

RUS S356/REE S325/CL S323/HIS S362G

“Rebels and Revolutionaries in Russian History and Literature”

Instructor Information: Marina Potoplyak. PhD

Class Meetings: MTWThF 10-11:30 AM in BUR 116

Office: BUR 466

Office Hours: Mon, Wed 9:00 – 10:00 AM and by appointment

E-mail: marina.potoplyak@gmail.com

Course Description: Spanning almost a century of Russian literature, this course highlights a gallery of fictional and real rebels and revolutionaries. Were they heroes and martyrs who sacrificed their lives to improve the lot of others? Or unscrupulous and manipulative individuals who disguised their thirst for power behind an agenda of societal betterment? From Pushkin’s portrayal of Emelian Pugachev’s rebellion in the 1770s to Nechaev’s organized revolutionary group, which inspired Dostoevsky’s *Demons*, to Bakunin’s writings and memoirs of notorious revolutionaries and intelligentsia’s responses to the “revolutionary virus,” the array of representations of rebels and revolutionaries simultaneously served as a reflection of their popular perception and formed the reading public’s opinion on these issues. We will supplement textual analysis of prose and poetry with the study of historical documents in order to understand the complex historical, moral, and cultural dimensions of such enduring phenomena as revolution, rebellion, and terrorism.

Course Materials:

Pushkin, Aleksandr. *The Captain’s Daughter* (1836)

Pushkin, Aleksandr. “In the Depths of Siberian Mines” (1827)*

Bakunin, Mikhail. *The Revolutionary Catechism* (1865)*

Nechaev’s *Catechism of the Revolutionary* (1869) (excerpts)*

Turgenev, Ivan. *Fathers and Children* (1862)

Stepniak-Kravchinsky, Sergei. *Underground Russia: Revolutionary Profiles and Sketches from Life* (1883) – Google Books

Vera Zasulich’s and Vera Figner’s memoirs (excerpts from *Five Sisters: Women against the Tsar*)*

Ropshin, V. (Savinkov, Boris) *Pale Steed* (1909) – Google Books

*Available on BlackBoard under Course Documents

Class Attendance: Daily class attendance is required. You are expected to read all assigned texts before the class and to participate actively in the discussion. According to the *General Information* catalog, “[a] student who is absent from a class or examination for the observance of a religious holy day may complete the work issued within a reasonable time after the absence, if proper notice has been given” (page 71). The deadline for notification of such an absence is four days prior to the class absence or the first class day for religious holy days that fall within the first two weeks of the semester.

Special Accommodations: At the beginning of the semester, students with disabilities who need special accommodations should notify the instructor by presenting a letter prepared by the Services for Students with Disabilities Office. To ensure that the most appropriate accommodations can be provided, students should contact the SSD Office at 471-6259 or 471-4641

TTY.

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty: Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. Refer to the Student Judicial Services website for official University policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty.

Grade Evaluations:

a. Two Response Papers (10% and 20%): Response papers should reflect your thinking on assigned reading. Format: 2-3 pages (at least 1,000 words), Times New Roman, 12 pt. You will be evaluated on the depth and quality of your reflections, clarity of style, and cohesiveness of argumentation. After you receive your paper back, you will have a week to revise and resubmit it, if desired. Detailed instructions will be provided a week before the draft is due.

b. Two In-Class Exams (50% total): Each exam will test your knowledge of material discussed in class and studied independently at home. Exams will include ID, multiple-choice, and essay questions.

First in-class exam (40 min) – 20%
Final in-class exam (75 min) – 30%

c. Presentation (10%): In pairs, you will prepare a 10-15-minute oral presentation on one of the topics offered at the beginning of the semester. You will discuss your presentation with your instructor no later than one week in advance. **Graduate students** will prepare to teach or co-teach during one class meeting. Two meetings with your instructor are required (one before the class and one after). More instructions to follow.

e. Participation (10%): Your instructor will determine this part of the grade based on your preparedness and participation in class. There are three components of success: regular attendance, advance reading/preparation of assigned materials, and insightful, well-formulated comments during discussions. **Important:** Bring your **text** and **reading diary** to each class! In the diary, you will record your thoughts, questions, and observations while reading the assigned pieces. It is tremendously helpful when you are generating ideas for your papers and prepare for exams. Let me know if you have any questions.

Class Schedule*

Monday, July 15 – Introduction: Terrorists, Rebels, Revolutionaries.

Tuesday, July 16 - Aleksandr Sergeevich Pushkin: Life and Works. *The Captain's Daughter*.

Wednesday, July 17 – *The Captain's Daughter*

Thursday, July 18 – *The Captain's Daughter*. Pushkin and the Decembrists

Friday, July 19 – Secret societies in the first half of the 19th century. Petrashevtsy. Belinsky

Monday, July 22 – Nihilism and Anarchism

Tuesday, July 23 - Fathers and Children

Wednesday, July 24 – Fathers and Children

Thursday, July 25 – Fathers and Children

Friday, July 26 – **First Response Paper Due.** “The Great Reforms”

Monday, July 29 – **First Exam.** Bakunin and Nechaev.

Tuesday, July 30 – Bakunin and Nechaev.

Wednesday, July 31 – Revolution and Literature: Stepniak-Kravchinsky’s *Underground Russia*

Thursday, August 1 – Stepniak-Kravchinsky.

Friday, August 2 – Stepniak-Kravchinsky

Monday, August 5 – Women Question. *Five Sisters* (xix-xxxiv; 61-94). *Five Sisters*.

Tuesday, August 6 – *Five Sisters*.

Wednesday, August 7 – *Five Sisters*

Thursday, August 8 – Savenkov’s *Pale Horse*

Friday, August 9 – *Pale Horse*

Monday, August 12 – *Pale Horse*

Tuesday, August 13 – Other Responses: Dostoevsky, Lev Tolstoy, Leonid Andreev...

Wednesday, August 14 – Excerpts from Andrey Bely’s *Petersburg*

Thursday, August 15 – Closing Discussion

Friday, August 16 – **Second In-Class Exam**

Second Response Paper Due (electronically)