This course surveys roughly a century of Russian cultural production – we will be reading novels, plays, poetry, philosophical texts, and watching a number of films – starting in the late 19th century and finishing with some recently translated short stories and novellas of the 1990’s. Our focus on gender and sexuality in Russian culture will be served by studying “mass audience” products side-by-side with what are considered more “high culture” literary works. Thus, for example, the relatively esoteric experiments of the Russian Symbolists will be juxtaposed with Artsybashev’s scandalous bestseller Sanin, a novel which can brag of few literary accomplishments, but which serves to crystallize some of the major sexual anxieties and popular debates of the time.

We will analyze the ways in which our texts and films represent gender, sexual identity, and sexual relationships. By taking a historical perspective, we will be able to see how these representations change, and the kinds of additional layers of significance they take on in different historical and political contexts. Turn-of-the-century love triangles, for example, resolve themselves very differently from the love triangle we will encounter in the 1927 Bed and Sofa, since this film must already take into account Stalin’s prescriptions for Soviet womanhood.
Required Work:

4 take-home quizzes
• You may use your notes and the texts on the quizzes. You may not use the internet or any other sources.
• You will have an hour from the time you open the quiz on OAKS to answer the short essay questions and submit your response.

5 pg midterm paper
• topic of your choice
• 12 point Times New Roman font
• double spaced, 1in margins
• Due March 3rd to Dropbox on OAKS

7 pg final paper:
• topic developed in consultation with me
• same formatting as midterm paper
• it must include a bibliography with at least 3 academic sources, which can be articles or books
• Due April 28th to Dropbox on OAKS

10 minute presentation
of your final paper topic during the last week of classes

Evaluation:

20% Quizzes
20% Midterm Paper
25% Class Participation
35% Final Paper

Texts to Purchase:

Mikhail Artsybashev, Sanin
(Cornell University Press)
ISBN 9780801485596

Evgeny Zamiatin, We
(Modern Library Classics)
ISBN 9780812974621

Other texts will be available on OAKS

Late Work
will not be accepted. I will, however, consider brief extensions for written assignments due to extenuating circumstances, such as illness or other unforeseen events. Note that extension requests must be made via email, before the deadline.
Course Policies:

Participation:
20% of your grade will be based on your participation in the class discussion. You are expected to have read the class material and to contribute to discussion constructively, in a thoughtful and informed way.

Attendance:
More than 3 unexcused absences will result in a reduction of your participation grade by 10% per additional absence. If you miss 6 or more classes without an acceptable excuse, you will receive a WA at midterm or an F at the end of the course.

Technology in the Classroom:
You may use computers and iPads to access the course readings, but I strongly encourage you to take notes on paper. If you are at any point caught using your laptop or other device to access anything other than the course materials (such as your email, Facebook, etc), you lose computer privileges for the duration of the semester.

Honor Code:
I enforce without exception the College’s Honor System and Classroom Code of Conduct. By choosing to enroll in this course, you indicate that you understand the Honor Code and are going to abide by it. The academic honor code forbids lying, cheating, and plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as presenting the work of others as your own and copying sources without citation. Plagiarism or cheating will result in an XF grade for the course.

Equal Access:
I am happy to work with all students to ensure that they have equal access to the educational experience of this class. The College will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students should apply at the Center for Disability Services / SNAP, located on the first floor of the Lightsey Center, Suite 104. If you are approved for accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible. All such discussions will be held in confidence unless you stipulate otherwise.

Religious Accommodations:
CoC supports reasonable accommodation for religious observance in regard to class attendance, but students are responsible for satisfying all academic requirements.
Learning Goals:

Students will learn about key texts and films in the history of modern Russian culture that either directly or indirectly engage with questions of gender and sexuality.

The chronological span of the class will allow students to frame the works we study within the context of major developments in Russian history, and to integrate this knowledge into their classwork.

Students will be introduced to major theoretical texts and critical frameworks, and asked to apply them to discuss the issues brought out by our texts.

As studying gender and sexuality within the context of one cultural tradition inevitably brings up questions as to how other cultures have addressed these subjects, students will be asked to think critically and comparatively.

Students will hone their oral communication skills through class discussions and presentations.

General Education Student Learning Outcomes for Humanities:

1. Students analyze how ideas are represented, interpreted, or valued in various expressions of human culture.

2. Students examine relevant primary source materials as understood by the discipline and interpret the material in writing assignments.

Both of these outcomes will be assessed by a final paper.

Please note: This course counts for the General Education Humanities Requirements for students entering before Fall 2015.
COURSE EVALUATIONS:

You will have an opportunity to evaluate this course and the quality of instruction via an online evaluation form. We will take 15 minutes in the last week of classes to fill out evaluations. This process will require that you bring a mobile device, such as a laptop or cell phone, to access the online course evaluation system.

