

RUT 3452, sections 03C5 (17696/WR) & 03C6 (17697): Russian Literature of the Twentieth Century
Course Syllabus, Fall 2022

Time: MWF 5 (11:45 - 12:35)

Instructor: James Goodwin

Office, phone: Dauer 252c, (352) 273-3790

Place: FLG 270

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Office hrs: MW 10:30 –11:30

Course goals and learning outcomes:

- To increase your knowledge and understanding of Russian literature and literary culture since the year 1900. By the end of the course you will know the basic “map” of twentieth-century Russian literature, its major authors, works and movements.
- To strengthen your ability to analyze a modern Russian literary text, particularly in terms of its artistic, historical and ideological significance. By the end of the course you will have a better understanding of the essential cultural, social and political *contexts* in which modern Russian literature developed.

Course content:

- Throughout the course we will examine a variety of writers and subjects. In light of the dominance and longevity of the so-called “Soviet” period, emphasis will fall on those trends that appeared between the Bolshevik (Communist) revolution of October 1917 and the formal dissolution of the U.S.S.R., or Soviet Union, in 1991.
- While most of our literary themes will be of universal relevance (individual growth, family and interpersonal relationships, social justice, inequality, armed conflict, cultural differences, etc.), others pertain especially to twentieth-century Russian circumstances (political conformity and dissent, class struggle, revolution, “proletarian” culture, etc.).
- The dominant literary genre of our course will be fictional prose (stories, novellas, one novel), but we will also read a few well-known selections of poetry. Excerpts of programmatic declarations, speeches and essays will also be covered. Course readings will be supplemented in class occasionally by visual images, film and audio excerpts.
- In the interests of appreciating and recognizing context, our course readings are arranged, for the most part, in chronological order of the historical time described. Therefore I will ask you to learn, along with the content of an assigned reading, *the specific period (years)* in which a given work originated. In addition, we will review the important events and circumstances that immediately preceded the genesis of most of our readings.

Course format and reading assignments:

- This is a reading course that requires close examination and class discussions of the assigned texts. Everyone is expected to obtain the required books and to read the assigned pages thoroughly *prior* to the relevant class meeting. Although the weekly reading assignments vary in length, *on average* you will be asked to read between 50-100 pages per week throughout the semester (some weeks slightly less, other weeks slightly more).
- The vast majority of our course readings will be drawn from five required books (below), which should be available at local bookstores or through online vendors. One hard copy of our required books, as well as other source material, is also on two-hour **Course Reserve** at Library West. Some titles may also be available on Electronic Reserve. *If possible, you should obtain only the specific editions/translations listed below.* Alternate editions will likely differ somewhat in content (esp. if produced by a different translator), and will also have different pagination, which may make it more difficult for you to follow references to page numbers and / or find the correct pages of a reading assignment.

1. Brown, Clarence, ed. *The Portable Twentieth-Century Russian Reader*. Revised & updated edition (N.Y.: Penguin, 2003) [ISBN # 0142437573; + Lib West Reserve (ask for it at the Circulation desk), call number **PG3213 .P67**]
2. Gorky, Maksim. *Childhood*. Translated by Gr. Hettlinger (Ivan Dee Publishers, 2011). [ISBN # 1566638402 + Lib West Reserve: **PG3465.A32 H47**]
3. Bulgakov, Mikhail. *Heart of a Dog*. Tr. by M. Ginsburg (Grove Pr.,1987) [ISBN # 0802150594; Lib West Rsrv: **PG3476.B78 S613**]
4. Solzhenitsyn, Alexander. *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*. Translated by H.G. Willetts. Reprint edition (N.Y.: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005) [ISBN # 0374529523; Lib West Reserve: **PG3488 .O4 O3313 1991**]
5. Voinovich, Vladimir. *The Life and Extraordinary Adventures of Private Ivan Chonkin*. Translated by Richard Lourie. Reprint ed. (Northwestern U Pr, 1995) [ISBN # 0810112434; Lib West Reserve: **PG3489.4.I53 Z313 1995**]
6. [+ additional online texts and study sheets in the “Files” folder of [our course space on “Canvas”](#)]

