WELCOME TO THE CONTINUATION OF BEGINNING RUSSIAN: RUSS 20

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 12:00 - 12:50
Schiffman 123
Friday 12:30 - 1:20 (Curt Woolhiser)

INSTRUCTOR: Irina Dubinina
OFFICE PHONE 781-736-3223
OFFICE: Shiffman 206
E-MAIL: idubinin@brandeis.edu
OFFICE HOURS: M 1:00 – 2:00, W 1:00 – 3:00
or by appointment

GRALL Admin Assistant 781-736-3200
Alyssa Ring, Admin. Assist

Days usually NOT on campus Fridays

Congratulations! You’ve made it to the second semester of
Beginning Russian!

Course Description
We will continue with the engaging textbook and accompanying video, which serve as a
lively introduction to the basic building blocks of the Russian language and Russian cultural
norms. Building on the material learned in the first semester, you will continue developing
your vocabulary to reach about one thousand words, expand your pragmatic skills to
include promises, requests and threats, and complete your understanding of the
elementary Russian grammatical system.

Course Learning Outcomes
If you adhere to your part of this contract, after completing Beginning Russian 20 you will
be able to:
• Talk about your interests, hobbies and personal preferences
• Compare and contrast things, ideas and people
• Describe your university studies: classes, exams and research papers
• Express your opinion, agreement (disagreement), surprise, frustration and some other emotions
• Invite friends and elders to do something together
• Order people around
• Make polite (and impolite) requests
• Give advice
• Make threats
• Make plans and give promises

You will also know and comprehend the following:

Grammar-
- the entire nominal, pronominal and adjectival declension system (all 6 cases!)
- expressions of necessity and obligation
- impersonal constructions expressing various states of mental and physical being
- verbal aspect (perfective and imperfective)
- unprefixed verbs of motion
- first and second-person commands
- past, present and future tenses

Culture
- some facts and names pertaining to Russian and Soviet “high” culture
- sociocultural norms of interpersonal communication
- basics of Russian worldview as coded in the language (how many fingers does a Russian human being have?)
- some basic facts about Russian and Soviet social history which shape the way Russians think about themselves and the others

Ultimately this knowledge and skills will bring you closer to the Intermediate-Low level of proficiency as defined by the ACTFL guidelines which is characterized in speaking by
- the ability to handle successfully a variety of uncomplicated basic communicative tasks and social situations (such as shopping or traveling);
- describing self and family members, immediate environment, daily activities and personal preferences;
- expressing personal meaning by combining and recombining known elements and conversational input to make meaningful utterances of short-paragraph length; and
- to be understood fairly easily by sympathetic interlocutors accustomed to dealing with non-natives despite frequent misunderstandings and inaccuracies.

(for more information go to http://www.sil.org/lingualinks/languagelearning/OtherResources/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines/ACTFLGuidelinesSpeakingInterme.htm)
**Required Materials**
The textbook is *Russian Stage One: Live From Moscow*, and comes with a workbook, CD and DVD (the disks are located inside the textbook and workbook covers). NOTE: the textbook and the workbook come in two volumes. We will finish the last chapter of VOLUME I before we begin with the first chapter of Volume II.

*Please note that VOLUME II is already at the bookstore. You can purchase it now or wait for two weeks until we finish VOLUME I.*

Volume II consists of 8 units; we will be able to finish only 5. We will resume in the fall (in Russian 30) with units 12 and 13 before switching to the next textbook in the series: “Welcome Back!” As with Volume I, each unit of Volume II consists of 9 days, each of which corresponds to one class period. The workbook clearly indicates the homework that goes with a particular day in a particular unit. We may occasionally combine two days into one class period (especially Days 1 and 2 or Days 8 and 9 of every chapter) or students will have two days worth of homework to complete, especially between a Friday and a Monday. 

