“No Russian writer of any repute has failed to describe une rencontre, a hostile meeting,” writes Vladimir Nabokov in his memoir *Speak, Memory*, adding that “a Russian duel was a much more serious affair than the conventional Parisian variety.” Russia’s cultural history still bears the pain of losing two of its greatest poets, Pushkin and Lermontov, to wounds incurred on dueling grounds. This fourth-year seminar will serve as an introduction to Russian literature, history, and culture through the lens of the duel. We will read some of Russian literature’s defining texts alongside theoretical works on the Russian duel and literary criticism on the texts under examination. Special attention will be paid to the social and political circumstances that give Russian literature its unique flavor, such as Russian protocols of address, social organization, and political structures.

**Required Texts:**

Ivan Turgenev, *Fathers and Sons* (1862) (Signet) ISBN: 9780451529695  

Because of significant variations among translations of these works, students should purchase only the editions ordered for the course. These texts will be available from Octopus Books (116 Third Avenue, the Glebe; phone #: 613-233-2589) and can be purchased in person or ordered on the bookstore’s website (www.octopusbooks.ca). If
purchasing in person, please bring your course number and the course instructor’s name with you.

Reading Schedule:

September 11: Introduction and sign-up for presentations

September 18: Pushkin, “The Shot”; available at
http://www.readbookonline.net/readOnLine/16152/

Irina Reyfman, Introduction and Chapter 1 of Ritualized Violence Russian Style: The Duel in Russian Culture and Literature, 1-44 (on 2-hour reserve at McOdrum Library)

September 25: Pushkin, Eugene Onegin


October 2: Pushkin, Eugene Onegin

Irina Reyfman, Chapter 2, “A Brief History of Dueling in Russia” in Ritualized Violence Russian Style: The Duel in Russian Culture and Literature, 45-96 (on 2-hour reserve at McOdrum Library)

October 9: Lermontov, A Hero of Our Time

David Powelstock, “Violent Outcomes: Mikhail Lermontov and Romanticism’s Insoluble problems” in Times of Trouble: Violence in Russian Literature and Culture, 30-41 (on 2-hour reserve at McOdrum Library)

October 16: Lermontov, A Hero of Our Time

Irina Reyfman, Chapter 3, “Physical Inviolability and the Duel” in Ritualized Violence Russian Style: The Duel in Russian Culture and Literature, 97-140 (on 2-hour reserve at McOdrum Library)

October 23: Turgenev, Fathers and Sons


1 From library home page, go to “Journals,” then type “Modern Fiction Studies,” and then find the relevant volume through “Periodicals Online Archive 3.”
October 30: Turgenev, *Fathers and Sons*

Anthony Kwame Appiah, Chapter 1: The Duel Dies, in *The Honor Code: How Moral Revolutions Happen* (on 2-hour reserve at McOdrum Library)

November 6: Dostoevsky, *Notes from Underground*

James Scanlan, “The Case against Rational Egoism in Dostoevsky's Notes from the Underground,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 60.3 (1999): 549-67 (available through JSTOR)

November 13: Dostoevsky, *Notes from Underground*


**Grade Distribution:**
Seminar participants will be asked to choose one of the following two options:

**Option 1:**
Participation in class discussions (10%); 2 presentations (10%+20%); 5 unannounced multiple-choice quizzes (20%); 6 “insight” reports (30%); 2 “lead-today’s-discussion” questions (1 question per student) (5%+5%)

**Option 2:**
Participation in class discussions (10%); 2 presentations (10%+20%); 5 unannounced multiple-choice quizzes (20%); 12-page research essay (30%); 2 “lead-today’s-discussion” questions (1 question per student) (5%+5%)

**Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory. A passing grade cannot be assigned to anyone who has missed three or more seminar sessions. Members of the seminar are asked to
make every effort to come to class on time. **Being consistently late is disrespectful to all members of the seminar.**

**Participation:** All students are expected to participate in class discussions; *mere attendance does not fulfill the participation requirement.* Students who do not participate in class discussions with consistency and thoughtfulness will forfeit their participation grade.

**P**resentations: All seminar participants will sign up at the seminar’s first meeting to make two presentations on pre-assigned topics. These presentations are designed to hone students’ research and pedagogical skills. To that end, the presentations should be closely researched and delivered in such a way as to maximize learning. Topics will include, among others, the duel *à volonté*, Pushkin’s duel with d’Anthès, Russia’s Table of Ranks, Russian forms of address, quit-rent tenure, Alexander II’s reforms, the Decembrists, the 1905 and 1917 Russian Revolutions, Russian émigré life in Paris and Berlin. The first presentation will be worth 10%; the second presentation will be worth 20%. All presentations should be approximately 10 minutes long.

**Unannounced multiple-choice quizzes:** To cultivate close reading, students will write five unannounced multiple-choice quizzes designed to test their detailed knowledge of the *primary and secondary* assigned readings. Each quiz will contain ten questions and will be worth 4% of the final grade. Those who have missed a quiz will have the opportunity to rewrite only one of these quizzes at the end of the semester. The make-up quiz will include questions taken from the primary and secondary readings covered in the whole course. *Multiple-choice quizzes will be written at the beginning of class; those arriving late will not be able to write it and will therefore forfeit the test grade.*

**“Insight” Reports (Option 1 only):** These 6 insight reports are intended to stimulate sustained and thoughtful reflection on the assigned primary and secondary readings assigned for a particular week. These reports should be approximately 2 pages long (double spaced, 12-point font) and *must be submitted before the beginning of class.* Each report is worth 5% of the final grade. In writing these reports, students are encouraged to engage with the readings in a daring but nonetheless intellectually rigorous manner. They will be graded for thoughtfulness, originality, quality of analysis and written expression.

