



McGill

Department of
Languages, Literatures, and Cultures
Russian Studies

RUSS 215 (6 credits)
Elementary Russian Language (Intensive track)
Winter 2024

Instructor: Dr. Maria Ivanova (Мария Владимировна)

Email: maria.ivanova@mcgill.ca

Office: 680 Sherbrooke Suite 343

Office hours: Mondays 2:30 – 3:30 pm, Wednesdays 11:30 am – 12:30 pm, and by appointment

Required materials:

1. *Golosa* (Голоса), a Basic Course in Russian. Book One. By R. Robin, K. Evans-Romaine, G. Shatalina. (6th edition).
2. *Golosa* (Голоса), Student Activities Manual (SAM). Book One. By R. Robin, K. Evans-Romaine, G. Shatalina. (6th edition).
3. Supplementary study materials and practice exercises will be provided by me on myCourses. Please check regularly for updates.

General Information: This course covers two regular semesters of Elementary Russian at LLC Russian Studies. It carries 6 credits and must be taken for a letter grade. The course is aimed at students who have never taken Russian and are complete beginners, thus there are no prerequisites. Students who have any prior exposure to the Russian language (prior course work, travel in Russia, relatives with whom they have lived who are able to speak Russian, or anything else that would provide exposure to the language) must inform the instructor about this prior experience. **Failure to disclose this information to the instructors constitutes practicing deceit in an academic evaluation proceeding, and will be regarded as an Academic Integrity offense.**

Course content: RUSS 215 is focused on developing learners' beginning proficiency in speaking, reading, listening, and writing with emphasis on reading, cursive writing skills, and basic vocabulary. The content of the course relies on the materials, topics and grammar drills presented in the textbook. This course will cover all 10 Chapters of *Golosa*, Book 1.

© Instructor-generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. I remind everyone of their responsibility in ensuring that the instructor's materials are not reproduced or placed in the public domain. This means that each of you can use it for your educational (and research) purposes, but you cannot allow others to use it, by putting it up on the Internet or by giving it or selling it to others who may also copy it and make it available.

Please refer to McGill's [Guidelines for Instructors and Students on Remote Teaching and Learning](#) for further information. Thank you very much for your help with this.

Learning outcomes: The course has two main goals. The first goal is to give learners, in the course of one term, a solid and thorough introduction to the structure of the Russian language. This knowledge will be the foundation for intermediate and advanced study and forms the first year at the McGill Russian language program. The second goal, no less important than the first, is to help students gain as high a level of basic proficiency in spoken and written Russian as is possible in the course of one term.

At the end of the term students should be able to engage in simple conversations on everyday topics, talk about self in some detail, perform many of the everyday tasks that a student might need to perform in Russia. Learners will gain a basic familiarity with the cultural context that structures a Russian person's daily life and his/her language use. By the end of the term students should speak, read, listen, and write at a level equivalent to Novice High-Intermediate Low (ACTFL Proficiency Scale) or A1/A2 (CEFR), demonstrate control over the basic aspects of Russian grammar, such as case usage, verbal conjugation, tense and aspect.

Specific communicative targets of this course are formulated in terms of the following **communicative** tasks:

1. Talk about self, one's family, interests, hobbies, daily routine;
2. Ask and answer questions on a number of personal and familiar topics;
3. Read and understand simple texts and communications containing basic Russian vocabulary;
4. Write simple essays, lists, and short communications using a number of basic structures and vocabulary.

Writing Skills:

- Writing short communications, notes, classifieds, and emails in Russian.
- Signing post-cards in Russian.
- Writing essays about yourself, your family and your life in Montreal.

Speaking Skills:

- Моя квартира – Talk about your house or apartment; describe rooms and furnishings; Ask simple questions about an apartment you want to rent.
- Моя семья \ Мои друзья – Talk about your family and friends: their age, occupation, where they were born, and where they grew up.
- В магазине \ Мои покупки – Shopping in Russia; asking for advice and help in a store; making purchases; buying and giving gifts and presents.
- В ресторане \ Готовим еду – Asking questions and ordering meals in a Russian restaurant; discussing restaurant menus and restaurant reviews; discussing food preferences and cooking plans with a friend or roommate.
- Моя биография – Talking about yourself, your childhood, your family history and home town; ask questions about someone's biography and studies; interview a classmate in Russian.

Instructional method. The course will be taught primarily in Russian and use the flipped classroom pedagogy. Classroom time is optimized for communicative practice and interactive activities, as well as for explanation/clarification of difficult grammar material. Because classroom time is used for the development of interactive proficiency, it is essential that you spend at least 2 hours per day for each class (as you would need to do for any language course). A thorough study session includes reviewing the material presented in class, studying new material, writing out homework assignments, reviewing vocabulary and thinking about the material (making attempts to connect new material to old). Class will begin by reviewing items from the previous class meeting. In class, students participate in communicative activities and complete various assignments/exercises to practice and apply the studied grammar material. There will be NO final examination scheduled during the final week in this class. Instead, this course is organized around continuous assessment of student performance. Hence, the grade will be calculated from your participation, submitted homework, quizzes, tests, and group project.

