar blog at <http://firstyearsem.umwblogs.org/> to see the criteria used to evaluate courses proposed to meet the first year seminar requirement. See the report entitled "General Education Curriculum as Approved by the Faculty Senate" for additional details.

COURSE DESCRIPTION. In the space below, provide a **1-2 sentence** description of this class. The description will be entered in Banner, and will also be used in other publications about the first year seminar program (such as the "Eagle Essentials" booklet).

This course explores six major Russian novels of the 19th and 20th centuries as windows onto the Russian past and the modern human condition beginning with Gogol's *Dead Souls* and concluding with Solzhenitsyn's *Cancer Ward*.

RATIONALE. Using only the space provided in the box below, **briefly** state why this course should be approved as a first year seminar course.

The purpose of this course is to have students read, discuss, and analyze six major Russian novels from the 19th and 20th centuries. Students will explore the novels as works of literature, as well as narratives that have shaped how Russians and foreigners alike have come to understand Russian culture, social identities, and political transformations. Beyond the Russian historical context, we will examine what the novels can tell us about the modern human condition and our contemporary world. Class time in this course will be devoted primarily to our discussion of the texts themselves. As a specialist in modern Russian history, I will give several lectures on the historical context of the novels, their authors' lives, and the role of literature in Russia's history. Students will further explore these novels in three short response papers and a longer research paper by the end of the semester. They will deliver a class presentation on one of their short papers and on their final paper assignment. Since no courses in Russian language or literature are presently taught at the university, this seminar will contribute to our overall curriculum.

SYLLABUS. Attach a course syllabus.

SUBMIT this form and attached syllabus **electronically as one document** to Maya Mathur (mmathur@umw.edu). All submissions **must** be in electronic form.

FSEM 100: THE RUSSIAN NOVEL

Instructor: Prof. Steven E. Harris

University of Mary Washington – Fall Semester, 2010

This class meets (TBA)

Office Hours: (TBA); and by appointment

Office: Mercer Hall 304; tel. (540)-654-1390; e-mail: sharris@umw.edu

Course Description and Goals:

The purpose of this course is to read, discuss, and analyze six major Russian novels from the 19th and 20th centuries. We will explore the novels as works of literature, as well as narratives that have shaped how Russians and foreigners alike have come to understand Russian culture, social identities, and political transformations. Beyond the Russian historical context, we will examine what the novels can tell us about the modern human condition and our contemporary world. Class time in this course will be devoted primarily to our discussion of the texts themselves. Students will further explore these novels in three short response papers and a longer research paper by the end of the semester.

Course Assignments and Requirements:

1) Class participation: The quality of this class depends upon what each student contributes to it, so your participation is of paramount importance. You are asked to engage one another's interpretations and opinions in an effort to understand better any given text and also to challenge one another's readings of the texts. The following is the guideline for participation grades: A range (90-100%): student shows that he/she has read all of the assigned readings, and he/she makes several comments and poses questions that are insightful and guide the discussion for that particular class; B range (80-89%): student shows that he/she has read most of the readings and makes some comments/questions; C range (70-79%): student may have read some of the readings, but makes little or no comments; D range (60-69%): student is disruptive in class; 0%: student never participates in class.

You will receive a midterm class participation grade before spring break.

2) Three response papers: over the course of the semester, you will write three of the following six papers. You will present one of these papers in class.

A Letter to Gogol: 3-page paper in which you respond to Gogol's *Dead Souls* in the voice of one of the dead serfs whose soul has been sold.

A Revolutionary Program: 3-page paper in which you develop a revolutionary program based on the ideas of either the "fathers" or the "sons" of Turgenev's novel.

A Police Detective's Report: 3-page report on Raskolnikov's crime written by a police detective with a background in psychological profiling.

A Novel's Architecture: 3-page paper in which an architect explains to Zamiatin how to design the buildings and landscape of *We*; must include at least one sketch.

Video Game Proposal for Playstation or Xbox: 3-page proposal to Bulgakov explaining how you would construct a non-linear video game based on his novel, *Master and Margarita*.

