SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

Voyage: Summer 2014
Discipline: Slavic Languages and Literatures
SLAV 4500: Northern European Literature and Film
Division: Upper
Faculty Name: Julian W. Connolly

Pre-requisites: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The countries of northern Europe, from Ireland in the west to Russia in the east, have produced a wealth of stimulating and moving cultural texts, both in fiction and in film. This course will study several of the great works produced in that region, from classic works by such film directors as Ingmar Bergman to the strange tales of life in St. Petersburg by the inimitable writers Nikolai Gogol and Fyodor Dostoevsky. Those taking the course will come to appreciate the power of the creative imagination and the way that compelling narratives can captivate minds. Students will also have the opportunity to traverse the very streets and see locales depicted in these classic works. Students will become acquainted with the tools of literary and cinematic analysis, and they will finish the course with a heightened understanding of the rich cultural legacy of modern Europe.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The aim of this course is to introduce students to the world of Northern European literature and film by focusing on key works by some the region’s most important writers and filmmakers. Students will discover how social, historical, geographical, religious and political forces have shaped the rich legacy of this region’s creative figures, and they will come to understand how these figures use the many tools of their craft to fashion unforgettable narratives about the peoples and places of their diverse homelands.

During the course, students will learn to:
- Analyze literary and cinematic texts
- Utilize the language of literary and cinematic analysis
- Develop critical thinking skills
- Develop writing skills through short response papers and essays
- Appreciate how social, political, and religious forces shape a writer’s or filmmaker’s art

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

AUTHOR: Miguel de Cervantes Don Quixote (trans. Edith Grossman)
TITLE: Don Quixote (trans. Edith Grossman)
TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

June 16: Depart Southampton

June 17: Orientation

C1 - June 18: The Voyage Begins: Introduction to the Course

C2 - June 19:  Miguel de Cervantes, Don Quixote, Part 1, Chapters 1-5, 7, 8

C3 - June 20:  Miguel de Cervantes, Don Quixote, Part 1, Chapters 16, 17, 18, 20

June 21-24: Lisbon

C4 - June 25: Miguel de Cervantes, Don Quixote, Part 1, Chapters 25, 31; Part 2, Chapter 74
     Short paper on the relationship between Sancho Panza and Don Quixote due.

C5 - June 26:  Discuss film The Spirit of the Beehive (dir. Victor Erice)

June 27-30: Bilbao

C6 - July 1:  Muriel Spark, The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie, pp. 1-74

C7 - July 2:  Muriel Spark, The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie, pp. 75-137
C8- July 3: Exam


July 5-8: Glasgow


July 10-13: Dublin


July 17-20: Bergen and Oslo


July 24-28: St. Petersburg


C17- July 30: Discuss film *The Seventh Seal* (dir. Ingmar Bergman)

July 31- August 3: Stockholm

C18- August 4: Discuss film *Mother of Mine* (dir. Klaus Härö)

C19- August 5: Tadeusz Borowski, *This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen*, pp. 1-97

August 6-9: Helsinki

C20- August 10: Tadeusz Borowski, *This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen*, pp. 98-177

C21- August 11: Discuss film *Ashes and Diamonds* (dir. Andrzej Wajda)

August 12-15: Gdansk

C22- August 16: Paper on Borowski book or Wajda film due.
C23- August 17: Vladimir Nabokov, “Signs and Symbols”

C24- August 19: Final Exams

FIELD WORK
Field lab attendance is mandatory for all students enrolled in this course. Please do not book individual travel plans or a Semester at Sea sponsored trip on the day of our field lab.

FIELD LAB (At least 20 percent of the contact hours for each course, to be led by the instructor.)

St. Petersburg and the Russian Writer

Students will have the opportunity to walk along the very streets that feature in the work of Russia’s great nineteenth and twentieth-century writers, from Nikolai Gogol and Fyodor Dostoevsky to Vladimir Nabokov. They can retrace the memorable steps of Dostoevsky’s fictional murder Rodion Raskolnikov, and they can stroll down what Gogol called “the beauty of St. Petersburg”—Nevsky Prospect. Dostoevsky stated that St. Petersburg was the “most abstract city in the world,” and we will try to discover what the specific features of this city are that lead Dostoevsky to make his pronouncement. During this visit, we will try to determine how the specific contours and structures of the city directly affected its writers and their works. To flesh out our understanding of the unique cultural space that St. Petersburg represents, we will visit Dostoevsky’s modest apartment (now a museum) and Nabokov’s more elegant childhood home in one of the most fashionable districts of the city. We will also try to meet with a group of American and/or Russian students to gain added perspective on the atmosphere of this unique city.

FIELD ASSIGNMENTS

1. Students will prepare a personal reflection statement detailing how their encounter with the sites they visited in St. Petersburg affected their understanding of the material they read and viewed in the class (length: 3-4 pages). This reflection statement will count for 15% of the final grade.