**Students will receive a detailed unit work plan at the beginning of each new unit.**

**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.

**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.
Grading
Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

- 15% - Preparation and Participation
- 10% - Recitation Attendance
- 20% - Homework → 25%
  - + 5% for Skype calls and Culture Hunts
- 20% - Unit Tests
- 5% - Vocabulary/Grammar Quizzes
- 10% - Language Project
- 10% - Final Written Examination
- 5% - Final Oral interview

Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100 = A</td>
<td>74-76 = C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-93 = A-</td>
<td>70-73 = C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89 = B+</td>
<td>67-69 = D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84-86 = B</td>
<td>64-66 = D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-83 = B-</td>
<td>60-63 = D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79 = C+</td>
<td>59 and below = F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note that passing grade for this class (which allows you to continue to Russian 30) 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 an ability to communicate in a different language!

Preparation and Participation (15%)
You must hear Russian and use Russian in order to learn Russian. Therefore, it is essential that students attend classes and keep up with course work on a daily basis. Moreover, students who come to class unprepared, eventually fall behind and hold up the rest of the class. Therefore, coming to every class and preparing for each lesson is essential not only to your learning, but also to the learning of your peers. Just being in class is not enough to gain proficiency in the language. You need to be active and engaged. **When you are assigned to do an exercise with a partner, try to stay away from chatting in English.** Focus on your Russian instead! You will receive a daily participation score based on the following scale:
5 (A) 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
4 (B) Not that well prepared, but actively participates (or was late)
3 (C) Not prepared, and makes little or no effort to participate
0 (F) Absent (or was more than 20 minutes late)

Please note that more than four absences will result in the lowering of your final grade in the “Preparation and Participation” category.

Recitation Hour (10%)
This course requires that you attend one additional hour of class per week. It is called the “Recitation hour”, which in a language learning course means that you will practice phonetics, do selected homework exercises together, practice conversation, prepare for oral exams, and have an extra opportunity to work with authentic language and culture material. It is a great benefit to your language development as it gives you lots of opportunities to practice your language outside of classroom, to work on your pronunciation and to learn more about the culture of the language.

The exact time for the recitation will be scheduled at the beginning of the semester by common consent. However, the suggestion is that recitation hour shall be scheduled for Mondays 7:00 – 7:50 p.m. Recitations will start in the third week of classes: the week of January 25th. There will be a total of 13 recitations. You must attend at least 11 to receive the grade of “A” for this portion of the final grade. More than 2 missed recitations will lower your grade.

Please note that attendance of the Recitation hour is mandatory (for at least 11 out of 13 sessions) and is subject to the same attendance, participation and classroom policy as the attendance of the regular sessions of the class. You will receive a participation grade for each recitation hour.

Homework (20% + 5% for Skype calls and Culture Hunts)
Homework consists of two parts:
   a) appropriate pages from the Workbook (sold with the textbook) for written exercises,
b) studying the assigned grammatical material ahead of the class by watching instructional videos posted on LATTE. The goal of studying grammatical material ahead of 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 by one letter grade (e.g., 5 missed homeworks will earn you a “B+”, etc.).

| Homework which is more than 4 class periods late will be accepted, but you will NOT receive any credit for it. |

Homework is evaluated with the following marks: 5 = A; 4 = B; 3 = C. A mark below ’3’ is impossible and the mark of ‘3’ is unlikely. Instead you will receive a check-minus, which means that your homework has systematic problems. Students **MUST** correct circled mistakes and re-submit the work NO LATER THAN 2 CLASS PERIODS LATER. Full credit will be given only when all corrections are made and the work is re-submitted. Only **one** re-submission is allowed. If you do not re-submit, you will receive a grade of ‘3’.

| Nota Bene: Success in this 4 credit hour course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 12 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (written homework, instructional videos, research for culture hunts, preparation for quizzes and exams). |

**Skype calls:** you will be required to make at least 2 skype calls to a peer in Tyumen, Russia. You will be assigned a partner and provided with contact information for that person. You will arrange the time of your call on your own. You will be given specific instructions regarding this assignment and
will be expected to write a brief summary of your conversation (partly in Russian and partly in English).

