Congratulations! You grew up bilingual (to a greater or lesser extent)! However, as you know very well, your bilingualism is lopsided: English is your stronger language and is the language of preference in your daily communication in a variety of contexts (with friends, siblings, at school, at work, sometimes even with parents). In order to support your bilingualism, we now need to focus on developing your Russian.

In this course you will work on improving your ability to express your thoughts in Russian both orally and in writing. Although the course focuses on developing literacy skills in Cyrillic, you will also work on expanding your vocabulary and acquiring certain linguistic sensitivities which will allow you to tease and keep your two languages apart.

The course is only the first step toward strengthening your Russian. It may be enough to fulfill your university language requirement; it is not enough to maintain and develop your bilingualism. Therefore, you should seriously consider taking a Russian course every semester while you are at Brandeis. Bilingualism offers tremendous cognitive, emotional and professional benefits, but in order to unlock these benefits, you must use both languages on a regular basis as equally as possible.

In addition to the learning outcomes (below), this course will introduce you to concepts and skills that will help you hold on to the Russian side of your bilingual mind, hopefully, for the rest of your lives. It will also develop your analytical skills, such as short and long-term memory, pattern recognition, ability to extend knowledge to novel situations and to synthesize various patterns into a bigger system.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

*If you adhere to your responsibilities as a student* in this course, by the end of the semester you will have a respectable knowledge of
• the basic structure of contemporary Russian language;
• the morphological principle of spelling in Russian;
• the complex system of Russian roots, suffixes and prefixes;
• the socio-cultural norms of communication in contemporary Russian;
• structural differences between English and Russian.

You will be able to apply this knowledge to do the following:
• produce grammatically correct meaningful sentences in oral and written form in Russian;
• observe socio-cultural norms of communication by using correct formal forms of address and requests;
• read authentic Russian texts (fiction and non-fiction);
• use Internet to find information in Russian;
• use standard computer programs and on-line resources to type in Russian.

Required Materials
We will not use a particular textbook in this course. Rather we’ll rely on handouts which are part of the textbook I am developing with my colleague at Pennsylvania State University. All handouts will either be posted on LATTE or given to you in class. Please note that YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for keeping all handouts in a binder which you bring to every class, and for printing handouts for some homework exercises.

We will also be using some exercises from a free-access textbook «Русский без границ». Please download it from the Internet or from our LATTE page.

You will need Part 1 (introduction):

and Part 2 (grammar):

Classroom Policies

Behavior: You are expected to contribute to a respectful and positive learning environment. Please do not bring food to class as much as it can be helped. You should be able to finish your lunch either before or after class. It is hard to practice a foreign language while your mouth is busy with food.

Punctuality is essential.
Cell phones: I rely on your maturity to know that the use of cell phones in class for any reason is disrespectful and distracting. Phones should be turned off and out of sight while class is in session. Absolutely no text-messaging.

Russian-only rule: When you come to class, please be prepared to speak Russian not only to the instructor, but also to the fellow students. If you speak Russian only to Irina Yevgenievna, you will never master the language.

Communication: Please make sure your Brandeis e-mail address is active and check it regularly. I will communicate a lot of important information about the course to you via the Course Announcement function on our LATTE page or by direct e-mailing. Again, I rely on your maturity and respect for this course to maintain an open channel of communication with your instructors throughout the semester.

Group Dynamics
This class relies heavily on all of you working together. Some of you are faster at grasping new grammatical concepts and memorizing new vocabulary while others require more time to process language information. Personality types also play a huge role in how people learn languages: some are afraid to speak in front of other people and are very shy; others are more outgoing and are not afraid of experimenting and taking chances. Please be patient with each other and be polite. The important thing to keep in mind is that you NEED each other to activate what you have learned growing up. Be grateful for the fact that you have “comrades in arms” in your conquest of the Russian language!

Notice of Accommodation
If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

Grading
Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly participation</td>
<td>20% (credit at 90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly assignments (2 per week)</td>
<td>20% (credit at 90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly quizzes/dictations</td>
<td>20% (credit at 90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teleconferences with Russia</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language project (e-mail letter)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam (=exemption exam)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-93</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84-86</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-83</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74-76</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-73</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64-66</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-63</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59 and below</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please note that the **passing grade** for this class (which allows you to continue to advanced Russian language classes) is C-.  

**Components of Course Work**

The text below explains in detail what you are expected to do in this course and how you will be graded. But I invite you to think more about developing your proficiency in the language rather than focusing on the mechanics of the grade. The ultimate goal for you and for me is to give you knowledge and ability to communicate effectively in Russian!

