

Fall 2023/ University of Texas, Austin
REE 325 (43435), EUS (36310), WGS (45730)

Women and Resistance in Contemporary Eastern Europe

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Course description:

Welcome! This course will examine works of a number of Eastern European women writers, such as Olga Tokarczuk (Poland), Natalka Babina (Belarus), Oksana Zabuzhko (Ukraine), Slavenka Drakulić (Croatia), Herta Müller (Romania – Germany), Sofi Oksanen (Finland), Ludmila Ulitskaya and Ludmila Petrushevskaya (Russia), and trace their role and involvement in resisting not only political regimes but also gender-based oppression. We will also read supplemental scholarly articles. We will practice close readings of text, and hone writing skill through a variety of assignments, ranging from short responses to a structured paper with a thesis. Through writings and class discussion, students will discuss the forms and repercussions of women's resistance in regard to recent issues and events within this strategic region.

We will hold discussions in a friendly environment, with all voices heard.

Objectives:

- to hone reading and close reading skills (learn about various types of texts, do close reading, analyze quotes, analyze themes, analyze characters and the classify the types of narrators – reliable, omniscient, partially informed)
- to introduce authors from various Eastern European contexts
- to foster critical thinking (discuss ethics systems in various contexts, discuss the meaning of terms such a feminist in various contexts, learn and structure historical background information, compare historical contexts, compare and contrast situations pertaining to the rights of women and girls)
- to practice research skills (finding and evaluating scholarly sources, writing annotations, annotated bibliographies, and adhering to MLA)
- to introduce texts of various styles (fiction, non-fiction, essays, articles)
- to produce a research paper (introduce basic terms of critical analysis, work on elements of paper, come up with a solid thesis statement, use textual analysis in context, synthesize materials studied)
- to hone and practice public speaking skills and collaborative skills (work in groups, do presentations, construct a PPT adhering to the principles of effective presenting and visual presentation)

Disclaimer

The students should come to class with **an open mind and ready to discuss complex, at times controversial and difficult issues**, such as totalitarianism, violence, sexually explicit material, drug and alcohol abuse, and others. This class aims at providing a safe environment for everyone; therefore the students are expected to treat each other, and the instructor, with respect and courtesy. **If you feel that you would prefer not to deal with such topics, you are advised to drop this course.**

Required Readings:

Drakulić, Slovenka. *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed*. Harper Perennial, 1993. ISBN 9780060975401.

Ulitskaya, Ludmila. *Sonechka: A Novella and Stories*. Glas 1998, **(this is the only reading available via Canvas; please purchase the rest)**.

Oksanen, Sofi. *Purge*. Trans. Lola Rogers. Grove Press, 2010. ISBN-10: 0802170773.

Tokarczuk, Olga. *Drive Your Plough Over the Bones of the Dead*. Penguin, 2019. ISBN 978052541356.

Müller, Herta. *The Land of Green Plums*. Transl. Michael Hofmann. Picador, 2010. ISBN-10: 0312429940.

Zabuzhko, Oksana. *Your Ad Could Go Here*. Amazon Crossing, 2020. ISBN 978-1542022521.

Petrushevskaya, Ludmilla. *There Once Lived a Woman Who Tried to Kill Her Neighbor's Baby: Scary Fairy Tales*. Trans. Keith Gessen. Penguin, 2009. ISBN-10: 0143114662.

Babina, Nataalka. *Down Among the Fishes*. Glagoslav 2013, 1782670769.

Please be advised that if you choose a different edition or Kindle, it will be your responsibility to find out the pagination of the assigned reading.