**Culture Hunts:** starting on the second week of the semester, you will receive a set of questions on Russian culture, history or linguistics. These questions may include points about social and high culture as well as some linguistic interests (for example, why is the Russian alphabet called “Cyrillic”). You can explore the Internet resources, ask your Russian friends or go to the library. You are not allowed to simply copy the material from the Internet (e.g., Wikipedia articles); you must use your own words to describe. Please indicate the source of your information for every answer.

**Unit Tests (20%)**
A fifty-minute written test will be scheduled at the end if each unit. Sometimes the tests may be take-home. Each Unit Test will have an oral component. The oral part will be administered either during the Recitation hour or outside of class (you will have to work with a digital camera). Tests will be graded on a percentage scale (the highest possible score is 100%). You will receive specific instructions on how to handle a take-home. Spelling counts for partial credit.

**Important note about unit tests:** your tests will be checked for mistakes. All problems in the learned material will be circled, but not corrected. It is your responsibility to correct your mistakes in a different color ink and re-submit the unit test within 3 days. Your grade will not be recorded until your corrections are turned in.

**Language Project (10%)**
You will be required to work in groups of no more than 3 people to create a film (documentary or artistic). You will need to first prepare a written script (5-7 minutes) which incorporates most of the grammar/culture we have covered/reviewed this semester. Each student will have the same amount of lines and cannot read from the script while filming. Just like in real cinema you can do different takes before your final edit. Be sure the quality of the audio is good (AHEAD of time). You can quote famous Russian/Soviet directors in your films (insert scenes from old and acclaimed movies), and you can make your films as creative as you’d like, using any other means.

**Your films will be due before the end of the semester, by April 11. Please plan ahead!** We will watch all videos in class and choose one nominee for the all-language competition. In this competition, students of other languages will submit their films. The films will be evaluated by a panel of judges. The winning group of students will receive substantial money prize for a dinner at one of Waltham restaurants. **Please note that the**
International Video Competition will take place on April 14th, 5:00 – 7:00 pm.

While the topics of the video are absolutely unrestricted (other than they must incorporate both language and culture), there are specific technical and language requirements for the videos for all languages:

- the films must be at least 5 minutes long (but no longer than 7 minutes);
- they must be made only in the target language;
- the films must be a group work, absolutely no more than 4 people per group. All members of the group must talk equal amount of time; there cannot be dead silence or music fill-ins.

Final Exams: written (10%) and oral (5%)
There will be a three-hour final examination at the end of the semester during the examination period. Please do not plan on leaving Brandeis before your finals are over. The schedule for the final exams will be posted in mid-semester by the Registrar’s office.

There will also be a final oral examination scheduled during the last days of the semester and/or on the study day (before the written final).

Both exams will be based on the entire semester’s work with an emphasis on the last unit covered.

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.

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 at home. Be grateful for the fact that you have “comrades in arms” in your conquest of the Russian language!

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 2014-2015 academic year are Eve Litvak (evlitvak@brandeis.edu) and Mikhail Vilenchuk (mvilen@brandeis.edu). Mikhail (Misha) and Eve (Eva) are heritage speakers of Russian: they grew up speaking Russian at home and now study it formally at Brandeis. The UDRs can answer your questions about choosing a Russian major or minor, professors in the Russian program, etc. Eva and Misha are wonderful resources not only for your questions about major/minor, but also about the culture of Russian-speaking immigrants in the U.S., colloquial Russian or connection of Russian to other academic disciplines.

**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 (Rossina Soyan) during her office hours, and the BUGS tutor (Breanna Vizlakh) by appointment. Breanna Vizlakh (bvizlakh@brandeis.edu) is not only your BUGS tutor this semester, she is also our undergraduate TA. You are highly encouraged to practice the language with her. She can help with pronunciation practice, homework troubles, vocabulary learning, etc.

**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.

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.

**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!