Extended Universe: 3-page narrative in which you further develop a character or event from Solzhenitsyn's *Cancer Ward*.

3) Final paper: 7-8 page paper in which you examine, compare, and contrast three of the novels on a theme of your choice. You will present your paper to the class at the end of the semester.

You must keep each graded written assignment in a folder that you turn in with each subsequent paper.

Numerical grades in this course correspond to the following letter grades: A (95-100); A- (90-94); B+ (87-89); B (83-86); B- (80-82); C+ (77-79); C (73-76); C- (70-72); D+ (67-69); D (60-66); F (59 and below).

Relative Weight of Grades for the Course:

Class participation:	25%
Response paper #1:	15%
Response paper #2:	15%
Response paper #3:	15%
Final paper and presentation:	30%

Honor Code:

The Honor Code of the University of Mary Washington will be strictly enforced, as explained in the Honor Constitution. If you have any questions about the code and its enforcement, please do not hesitate to ask me. All violations of the Honor Code will be immediately reported to the Honor Council.

In writing your papers, be sure to avoid plagiarism. If you take someone else's ideas or words and present them in an essay as your own (i.e., without proper acknowledgement of the author), you will have committed plagiarism. If you are unsure about what this means, please do not hesitate to ask me for further clarification.

Americans with Disabilities Act:

If you have a disability and require academic accommodation, please contact the Office of Disability Services (540-654-1266). Upon obtaining an accommodation letter from this office, please see me so that we can establish the proper academic accommodation for you in this course. All information pertaining to your academic accommodation will be kept in the strictest confidence.

Course Readings:

The main texts are available for purchase at the bookstore. When purchasing the texts, obtain the edition indicated below since this will facilitate class discussion when the instructor and students refer to the texts. Additional texts will be distributed via the course blog; they are indicated in the course schedule below.

Nikolai Gogol, *Dead Souls* (1842)
Ivan Turgenev, *Fathers and Sons* (1862)
Fedor Dostoevskii, *Crime and Punishment* (1866)
Evgenii Zamiatin, *We* (1920)
Mikhail Bulgakov, *Master and Margarita* (1941)
Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *Cancer Ward* (1967)

Highly Recommended Texts for Writing Papers:

- * Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th edition (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007).
- * A good dictionary of American English. Do NOT depend on your computer's spell checker! I recommend Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, especially those editions that contain the etymologies of words.
- * A good grammar book. I recommend Patricia T. O'Conner, *Woe is I: The Grammarphobe's Guide to Better English in Plain English* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2003).

Course Schedule: (based on a Tuesday/Thursday schedule)

- Week 1: * Introduction
 * Lecture on mid-19th century Russian state and society
- Week 2: * Nikolai Gogol, *Dead Souls* (1842)
- Week 3: * Nikolai Gogol, *Dead Souls* (1842)
- Week 4: * Lecture on the Russian radical intelligentsia and revolutionary movement
 * Ivan Turgenev, *Fathers and Sons* (1862)
- Week 5: * Ivan Turgenev, *Fathers and Sons* (1862)
- Week 6: * Ivan Turgenev, *Fathers and Sons* (1862)
 * Fedor Dostoevskii, *Crime and Punishment* (1866)
- Week 7: * Fedor Dostoevskii, *Crime and Punishment* (1866)
- Week 8: * Fedor Dostoevskii, *Crime and Punishment* (1866)
 * Lecture on the Russian Revolution
- Week 9: * Evgenii Zamiatin, *We* (1920)
- Week 10: * Mikhail Bulgakov, *Master and Margarita* (1941)
- Week 11: * Mikhail Bulgakov, *Master and Margarita* (1941)
- Week 12: * Mikhail Bulgakov, *Master and Margarita* (1941)
 * Lecture on Soviet life and literature
- Week 13: * Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *Cancer Ward* (1967)
- Week 14: * Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *Cancer Ward* (1967)
- Week 15: * Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *Cancer Ward* (1967)
 * Final paper presentations
- Exam Day: * Final Paper presentations