Student learning outcomes:

- to be able to use close reading skills
- to be able to analyze characters and the classify the types of narrators – reliable, omniscient, partially informed
- to read works by authors from various Eastern European contexts
- to learn about historic context of various Eastern European countries
- to practice critical thinking as applied to literature
- to obtain research skills (finding and evaluating scholarly sources, writing annotations, annotated bibliographies, and adhering to MLA)
- to understand the term feminist as applied to literature

- to learn about writing a research paper in the field of literary studies (basic terms of critical analysis, elements of paper, a solid thesis statement, textual analysis in context)
- to use public speaking skills and collaborative skills

Writing Flag

This course carries the Writing Flag. Writing Flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. In this class, you can expect to write regularly during the semester, complete substantial writing projects, and receive feedback from your instructor to help you improve your writing. You will also have the opportunity to revise one or more assignments, and you may be asked to read and discuss your peers' work. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from your written work. Writing Flag classes meet the Core Communications objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication, Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility, established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Important: This is a writing-intensive course, not a composition course. You will use writing to demonstrate mastery of the subject matter, to synthesize ideas, to learn concepts, and to explore ideas. You will still be responsible for grammar, punctuation, spelling, and style, even though we will not address these issues primarily.

Ethics Flag

This course carries the Ethics flag. Ethics courses are designed to equip you with skills that are necessary for making ethical decisions in your adult and professional life. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments involving ethical issues and the process of applying ethical reasoning to real-life situations.

Global Cultures Flag

This course carries the Global Cultures flag. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.

Grading:

Quizzes (2)	5% (2,5% each)
Participation/classwork	10%
Discussion Board posts (5)	10% (2% each)

Quote Analysis, on author of choice (2)	20% (10 % each)
Annotated Bibliography	15 %
Thesis & quotes for Final Paper	10%
Final Paper	15 %
Group presentation	15%
Total:	100%

Grading Scale:

94 –100 = A 80 – 83 = B- 67 – 69 = D+
 90 – 93 = A- 77 – 79 = C+ 64 – 66 = D
 87 – 89 = B+ 74 – 76 = C 60 – 63 = D-
 84 – 86 = B 70 – 73 = C- 59 or less = F

Brief description of Assignments (for full descriptions and rubrics, please go to Canvas/Assignments):

Quizzes – you will be quizzed on understanding the policies from the syllabus and on MLA format. The quizzes are MC or T/F. They are available via Canvas (please go to Assignments to check dates).

Participation/classwork - you are expected to participate in class discussions and small group discussions. A lot of class work is structured small group discussions, to make you feel comfortable.

Discussion Board posts – 1 paragraph or more (300 words or so); these are short, informal write-ups about an aspect of the text/book that stood out or inspired thought.

Quote Analysis – 2,5 pages (with Works Cited being one of them) - these are formal papers that will focus on a quote or two from the books. You will need Works Cited page.

Annotated Bibliography -1,5 pages - this will be a summary of three scholarly articles on the author of choice. The articles are provided and available via Canvas.

Thesis and Quotes – 1 page or less - this is your thesis statement (about 1 paragraph long) for the Final paper, and two or more quotes from the book of choice.

Final Paper – 8 pages or more - this will be your end-of-semester paper that will include the Annotated Bibliography, possibly a quote analysis or a discussion board entry, a thesis, text analysis, a formal introduction and conclusion. You will need a Works Cited page.

Group Presentation - 8-10 slides, 10 min or less – this will be a group project on a gender-related issue in a country of choice. You will prepare slides, a narrative, and record it as a short video.

For help with writing, please check out Canvas: at the end of the **Home page there is a section titled Help with Writing**. It contains writing aids, sample papers, guides, etc.

Late work will be penalized; 10% of points will be taken off for late papers submitted within seven calendar dates after the due date. After that, late work will only be accepted in the cases of documented emergencies.

Incompletes may be assigned only in the cases of documented emergencies.

University Policies and Resources:

Office of Disability and Access

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact the Office at 512-471-6259 (voice) or 512-410-6644 (Video Phone) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

Religious holidays

A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible, so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence.

