RUSN 397  
Dostoevsky  
Fall 2011
Department of Modern Languages and Literatures  
College of William & Mary
Instructor: John Lyles  
Class Time: MW: 3:30 – 4:50  
Blow Memorial Hall 332
Office Hours: M: 11:30 – 12:30, T: 3:00 – 4:00, or by appointment  
Office: 203 Washington Hall
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Schedule of Readings
Aug. 24: Introduction
Aug. 31: Poor Folk
Sept. 5: Poor Folk
Sept. 7: Gogol – “Diary of a Madman”; “The Nose”
Sept. 12: The Double
Sept. 14: The Double
Sept. 19: “White Nights”
Sept. 21: Notes from the Underground (Part I) [REPORTS DUE]
Sept. 26: Notes from the Underground (Part II)
Sept. 28: Crime and Punishment (Part 1)
Oct. 3: Crime and Punishment (Parts 2 & 3)
Oct. 5: Crime and Punishment (Part 4)
Oct. 8-11: FALL BREAK
Oct. 12: Crime and Punishment (Parts 5 & 6, Epilogue)
Oct. 17 MIDTERM
Oct. 19: The Gambler
Oct. 24: The Gambler
Oct. 31: “The Dream of a Ridiculous Man”
Nov. 2: The Brothers Karamazov (Books 1 & 2)
Nov. 7: The Brothers Karamazov (Books 3 & 4) [Paper topics and introductory paragraph due]
Nov. 9: The Brothers Karamazov (Book 5)
Nov. 14: The Brothers Karamazov (Book 6)
Nov. 16: The Brothers Karamazov (Books 7 & 8)
Nov. 21: The Brothers Karamazov (Books 9 & 10)
Nov. 23-27: THANKSGIVING BREAK
Nov. 28: The Brothers Karamazov (Book 11)
Nov. 30: The Brothers Karamazov (Book 12, Epilogue), Conclusion [PAPERS DUE]

Dec. 7: FINAL EXAM 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

REQUIREMENTS: Attendance and participation: 10%
               Written report on assigned topic due Sept. 21: 20%
               Mid-term exam on October 17: 20%
               Term paper due Nov. 30: 25%
               Final exam on Dec. 7: 25%

TEXTS: The following have been ordered through the College of William and Mary Bookstore:
        Pushkin, A. Captain’s Daughter & Other Stories (Random)
        Gogol, N. Diary of a Madman and Other Stories (Signet)
        Dostoevsky, F. Poor Folk and Other Stories (Penguin)
        Dostoevsky, F. Great Short Works of Fyodor Dostoevsky (Harper)
        Dostoevsky, F. Crime and Punishment (Vintage)
COURSE GOALS: The primary goal of this course is to familiarize students with the life and works of one of Russia’s greatest writers, Fyodor Dostoevsky. The course will begin with two authors who greatly influenced Dostoevsky, Pushkin and Gogol. We will then move on to reading many of Dostoevsky’s early and later works, including two of his great novels: Crime and Punishment and The Brothers Karamazov. Students will develop a deeper understanding of Dostoevsky as a writer and as a man, as well as be able to observe how his writing evolved over time. With this in mind, much of class will be devoted to discussing his works in terms of style and theme, ideology and narrative technique. There will be a lecture component to this course as well, through which Dostoevsky’s works will be placed within their historical and cultural context.

Beyond learning a great deal about Dostoevsky and his oeuvre, students will also be expected to write one report and one research paper. The goal of the report is to provide students with a broader context for Dostoevsky’s Notes from the Underground (either philosophically or stylistically) and to allow students to analyze this work from one of those perspectives. The research paper provides students with the opportunity to pursue a question of their own choosing and to contribute to the ongoing scholarly discussion about Dostoevsky and his works. Furthermore, these assignments will help students improve as writers.