HUMA 650: Humanities and the Law: Dostoevsky
Course Introduction (Fall 2013)

Class Meetings: TR 2:10-3:30
Murkland 102

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Office Hours: TR 9:10-10:00, 3:40-4:20
(and by appointment)

Texts:
Dostoevsky, Crime and Punishment
Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov
course packet (available at MUB Copy Center)

Course Objective: To become improved readers, writers, and thinkers by examining how the Russian author, Fyodor Dostoevsky, treats a number of important legal, judicial, and moral issues in his writings.

Course Grade:
40% = writing assignments: essays (2)
30% = writing assignments: analyses (3)
30% = class attendance, preparation, participation, contribution

* This breakdown of the course grade applies only for those students who miss 3 or fewer class meetings. Students who miss more than 3 class sessions can expect their overall course grade to be lowered substantially (one intermediate grade level for each absence: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, etc.). This policy is strictly enforced.

Course Description:
In this course we will be reading and discussing Crime and Punishment (1866), The Brothers Karamazov (1881), as well as selected entries from Diary of a Writer (1873-1881), the one-person journal in which Dostoevsky discusses a number of jury trials that took place in Russia during the 1870s. We will examine in these works how Dostoevsky views the new legal reforms in post-emancipation Russia, with special attention being focused on his treatment of such issues as criminality, justice, and legal (as opposed to moral) culpability. Dostoevsky was particularly interested in the newly established jury trials and the new institution of the bar, both of which resulted from the sweeping legal reforms that were instituted in 1864. He was dismayed by what he considered to be a high number of acquittals as well as by the use of what were then fashionable new defense strategies, such as those that argued that a hostile social and economic environment was responsible for individual acts of criminality. Some commentators feel that at the heart of Dostoevsky’s misgivings about trials by jury was his fear that the growing professionalization of the bar and the formalism of legal procedures would sow moral confusion in Russian society by institutionalizing the separation of ethics and morality from legal practice. In other words, he feared that the law courts would soon replace such traditional institutions as the Russian Orthodox Church and the family as a school for moral values in Russia. In addition, Dostoevsky seemed to fear that lawyers were in competition with literary artists (such as himself) as psychologists of the human soul, constructing narrative plots and drawing character profiles in the courtroom that served not the truth about human beings, but rather the narrow and immediate interests of the clients who hired them (system of advocacy).
**Attendance:** Regular class attendance is necessary if the objectives in this course are to be met. Failure to attend class regularly will result in a substantial lowering of your final course grade. In this course there is no such thing as an excused absence: either you are in class or you are not. Do not make appointments (with doctors, advisors, etc.) scheduled during class time. Be on time for class: students who leave early or arrive late are treated as absent for half that class period when attendance grades are computed.

**Absences:** Students are responsible for all information and announcements gone over in class, whether they are in attendance or not. If you do miss a class, you are still responsible for turning in any work that is due that day and for finding out what occurred in class. It is the responsibility of the absent student to ask a classmate ahead of time to pick up handouts, take notes, record announcements, etc. Do not simply ask the instructor upon your return what you missed.

**Quizzes:** Short quizzes, asking only for five identification items from the texts assigned, may be given each class period. It is your responsibility to make arrangements with the instructor to make up any quiz you may have missed. Unless you make those arrangements before the next class meeting, you will not be able to make up a quiz you have missed due to an absence and will receive a “0” for that quiz.

**Essays and Analyses:** Guidelines to follow when writing essays and analyses in this course, as well as the deadlines for their submission, will be distributed separately. Late work will be accepted, but with a substantial penalty (an automatic reduction in grade of 5 points for each day late). Being absent from class does not relieve a student of the responsibility of turning in written assignments on their due date.

**Reading Assignments:** You should attempt to finish reading all the assigned texts as soon as possible. However, the class discussions and quizzes will focus only on the pages assigned for that particular day. You should try to reread the assignments shortly before class.

**Class Participation:** This course is designed more for discussion than lecture. Therefore, you should be prepared to discuss the events depicted, the characters portrayed and the themes developed in the assigned reading. Take notes when you are reading and then review them before class.

**Academic Honesty:** Students are reminded that academic dishonesty is unethical and constitutes a violation of the academic honesty policy at UNH. One of the most common forms of academic dishonesty committed in a course like this one is plagiarism: namely, the unattributed use of the ideas, evidence, or words of another person. Plagiarism may include, but is not limited to, the representation of the ideas, data, or writing of another person as one’s own work (even though some wording might have been altered). Copying items from the internet is a particularly egregious form of plagiarism. Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty will automatically receive a failing grade for the assignment, perhaps even for the entire course.

**Electronic Devices:**
The use of electronic devices (cell phones, laptop computers, Blackberries, etc.) is not allowed in the classroom. Such devices can serve as a distraction not only to the student who is using one of them, but also to the other students in the class. During class sessions our full attention should be focused on the instruction and the discussion that is taking place in the classroom. I would prefer that such devices not be brought to class at all, but if they are, they must be turned off and stored away until the class period is over. Students who violate this policy can expect a substantial lowering of their course grade.

**Disabilities:**
UNH is committed to providing students who have documented disabilities with equal access to all university programs and facilities. If you think you have a disability requiring accommodations, you must register with Disability Services for Students (DSS). You should contact DSS at (603) 862-2607 or disability.office@unh.edu. If you have received Accommodation Letters for this course from DSS, please provide your instructor with that information privately so that we can review those accommodations together.
HUMA 650: Humanities and the Law: Dostoevsky
Syllabus (Fall 2013)

August 27: Course introduction
August 29: Dostoevsky: life and works

September 03: *Crime and Punishment*: selected passages
September 05: *Crime and Punishment*: selected passages

September 10: *Crime and Punishment*: selected passages
September 12: *Crime and Punishment*: selected passages

September 17: *Diary of a Writer*: “The Environment,” “Vlas,” “Colony of Young Offenders”
September 19: *Diary of a Writer*: Kroneberg Case

September 24: *Diary of a Writer*: Kairova Case
September 26: *Diary of a Writer*: Dzhunkovsky Case

October 01: *Diary of a Writer*: Kornilova Case I
October 03: *Diary of a Writer*: Kornilova Case II

October 08: *The Brothers Karamazov*: Book 1
October 10: *The Brothers Karamazov*: Book 2

October 15: *The Brothers Karamazov*: Book 3
October 17: *The Brothers Karamazov*: Book 4

October 22: *The Brothers Karamazov*: Book 5
October 24: *The Brothers Karamazov*: Book 6

October 29: *The Brothers Karamazov*: Book 7
October 31: *The Brothers Karamazov*: Book 8

November 05: *The Brothers Karamazov*: Book 9
November 07: *The Brothers Karamazov*: Book 10

November 12: NO CLASS (Monday schedule)
November 14: *The Brothers Karamazov*: Book 11

November 19: *The Brothers Karamazov*: Book 12
November 21: *The Brothers Karamazov*: Book 12

November 26: *The Brothers Karamazov*: Epilogue
November 28: NO CLASS (Thanksgiving holiday)

December 03: *Crimes and Misdemeanors* (film)
December 05: course retrospective