Course requirements and expectations:

1. Regular attendance (either in person or via Zoom) and assimilation of material covered in class (see also “**Attendance policy**,” below)
2. Full engagement in all classroom activities for the entire day’s lesson (see also “**Cell phone policy**,” below);
3. Thorough and punctual completion of all assigned readings;
4. Completion of three written (in-class) exams;
5. [*Writing section (03C5) only:*] A 2000-word expository essay on an assigned topic (see “**Writing Requirement**” details, below).

Attendance policy:

- 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 and to remain throughout the entire class meeting. Regular disappearance from the classroom during class will result in a lower "Course participation" grade for the course.
- There are **no penalties** for an **officially excused absence** (as defined by UF's "[Attendance Policies](#)").
- Your final **attendance score** will combine ***two* percentages**:
 - 1) the number (percentage) of classes you attended **overall**;
 - 2) the number (percentage) of classes you attended **minus** those classes you missed b/c of an **officially excused absence** (illness etc.). Thus, if a class is missed, even for officially acceptable reasons, then an attendance point will **not** be gained for that day and will lower the **first** attendance percentage; but if the absence is officially excused, then the absence will **not** lower the **second** attendance percentage, which will remain at 100% as long as your absences are officially excused. At the end of the course, **the two separate percentages will be averaged together for your final attendance score** in the course.

Cell phone / electronics policy:

1. Keep all cell phones and communication devices silent (either off, or on airplane/vibrate mode) for the duration of each class meeting. In the event of an emergency that requires your immediate use of a device, please exit the classroom quietly before using your device;
2. Laptops or other note-taking devices (phones, pads, tablets, e-book readers, etc.) should be used in class only for the purpose of viewing one of our texts and/or taking notes. *Please do **not** use the internet or read / write electronic messages/texts on your device(s) during class.* Failure to respect this rule will result in a lower "Course Participation" component of the final course grade.

Exams: This course requires three written, in-class exams of sixty minutes each. Because our class meetings last only fifty minutes, each of the first two one-hour exams will be divided into two halves and taken on two different days. The third one-hour exam will take place during our assigned (two-hour) Final Exam period, and thus will **not** need to be divided.

The three exams will measure your knowledge and assimilation of material from the assigned readings, lectures, and class discussions. The exams typically include [1] a brief factual component (identify important names, events, dates, etc.); [2] a longer text recognition section (identify an excerpt from our readings and answer brief questions about it); [3] short-answers (re. terms, characters, etc.); [4] a short essay (respond in detail to a broader question on course content). The second and third exams will cover (mainly) material introduced *since* the preceding exam.

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. If / when unavoidable, a make-up test should be arranged in person with me **prior** to an anticipated absence. In case of certified illness, you should contact me immediately following your return to classes.

Individual assignments for extra credit will **not** be given to compensate for a missed test, a missed assignment, or missed classes.

In the interests of maintaining a safe learning environment in this course, the University of Florida continues to issue the following two recommendations to all students:

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit [one.ufl](https://one.ufl.edu) for screening / testing and vaccination opportunities.

- If you are sick, stay home. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 to be evaluated. With an excused absence, you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.

Finally, remember that approved masks or face coverings, while no longer required, are welcome and encouraged in most classrooms and other interior spaces on campus.

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>

Final course grades will be based on the following percentages:

1. **Attendance** [see "Attendance policy," above] **10%**
2. **Course participation** (daily class involvement, punctual & thorough completion of assigned readings & exams). **10%**
3. **Three in-class exams** of equal weight (will be averaged together). **80%**

+ **NOTE** that students enrolled in **the writing section (03C5)** will receive a separate/additional grade for their 2000-word term paper. In order to gain the 2000-word writing credit for the course, the grade on the term paper must be "C" or higher and meet all of the criteria spelled out in the assignment. See "**Writing Requirement**," below, for more details.

