

RUT 3503: Violence and Terror in the Russian Experience

section RUT3 / 26136 (*writing* section)
section RUT4 / 26137 (*non*-writing section)

Course Syllabus, Fall 2020

Time and place of class meetings: **MWF 5** (11:45 a.m. - 12:35 p.m.), **online via “Zoom”** video conferencing.

Instructor name, campus office & phone: **James Goodwin, Dauer Hall 252c, (352) 273-3790.** *NOTE* that due to Covid-19 concerns and recommendations I may *not* be in my campus office (Dauer 252c) on a regular basis this semester, so do not leave a message on my office phone unless you know that I am there (otherwise I may not receive it). Instead, **send me an e-mail message** so that we can arrange to talk via Zoom.

Instructor’s e-mail address: jegoodwi@ufl.edu (*NOTE* that **this is the *best* way to reach me** outside of our class meetings).

Instructor’s consultation hours: **W 2:00–4:00** (send me an e-mail during that time, or before, and I will send you an invitation to an individual Zoom meeting).

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● Course description:

- This is a reading-intensive course that examines major episodes of violent conflict in Russia’s cultural and historical development through well-known works of Russian literature (fiction, essays, documentary narratives), as well as in visual art (images and film).
- Our principal focus will be on well-known literary/artistic and cultural *reactions* to violent conflict as expressed either in arguments against violence, or calls for violent resistance to violence with a variety of aims or forms of motivation (e.g. self-defense, resolution, retribution etc.).
- Our readings and viewings will explore some of the important cultural and ideological aspects of violence in modern Russian history, as manifested in:
 - Russian militarization and imperial conquest under Nicholas I;
 - the Russian revolutionary movement under Tsar Alexander II;
 - the Bolshevik (Communist) revolution and Russian civil war, 1917-1921;
 - Stalin’s Great Terror of the late 1930s;
 - World War II and Soviet Russia’s “cold war” with the west.
- In light of our readings, our lectures, presentations and class discussions will then examine the circumstances, ideas and movements that have entailed, facilitated or even encouraged violent conflicts in Russia, including:
 - the drive to build and secure a strong, centralized Russian state;
 - popular resistance to autocracy and tyranny;
 - nationalism, and nationalist reaction against internationalism.

● Course objectives:

- to expand your knowledge of modern Russia, its literary culture and history;
- to deepen your understanding of Russian literature, especially how it has responded to social and political conflicts;
- to strengthen your critical reading skills, particularly through consideration of the historical, social, political (etc.) *contexts* from which well-known artistic/creative works evolved;

- [*writing section*:] to improve your academic writing skills, especially your ability to explicate and support an expository *argument* in scholarly, “academic” prose.

- Course requirements and expectations:

- **Course participation** is required and will be assessed by the following criteria:
 - Attendance (see following section on **Attendance Policy**);
 - Consistent and full attention to all class activities for the entire fifty minutes of each day’s lesson; that includes **not** being occupied by other personal activities while you are logged in to our class Zoom meeting(s). Failure to respect this rule will result in a lower “Course Participation” grade;
 - Punctual, close and ***thorough*** reading of all assigned texts, which you should have at hand during our class meetings;
 - Completion of three scheduled written exams in class (see also “**Exam format**,” below);
 - Completion of, and/or participation in, any other assigned class activities, tasks and homework;
 - [*Writing section only*:] A 2000-word expository essay on a pre-assigned topic (details forthcoming after our first exam).
 - **Attendance policy:**
 - Due to the risks of face-to-face instruction, **the University of Florida has mandated that this course be taught exclusively online**, via “Zoom” video conferencing, throughout Fall 2020.
 - Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with UF policies **as defined in the UF undergrad catalog under “[Attendance Policies](#)”**.
 - Everyone is expected to attend class regularly. “Attending class” means following the Zoom links to our class meetings (which you should receive MWFs by 11:45 a.m., if not before) and remaining logged in until the end of class so that I can see and/or hear you whenever necessary. Regular disappearance from the radar (Zoom) screen during class will result in a lower “Attendance” grade.
 - There are **no** penalties for an **officially excused absence (as defined in the UF undergrad catalog under “[Attendance Policies](#)”)**.
 - Your **attendance grade** will be based on **two** percentages:
 - * 1) the number of classes you **attended**;
 - * 2) the number of classes you were **able to attend**, where “able to attend” means every class for which you did **not** provide documentation of an **officially excused absence (as defined in the UF undergrad catalog under “[Attendance Policies](#)”)**. Thus, if a class is missed, even for officially acceptable reasons, then an attendance point will **not** be gained for that day and will be reflected in the first attendance percentage; but if the absence is officially excused, then the absence will **not** affect the second attendance percentage. At the end of the course, your attendance grade will be based on an average of the two percentages.
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- Course materials:

- There are **four required books** for the course are listed on UF’s “Textbook Adoption” website and should be available at the UF bookstore. If you choose to obtain the books elsewhere, *be sure to purchase the editions/translations listed here*:
 - Tolstoy, Leo. *Hadji Murat*. Translated by Pevear and Volokhonsky. Intro. by R. Pevear. N.Y.: Vintage, 2012. [ISBN # 0307951340].

- Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *Demons*. Translated by Robert Maguire. Ed. by R. Meyer. Introduction by Robert Belknap (N.Y.: “Penguin Classics,” 2008) [ISBN # 0141441410; *Lib West Rsv*: **PG3326 .B6 2008**].
 - Chukovskaya, Lydia. *Sofia Petrovna*. Translated by Aline Werth (Northwestern U Pr., 1994) [ISBN # 0810111500].
 - Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr. *In the First Circle: The First Uncensored Edition* (the Restored Text). Translated by Harry T. Willetts. N.Y.: Harper Perennial, 2009 [ISBN # 0061479012].
- Also required for this course are a number of shorter readings, which will be made available in PDF format through [our designated course space on Canvas](#), primarily in folders located under our Canvas “[Files](#)” link. Images and visual art will be available in class only. One required film will be made available either on Canvas, or on some other online space.
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- Exam and test format: This course requires **two written exams of 45 minutes**, a **two-hour final exam**, as well as **two shorter fact-based tests**.
 - **Three exams** will require you to demonstrate your knowledge and assimilation of material from the assigned readings, lectures, and class discussions. The exams *may* include any / all of the following:
 - a factual component (identify names, events, dates, etc.), based mainly on material covered in class;
 - a longer text recognition section (identify an excerpt from our readings and answer questions about it);
 - short definitions or explanations of important literary characters, terms, events, institutions, ideas, etc.;
 - a 200-300 word essay in which you respond in detail to a broader question on assigned readings and course content.
 - * NOTE that the second exam will cover *mainly* material introduced since the first exam.
 - * NOTE that the third exam will cover *mainly* material introduced *since* the second exam, but may also ask you to consider broader issues, themes, etc. from earlier weeks in the semester, as well.
 - * NOTE that Exam № 3 will take place during finals week at our designated final exam time.
 - **Two (shorter) fact-based tests** require you to identify names and events, both real and fictional, as well as dates and/or other details mainly from material covered in class and/or on the assigned readings.
 - Term paper: Those enrolled for **writing credit (section “26136”)** are required to write a 2000-word essay on one of several possible topics which I will give you *after* our first exam (on Wed. Oct. 14), together with specific instructions, technical requirements and grading criteria. Regardless of your selected topic, the assignment will ask you to present a thoughtful argument based on your original analysis of your chosen topic and text(s). It will *not* require additional research, but only your own interpretive “reading” of the selected text(s). The writing will be evaluated on content, organization and coherence, argument and support, style and mechanics. In order to receive the writing credit, the essay must receive a grade of “C” or higher. For more information, see UF’s rules for fulfilling the Writing Requirement: <http://undergrad.aa.ufl.edu/general-education/gen-ed-program/writing-requirement/>

- Make-up policy: Except in the case of a certified illness or other officially approved reason (e.g. U.F.-assigned travel), there will be no make-up option for missed exams or term paper deadlines. Please do **not** request an individual assignment for extra credit in place of a missed exam or missed classes! If/when unavoidable, a make-up exam should be arranged in person with me *prior* to an anticipated excused absence. In case of certified illness, please contact me immediately following your return to classes.

- Final course grades will be based on the following percentages:
 - Attendance (number of class meetings attended) [see “Attendance policy,” above]..... **10%**
 - Course participation (involvement in class, punctual/thorough completion of readings & exams). . **10%**
 - Fact-based test № 1. **7%**
 - Fact-based test № 2. **7%**
 - Exam № 1 (essay & short-answer).. **20%**
 - Exam № 2 (essay & short-answer).. **20%**
 - Exam № 3, part 1 (fact-based).. **6%**
 - Exam № 3, part 2 (essay & short-answer).. **20%**

- Final course grades will be assigned according to the following scale: **A** = a final course percentage of 93-100; **A-** = 90-92; **B+** = 87-89; **B** = 83-86; **B-** = 80-82; **C+** = 77-79; **C** = 73-76; **C-** = 70-72; **D+** = 67-69; **D** = 63-66; **D-** = 60-62; **E** = less than 60. U.F.’s “grade point” scale can be accessed at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

