

**Carleton University
Fall 2020
Department of English**

**ENGL 4600A/ ENGL 5900G/ EURR 4103A:
The Great Russian Novel (in English translation):
Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* and
Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*
ONLINE**

**Prerequisite:
fourth-year standing or permission from the department**

**Time of Online Class Lectures and Discussions:
Tuesdays and Thursdays
1:05 pm—2:25 pm**

**Format: Synchronous with recorded sessions
Location: Big Blue Button on CU Learn Course Page
(all lectures and discussions will be recorded)**

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Office Hours:
On demand by appointment**

Comme l'on serait savant, si l'on connaissait bien seulement cinq à six livres!
Flaubert to Louise Colet, February 17, 1853

In a letter to his mistress, Flaubert remarked wistfully: “How knowledgeable one might be if one knew well only some half a dozen books!” Taking Flaubert’s remark seriously, this course examines in close detail two crowning achievements of nineteenth-century Russian literature through the double lens of the nineteenth-century Russian history and culture that produced them and the lens of the twentieth-century world literature, theory, and philosophy that they inspired.

Following the Golden Age of poetry associated most intimately with the verse of Pushkin, Russian literature produced a second Golden Age, this time associated with prose. The novels of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, in particular, were greeted by writers all over the world as the finest in their genre. In *Aspects of the Novel*, E.M. Forster declared “No English novelist is as great as Tolstoy—that is to say has given so complete a picture of man’s life, both on its domestic and heroic side. No English novelist has explored man’s soul as deeply as Dostoevsky.” At late as 1925, Virginia Woolf still referred to

Tolstoy as “the greatest of all novelists” for having written *War and Peace*. For Vladimir Nabokov, it was Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina* that was “the supreme masterpiece of nineteenth-century literature.” Other twentieth-century figures bestowed even higher praise on Dostoevsky’s final novel, *The Brothers Karamazov*: Freud referred to it as “the most magnificent novel ever written” and Einstein confessed that it was “the most wonderful book I have ever laid my hands on.” Kafka acknowledged having been influenced by it (he referred to himself and Dostoevsky as “blood relatives”) and Wittgenstein is said to have read it so many times as to have learned entire passages by heart. Nabokov coined the term “Tolstoevsky” to refer to Tolstoy’s and Dostoevsky’s outsized influence on world literature and culture, and Heidegger, generally considered the twentieth century’s most influential philosopher, acknowledged having been influenced by them both.

We will read Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina* and Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov* by focusing on the “big questions” (Dostoevsky called them “accursed”) that obsessed nineteenth-century Russian writers: What is the meaning of life? Does God exist? What is the essence of humanity? What is evil? What happens after death? At the same time, we will range deep into the twentieth century in order to examine the reasons behind Tolstoy’s and Dostoevsky’s influence on Freud, Bakhtin, Heidegger, Camus, Sartre, Wittgenstein and others.