Important dates and deadlines:

Exam № 1, part 1 (10 min., in class)	Wed., Sept. 28
Exam № 1, part 2 (50 min., in class)	Fri., Sept. 30
Exam № 2, part 1 (10 min., in class)	Wed., Nov. 2
Exam № 2, part 2 (50 min., in class)	Fri., Nov. 4
[<i>Writing section only:</i>] Last day to notify me of your term paper topic (or meet with me to discuss options)	Fri., Nov. 4
[<i>Writing section only:</i>] Last day to submit rough draft of term paper to me	Mon., Nov. 21
[<i>Writing section only:</i>] Final draft of term paper due <i>in class</i>	Wed., Dec. 7
Exam № 3 (60+ min., during our designated Final Exam slot from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.)	Tues., Dec. 13

Classroom accommodation: Students requesting classroom or test accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office, which will provide documentation to the student who must then provide it to me for accommodation. Students with physical, learning, sensory or psychological disabilities will be accommodated according to UF policies.

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/>.

UF’s **“Writing Requirement”** (formerly “Gordon Rule”) aims to help students maintain their writing fluency and facilitate learning. Those who wish to receive a 2000-word credit toward fulfilment of the UF Writing Requirement must write a 2000-word expository essay on a topic and text(s) from a list which I will distribute *after* our first exam (Fri. Sept. 30), together with specific instructions, technical requirements and grading criteria. The writing 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). In order to gain the 2000-word writing credit, the essay must receive a grade of “C” or higher and meet all of the criteria spelled out in the assignment. You should notify me of your topic/text choice before Fri. Nov. 4 (at the latest).

By Mon., Nov. 21, you will submit a rough draft of the paper which I will return to you with feedback and suggestions for further improvement, if necessary. **Beginning Mon. Nov. 28 I will also ask you to agree with me on a time** (outside of our class meeting time) **when we can meet in person to go over your rough draft and discuss strategies for final revisions.**

By Wed., Dec. 7, our last regular class meeting, you must submit to me a hard/printed copy (*not* electronic) of your final draft. The final draft will be evaluated on **content, organization and coherence, effectiveness, style, grammar, and punctuation**. In order to receive the 2000-word writing credit, the paper must include: (1) **a meaningful title**, which does **not** have to be elegant or “catchy,” but should reference the specific subject matter or your essay to some degree. Thus the title should be more informative than simply: “Paper for Rus Lit Course”; (2) an **original thesis**, or argument, which proceeds logically from your specific claims throughout the paper; (3) **effective support** for your thesis by means of specific examples from the texts under discussion; (4) **thoughtful analysis** of the subject (*i.e. not* simply a description of events, plot, characters, etc.); (5) **clear exposition** of your statements, free of egregious or frequent grammatical, lexical, syntactical and/or spelling errors. Failure to meet these criteria will lower the grade for the final draft. If the grade on the final draft is lower than “C,” then UF will not give you writing credit for this course.

Students who seek suggestions for improving their writing skills are also encouraged to visit the UF’s **“Writing Studio”** (located in 2215 Turlington Hall, phone: 352-846-1138).

Weekly schedule of topics, required readings (by author), exams and term paper deadlines

(for more details, see the “Daily Assignments” PDF in the “Files” folder of our Canvas course page)

Week 01 (Aug. 24, 26).

