



RUSS 328 (3 credits)
Readings in Russian
Fall 2024

Instructor: Dr. Maria Ivanova

Email: maria.ivanova@mcgill.ca

Office: 680 Sherbrooke, Suite 343

Office Hours: Mondays 2:30–3:30 pm, Wednesdays 1–2 pm, and by appointment

Course content and objectives.

This course offers an introduction to writings by the prominent Russian authors, including Pushkin, Gogol, Turgenev, Dostoevskii, Chekhov, and others. In this course, students will analyze, critically approach, and reflect on Russian literature, in Russian. Reading texts in the original Russian will help you expand your vocabulary, review and learn new grammar concepts and structures, and continue to develop your listening, speaking, and writing skills. You will acquaint yourself with the basics of literary analysis and concepts useful in discussing literary works in Russian. We will analyze the main literary types of heroes (*маленький человек*, *лишний человек*, *новый человек*, as well as the representations of women) and discuss how they reflected the writers' vision of Russian intellectuals. The course intends to prompt students' creativity through creative writing assignments and participation in a theater project.

Required materials.

All required readings, assignments, media files and theory will be available via myCourses. Please make sure **to have a ready copy** of the studied text, as well as any other handouts, before coming to class.

© 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. Thank you very much for your help with this.

Instructional method.

Class time will be a mixture of lecture, discussion, film/media, speaking, writing, and other activities designed to deepen your understanding of a text as well as to enhance your speaking and writing skills. This class is given almost entirely in Russian, with occasional grammar explanations in English. If you need outside help in English, please see me in my office hours. If you are a (near)native or heritage speaker of Russian, you will be required to do additional reading and assignments, and different length requirements will apply to your essays.

Learning outcomes.

By the end of the term students will speak, read, listen, and write at a level equivalent to Intermediate Mid (ACTFL Proficiency Scale), or higher. Students will also demonstrate a growing awareness of Russian formal academic register in the context of literary analysis.

Assignments and methods of evaluation:

Participation	10%
Homework	25%
Compositions	18%
Tests	27%
Group project	20%
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	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%

Class attendance and participation.

For each class, prepare questions regarding the most difficult or unclear passages in your reading. Your preparation will be judged according to your willingness to ask and answer questions and to participate in the discussion about the text; quality of your questions and answers will be taken into account as well. It is my goal as your instructor that each student be given ample opportunity to learn and apply 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 attendance policy:

- Attendance for this course is mandatory, as each day of class is essential to your mastery of the language. I will take attendance each class; absences will be reflected in the attendance register on myCourses.
- Because tardiness is disruptive, students are expected to arrive on time and not to leave before the end of the class session. Two late arrivals or early departures (10-20 min) 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 all the uploaded files on myCourses, tutoring services, study groups and other resources.
- Students requesting accommodation must do so before the assessment task is submitted.
- Under normal circumstances, there are no make-up tests, or quizzes, or assignments. Any medical emergencies and/or hospitalizations must be verified by valid documentation submitted no later than 10 days since the day of the absence.
- Vacations, family gatherings, tickets booked in advance, dates immediately preceding/following holidays etc. are not legitimate excuses for a make-up consideration. Absences for McGill Athletics events and holy days follow McGill University guidelines.
- After 3 absences, each subsequent absence will result in a loss of 2 points per absence deducted from the Final Calculated grade (e.g., 5 absences will result in the loss of 4 points). In addition, starting with 6 absences, the right to extra credit is revoked. Please note that missing over 40% of classes constitutes an automatic failure of the course, regardless of the performance in any other course components.
- Please note that graded assessment in language courses begins already during the Add/Drop period. Students who joined the course later during the Add/Drop period have one week from the registration date to complete the missed graded assignments. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor to arrange for the timely make-up of assessments missed during the Add/Drop period. Once one week from the registration date elapsed, no make-ups will be allowed.

The Participation component emphasizes oral practice and continuous sustained interactive engagement with the course material and is essential for building Speaking fluency. To meet the pedagogical goals for the Speaking modality and the learning outcomes for the course, students must continuously interact with their professor and peers (in pairs and groups) in the target language, to build communicative competency. Due to its spontaneous, in-class interactive, and context-dependent nature, this component cannot be made up. Detailed assessment criteria for Participation are available on myCourses.

Homework.