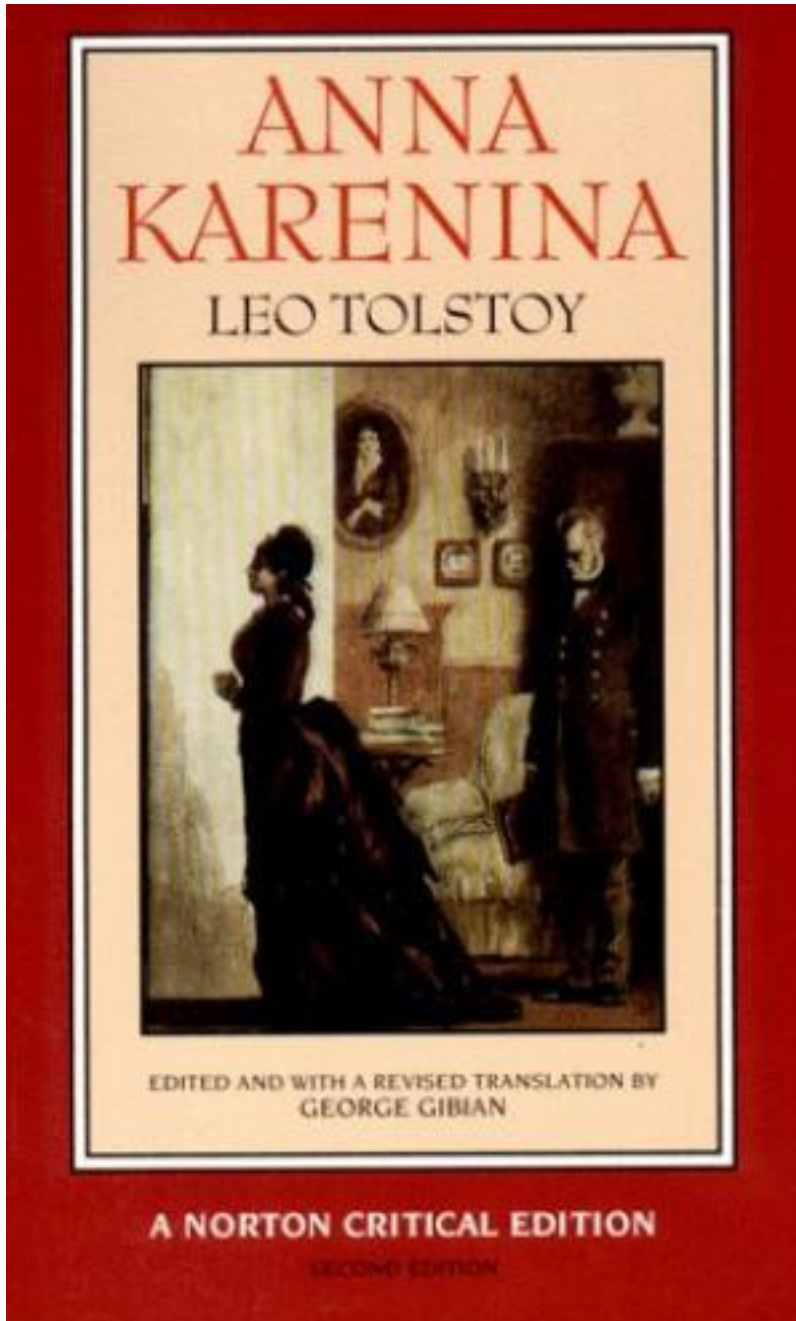
In this online course, we will seek to replicate as close as possible a traditional face-to-face classroom experience. Therefore, the course will consist of *synchronous* lectures and discussions that will take place on the Big Blue Button during the formally scheduled times of the course. These lectures and discussions will be recorded on the course page in CU Learn for students to watch on their own time should they be unable to attend a particular session or sessions. These recordings will remain accessible to students for the duration of the course. Though students will have the option of watching these recordings on their own time and there is no penalty whatsoever for not being present during our synchronous online sessions, the expectation is that they will make a good-faith effort to be part of the scheduled sessions of the course. The communal nature of this course is intended to serve as an antidote to pandemic loneliness and to reproduce—if only virtually—the camaraderie and intellectual give-and-take of a traditional classroom. Office hours will take place on Big Blue Button on demand by appointment.

Though both novels will be taught and read in English translation, Russian readers have the option of reading them in Russian and quoting the original Russian texts in their written work. The course is designed to appeal to students in English, EURUS, SLALS, and—most important of all—to all voracious readers.

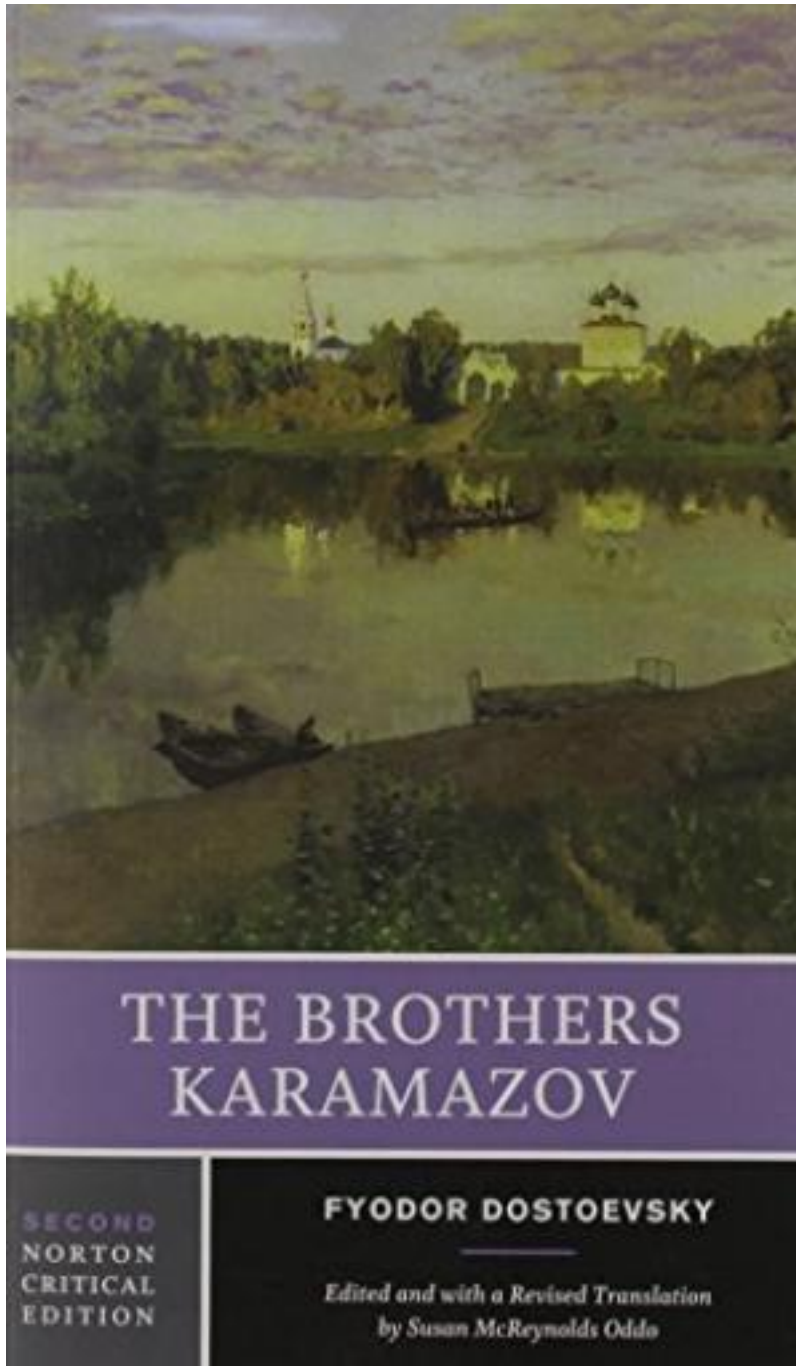
Students are encouraged to read as much in advance as they can. In an ideal world, students will read both novels before the beginning of the course and re-read them during the course according to the reading schedule. Such an ideal scenario would maximize retention, comprehension, and pleasure.