Absence for military service

In accordance with section 51.9111 of the Texas Education Code, a student is excused from attending classes or engaging in other required activities, including exams, if he or she is called to active military service of a reasonably brief duration. The maximum time for which the student may be excused has been defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board as “no more than 25 percent of the total number of class meetings or the contact hour equivalent (not including the final examination period) for the specific course or courses in which the student is currently enrolled at the beginning of the period of active military service.” The student will be allowed a reasonable time after the absence to complete assignments and take exams. Policies affecting students who withdraw from the University for military service are given in the Withdrawal section.

Title IX Disclosure

Beginning January 1, 2020, Texas Education Code, Section 51.252 (formerly known as Senate Bill 212) requires all employees of Texas universities, including faculty, to report to the [Title IX Office](#) any information regarding incidents of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking that is disclosed to them. Texas law requires that all employees who witness or receive information about incidents of this type (including, but not limited to, written forms, applications, one-on-one conversations, class assignments, class discussions, or third-party reports) must report it to the Title IX Coordinator. Before talking with me, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX related incident, please remember that I will be required to report this information.

Although graduate teaching and research assistants are not subject to Texas Education Code, Section 51.252, they are [mandatory reporters](#) under federal Title IX regulations and are required

to report [a wide range of behaviors we refer to as sexual misconduct](#), including the types of misconduct covered under Texas Education Code, Section 51.252. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex – including pregnancy and parental status – in educational programs and activities. The Title IX Office has developed supportive ways and compiled campus resources to support all impacted by a Title IX matter.

If you would like to speak with a case manager, who can provide support, resources, or academic accommodations, in the Title IX Office, please email: supportandresources@austin.utexas.edu. Case managers can also provide support, resources, and accommodations for pregnant, nursing, and parenting students.

For more information about reporting options and resources, please visit: <https://titleix.utexas.edu>, contact the Title IX Office via email at: titleix@austin.utexas.edu, or call 512-471-0419.

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. Refer to the Student Judicial Services website for official University policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty.

Writing Center

Any currently enrolled undergraduate at UT can visit the UWC for assistance with any writing project. Our services are not designed to fix writing ‘problems.’ Instead, we support students as they hone their skills; getting feedback from an informed audience is a normal part of a successful writing project. We work with students from all UT colleges and departments, for both academic and non-academic writing. Whether a student is writing a lab report, a resume, a term paper, a statement for an application, or a work of creative writing, our consultants will be happy to help.

Class Recordings

Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

Artificial Intelligence

“The creation of artificial intelligence tools for widespread use is an exciting innovation. These tools have both appropriate and inappropriate uses in classwork. The use of artificial intelligence tools (such as ChatGPT) in this class:

- ...is strictly prohibited. This includes using AI to generate ideas, outline an approach, answer questions, solve problems, or create original language. All work in this course must be your own or created in group work, where allowed.
- ...shall be permitted on a limited basis. You will be informed as to the assignments for which AI may be utilized. You are also welcome to seek my prior-approval to use AI writing tools on any assignment. In either instance, AI writing tools should be used with caution and proper citation, as the use of AI should be properly attributed. Using AI writing tools without my permission or

authorization, or failing to properly cite AI even where permitted, shall constitute a violation of UT Austin's Institutional Rules on academic integrity.

- ...is permitted for students who wish to use them, provided the content generated by AI is properly cited.

If you are considering the use of AI writing tools but are unsure if you are allowed or the extent to which they may be utilized appropriately, please ask.”

Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited

No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure in the course.

COVID

To help keep everyone at UT and in our community safe, it is critical that students report COVID-19 symptoms and testing, regardless of test results, to University Health Services, and faculty and staff report to the HealthPoint Occupational Health Program (OHP) as soon as possible. Please see this [link \(Links to an external site.\)](#) to understand what needs to be reported. In addition, to help understand what to do if a fellow student in the class (or the instructor or TA) tests positive for COVID, see this University Health Services link.