If you have any comments or concerns about the class, please do not feel like you have to wait until the final day. You are always welcome to come and talk to me about anything I can do to improve your learning experience and to help you succeed in the class.

Schedule

*Subject to change due to special circumstances

Week 1. Setting the Scene

Thur 1.7
Introduction

Week 2. The 19th Century Hero and the Failed Rendezvous

Tue 1.12
Nikolai Karamzin, “Poor Liza” (1792) on OAKS

Thur 1.14
Ivan Turgenev, “Asya” (1857) on OAKS
Schedule

Week 3. What is to be Done?

Tue 1.19
Nikolay Chernyshevsky, “The Russian Man at the Rendezvous” (1858) on OAKS
Also read the summary of Chernyshevsky’s What is to Be Done? linked on OAKS

Thur 1.21
Fyodor Dostoevsky “Akulka’s Husband” from Notes from the Dead House (1862) on OAKS

Fri 1.22
Quiz 1 on Chernyshevsky and “Asya” due at 5pm on OAKS

Week 4. Whose Fault?

Tue 1.26
Leo Tolstoy, “The Kreutzer Sonata” (1889) on OAKS

Thur 1.28
Sofiya Tolstoy, “Whose Fault?” on OAKS
Recommended link on OAKS: http://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/sofiya-tolstoys-defense

Fri 1.29
Quiz 2 on “Akulka’s Husband” and “Kreutzer Sonata” due at 5pm on OAKS

Week 5. Terrible Perfection

Tue 2.2
Nikolay Leskov, “Lady Macbeth of Mstensk” (1865) linked on OAKS

Th 2.4
Maxim Gorky, “26 Men and One Girl” (1899) on OAKS
Week 6. Sex in the *Fin de Siècle*: Symbolist Woman vs. Woman as Symbol

Tue 2.9
Zinaida Gippius, selected poems on OAKS

Th 2.11
Zinaida Gippius, *Madwoman* (1906) on OAKS
Short selection from Gilbert and Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic* on OAKS

Week 7. Sex in the *Fin de Siècle*: *Succès de scandale*

Tue 2.16
Mikhail Artsybashev, *Sanin* (1907) [Introduction and pp. 15-118]

Th 2.18
Mikhail Artsybashev, *Sanin* [pp. 118-195]
Otto Boele, selection from *Erotic Nihilism in Late Imperial Russia: The Case of Mikhail Artsybashev’s Sanin* on OAKS

Week 8. Sex in the *Fin de Siècle*: Artsybashev’s *Sanin*

Tue 2.23
Mikhail Artsybashev, *Sanin* [pp. 195-259]

Thur 2.25
Finish discussing Artsybashev’s *Sanin*
Laura Engelstein, “Erotic Individualism” in *The Keys To Happiness: Sex and the Search for Modernity in Fin-de-Siècle Russia*, 383-390 on OAKS

Week 9. Eros and Revolution

Tue 3.1
Leonid Andreev, “The Abyss” (1902) on OAKS
Schedule

Th 3.3
Watch Abram Room and Viktor Shklovsky, *Bed and Sofa* (1927) available to stream through link on OAKS

Fri 3.4
**Midterm Essays due at 5pm via Dropbox on OAKS**

Week 10. NO CLASSES – Spring Break

Week 11. Constructing Utopian Spaces: Sex by the Numbers

Mon 3.14
**Midterm Grades available online**

Tue 3.15
Evgeny Zamiatin, *We* (1929) [PGS 1-88]

Th 3.17
Evgeny Zamiatin, *We* (1929) [PGS 89-203]

Fri 3.18
**Last day to withdraw with a grade of “W”**

Week 12. Writing Homosexual Identity in the Homogenous State

Mon 3.21
**Quiz 3 on We due at 5pm on OAKS**

Tue 3.22
Mikhail Kuzmin, “Virginal Viktor: A Byzantine Tale” (1914) on OAKS

Th 3.24
Schedule

Week 13. Deconstructing the Mother of all Mythologies

Tue 3.29
Lyudmila Petrushevskaya, “Our Crowd” on OAKS
Helena Goscilo, “Mother as Mothra: Totalizing Narrative and Nurture in Petrushevskaya” in Hoisington (ed.) A Plot of Her Own, [pp. 102-113] on OAKS

Th 3.31
Anton Chekhov, “The Darling” (1899) on OAKS

Week 15. Comparisons and Conclusions

Tue 4.5
Tatiana Tolstaya, “Sonya” (1990’s) on OAKS

Th 4.7
Course Evaluations
Discussion of the state of affairs in contemporary Russia

Fri 4.8
Quiz 4 due at 5pm on OAKS

Week 16.

Tue 4.19
Student Presentations of Final Paper Topics

Final Essays are due Thursday April 28th by 5pm via Dropbox on OAKS