During my lectures, I will be citing passages from the editions listed below. Though

students may use any editions they already have, I encourage students to purchase these particular editions (see images and descriptions below) because they are finely translated, closely annotated, and accompanied by useful secondary materials such as scholarly essays and extracts from the authors' diaries and private correspondence. Students are responsible for purchasing these course texts online or at bookstores that carry them (they will *not* be ordered by me). Inexpensive used copies may be purchased at abebooks.com. For students who do not wish to purchase books, [Anna Karenina](#) and [The Brothers Karamazov](#) can also be read online free of charge. Russian readers may also read *Анна Каренина* ([Parts 1-4](#) and [Parts 5-8](#)) and [Братья Карамазовы](#) online.



Leo Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*. The Maude translation revised by George Gibian.
Edited by George Gibian. Second edition. New York: Norton, 1995.



Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*. The Garnett translation revised

by Ralph E. Matlaw and Susan McReynolds Oddo. Edited by Susan McReynolds Oddo. Second edition. New York: Norton, 2011.

READING SCHEDULE

Thursday, Sep 10	Introduction; distribution of short essay topics
Tuesday, Sep 15	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> : From the Author
Thursday, Sep 17	Books 1-2
Tuesday, Sep 22	Book 3
Wednesday, Sep 23	Last day of registration for fall-term and fall/winter courses.
Thursday, Sep 24	Books 4-5
Tuesday, Sep 29	Short essay due
Wednesday, Sep 30	Last day to withdraw from fall-term courses and fall/winter courses with a full fee adjustment
Thursday, Oct 1	Book 6
Tuesday, Oct 6	Books 7-8
Thursday, Oct 8	Books 9-10
Tuesday, Oct 13	Book 11
Thursday, Oct 15	Book 12
Tuesday, Oct 20	Epilogue; last day to submit short essays; distribution of formal essay topics
Thursday, Oct 22	Analyzing <i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> in its entirety
OCTOBER 26-30	FALL BREAK—UNIVERSITY CLOSED
Tuesday, Nov 3	Analyzing <i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> in its entirety
Thursday, Nov 5	<i>Anna Karenina</i> : Part 1
Tuesday, Nov 10	Part 2
Thursday, Nov 12	Part 3
Friday, Nov 13	Last day to submit Formal Examination
	Accommodation Forms for December examinations to the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities
Tuesday, Nov 17	Part 4; take-home test posted.
Thursday, Nov 19	Part 5
Tuesday, Nov 24	Part 6; annotated bibliographies due.
Thursday, Nov 26	Part 7
Tuesday, Dec 1	Part 8; take-home test due.
Thursday, Dec 3	Analyzing <i>Anna Karenina</i> in its entirety
Tuesday, Dec 8	Analyzing <i>Anna Karenina</i> in its entirety; last day to submit annotated bibliographies.
Thursday, Dec 10	Analyzing <i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> and <i>Anna Karenina</i> together
Friday, Dec 11	Last day for academic withdrawal from fall-term courses.
Monday, Dec 14	Formal essays due.
Friday, Dec 18	Last day to submit formal essays.

