

LIT 401: The Literary Tradition: The Rise of Modernism

Fall 2025 (M,W,F 10:30-11:20; RM 200)

Childs; mchilds@smac.edu; x201

Office hours: by appointment

Course Description and Purpose Statement: Beginning with English Romantic poetry, the course centers upon Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* and introduces other works of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, demonstrating the transition from Romanticism to Modernism. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the literature in class discussion and will augment their reading and critical skills through research of literary scholarship, presenting their findings in essays of increasing scope and length. **In this class, you will propose your own paper topics, which I must approve at least two weeks prior to the due date.**

Required Texts:

Moby Dick, Herman Melville

The Brothers Karamazov, Fyodor Dostoyevsky (trans. Pevear and Volokhonsky)

Lit 401/402 Course Pack

Policy Points of Note:

- I will take attendance at the beginning of each class. Please come; it is the best way to get something out of the course. Any work missed because of an **unexcused** absence will receive a zero and cannot be made up—this includes work that was due that day. If you have five or more unexcused absences during the semester, I reserve the right to assign you an F for the class.
- Quizzes will generally be given at the beginning of class at least once a week. They may or may not be announced and will demand short written commentary on the material of the previous class or your reading. They are meant to keep you engaged and in the habit of taking and reviewing notes and will never last more than ten minutes.
- Assignments are due at class meeting time on the due date. You will lose a letter grade for each day an assignment is late, and a zero if it is five or more days late. I will be very flexible with you on extensions, **but only if you ask for one more than 24 hours in advance of the due date.** Please work and think ahead and let me know if you need help and/or more time.
- **No electronic devices are allowed in the classroom**—whether powered on or off. If I see one, I will confiscate it and turn it over to the Academic Dean; if you catch me with one, I will drop the lowest grade of every student in the class. Let's respect and pay attention to each other whenever we are together.

Plagiarism Reminder:

- **NEVER** present another author's published words or ideas as if they were your own. To do so is plagiarism, which is a crime, essentially stealing AND lying, misrepresenting someone else's work as your own—see the College catalog for the serious consequences of committing this crime. If you wish to use a published comment to support your own argument, please do so, either in a direct quote or a paraphrase, but in either case, give the author credit by mentioning where you found the quote and the author's name in the context of the quote or in a parenthetical citation. [See the MLA guidelines for parenthetical citations in SMC Writer's Handbook.]
- **NEVER** consult a paper-writing service in person or on the internet, including ChatGPT or anything of its kind. These "services" will not help you to develop as a writer and, in fact, pose a moral threat, a temptation to sin by fraudulently presenting as your own what is the composition of another, which is plagiarism. Do not rely upon voice recognition software to enter your work accurately on the computer.

Grading:

Essays:	40%
Midterm Exam:	15%
Final Exam:	20%
Quizzes:	10%
Class Participation:	15%

The *Plan* [Items may shift during flight . . .]

Week of:

Sep 1:	Introduction; Romanticism (Wordsworth)	
Sep 8:	Romanticism (Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Byron)	
Sep 15:	Romanticism (Byron, Keats)/ <i>Moby Dick</i>	
Sep 22:	<i>Moby Dick</i>	Essay 1 Due (Friday)
Sep 29:	<i>Moby Dick</i>	
Oct 6:	<i>Moby Dick</i> /Victorianism (Tennyson)	
Oct 13:	Victorianism (Ruskin, Arnold, Pater)	<i>17 Oct: No Class;</i>
Oct 20:	Victorianism (Hopkins)/ <i>The Brothers Karamazov</i>	Midterm Exam
Oct 27:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i>	Oct 30-31: No classes
Nov 3:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i>	
Nov 10:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i>	Essay 2 Due (Monday)
Nov 17:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i>	
Nov 24:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i>	Nov 26-Dec 1: Thanksgiving Break
Dec 1:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i>	M: No Classes;
Dec 8:	<i>The Brothers Karamazov</i>	M: No Classes Essay 3 Due (Friday)
Dec 15 :	Final Examinations	
Dec 19-Jan 11:	Christmas Break	