

From: Angela Brintlinger
To: ASC Curriculum Committee
Re: Russian Honors ~~350~~ 251

3/2/05

At present the Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Literatures offers regular and honors versions of the Russian 250 course (Masterpieces of 19th Century Russian Literature). In the past this course has covered 19th and 20th century literature. However, experience of the last few years has shown our faculty that the course needed to be deepened and split into two in order to fully delve into this rich and complex literature.

We are at present proposing two new courses, Russian 350 and Russian H350, which will act as a continuation of Russian 250/H250, but can also stand alone as courses exploring Masterpieces of 20th and 21st Century Russian Literature.

The honors version of 350 will address many of the same canonical primary texts of the 20th and 21st century as regular 350. However, as the syllabus shows, H350 (like its counterpart H250) will also consider secondary critical and theoretical texts to illuminate and contextualize the primary material. Thus H350 will allow students to engage with the material on a more serious and in-depth level and will require and encourage the development of sophisticated analytical tools for approaching monuments of literature and culture. Since the course will be capped at 20-25, a more seminar-like atmosphere will reign in the classroom, allowing for individual questioning and exploration of topics.

In addition, the assignments for H350 demonstrate a continued dialogue between the students and professor. Students will engage with the reading in a provocative manner, presenting reading questions that will help structure weekly discussions (see “weekly homework”). In addition, students will write six “reading reports” of 400-500 words over the course of the quarter. This assignment will give the students a place to work out ideas in a more formal, written form and can serve as a breeding ground for ideas for their presentation and/or final research paper.

The highlight of the quarter will be our week-long “symposium” on Soviet and post-Soviet literature and culture, in the 9th week of classes. During the symposium, students will give individual presentations based on their own research into any aspect of the course. They will react to each other in the symposium-setting, producing a classwide conversation on topics of interest.

Finally, while Russian 350 students will be examined on their mastery of course material in midterm and final examinations, H350 students will write a research paper, identifying the aspect of the course into which they choose to delve further. Through the readings and assignments which lead up to this final paper, the students will have gradually gained the experience and skills necessary to produce a serious piece of undergraduate research.

May 16, 2005

Professor Angela Brintlinger
Department of Slavic and Eastern European Languages and Literatures
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Dear Professor Brintlinger:

I write to inform you that the Curriculum Subcommittee of the Colleges of the Arts and Sciences Honors Committee has approved your proposal for an honors version of Russian 350 (Masterpieces of Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Russian Literature), with the understanding that the number will be changed to H251 as requested by the College of Humanities Curriculum Committee. Assuming final approval by the curriculum committee in the College of Humanities, you may offer the course at your discretion.

In extending their approval, the members of the Curriculum Subcommittee asked that I pass along the suggestion that you reconsider the amount of reading required for the course, as it seems to be greater than that which is required in Russian H250. The members believe the course will constitute a welcome addition to the honors curriculum, and they wish you the very best with what they are certain will be a rewarding experience for you and your students.

Sincerely,

Edward Adelson
Associate Executive Dean, Colleges of the Arts and Sciences
Chair, Arts and Sciences Honors Committee

c: ASC Honors Committee
Daniel Collins
Jack Cooley
Linda Harlow
Mary Ellen Jenkins
Jennifer Lando
Debra Lowry
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