

RUSSIAN (BRYN MAWR)

Department Website:

<https://www.brynmawr.edu/russian>

The Russian major is a multidisciplinary program designed to provide students with a broad understanding of Russian culture and the Russophone world. The major places a strong emphasis on the development of functional proficiency in the Russian language. Language study is combined with a specific area of concentration to be selected from the fields of Russian literature, history, economics, language/linguistics, or area studies.

Major Requirements

A total of 10 courses is required to complete the major:

- two in Russian language at the 200 level or above
- four in the area of concentration, two at the 200 level and two at the 300 level or above (for the concentration in area studies, the four courses must be in four different fields)
- three in Russian fields outside the area of concentration
- either RUSS B398, Senior Essay, or RUSS B399, Senior Conference.

Russian majors have the option of fulfilling the College's writing requirement through Writing Attentive (WA) courses either through upper-level Russian language courses, where the focus is on writing in Russian, or through 200-level courses on Russian literature (in translation), culture or film, where the focus is on writing in English. Majors also have the option of completing one WA course in Russian and one WA course in English.

Majors are encouraged to pursue advanced language study in Russia in summer, semester, or year-long academic programs. Majors may also take advantage of intensive immersion language courses offered during the summer by the Bryn Mawr Russian Language Institute. As part of the requirement for RUSS B398/RUSS B399, all Russian majors take senior comprehensive examinations that cover the area of concentration and Russian language competence.

Requirements for Honors

All Russian majors are considered for departmental honors at the end of their senior year. The awarding of honors is based on a student's overall academic record and all work done in the major.

Minor Requirements

Students wishing to minor in Russian must complete six units at the 100 level or above, two of which must be in the Russian language.

Faculty at Bryn Mawr

Timothy Harte

Provost and Professor of Russian

Marina Rojavin

Visiting Assistant Professor

Jane Shaw

Visiting Assistant Professor

Jose Vergara

Assistant Professor of Russian on the Myra T. Cooley Lectureship in Russian Studies

Irina Walsh

Senior Lecturer in Russian

Affiliated Faculty

Linda Gerstein

Professor of History; Chair of Independent College Programs

Courses at Bryn Mawr

RUSS B001 ELEMENTARY RUSSIAN INTENSIVE (1.5 Credits)

Jane Shaw, Marina Rojavin

Division: Humanities

Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)

Study of basic grammar and syntax. Fundamental skills in speaking, reading, writing, and oral comprehension are developed. Eight hours a week including conversation sections and language laboratory work.

(Offered: Fall 2023)

RUSS B002 ELEMENTARY RUSSIAN INTENSIVE (1.5 Credits)

Jane Shaw, Marina Rojavin

Division: Humanities

Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)

Study of basic grammar and syntax. Fundamental skills in speaking, reading, writing, and oral comprehension are developed. Eight hours a week including conversation sections and language laboratory work.

(Offered: Spring 2024)

RUSS B101 INTERMEDIATE RUSSIAN (1.0 Credit)

Jose Vergara

Division: Humanities

Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)

Continuing development of fundamental skills with emphasis on vocabulary expansion in speaking and writing. Readings in Russian classics and contemporary works. Five hours a week

(Offered: Fall 2023)

RUSS B102 INTERMEDIATE RUSSIAN (1.0 Credit)

Jose Vergara

Division: Humanities

Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)

Continuing development of fundamental skills with emphasis on vocabulary expansion in speaking and writing. Readings in Russian classics and contemporary works. Five hours a week.

(Offered: Spring 2024)

RUSS B201 ADVANCED RUSSIAN (1.0 Credit)

Irina Walsh

Division: Humanities

Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)

Intensive practice in speaking and writing skills using a variety of modern texts and contemporary films and television. Emphasis on self-expression and a deeper understanding of grammar and syntax. Five hours a week.

(Offered: Fall 2023)

RUSS B202 ADVANCED RUSSIAN (1.0 Credit)

Irina Walsh

Division: Humanities

Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)

Intensive practice in speaking and writing skills using a variety of modern texts and contemporary films and television. Emphasis on self-expression and a deeper understanding of grammar and syntax. Five hours a week.

(Offered: Spring 2024)

RUSS B216 THE SOVIET THAW AND ITS CULTURE (1.0 Credit)

Irina Walsh

Named by famed Soviet writer Ilya Ehrenburg, the Thaw (Ottepel) was a brief period in Soviet history spanning the late 1950s and early 1960s, when social, political and cultural changes led to more openness and freedom in Soviet society. This course focuses on this brief, yet consequential time in Soviet history. The main text for the course will be the 2013 TV series *The Thaw* (dir. Valery Todorovsky). As we watch this show, we will discuss its major conflicts

and the characters' lives, and we will look into all the allusions to various Soviet texts and realia. As such, we will explore Stalin's repressions, de-Stalinization, the rehabilitation of Stalin's political prisoners, Gagarin's orbiting of the Earth, the Cold War, Khrushchev's policies during the Thaw, artistic movements, government censorship, and fashion. Through articles, literary and non-literary texts, documentaries and feature films, in addition to the TV series, participants in this course will expand their understanding of this time period in Soviet history and Russian culture in general. Participants will also compare and contrast culturally-accepted norms, behaviors, and taboos in Soviet Russia to those characteristic of contemporary Russian society. All texts and class interaction will be in Russian.