Since completing homework assignments is essential to the learning outcomes of the course, obtaining a passing grade on the homework component is required to pass the course. Reading of the assigned texts is a crucial component of this course. Please always bring them to class. For each class students complete the readings, making sure they work with unknown vocabulary and translate it, as well as prepare grammar exercises. The course material is introduced and organized in a sequential manner, with each subsequent unit building upon the preceding one. Homework assignments are holistic assessments aimed to help students practice, reinforce, and test reading, writing, speaking, and listening, as well as help with the mastery of grammar and vocabulary retention. Assignments should be submitted by due times: discussions of texts and grammar cumulatively include discussions of the previously assigned material, so it is important that everything is read and mastered by the dates indicated in the Schedule. Late assignments will NOT be accepted. Assignments submitted by email will NOT be accepted. Homework will be graded for completion. HW completed in full, with detailed answers to questions – 2 points. HW completed in full, but answers are short or sloppy – 1 point. Late/incomplete/ absent/submitted by email HW – 0 points.

Writing assignments (сочинения).

There will be three creative writing assignments (сочинения) due by the dates indicated in the Schedule on myCourses. There will be two drafts of each composition. Topics, guidelines, and evaluation criteria are posted on myCourses.

Tests (контрольные работы).

There will be three extensive in-class tests (контрольные работы). They will include questions and assignments based on the studied texts, vocabulary, grammar, and literary theory. You may be asked to write a short essay as a part of контрольная работа. The dates are indicated in the Schedule in the beginning of the semester to give students sufficient time to review and prepare. Detailed assessment criteria are available on myCourses.

Group project.

For the group theater project, you will participate in the performance of a play of one of the famous Russian playwrights. Plays and roles will be distributed in advance. Presentations of the projects will take place in class in the last week. Please note that since it is a group project each participant is expected to contribute to the success of the entire production. Therefore, your final project grade will depend on both your own and your group performance. Due to the interactive nature of this assessment component, it cannot be made up. Detailed instructions and evaluation criteria are posted on myCourses.

Extra credit.

There will be opportunities to earn extra credit in this course. All relevant information, including the schedule, will be posted on myCourses, as it becomes available, pending funding approval.

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools. Any use of AI (including but not limited to Chat GPT, Google Translate, and DeepL) is prohibited.

Electronic devices. The use of electronic devices in class for sending emails, texting, social networks, gaming, etc. is prohibited. No audio or video recording of any kind is allowed in class without the explicit permission of the instructor. MC2 devices are not to be used for voice communication without the explicit permission of the instructor.

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 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.” (Approved by Senate on 21 January 2009)

«Conformément à la *Charte des droits de l’étudiant* de l’Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté, sauf dans le cas des cours dont l’un des objets est la maîtrise d’une langue.» (Énoncé approuvé par le Sénat le 21 janvier 2009)

Additional policies governing academic issues that affect students can be found in the [McGill Charter of Students’ Rights](#).

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](#)” (Approved by Senate on 29 January 2003) (See [McGill’s guide to academic honesty](#) for more information).

«L’université McGill attache une haute importance à l’honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l’on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon [le Code de conduite de l’étudiant et procédures disciplinaires](#).» (Énoncé approuvé par le Sénat le 29 janvier 2003) (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le [guide pour l’honnêteté académique de McGill](#).)

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 (and research, with proper referencing/citation) 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/or Student Accessibility and Achievement (<https://www.mcgill.ca/access-achieve/>).

Respect. The University is committed to maintaining teaching and learning spaces that are respectful and inclusive for all. To this end, offensive, violent, or harmful language arising in course contexts may be cause for disciplinary action.

Many students may face mental health challenges that can impact not only their academic success but also their ability to thrive in our campus community. Please reach out for support when you need it from the Wellness Hub; wellness resources are available on campus, off campus, and online.

If you are feeling overwhelmed by your academic work and/or would like to further develop your time and workload management skills, don't hesitate to seek support from Student Services.

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. Please note that a minimum number of responses must be received for results to be available to students.

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. L'Université McGill est sur un emplacement qui a longtemps servi de lieu de rencontre et d'échange entre les peuples autochtones, y compris les nations Haudenosaunee et Anishinabeg. Nous reconnaissons et remercions les divers peuples autochtones dont les pas ont marqué ce territoire sur lequel les peuples du monde entier se réunissent maintenant.