



RUSS 415 (6 credits)
Advanced Russian Language (Intensive track)
Winter 2024

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

Course materials:

1. Kagan, Olga E., Anna S. Kudyma and Frank J. Miller. *Russian: From Intermediate to Advanced*. London & New York: Routledge, 2015: a free version is available via McGill library
2. Companion website
3. As always, there will be plethora of information and materials provided on myCourses by me. Please check regularly for updates.

General information. This course covers the Advanced Russian Course Sequence at McGill University and introduces learners to the advanced elements of the Russian language. RUSS 415 carries six (6) undergraduate credits and must be taken for a letter grade. Heritage speakers and students who have lived under circumstances that would provide advantageous exposure to the language (e.g., family members, prolonged stay in Russia etc.) must inform the instructor about this. **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 415 focuses on developing learners' advanced proficiency in speaking, reading, listening, and writing with emphasis on reading short authentic texts, using more complex grammar structure and more extensive vocabulary. The content of the course relies on the materials, topics and grammar drills presented in *Russian: From Intermediate to Advanced*.

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Prerequisites. Intermediate Russian (RUSS 311 or RUSS 316), or equivalent, as determined by the placement test.

Learning outcomes. At the end of the term the students will be able to do the following (according to ACTFL Guidelines, 2012):

1. Speaking: “Engage in conversation in a clearly participatory manner in order to communicate information on autobiographical topics, as well as topics of community, national or international interest”;
2. Reading: “understand the main ideas and supporting details of authentic narrative and descriptive texts”;
3. Listening: “understand the main ideas and most supporting details in connected discourse on a variety of general interest topics, such as news stories, explanations, instructions, anecdotes, or travelogue descriptions”;
4. Writing: employ “a variety of cohesive devices up to several paragraphs in length” and demonstrate “control of the most frequently used syntactic structures and a range of general vocabulary.”

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, compositions, discussions, and debates.

Assignments and methods of evaluation:

Homework	14%
Participation and practice	10%
Discussions	12%
Compositions	12%
Quizzes	18%
Tests	24%
Group debates	10%
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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%

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

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 retake the course 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. You should anticipate at least 2 hours of studying/homework per day. **Homework submitted by email will not be accepted.** **No late assignments will be accepted.** Detailed instructions are available on myCourses.

Discussions. The students will be divided into groups. Each group will be responsible for leading a class-wide discussion. Both, the discussion-leading group and the remainder of the class will be graded. Group members will be graded individually for their own preparation, delivery and participation (i.e., there will be no just one "blanket"-group grade). Non-presenting students will be graded based on their **active** participation and preparation (having read all required texts and watched required videos). You must attend and participate in **all** discussions, even if you are not presenting, in order to get points. Topics for discussions will be chosen from the topics covered in Chapters 1-10 in the textbook. Detailed instructions/grading rubric are posted on MyCourses.

Compositions. Compositions will be written at home. There will be two drafts of each composition. Detailed instructions are posted on myCourses.

Quizzes and tests. Quizzes based on the vocabulary and grammar will be given at different points of the term, after a portion of the course material has been covered. Tests will cover the material of individual chapters + some old material, for retention purposes. All necessary details for quizzes/tests are posted on myCourses.

Group debates. At the end of the term the class will be divided into groups. The statements for each debate team will be chosen from the topics covered in Chapter 1-10 in the textbook. Debates will take place during the last class. Detailed instructions/grading rubric are posted on myCourses.

Extra credit. RUSS program at McGill offers plenty of excellent 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.

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.