

Online Discussion Instructions for Students (Graduate Literature Course)

Mini-essay. For this week's seminar forum, please begin by composing a mini-essay [500 words strict cap] and post it to the forum. In your mini-essay, first identify what you have been reading since we've started Part II of the course. Next, please identify a chapter, group of chapters, or part of the novel that you would like to discuss in your mini-essay. Now, please compose your mini-essay by describing one or more key theological or religious themes, ideas, or questions that you believe Dostoevsky is exploring in your chosen section of the book. Explain what you think Dostoevsky is saying about your chosen topic in this section and why you think that this is his message. Alternatively, you can focus on what theological or religious questions you think Dostoevsky is raising in your chosen section and why you think they are important.

Responses. For the forum responses this week, please focus on asking follow-up questions regarding your colleague's mini-essays. Think of each other student as an expert regarding the section of text on which they have written, then aim to ask them some questions that probe further into the topic. It's completely okay to ask questions about selections that you have not read yourself, just as you might ask questions to learn more about a book you haven't read when speaking to a colleague, professor, or friend. If you have also read the same section of a book at this point, feel free to push the conversation further by adding additional details, your own different way of reading the passage, or other insights of significance. You are encouraged to frame your questions by explaining something of your own readings or encounters with Dostoevsky, and you are especially encouraged to follow-up with your colleague's responses after you have asked them your question. Did you find their answer or response compelling? Are there further issues to discuss?