- *Topics and contexts:* End of the “Golden Age” of Russian literature. Tolstoy’s final decade.
- *Required readings:* **Luxemburg; Tolstoy.**

Week 02 (Aug. 29, 31, Sept. 2):

- *Topics and contexts:* Civic (social) vs. aesthetic functions of Russian literature. Competing currents of “realism” and “Symbolism.” Russia’s revolutionary “dress rehearsal” of 1905.
- *Required readings:* **Chekhov; Blok; Gorky.**

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Week 03 (Sept. 7, 9):

- [NO CLASS on Mon. Sept. 5 (Labor Day holiday)]
 - *Topics and contexts:* Breaking free of “old” Russia. Outbreak of World War I.
 - *Required readings:* **Gorky.**
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Week 04 (Sept. 12, 14, 16):

- *Topics and contexts:* Futurism. Collapse of the Russian monarchy (Feb.-March 1917).
 - *Required readings:* **Gorky. Mayakovsky.**
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Week 05 (Sept. 19, 21, 23):

- *Topics and contexts:* Proletarian culture. The Bolshevik revolution (Oct. 1917) and Civil war (1918-21). Fellow travelers.
 - *Required readings:* **Mayakovsky; Gerasimov; Babel’; Zamyatin, Akhmatova, Pasternak.**
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Week 06 (Sept. 26, 28, 30):

- *Topics and contexts:* Whither Soviet Russia? Lenin’s “New Economic Policy” (“NEP”).
 - *Required readings:* **Bulgakov.**
 - **Wed. Sept. 28: EXAM I, part one** (ten minutes, in class)
 - **Fri., Sept. 30: EXAM I, part two** (fifty minutes, in class)
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Week 07 (Oct. 3, 5, 7):

- *Topics and contexts:* Growing censorship after Lenin’s death.
 - *Required readings:* **Bulgakov; Zhdanov.**
 - [NO CLASS on Fri., Oct. 7 (Homecoming holiday)]
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Week 08 (Oct. 10, 12, 14):

- *Topics and contexts:* The Union of Soviet Writers. Stalin’s growing power. A new official, prescriptive method for literature.
 - *Required readings:* **Ostrovsky; Platonov.**
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Week 09 (Oct. 17, 19, 21):

- *Topics and contexts:* Conformity in literature and art. Stalin’s Terror. World War II and its aftermath.
 - *Required readings:* **Akhmatova; Sholokhov; Shalamov.**
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Week 10 (Oct. 24, 26, 28):

- *Topics and contexts:* Life in the GULAG. “Camp” literature.
 - *Required readings:* **Solzhenitsyn.**
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Week 11 (Oct. 31, Nov. 2, 4):

- *Topics and contexts:* After the camps. The rediscovery of Russian village life. Cultural “stagnation” under Brezhnev.
 - *Required readings:* **Solzhenitsyn.**
 - **Wed. Nov. 2:** ***EXAM 2, part one*** (in class)
 - **Fri. Nov. 4:** ***EXAM 2, part two*** (in class)
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Week 12 (Nov. 7, 9):

- *Topics and contexts:* Rebirth of Russian satire. “Dissident” activity and illegal publishing.
 - *Required readings:* **Voinovich**
 - [NO CLASS on Fri., Nov. 11 (Homecoming holiday)]
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Week 13 (Nov. 14, 16, 18):

- *Topics and contexts:* Rebirth of Russian satire (continued).
 - *Required readings:* **Voinovich**
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Week 14 (Nov. 21):

- *Topics and contexts:* Rebirth of Russian satire (continued).
 - *Required readings:* **Voinovich**
 - [Writing section only:] Rough drafts of term papers due in class on **Mon. Nov. 21**
 - [NO CLASS on Wed. Nov. 23 or Fri. Nov. 25 (Thanksgiving holiday)]
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Week 15 (Nov 28, 30, Dec. 2):

- *Topics and contexts:* The twilight of “Soviet” literature.
 - *Required readings:* **Voinovich; Terts.**
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Week 16 (Dec. 5, 7):

- *Topics and contexts:* The breakup of the U.S.S.R. and “post-Soviet” literature.
 - *Required readings:* **Erofeev; Arzhak.**
 - [Writing section only:] Final version of term papers due in class on **Wed. Dec. 7**
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Finals Week: **EXAM 3** on **Tues. Dec. 13** from 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. (in our normal classroom).