



RUSS 358

Fall 2020

Prof. Lyudmila Parts
lyudmila.parts@mcgill.ca

Tuesday 11:35-12:35 – live Zoom discussion

Thursday 11:35-12:35 – office hours, questions, etc., on Zoom.

September 3rd, first day of classes – live Zoom session 2:35 – 3:05

Virtual office hours Thursday 11:35-12:35 on Zoom, or by email.

Fedor Dostoevsky

Course objectives: a study of major works by Dostoevsky. Structure, themes, philosophical, religious, and political ideas, and their artistic and philosophical significance for Russia in the 19th century and beyond.

Required Texts (McGill Bookstore):

1. *Course pack* available through McGill Bookstore in electronic format.
2. *The Best Short Stories of Fyodor Dostoevsky*. Transl. David Magarshack. Modern Library.
3. *The Idiot*. Transl. Richard Pevear, Larissa Volokhonsky, Vintage classics.
4. *The Brothers Karamazov*. Transl. Richard Pevear, Larissa Volokhonsky. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
5. Critical Sources in Course pack and on MyCourses.

You can use other editions, including eBooks

Instructional Method: the class will be a combination of (fixed) live Zoom discussions and flexible activities, such as posts on the discussion board, a reading journal, and group discussion reports.

There will be a great deal of reading, plan your time accordingly. You are expected to complete all readings before each class.

Live Zoom discussions; familiarize yourself with Zoom:

<https://www.mcgill.ca/tls/students/remote-learning-resources/learning-zoom>

The link to the meetings will be posted on MyCourses. To use Zoom, you will need a computer, a microphone, and a webcam (these can be internal to your computer).

Our lives have been disrupted. I realize some of you might be in a situation when participating in fixed activities, such as Zoom discussions, is difficult. Make an effort to participate in as many

as you can. If you cannot attend live sessions, you are still expected to complete all assignments. All live sessions will be held on Tuesday except the first day of classes Thursday, September 3.

Important Note: Not everything will go right every time, and as far as possible, I will make every effort to ensure that the learning experience works for everyone. If you are having consistent issues, or if you have particular concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Zoom Etiquette:

- Only use your official McGill Zoom with your full name.
- Upon entering, please write in chat saying “here” or “present” or even just “hi” so I have a record of everyone who is there (I do not record the meetings, but I do keep the chats).
- You do not need to use your camera over Zoom.
- Please turn your microphone off when you are not speaking.
- Please use the wave hand signal or the chat to alert me that you have a question or want to make a comment. I will call on you.
- If you do not have a microphone, feel free to use the chat function to engage with the Zoom conversation. I will happily include chats into the broader discussion.
- I will not record class time to ensure the privacy of all students, and I do not consent to having the class recorded.

Readings:

Critical materials in the *Course pack* [CP] and on *MyCourses*

“White Nights” (1848) [in Best Short Stories, BSS]

Notes from the Underground (1864) [in BSS]

Albert Camus, excerpts from *Myth of Sisyphus* and *Rebel* [CP]

The Idiot (1868)

“The Eternal Husband” (1870) [CP]

“A Gentle Creature” (1876) [in BSS]

The Brothers Karamazov (1879)

Lectures and Course Materials:

Posted on **MyCourses**, for each author, there is a ‘Lecture’ document and a ‘Questions’ document. Read the texts, read both documents, and prepare to discuss the questions.

Learn your way about MyCourses: <https://www.mcgill.ca/mycourses/tips-students>

Graded assignments:

Reading Critical Sources: two assignments to read and summarise a critical source. Submit on MyCourses.

Discussion posts and portfolio. Every two weeks or so you will post your response to the discussion prompt and respond to a posting by at least one other student. You must submit a **minimum of 4 posts and 4 responses**. See detailed instructions on MyCourses. This will allow all students to participate regardless of their ability to join live discussions on Zoom. You can suggest your own topic for discussion. I will read all posts and reply occasionally but will not grade individual posts. At the end of the semester you will submit your discussion portfolio and I

will grade the full portfolio taking into consideration the quantity and quality of all your posts and responses.

Group discussion reports. There will be **four** group discussions when you will meet in assigned groups (using Bongo tool on MyCourses) to discuss an issue in the text and relevant critical sources (assigned). The topics will be very specific and based on careful reading of the texts. You will submit a short video or written report outlining your conclusions.

Bongo group assignments: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6W0TzFK3Dcs> See MyCourses for detailed instructions.

The Brothers Karamazov journal: you will keep a reader journal of the novel noting recurring images, motifs, conversation topics, and details of descriptions – everything that seems significant. You will submit your lists on MyCourses (with short explanations, about a page) each Tuesday before Zoom meeting while we read the novel (Nov. 3 – Dec 1), **five** submissions in all. Individual submissions will not be graded. You will receive the grade for the whole journal. See MyCourses for detailed instructions.

Final Paper: short analytical essay: 4-5 pages, double-spaced. You will use critical sources. Topics will be given in advance. Submit by email by December 8.

Grade breakdown:

- reading critical sources – 20%
- discussion posts – 20%
- group discussion reports – 25%
- BK journal submissions – 15%
- final paper – 20%

-
- In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.
 - “In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.” (Approved by Senate on 21 January 2009).
 - “McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.” (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).” (Approved by Senate on 29 January 2003).
 - Copyright: All slides, video recordings, lecture notes, etc. remain the instructor’s intellectual property. As such, you may use these only for your own learning (and research, with proper referencing/citation) ends. You are not permitted to disseminate or share these materials; doing so may violate the instructor’s intellectual property rights and could be cause for disciplinary action.
 - Students with grades of D, F or J do NOT have the option of doing additional work to upgrade their final standing.
 - As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the [Office for Students with Disabilities](#), 514-398-6009.