**Course title:** Analytical Readings: 19th Century Russian Literature  
**Course code:** LITT 3001 RLPR  
**Programs offering course:** Russian Language  
**Language of instruction:** Russian  
**U.S. semester credits:** 3.00  
**Contact hours:** 45.00  
**Term:** Fall 2020

**Course Description**

This analytical reading course consists of annotated readings and analysis of works of prominent Russian writers and poets of the nineteenth century. The course offers a survey of nineteenth-century literary process in Russia, reviews the creative work of selected writers and poets and performs close textual readings of key texts.

**Learning Objectives**

By completing this course, students will:

- compare and contrast the life and work of prominent nineteenth-century Russian writers and poets;
- examine and implement various types of literary analysis: cultural, semiotic, linguistic, formal and other types;
- formulate the relationship between historic, cultural and literary processes in nineteenth-century Russia;
- expand their Russian language vocabulary by acquiring terms and concepts pertaining to art, culture and literary process;
- develop their skills in Russian creative writing by composing several essays and critical pieces in Russian.

**Course Prerequisites**

Successful completion of this course requires an advanced level of Russian language competence.

**Methods of Instruction**

The course combines lecture mode of teaching with the class open discussion model. The teaching process will include the use of PowerPoint material presentation, poems and short stories (in Russian), films and video clips relating to discussed topics.

**Assessment and Final Grade**

1. Class Participation 20%  
2. Homework 25%  
3. Essays 30%  
4. Oral Examination 25%  
TOTAL 100%

**Course Requirements**

**Class Participation**

Active participation in class discussions is required. Students are expected to complete class readings for the assigned date and come to class ready to analyze and debate issues raised by the readings.

**Homework**

Students are expected to complete class readings for the assigned date and come to class ready to analyze and debate issues raised by the readings.
Essays
5% each

In the course of the semester, each student will write a total of 6 essays, each essay being approximately top-page long. The topic of the essays will be chosen in consultation with the instructor.

Oral Examination

At the end of the course there is an oral exam, which will test the students’ factual knowledge and their ability to analyze literary texts covered in this class.

Attendance

Attendance is crucial for successful completion of the class. Students are allowed to have two unexcused absences for each course for the whole semester program. These allowed unexcused absences should be used for situations such as minor illnesses without a doctor’s note or personal situations that prevent the student from attending the class. Allowed unexcused absences should not be used in a planned way for travel or other activities. Unexcused absences beyond the limit of two will lower a student’s grade by 2 points on the 100-point scale each. For example, if your overall score in the class is 90 (an equivalent of A) and you have had three unexcused absences, your final score will be 88 (B+).

N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

Class: 1.0 Life and creative work of Alexander Pushkin

Love lyrics by A. Pushkin. Poem “I loved you”

Class: 2.0

Philosophical lyrics by Pushkin: “Anchar,” “Upon the Hills of Georgia,”

Week 2

Class: 3.0 Pushkin’s novella The Squire’s Daughter (from the cycle The Belkin Tales)

Commentated reading Possible topics for essay: 1. Pushkin’s love poems 2. “Anchar” as an allegorical poem 3. Image of the Russian landed gentry as seen through Pushkin 4. The problem of “East vs. West in the novella The Squire’s Daughter

Class: 4.0 Film The Squire’s daughter (1995, dir. Mikhail Sakharov)

Commentated screening of selected fragments

Essay 1 is due

Week 3

Class: 5.0 Life and creative works of Mikhail Lermontov

Class: 6.0 Mikhail Lermontov’s lyrics


Week 4

Class: 7.0 Mikhail Lermontov, novel A Hero of our Time (fragments)
Possible topics for essay:

1. The theme of loneliness in Lermontov’s poems
2. Describe the 'strangeness' of Lermontov’s love to his fatherland.
3. The fault and the tragedy of Pechorin
4. Generational portrait of the 1930s through the creative works by Lermontov

Class:  8.0  Novel A Hero of our Time

Psychological portrait of the main character.

**Essay 2 is due**

**Week 5**

Class:  9.0  Life and creative works of Nikolai Gogol (a survey)

Class:  10.0  Gogol’s novella, The Overcoat.

Multiple interpretations of the novel: social, philosophical, religious, mythological

Possible topics for essay:

1. The motif of the 'small man' in Gogol's novella *The Overcoat*.
2. Images of Petersburg in Gogol’s creative works
3. Film adaptation of Gogol’s novella *The Overcoat*

**Week 6**

Class:  11.0  

For both week 6 classes...

Film adaptation: The Overcoat (1959; dir. Alexei Batalov)

Commentated screening of the film.

Discussion.

**Essay 3 is due**

**Week 7**

Class:  13.0  Life and creative works of Ivan Turgenev

Class:  14.0  Novella First Love

Psychologism of Turgenev’s prose

Possible topic for essay:

1. Problem of ‘fathers’ and ‘children’ in Turgenev’s novella First Love.

**Week 8**

Class:  15.0  Film screening First Love (1968, dir. Vassily Ordynsky)

Discussion and interpretations

**Essay 4 is due**

Class:  16.0  Life and creative works of Fyodor Dostoevsky

**Week 9**

Class:  17.0  Dostoevsky’s short story “Fir tree and violin”

Commented readings
Problem of social inequality in creative works by Dostoevsky.

**Essay 5 is due**

**Week 10**
Class: 19.0 Film adaptation: Crime and Punishment (1969, dir. Leo Kulidzhanov)
Interpretations and discussion

Class: 20.0 Image of St. Petersburg in creative works by Dostoevsky
Possible topics for essay:
1. “Poor people” in creative works by Dostoevsky
2. “Child’s tear” in Dostoevsky’s story Fir-tree and Violin
3. The image of misalliance in Dostoevsky’s prose
4. The image of social predator in Dostoevsky’s prose

**Week 11**
Class: 21.0 Leo Tolstoy, his life and creative work
A survey.

**Essay 6 is due**

Class: 22.0 Three Hermits: philosophical parable by Tolstoy
Tolstoy’s views on faith, religion and church

**Week 12**
Class: 23.0 Review
Review for final exam

Class: 24.0 Final Exam

**Course Materials**

**Readings**


Lermontov Mikhail. Lermontov Poems (Russian Edition)