TERMS OF EVALUATION

Grade Distribution: 10% first essay (2-3 pages double spaced); 10% annotated bibliography (minimum of five scholarly sources); 40% formal essay (9-10 pages, double spaced); 20% four insight reports on assigned readings (8 pages in total, double spaced); 20% take-home test.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

ESSAYS A choice of essay topics will be distributed in advance of the due dates, and students are encouraged to consult with the instructor regarding all aspects of the research, organization, argument, and writing style of the essays. Each essay will be graded on form—organization, writing style, grammar,—(50%), and content—knowledge of texts, quality of argument, analysis, and scholarly research—(50%). ***NB:** The essay grades are contingent upon an informal oral examination by the instructor.*

a) The short essay should be 2-3 pages long (12-point font; double spaced). A penalty of 2%/per day (including Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays) will be applied to late essays. The penalty does not apply in case of illness upon the presentation of a doctor's note. The essay deadline is listed on the reading schedule; the essays are due at the **BEGINNING OF CLASS** on the specified date. They are to be submitted electronically to our course CU Learn page. **Short essays will not be accepted after October 20; first essays received after this date will not be graded and will receive a grade of "0."**

b) The formal essay should be 9-10 pages long (12-point font; double spaced). A penalty of 2%/per day (including Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays) will be applied to late essays. The penalty does not apply in case of illness upon the presentation of a doctor's note. The essay deadline is listed on the reading schedule; the essays are due at the **BEGINNING OF CLASS** on the specified date. They are to be submitted electronically to our course CU Learn page. **Formal essays will not be accepted after December 18; formal essays received after this date will not be graded and will receive a grade of "0."**

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY: The annotated bibliography must contain **five or more** bibliographic items relevant to a student-selected research or creative-writing topic. These may include books, essays, reviews or any other material that is justifiably relevant to the chosen topic. Each annotation must provide a short summary of the work in question and a brief explanation of its relevance to the chosen topic. The annotated bibliographies are due on **Tuesday, November 24**. They are to be submitted electronically to our course CU Learn page. ***Annotated bibliographies will not be accepted after Tuesday, December 8; bibliographies received after this date will not be graded.***

INSIGHT REPORTS: Each member of the class will write **four** insight reports. These are intended to stimulate sustained and thoughtful reflection on the assigned reading for a particular class *before* the beginning of that class. These reports should be approximately 2 pages long (double spaced, 12-point font) and should 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 an unconstrained, freewheeling manner. They will be graded for thoughtfulness, originality, and quality of analysis and written expression.

TAKE-HOME TEST: The test will be posted two weeks in advance of the deadline for submitting it. It will contain questions designed to test students' knowledge of the studied texts and the lecture material. It will contain short-answer questions and longer essay-type questions. The test is worth 20% of the final grade.

GRADING SYSTEM

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

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

General Guidelines for Student Conduct

Having taught an online course during the COVID-19 pandemic, I know first-hand that some students do not have access to cameras or microphones. Additionally, some students have important obligations that make it impossible for them to be part of our classroom sessions. As a result, students who cannot join us during our synchronous class sessions are exempt from doing so. Because all class sessions will be recorded, they will be able to watch the sessions on their own time. All other students, however, are expected to be in class on a regular basis to listen to lectures and participate in class discussions. Being together during the formally scheduled sessions will give us an opportunity to replicate as closely as possible a traditional classroom experience. This involves seeing each other, listening to each other, and examining a text in all of its complexities during the natural give-and-take of scholarly discussion. Discussions will be conducted in an atmosphere of respect and goodwill towards all members of the class and towards all races, ethnicities, religious affiliations and gender identities.

Learning Outcomes:

This course was designed to achieve the following learning outcomes:

1. demonstrate cultural literacies that engage with the transnational, multilingual, and historical traditions of literary production

2. read and analyze texts accurately, contextually, and critically
3. conduct independent textual research
4. recognize and apply a range of methodological frameworks in a critical and self-reflective manner
5. write clearly and persuasively in a variety of genres, while advancing and supporting arguments
6. express ideas clearly, persuasively, and collegially in a variety of oral formats.

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft. It is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include failure of the assignment, failure of the entire course, or suspension from a program. For more information, please go to:

<https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: 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. For more details click [here](#).

Religious obligation: 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. For more details click [here](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520- 6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. 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. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>