**Research Essay (Option 2 only):** The essay should be 12-pages long (double spaced, 12-point font). Longer papers will not be accepted. Research papers should be extensively researched, thoughtfully argued, and elegantly written. Though the expectation is that research papers will focus on the primary and secondary texts studied in class, other related topics will be considered. Students contemplating writing the essay must inform the instructor 8 weeks prior to the deadline of their intention to do so. The deadline for the research essay will be the last day of class. Late papers will be penalized 5% per day, including weekends and holidays.

**“Lead-Today’s-Discussion” Questions:** All seminar participants will choose to lead two seminar discussions by means of one scholarly question. In choosing their question,
students should engage with the primary and secondary readings assigned for that particular session, but they should also feel free to extend the range of the assigned readings to questions pertaining to their research and interests outside of class. The “ideal” question will be skillfully set up within a narrative paragraph that establishes its origins and its relevance to other questions studied in the course. These questions must be circulated to all members of the seminar either electronically (18 hours in advance of class meetings) or in paper form (during class meetings).

Classroom Etiquette

All cell phones must be turned off when the seminar is in session. If awaiting an emergency phone call, please notify the instructor at the beginning of class. Though laptops and cell phones are allowed in class, students must avoid the temptation to text-message and browse the Internet while the seminar is in session. Doing so is not only distracting, but also disrespectful towards all members of the class.

Grading System

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

- A+ = 90-100
- A  = 85-89
- A - = 80-84
- B+ = 77-79
- B  = 73-76
- B - = 70-72
- C+ = 67-69
- C  = 63-66
- C - = 60-62
- D+ = 57-59
- D  = 53-56
- D - = 50-52
- F   Failure. No academic credit.

2012 – 2013 Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include, but are not limited to, mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that your Instructor receives your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by Nov. 9, 2012 for the Fall term and March 8, 2013 for the Winter term.
You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation.

All Students

Students are strongly encouraged to make optimal use of the instructor’s office hours. Office hours are set aside for students to discuss with the instructor all aspects of the course and to seek assistance with any problems they might encounter in fulfilling the assigned tasks.

All students are also strongly encouraged to take advantage of the services offered at Carleton University, such as the following:

Learning Support Services (LSS): LSS offers students a variety of free services, including academic-skills workshops and information sessions, bookable study rooms, a Tutor Referral Service, and a supportive staff of Peer Helpers. To learn more about these services, visit LSS on the fourth floor of the MacOdrum Library, contact them by phone at 613-520-2600, ext. 1125, or visit them online at www.carleton.ca/lss.

Career Development and Co-operative Education (CDCE): CDCE is an on-campus centre for career development, employment preparation, and experiential learning opportunities for Carleton students. Students are encouraged to use the various services provided by CDCE throughout their time at Carleton by visiting its two service locations. The Career and Resource Centre is located at 401 Tory (613-520-6611); the Co-op and Employer Centre is located at 1400 CTTC (613-520-4331).

International Student Services Office (ISSO): ISSO is at the heart of Carleton’s international student community. It supports international students, including incoming and outgoing exchange students, and promotes cross-cultural understanding within the Carleton community. For more information, visit ISSO at 128 University Centre or contact by phone 613-520-6600. For general email inquiries, write to isso@carleton.ca; for exchange-program inquiries, write to exchange@carleton.ca. Website: www.carleton.ca/isso.

Plagiarism and Other Instructional Offences

The University’s policy concerning plagiarism and other instructional offences is outlined in the Undergraduate Calendar (see particularly regulation 14 – Instructional Offences). The Undergraduate Calendar defines an act of plagiarism as an attempt “to use and pass off as one’s own idea or product the work of another without expressly giving credit” to the original author. Any act of plagiarism will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the guidelines set out in the Undergraduate Calendar.

The Undergraduate Calendar further specifies that the act of submitting “substantially the same piece of work to two or more courses without the prior written permission of the
instructors from all courses involved” constitutes an Instructional Offence. Please note: “Minor modifications and amendments, such as changes of phraseology in an essay or paper, do not constitute a significant and acceptable reworking of an assignment.” No piece of work written for another course will be accepted for credit in this course.

Students should prepare lectures on (in chronological order)/exercise in research and pedagogy:

Biographical sketches on all authors

Onomastic practices
Russian Imperialism/Tsarism/Autocracy
Russian Social Rankings (gentry, intelligentsia, peasantry)
Russian 1905 and 19017 revolutions
Emigration

Onegin
Lermontov’s duel
Pushkin’s duel

Fathers and Children:
Russian Serfdom and the Emancipation of the Serfs by Alexander II’s reforms
Agricultural problems/reforms/modernization of agricultural methods
Russian Nihilism
Dobroliubov and Chernyshevski

Dostoevsky
Slavophilism

On Nabokov:
Synopsis of The Tragedy of Mister Morn in Brian Boyd, The Russian Years, pp. 222-226 (and any critical takes on it)
Chapter 9 of Speak, Memory