

**Type of Request:**

Renew

**Subject code**

RUSS

**Course Number**

101-102

**Catalog Year**

-

**Course Title**

Elementary Russian

**College/School**

College of Humanities and Sciences

**Department**

World Languages and Cultures

**Level**

Undergraduate (U)

**Campus**

Mountain Campus

**Semesters offered**

Fall, Spring

**Description & Purpose**

This course introduces students to the Russian language through a team-taught approach and the use of a new and comparatively inexpensive textbook with on-line supplements. Russian 101 and 102 are each four-credit courses and together fulfill the Foreign Language Competency. In these courses the students learn the fundamentals of the Russian language through the four skills of speaking, listening, writing, and reading. While there is considerable focus on grammar, the primary aim of the course is active communication within various contexts of the target language and culture. In taking this course, students will become more informed members of the global community.

**Justification/explanation**

The courses meet these conditions.

## Additional Information (For OCHE Database):

**In which MUS Core Category, does this course fit?**

Humanities/Fine Arts

**Does the course include content regarding cultural heritage of American Indians?**

No

## Attachments

### Syllabus

[rfc 101 syllabus 2021 \(2\).docx](#), [rfc 102 syllabus 2019.docx](#)

### Other

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## Criteria

**Briefly explain how this course meets the criteria for the group:**

Russian 101 and 102 are comprehensive in that they focus on the four skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening), in addition to cultural skills. No previous knowledge of Russian language or culture is required. The course is rigorous, as students' progress is continually assessed not only by nightly homework and daily in-class oral work but also by frequent quizzes, tests and a final exam. The course textbook and structure follows the communicative method, which emphasizes frequent interaction and building skills that enable students to communicate successfully even with limited exposure. We incorporate authentic communicative tasks into class daily.

## Student Learning Goals

**Briefly explain how this course will meet the applicable general education learning goals.**

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**Read and write if the language is classical, such as Latin;**

N/A

**Speak and aurally comprehend, if the language does not have a written tradition, such as Salish;**

N/A

**Perform all four skills (speaking, aural comprehension, reading, and writing) if the language is modern and has a written tradition, such as Japanese or French.**

In this course, the students will learn the fundamentals of the Russian language through the four skills of speaking, listening, writing, and reading. By the end of the year students will have learned all the cases, as well as verbal aspect and all of the tenses (present, future, and past). While there will be considerable focus on grammar, the ultimate aim of the course will be active communication within various contexts of the target language and culture. Students will be able to speak and write about themselves (e.g., their interests, university life, family, friends) and somewhat about the broader world (e.g., basic concepts of geography, the arts, history). They will also be able to read and listen to some authentic cultural materials, such as simple poems and songs and cartoons. They will also have a foundational knowledge of cultural norms, world views, and etiquette that will aid them in communicating more successfully with native speakers.

**Demonstrate both receptive (visual comprehension) and expressive (manual production) proficiency if the language is American Sign Language.**

N/A

## Learning Outcomes Assessments

**How are the learning goals for the General Education Group measured?**

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**Read and write if the language is classical, such as Latin;**

N/A

**Speak and aurally comprehend, if the language does not have a written tradition, such as Salish;**

N/A

**Perform all four skills (speaking, aural comprehension, reading, and writing) if the language is modern and has a written tradition, such as Japanese or French.**

Students have short unit quizzes about five times per semester and more in-depth unit tests about four times per semester.

The quizzes consist mostly of vocabulary—both from Russian to English and English to Russian.

The tests have a listening comprehension section, a reading comprehension section, a culture section, a controlled writing section (mostly grammar), and a free-writing section (essays or dialogs). Accompanying each written test is a short oral in-person test, held outside of class time and equalling 20% of the overall test grade.

These oral tests consist of reading dialogs aloud with a partner (pronunciation, fluency, and intonation are all assessed) and situational role play with a partner (vocabulary, grammar, and fluency are all assessed). Students are graded according to a rubric. An example of the pronunciation rubric follows:

9-10: Student displays mastery of pronunciation rules, such as vowel reduction and consonant palatalization and has little to no accent.

7.5-8.5: Student displays understanding of above pronunciation rules, though shows room for improvement, and has an accent.

6.5-7: Student does not display an adequate understanding of above pronunciation rules, or is unable to produce them. Some words might not be understood by a native speaker.

0-6: Student does not display an understanding of either of the above pronunciation rules and would not be clearly understood by a native speaker.

Cultural knowledge is also assessed on tests and the final exam. For example, students read proverbs in Russian and have to explain in what kind of circumstance a Russian might use them. For example, "Eggs don't teach the chicken." This can be said when a younger person is speaking disrespectfully to someone who is older. This type of assessment requires students have the linguistic and cultural competence to understand and perhaps even use proverbs, which are commonly used by Russians and often explain core cultural values.