Assignments and methods of evaluation

| | |
|----------------------------|------|
| Syllabus Quiz | 1% |
| Homework | 25% |
| Participation and practice | 10% |
| Quizzes (10) | 15% |
| Chapter Tests (5) | 35% |
| Group project | 14% |
| <hr/> | |
| | 100% |

| Grade | Percentages |
|-------|-------------|
| A | 100%-85% |
| A- | 84%-80% |
| B+ | 79%-75% |
| B | 74%-70% |
| B- | 69%-65% |
| C+ | 64%/-60% |
| C | 59%-55% |
| D | 54%-50% |
| F | 49%-0% |

Schedule. All the above assignments are due by dates and times outlined in the beginning of the semester on myCourses (see Schedule and Calendar).

Student participation. It is my goal as your instructor to ensure that each student be given ample opportunity to learn, apply, and practice the material. In order for this to happen, it is important that we all work together to make the learning environment a truly productive one. The classroom atmosphere should be one where all students feel comfortable trying out the language and experimenting with language production without fear of making mistakes. To this end, I will **not** record our sessions, and I **do not consent** to them being recorded by any participant. Please respect one another, fully participate in all group/pair activities, and come prepared.

As most language learning takes place in the classroom in communicative situations, where students need to speak with one another in Russian, absence can be particularly damaging not only to a student's progress, but also to the progress of others who must then work with someone who is inadequately prepared. For this reason, this course follows a fairly strict participation policy:

- There are no excused absences in this course.
- Each day of class is essential to your mastery of the language. The participation grade is critical because it cannot be made up.

- Because tardiness is disruptive, students are expected to arrive on time and not to leave before the end of the class session. While occasional tardiness may sometimes be unavoidable, frequent or chronic tardiness will be counted as absence. Three late arrivals will count as one absence.
- In case of absence students are responsible for catching up with the class, completing homework and coming to the next class prepared. To catch up with the missed material students are encouraged to use the materials on myCourses, tutoring services, study groups, and other resources.
- There are no make-up tests, or quizzes, or assignments. Any medical emergencies and/or hospitalizations must be verified by a doctor's note and/or medical certificate submitted no later than 10 workdays since the day of the absence. The instructor reserves the right to verify this information, and all final decisions are at the instructor's discretion. If a student's health repeatedly prevents the student from completing graded activities (e.g., tests, quizzes etc.) and actively participating in class (which will inevitably significantly affect the grade), the student is encouraged to consider taking time off to take care of their health and take the class at a later date. Vacations, family gatherings, tickets booked in advance, dates immediately preceding/following holidays etc. are not legitimate excuses for a make-up test consideration. Absences for McGill Athletics events and holy days follow McGill University guidelines.

All absences are reflected in the attendance register. The following will also apply:

4 absences – 50% of participation grade;

5 absences – 0 grade for participation

6 absences – 0 grade for participation, no individual extra credit accepted (group extra credit still accepted)

7 absences – F for the course grade (failed the course)

Home assignments. In many courses homework is a sort of take-home test that you complete after studying new material, but that isn't the case here. This course and its textbook are designed so that homework is studying (flipped classroom language pedagogy); it's a step-by-step guide to learning the material, rather than something you do after you've completed the learning. This course starts fairly intensively because it is difficult to do much of interest with a language until you've developed a bit of a foundation. **You should anticipate at least 2 hours of studying/homework per day. Homework submitted by email will not be accepted. Late assignments will not be accepted.** Homework will be graded for completion. HW completed in full, with answers corrected using a key provided on myCourses – 2 points. Fully completed HW without corrections via the key – 1 point. Late/incomplete/sloppy/absent HW – 0 points. Detailed instructions on homework submission are provided on myCourses.

Quizzes and tests. Quizzes and tests are announced ahead of time (see "Schedule" on myCourses), giving you the necessary time to review the material and memorize the target grammar and vocabulary. Under normal circumstances, quizzes or tests may not be made up or re-taken at a later date. Five (5) chapter tests will cover the material of individual chapters + some old material. All necessary details for quizzes/tests are posted on MyCourses.

Group project. Throughout this semester, you will complete small parts of the group project (interview). You will be divided into groups and asked to prepare an interview. Detailed instructions and grading rubric are provided on myCourses.

Extra credit. RUSS program at McGill offers plenty of opportunities for extracurricular activities (Conversation Club, Movie Nights, Help Desk, Russian Evening), which also allow to earn extra credit. All relevant information, including the schedule, will be posted on MyCourses, pending funding approval. Please check for updates on myCourses.

McGill policy statements

Language of submission: In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.

Academic integrity: McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures" (see [McGill's guide to academic honesty](#) for more information). Note that to support academic integrity, your assignments may be submitted to text-matching or other appropriate software.

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

Copyright of lectures: All slides, video recordings, lecture notes, etc. remain the instructor's intellectual property. As such, you may use these only for your own learning ends. You are not permitted to disseminate or share these materials; doing so may violate the instructor's intellectual property rights and could be cause for disciplinary action.

As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and [Student Accessibility and Achievement](#).

End-of-course evaluations are one of the ways that McGill works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student's learning experience. You will be notified by e-mail when the evaluations are available.

Land acknowledgment: McGill University is on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. We acknowledge and thank the diverse Indigenous people whose footsteps have marked this territory on which peoples of the world now gather.