

Spring 2008

GOVT 497, Directed Research: Fyodor Dostoevsky

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**Syllabus for
Directed Research
GOVT495 – Spring 2008
Dr. Steven Alan Samson
Liberty University
Helms School of Government**

I. Catalog Description

Directed Research 3 credit hours

II. Objectives

1. This course introduces the student to Fyodor Dostoevsky's political thought through a number of primary and secondary sources.
2. The student will gain a better understanding of the socio-political and philosophical revolutionary shift of the 19th century Russian political sphere through the study of Dostoevsky's literary work and supplemental texts .

III. Prerequisites

GOVT 200

IV. Required Texts:

A. Primary Sources:

Brothers Karamazov
The Devils
The Diary of a Writer
The Idiot (optional)

B. Bibliography of Secondary Sources:

Berdyayev, Nicholas. Dostoevsky. New York: Meridian, 1957.

_____. The Russian Idea, trans. R. M. French. Hudson, NY: Lindisfarne, 1992 [1947].

Berlin, Isaiah. Russian Thinkers, ed. Henry Hardy and Aileen Kelly. Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1978.

Billington, James H. Fire in the Minds of Men: Origins of the Revolutionary Faith. New York: Basic Books, 1980

_____. The Icon and the Axe: An Interpretive History of Russian Culture. New York: Vintage, 1970 [1966].

Girard, René. Deceit, Desire, and the Novel: Self and Other in Literary Structure, trans. Yvonne Freccero. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1976 [1961].

Panichas, George A. The Burden of Vision: Dostoevsky's Spiritual Art. Chicago: Gateway, 1985.

Sandoz, Ellis. Political Apocalypse: A Study of Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971.

C. Internet Sources

http://people.brandeis.edu/~teuber/dostoevsky_links.html

<http://www.kiosek.com/dostoevsky/contents.html>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Grand_Inquisitor

V. Learning Outcomes

1. The student will meet with at least one of the professors once each week for discussion on the readings and progress on the paper.
2. The student will be able to identify, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate key political and philosophical ideas concerning Man, God, Russia, religion, and revolution that informed Dostoevsky's literary corpus.
3. The student will demonstrate such understanding on two essay and short answer tests and a research paper.

VI. Assignments, Special Projects, and Due Dates:

- A. **Exams:** There will be two exams. **Exams are due in the professor's office no later than 4:30 p.m. on the date that it is due.** The final due date will be due in the professor's office no later than on **Monday, May 20, 4:30 p.m.**
- B. **Research Paper:** There will be one research paper. The first draft will be due on April 30. The students will meet with the professors at an agreed upon time and date within two weeks for an oral defense. The final version of the paper will be due in the professors' office on **Monday, May 20, no later than 4:30 p.m.**
- C. **Grades:** Final grades will be determined based upon the student's grades on the two exams and the research paper.
- D. **Grading Scale:**

| | |
|--------------|--------------|
| A = 100 – 94 | C = 76 – 73 |
| A- = 93 – 90 | C- = 72 – 70 |
| B+ = 89 - 87 | D+ = 69 – 67 |
| B = 86 – 83 | D = 66 – 63 |
| B- = 82 – 80 | D- = 62 – 60 |
| C+ = 79 – 77 | F = 59 |

First Exam: 25%

Second Exam: 25%

Research Paper: 50%

F. **Academic Dishonesty Policy (with a tip of the hat to the Lee University policy):**

As a Christian community of scholarship, we at Liberty University are committed to the principles of truth and honesty in the academic endeavor. As faculty and students in this Christian community, we are called to present our academic work as an honest reflection of our abilities; we do not need to defraud members of the community by presenting others' work as our own. Therefore, academic dishonesty is handled with serious consequences for two fundamental reasons: it is stealing – taking something that is not ours; it is also lying – pretending to be something it is not. Christian community, such pretense is not only unnecessary; it is also harmful to the individual and community as a whole. Cheating should have no place at a campus where Christ is King because God desires us to be truthful with each other concerning our academic abilities. Only with a truthful presentation of our knowledge can there be an honest evaluation of our abilities. To such integrity, we as a Christian academic community are called.