- Important dates and deadlines:
 - Fact-based text № 1 (10 min., during class) **Wed., Sept. 30**
 - Exam № 1 (50 min., during class). **Wed., Oct. 14**
 - Fact-based text № 1 (10 min., during class) **Mon., Nov. 2**
 - Exam № 2 (50 min., during class). **Wed., Nov. 18**
 - [*Writing section only*:] Last day to submit *rough draft* of term paper to me. **Fri., Nov. 13**
 - Exam № 3, part 1 (fact-based, during class) **Fri. Dec. 4**
 - [*Writing section only*:] *Final draft* of term paper due at start of class. **Wed., Dec. 9**
 - Exam № 3, part 2 (essay & short-answer). **Fri., Dec. 18 (12:30 — 2:30 p.m.)**

- All are required to adhere to U.F.’s **Student Honor and Conduct Codes**: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>.

- Academic accommodations: Students with physical, learning, sensory or psychological disabilities will be accommodated in accordance with UF policies. Students requesting academic accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students Office, which will provide documentation to the student who must then provide it to me when requesting accommodation. Information on accommodations is available from the [Disability Resource Center](#) (352-392-8565, drc@ufsa.ufl.edu).

- Course evaluation policy: Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

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Weekly Topics, Readings & Exams*

**NOTE* that the following schedule is simply a weekly outline. Our schedule of *daily* reading assignments will be posted on our online Canvas course space (under the “Files” folder):

- Week 01 (Aug. 31, Sept. 2, 4) **topics**: Introduction to the course. Survey of violence and terror in Russia history. The rise of a strong Russian state and its consequences, from Ivan the Terrible to Nicholas I. **Readings**: Tolstoy.
- Week 02 (Sept. 9, 11) **topics**: Tolstoy’s critique of war, church and state. Ethnic separatism in the Caucasus. **Readings**: Tolstoy.
- Week 03 (Sept. 14, 16, 18) **topics**: Conflicts between state and intelligentsia under Nicholas I (ruled 1825-55). Revolutionary thought from Nicholas I through the first years of Alexander II’s reign (ruled 1855-1881). “Nihilism.” **Readings**: Pushkin; Belinsky; Turgenev; Dostoevsky.
- Week 04 (Sept. 21, 23, 25) **topics**: Violent dissent. **Readings**: Dostoevsky.
- Week 05 (Sept. 28, 30, Oct. 2) **topics**: The Nechaev affair. **Readings**: Bakunin; Nechaev; Dostoevsky.
- Week 06 (Oct. 5, 7, 9) **topics**: The Nechaev affair (continued). **Readings**: Dostoevsky.
- Week 07 (Oct. 12, 14, 16) **topics**: Dostoevsky’s *Demons* (conclusion). **EXAM 1**. Political violence and the assassination of Alexander II. **Readings**: Dostoevsky; Kropotkin.
- Week 08 (Oct. 19, 21, 23) **topics**: Russian Marxism. War and the end of imperial Russia, 1914–1917. The October (“Bolshevik/Communist”) Revolution and Civil War, 1917–1921. **Readings**: Trotsky; Lenin; Babel.
- Week 09 (Oct. 26, 28, 30) **topics**: The Death of Lenin and rise of Stalin. Stalinism and the Great Terror (1937–38). **Readings**: Chukovskaya.
- Week 10 (Nov. 2, 4, 6) **topics**: World War II in Soviet Russia (1941-45) and its consequences. **Readings**: Grossman; Solzhenitsyn.

- Week 11 (Nov. 9, 11, 13) **topics:** Stalin's final years. The GULAG experience. [writing section only:] *Rough draft of term papers due in class on Fri. Nov. 13!* **Readings:** Solzhenitsyn.
- Week 12 (Nov. 16, 18, 20) **topics:** Stalin's final years. The GULAG experience (continued). **EXAM 2.** **Readings:** Solzhenitsyn.
- Week 13 (Nov. 23) **topics:** Stalin's final years. The GULAG experience (continued). **Readings:** Solzhenitsyn.
- Week 14 (Nov. 30, Dec. 2, 4) **topics:** Stalin's final years. The GULAG experience (continued). **Readings:** Solzhenitsyn.
- Week 15 (Dec. 7, 9) **topics:** Post-Soviet Russia. Final remarks. Instructions for Exam 3. [writing section only:] *Final draft of term papers due in class on Wed. Dec. 9!*
- Final exam week (Dec. 18): **EXAM 3**, part 2 (Friday, Dec. 18, 12:30 – 2:30 p.m.).