*Participation/ Работа на уроке (20%)*

We will do a lot of practical work in class where you work in pairs solving linguistic puzzles, writing dictations and checking each other’s work, practicing endings and discussing texts you read at home. Therefore, it is essential that you attend classes and keep up with course work on a daily basis. Just being in class is not enough to regain proficiency in the language. You need to be active and engaged. **When you are assigned to do an exercise with a partner, to stay away from chatting in English.** Focus on your Russian instead! You will receive a daily participation score based on the following scale:

- **Full credit (90%) V+**
  - Well prepared (i.e., have done the homework and is prepared to work with new grammatical material and vocabulary in class) and **actively** participates; comes to class on time

- **Partial credit (85-90%) V**
  - Not prepared, but actively participates (or was late)

- **Minimal credit (75-85%) V-**
  - Not prepared, and makes little effort to participate

- **No credit (zero)**
  - Absent (or was more than 20 minutes late)

Attendance and preparedness are mandatory: **more than four** absences will result in the lowering of your final grade in the “Attendance and Participation” category.

*Homework/ Домашняя работа (20%)*

Homework consists of two parts:

a) written exercises (handouts provided in class or printed by you from LATTE),

AND

b) studying the assigned grammatical material ahead of the lesson by watching instructional videos posted on LATTE. The goal of studying grammatical material prior to the lesson is to give you a chance **to familiarize yourselves with grammatical concepts and rules on your own time** so that we can dedicate a bigger portion of class time to actual language practice.
Please note that both parts of the homework are mandatory. Written homework will receive grade in the homework category while the grade for studying grammar part will be reflected in your daily participation score.

Homework must be submitted on the day when it is due and will be returned to you on the following day in most cases. If you know that you will not be able to make it to class, submit your homework in advance or arrange for a friend to hand it in for you. Four or more missed homework assignments will lower your final grade in the “Homework” category.

Homework is evaluated on the same credit/no credit basis as your participation. If your homework meets expectations, you receive a check-mark (V). If it exceeds expectations, you will have an opportunity to celebrate a V+. If, however, homework does not meet expectations, you will receive Re-Do (no record will be made in the LATTE grade book), which means that you will need to re-do your work and correct all mistakes. Students MUST correct circled mistakes and re-submit the work NO LATER THAN ONE WEEK AFTER THE ASSIGNMENT. Full credit will be given only when all corrections are made and the work is re-submitted. Only one re-submission is allowed.

Expectations for the homework are the following:

a) work is turned in on time and at any rate, no later than 2 class periods after the due date;
b) work is complete (all assigned exercises are done);
c) it is at least 90% correct, and
d) there are no systematic problems which would require re-learning and re-focusing, and re-submission.

*Homework which is more than a week late will be accepted, but you will NOT receive any credit for it.*

Nota Bene: Success in this 4 credit hour course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 8 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (written homework, instructional videos, research for culture hunts, preparation for quizzes and exams).

Moreover, studies show that students who do not do language homework on a regular basis, do not perform well on exams, no matter how much they study the night before.
**Weekly Quizzes and Dictations/ Самостоятельные работы и диктанты (20%)**
Each Monday (except for the first Monday of the semester) you will have a 10-minute quiz, covering the material studied in the previous week. Each Wednesday you will receive specific instructions for how to prepare for the Monday quiz. You will be tested on vocabulary, spelling (in the form of dictations) and grammar points discussed in class and practiced in the homework. Please note that spelling does count!

**Teleconferences with Russian students/Телеконференции (10%)**
Brandeis has partnered with the Far Eastern Academy of Economics and Law (Khabarovsk) to use teleconferencing technologies to enhance language learning and create opportunities for cultural information exchange.

There will be two large themes that you will work on together with Russian peers:
- challenges of being a young person in today’s world
- education: differences in US and Russian systems, challenges and possible solutions

Each topic will be developed in three stages: a) preparing for the teleconference by watching a movie or reading preparatory material; b) collaborative creation of a questionnaire and responding to the questionnaire of the Russian partners; and c) a teleconference, summarizing and debating.

You will receive detailed instructions regarding each step of the process at least one week prior to each telecollaboration event.

---

Please note that teleconferences will take place at a different time than our class meeting.
I really appreciate your efforts in making yourselves available for this exciting project! It is not easy to work with our widely varying schedules, a 14-hour time difference and inconsistencies in keeping winter/summer times between the two countries.

---

**The tentative dates for the teleconferences are March 15 and April 19, 2017.**

**Portfolio/Портфель (10%)**
The Portfolio is one of the key parts of your assessment in this course. It is also the rubric that allows you to gain lots of extra points. It consists of materials that you produce during the course of the semester - both through assigned tasks and through your own independent work on Russian. Much of the work for the portfolio will be offered online. You should maintain the portfolio - physically - in a binder or folder that will be checked periodically throughout the semester. At the end of the course, you will submit the entire portfolio for the final assessment. The assignments for the portfolio will allow you to explore the Russian-speaking world and to improve your language abilities.
**Language Project/Языковой проект (10%)**
Starting mid-way through the semester, you will be working on short writing assignments which will eventually become a letter to your favorite relative(s) or friend(s). Each week starting in the middle of the semester you will write a short paragraph about a topic related to your Brandeis life as part of your homework assignment. You will be required to type (no handwriting!) and to use only Russian words. You will revise each paragraph, working on your grammar and spelling mistakes until you have a polished product. At the end of the semester you will turn in a complete letter which you may also send to your favorite relative(s) at that time. **Until the final product is ready, the letter should remain a secret to your family.**

**Final Exam/Финальный экзамен (10%)**
There will be a three-hour final examination at the end of the semester which will be based on the entire semester’s work. This same exam will serve as your exemption test on the basis of which you will satisfy your language requirement.