Special Accommodations: At the beginning of the semester, students with disabilities who need special accommodations should notify the instructor by presenting a letter prepared by the Services for Students with Disabilities Office. To ensure that the most appropriate accommodations can be provided, students should contact the SSD Office at 471-6259 or 471-4641 TTY.

Open Carry

* All guns must be concealed at all times in line with the Campus Concealed Carry legislation. If an/the instructor or student(s) sees any sign of a gun in class, the UT police will be called immediately per the UT implementation policy for the statute.

* For responsibilities of concealed gun permit holders on campus, see UT's information page: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu/students> (Links to an external site.)

* Here is UT's general information website about campus carry: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu/> (Links to an external site.)

Zoom Etiquette

To make this a viable learning environment, we ask you to abide by the following guidelines:

- Find a quiet space where you would not be disturbed during the Zoom session.
- Conduct yourself as you would in a face-to-face meeting.
- Clothing is not optional! Dress comfortably, but remember that you are in a public setting.

- Have your video on, unless you are experiencing technical difficulties (contact us if those persist). **If your video is off, we would assume that you are not present for the session.**
- Mute your microphone when you're not speaking. This would help limit background noise.
- When you wish to speak, raise your hand or post a hand icon in Zoom.
- To ensure optimal connectivity, close all other windows/applications on your device.
- To hear and be heard better, consider using a headset with external microphone.
- Be aware that you are on camera, and avoid doing other tasks during the class meeting (checking email, updating social networks, checking your phone, etc.)

Tentative Schedule (subject to change)

Date	Readings/ materials/due dates
22 Aug	Introduction and syllabus
24 Aug	Drakulić “Pizza in Warsaw, Torte in Prague,” “Make-up and Other Critical questions”, “On Doing Laundry” Quiz 1 (on Syllabus)
29 Aug	Drakulić “The Strange Ability of Apartments...”, “Language of Soup”, ‘A Letter from the United States”
31 Aug	Ulitskaya 1-35 (Canvas)
5 Sept	Ulitskaya 36-71 (Canvas) Discussion Board 1 (on Drakulić or Ulitskaya)
7 Sept	Oksanen 1-70
12 Sept	Oksanen 71-160
14 Sept	Oksanen 121-260 Quote analysis 1 due (on Ulitskaya or Oksanen)
19 Sept	Scholarly articles (Canvas) Read /go over Sutcliff on Mother-Daughter in “Sonechka”
21 Sept	Zabuzhko “O Sister, My Sister”

26 Sept	Zabuzhko “The Tennis Instructor” Discussion Board 2 (on Zabuzhko)
28 Sept	On writing: Bibliography and Thesis Quiz 2 (on MLA)
3 Oct	Müller 1-70
5 Oct	Müller 71-145
10 Oct	Müller 145-170 Discussion Board 3 (on Müller)
12 Oct	Tokarczuk 1-79 Quote analysis 2 due (on Zabuzhko, Müller, or Tokarczuk)
17 Oct	Tokarczuk 81-159 Thesis and Quotes due
19 Oct	Tokarczuk-end
24 Oct	Petrushevskaya “The Arm,” “Revenge,” “Two Kingdoms” Annotated Bibliography due
26 Oct	Petrushevskaya “Hygiene,” “The Father,” “The Black Coat” Discussion Board 4 (on Tokarczuk or Petrushevskaya)
31 Oct	Babina 1-30
2 Nov	Babina 31-50 Discussion Board 5 (on Babina)
7 Nov	On writing: Introduction and Conclusion

9 Nov	Individual meetings
14 Nov	Writing workshop (Final Paper)
16 Nov	Writing workshop (Final Paper)
20-25 Nov	<u>Fall Break/Thanksgiving/no classes</u>
28 Nov	Group Presentations (due on the 28th of Nov at 9 a.m.)
30 Nov	Group Presentations
	Final paper due Friday Dec 8 at 11:59 p.m.