2. During visits to two other cities, students gather information to prepare a short report dealing with the following with the following points: how might the physical environment of the place, its setting, architecture, layout, etc. affect the character (emotions, psychology, world view) of an inhabitant? How might it affect a visitor? How does it affect you? Students should use specific observations (including photographs, if helpful) to support their point of view, and connect their comments with issues raised in class. They will summarize their findings in a 2-page paper due on the day after the ship has left the relevant port. These brief reports will each count for 5% of the final grade.

METHODS OF EVALUATION / GRADING RUBRIC
During this class a student’s work will be assessed in a variety of ways, with the overall goal of providing the student (and me) with useful feedback about the student’s learning progress. This will involve periodic self-assessment, peer assessment, and assessment by me. The following assignments will be graded, and each will contribute to the final grade according to the percentage listed.

1. Class participation [15 %]

To get the most out of this class, you will want to come to class well prepared (having read the assigned text or watched the assigned film) and ready to participate in class activities. Class attendance is mandatory. Your participation grade will reflect the contributions you make to the class on a regular basis. For many class sessions, you will be asked to prepare one or two questions or comments about the assigned reading or viewing, and post them to the class folder. The deadline for this posting will be given to you in class. Also, teams of students will be asked to prepare brief reports on contextual information that may be relevant for the work to be discussed (e.g., salient characteristics of the country and time in which it was made; how it fits into the creator’s career, etc.). Finally, you will write a personal reflection statement summarizing your learning experience for the course; this will be due on August 19.

2. Short paper discussing the relationship between Sancho Panza and Don Quixote (approx. 3 pages). Due June 25 [10%]

3. Hour Exam on July 3 [15%]

4. Personal reflection on your experience visiting the sites toured during the field lab (approx. 3-4 pages). [15%]

5. Two short papers (2 pages each) describing personal impressions of sites visited during port layovers. Reports due on the day after the ship has left the port. [Each paper counts 5%]

6. Short paper discussing a significant theme or image in Crime and Punishment (approx. 3 pages). Due July 23 [10%]

7. Short paper commenting on Borowski’s This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentelmen or Andrzei Wajda’s film Ashes and Diamonds (approx. 3 pages). Due August 16 [10%]

8. Final exam. August 19 [15%]

Assignments turned in late without prior permission will be marked down one letter grade.

RESERVE LIBRARY LIST

AUTHOR: Jerzy Andrzejewski
TITLE: Ashes and Diamonds
FILMS

*The Spirit of the Beehive*, directed by Victor Erice
*The Seventh Seal*, directed by Ingmar Bergman
*Mother of Mine*, directed by Klaus Härö
*Ashes and Diamonds*, directed by Andrzej Wajda

These films should be shown on the ship’s CCTV on the day before that are to be discussed in class.

ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

AUTHOR: Nikolai Gogol
CHAPTER TITLE: “Nevsky Prospect”
BOOK TITLE: *The Complete Tales of Nikolai Gogol*, ed. Leonard J. Kent
VOLUME: 1
PAGES: 207-38

AUTHOR: Alexander Pushkin
CHAPTER TITLE: “The Queen of Spades”
BOOK TITLE: *The Captain’s Daughter and Other Stories*
DATE:
PAGES: 227-60

AUTHOR: Vladimir Nabokov
ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE: “Signs and Symbols”
BOOK TITLE: *The Stories of Vladimir Nabokov*
DATE:
PAGES: 598-603

HONOR CODE

Semester at Sea students enroll in an academic program administered by the University of Virginia, and thus bind themselves to the University’s honor code. The code prohibits all acts of lying, cheating, and stealing. Please consult the Voyager’s Handbook for further explanation of what constitutes an honor offense.

Each written assignment for this course must be pledged by the student as follows: “On my honor as a student, I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment.” The pledge must be signed, or, in the case of an electronic file, signed “[signed]”
The Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha, or just Don Quixote (/ˈɛnkiˈeɪtəʊ/), is a Spanish novel by Miguel de Cervantes. Published in two parts, in 1605 and 1615, Don Quixote is the most influential work of literature from the Spanish Golden Age and the entire Spanish literary canon. A founding work of Western literature, it is often labeled "the first modern novel" and is sometimes considered the best literary work ever written. Don Quixote has become so entranced by reading chivalric romances th..."Though there have been many valuable English translations of Don Quixote, I would commend Edith Grossman's new version for the extraordinarily high quality of her prose. The spiritual atmosphere of a Spain already in steep decline can be felt throughout, thanks to the heightened quality of her diction. Grossman might be called the Glenn Gould of translators, because she, too, articulates every note. Reading her amazing mode of finding equivalents in English A note on translation. "Though there have been many valuable English translations of Don Quixote, I would commend Edith ...