The "free writing" (essay section) on the final exam of 101 is worth 25% of the exam. Here is the prompt: Your Russian professor has set you all up with Russian pen pals. Write a letter of introduction. Begin with a greeting and include the name of the person to whom you are writing. In the letter, write about such things as the following:

- who you are and what you do;
- where you live (your pen pal might not be very familiar with US geography, so help him/her out);
- some information about your family;
- what year you are in school;
- which languages you speak;
- which subjects you study;
- what you like to do in your free time (sports, instruments, etc.)

Finish the letter by asking him/her 2-3 questions about him/herself and/or Russia. Close with a parting and sign your letter. The grading rubric for this essay is as follows:

45-50: Student completed the task, used varied/advanced vocabulary, has limited

grammatical errors, is culturally appropriate

40-44.5: Student has not completed the task thoroughly, could use more varied/advanced vocabulary, has noticeable grammatical errors, is not entirely culturally appropriate

35-39.5: Student has not completed a significant aspect the task, is using simple vocabulary, has grammatical errors that make the essay difficult to understand, is not culturally appropriate

0-34.5: Student has completed less than 2/3 of the task, is using very simple vocabulary, has grammatical errors in over 50% of words, demonstrates no awareness of basic cultural etiquette

**Demonstrate both receptive (visual comprehension) and expressive (manual production) proficiency if the language is American Sign Language.**

N/A

**Critique the quality of their own work and that of others**

N/A

## General Education Assessment Report

**If this information is not yet available, this section must be completed after the next offering (re-submit the entire form with these sections completed by the curriculum deadline). Your course will be granted provisional status until the report is received. Report not required for one-time-only general education offerings.**

### **Achievement Targets**

We strive for the class average on quizzes and tests to not fall below 80%. If it does, we try to slow down the pace of the class or work more with those struggling one on one in office hours. We write on our syllabus and announce in class that if a student receives under an 80% on a quiz or test, we ask that they come in to review the material with us one on one during an office hour.

### **Assessment Findings**

Almost without exception, our students perform better on the sections of tests and final exam that focus on the passive skills of listening and reading. About 2/3 of the class scores an average of 90% on these sections. Last year, out of 11 final exams, on the listening comprehension section 2 students scored a 96%, 6 an 88%, 1 an 85%, and 2 --77%. This average was an 87%, with 7 of the 11 students averaging 90%. Ideally, in order to communicate with a native speaker of Russian, our students must train their ear to recognize vocabulary spoken at a normal pace. In first year Russian, however, that is a big challenge, so we do read aloud the listening comprehension section 3 times. Since there is the option of asking a native speaker to repeat themselves, this seems like a reasonable approach to aid students toward proficiency. We make sure they know how to ask people to repeat themselves and to express clearly that they don't understand.

The sections on the tests and final exam that focus on the active skills of writing and speaking result in a much wider range of proficiency. The grammar section of the same exam yielded a class average of 75%, with the highest grade on that particular section being a 95% and the lowest a 49%. Since people can make some grammatical errors when writing and speaking and still communicate effectively, it is reasonable that students can make grammatical errors while still achieving our communication targets.

### **Assessment Feedback**

I have taught this course at UM for 18 years and have made many changes along the way. In general, UM students are now unable to memorize vocabulary as well as they used to, so a couple years ago we changed our quizzes to be focused only on vocabulary, saving grammatical concepts for the bigger unit test that follows each quiz. This has encouraged students to begin focusing on new vocabulary sooner and also allows for them to focus more on the grammar later (on the tests), removing the barrier of struggling to remember words at the same time. We have also had to periodically assign students the banal homework of writing out the vocabulary words a number of times and recording themselves reading them as well. We are helping them memorize now, whereas we used to ask them to do that more on their own. Unfortunately, this means we are moving in the opposite direction of "flipping the classroom." Currently, we have no other plans for changing the course, as we are still monitoring these recent changes we have made.

## **Learning Outcomes**

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# Credits

## Credit Hours

**Min**

-

**Max**

-

**Value**

-

**Operator**

-

## Contact Hours

**Min**

-

**Max**

-

**Value**

-

**Operator**

-

## Billing Hours

**Min**

-

**Max**

-

**Value**

-

**Operator**

-

## Lecture Hours

**Min**

-

**Max**

-

**Value**

-

**Operator**

-

<b>Lab Hours</b>	
<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
-	-
<b>Value</b>	<b>Operator</b>
-	-

<b>Other Hours</b>	
<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
-	-
<b>Value</b>	<b>Operator</b>
-	-

<b>Academic Progress Hours</b>	
<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
-	-
<b>Value</b>	<b>Operator</b>
-	-

<b>Financial Aid Hours</b>	
<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
-	-
<b>Value</b>	<b>Operator</b>
-	-

**Course Count**

-

**Repeatable**

No

**Number Of Repeats**

-

**Number Of Credits**

-



## Topics

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## Requisites

No Requisites

## Components

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