*Note on the Exemption Exam*
You need to pass the final exam for this class with a grade C- or higher in order to get an exemption for the university language requirement. Your grade in the class is separate and does not help you with getting the exemption.

**What to do if you need extra help**
Please do not wait until problems start piling up. If you need another explanation of a particular concept or want to practice vocabulary, pronunciation, conversation, seek help from your instructor (Irina Dubinina) during office hours or by appointment, Recitation Hour instructor (Galina Gazizullina) during her office hours, and the BUGS tutor (Yan Shneyderman) by appointment. You are highly encouraged to practice the language with him. He can help with pronunciation practice, homework troubles, vocabulary learning, etc.

**Useful Contacts**
The undergraduate advisor for the Russian language program is professor David Powelstock (pstock@brandeis.edu). He will help you plan out your Russian Studies major or minor and guide you in questions related to study abroad credits.

The Russian program’s **Undergraduate Representatives** for the 2016-2017 academic year are Linda Liu (lliu18@brandeis.edu) and Andrew Baker (abaker31@brandeis.edu). Both of them are majoring in Russian Studies. Andrew started learning Russian in high school; Linda started Russian at Brandeis. The UDRs can answer your questions about choosing a Russian major or minor, professors in the Russian program, etc.

**Information on Russia-related Events on Campus**
There are two list-serves you may want to join.
1) Brandeis has a very active Russian Club. If you are interested in participating in events organized by the club, please sign up for their e-mail list. (Find them on the Brandeis website)

2) If you are interested in receiving messages with announcements about Russian language and culture related events as well as about courses offered in the Russian Studies program, please sign up for the Russian list serve (put your e-mail on the Bio Info Form)

Links to these listserves are also available at the program’s website: http://www.brandeis.edu/departments/grall/russian/

Study-Abroad and Other Related Opportunities
Brandeis has a number of approved programs for studying Russian in the Russian Federation. You will be able to choose between summer programs, semester-long and year-long programs. Brandeis Russian Language Program recommends that you have at least 4 semesters of Russian before a study-abroad program. You are well on your way toward this goal! If you are interested in going abroad, please talk to your instructor and visit the Study Abroad office. There are also several summer intensive Russian language programs in the U.S. The Russian program’s website lists a few of them. If you would like to know more about these programs, please talk to your instructor.

Statement on Brandeis Academic Integrity
Academic integrity is central to the mission of educational excellence at Brandeis University. Each student is expected to turn in work completed independently, except when assignments specifically authorize collaborative effort. It is not acceptable to use the words or ideas of another person, be it a world-class philosopher or your lab partner, without proper acknowledgement of that source.

Violations of University policies on academic integrity, described in Section Three of Rights and Responsibilities, may result in failure of the course or on the assignment, or in suspension or dismissal from the University. If you are in doubt about the instructions for any assignment in this course, it is your responsibility to ask your instructor for clarification.

SPECIAL NOTE: It has become a tradition of the Russian program to organize a Russian evening in celebration of the International Women’s Day on March 8th. I would like to invite our class to participate in this evening (it is really meant as a show of student talent). Please consult with your friends and let me know if there is a project you’d like to present. It can be a song, a dance, a skit, an i-movie, a poetry reading, etc. We will definitely be doing something together with other students of Russian as a group!
Rubrics for Portfolio Assignment

I. Quantity  
20 points  
This item is somewhat subjective, as the "number" will vary according to the length and complexity of the items included in the Portfolio. As a rule, however, you should have 12-14 short to medium length items in the final Portfolio on May 2 for the full credit.

II. Use of Language  
35 points  
This rubric measures not only the actual amount of Russian used in the items in the Portfolio, but also the accuracy of the language. The ratio of old material to newer (how much of the item is practicing familiar language, and how much delves into new forms that you are trying out?) is also taken into account.

III. Semantic Complexity  
35 points  
How many complex Russian words are actively used in each Portfolio item is the key question for this rubric. As the items increase in difficulty and complexity, the use of idiomatic Russian that is beyond what you normally use at home with your parents should rise in each item.

IV. Creativity  
10 points  
For this rubric your attempt to use the item to develop and expand vocabulary, reinforce grammar, and stretch the limits of your ability in the language is measured. Creative use of media incorporated into the item and reflecting more language use is rewarded.

TOTAL 100 points