RUSS B220 CHORNOBYL (1.0 Credit)

Jose Vergara

This course introduces students to the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, its consequences, and its representations across a range of cultures and media through a comparative lens and as a global phenomenon. Culture meets ecology, science, history, and politics. Students will contribute to a digital exhibition and physical installation. Taught in translation. No knowledge of Russian required. (Offered: Fall 2023)

RUSS B222 LANGUAGE POLICY ISSUES AND THE RUSSOPHONE WORLD (1.0 Credit)

Irina Walsh

This course provides an introduction to the study of language policy and language planning in the countries where Russian is or has once been used. The course will offer a survey of current theoretical approaches to language maintenance, bilingualism and language shift, as well as language spread and language death. Having a rich history of language interaction, the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, and post-Soviet Russia will be the major foci in this course. We will explore how Russian was often used as a tool for colonization. We will follow the development of various writing systems by Soviet linguists, mostly in the 1920s and 1930s. We will also look at the interactions between Russian and languages currently used in Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Baltic states, and in parts of the Russian Federation. All texts and class interactions will be in Russian.

RUSS B224 THE MEANING OF LIFE AND THE RUSSIAN NOVEL (1.0 Credit)

Jose Vergara

This course examines profound questions about the nature and purpose of human existence raised by preeminent 19th-century Russian authors such as Alexander Pushkin, Nikolai Gogol, Mikhail

Lermontov, Karolina Pavlova, Ivan Turgenev, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Lev Tolstoy, and Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin. (Content varies somewhat each time the course is offered.) Topics include the definition of good and evil, the meaning of freedom, the role of rationality and the irrational in human behavior, power dynamics between individuals and in relation to the state, and the relationship of art to life. In reading and closely analyzing texts that became the foundation for the Russian novelistic tradition, we explore how these works and their contexts speak to contemporary issues, our lives, and eternal, accursed questions. No knowledge of Russian required. Open to all.

RUSS B228 RUSSIAN NARRATIVES OF DISPLACEMENT AND ACCULTURATION (1.0 Credit)

Irina Walsh

Russian narratives of the displaced include memoirs and essays written by those authors who had to immigrate and those who were exiled within their country. What information did these authors include in their narratives? And what did they omit? How did they show their lives within the bigger picture of their country's present? Were they focused on adapting to the new settings or on contemplating the past in their writing? Through discussions of written texts, documentaries and feature films, as well as through interviewing Russophone immigrants about their experiences, we will deepen our understanding of narratives of displacement. We will also look at the mechanisms, stressors, and strategies that authors manifest as signs of acculturation, and eventually adaptation to the new culture or setting.

RUSS B232 COAL, OIL, NUCLEAR: NARRATIVE AFTERLIVES (1.0 Credit)

Jose Vergara

Coal. Oil. Nuclear energy. These items give shape to our everyday lives in countless ways. They impact our health, our politics, and our very survival on earth.. Nevertheless, because these resources permeate nearly every aspect of our existence, the human mind can struggle to comprehend them in their totality. In this course, we'll explore texts that engage with our environment to help us bring humans' relationship to these materials into focus. Scientific, historical, and economic studies tend to focus on their scale and widespread impact. Reading stories, watching
(Offered: Fall 2023)

RUSS B234 ECOLOGICAL DISPLACEMENT IN RUSSOPHONE LITERATURE (1.0 Credit)

Jose Vergara

Our era of immense environmental upheaval is striking in its urgency and scale, but it is, of course,

far from unprecedented. In this class, we'll consider the effects of ecological displacement, both real and imagined as portrayed in Russophone literature; its ties to solastalgia, nostalgia, and the condition of exile; art as a form of conservation; and historical and environmental issues in the region.

RUSS B235 THE SOCIAL DYNAMICS OF RUSSIAN (1.0 Credit)

Irina Walsh

Division: Social Science

Domain(s): B: Analysis of the Social World

An examination of the social factors that influence the language of Russian conversational speech, including contemporary Russian media (films, television, and the Internet). Basic social strategies that structure a conversation are studied, as well as the implications of gender and education on the form and style of discourse. Prerequisite: RUSS B201, RUSS 102 also required if taken concurrently with RUSS 201.

(Offered: Spring 2024)

RUSS B237 CRIME OR PUNISHMENT: RUSSIAN NARRATIVES OF INCARCERATION (1.0 Credit)

Jose Vergara

This course explores Russian narratives of incarceration, punishment, and captivity from the 17th century to the present day and considers topics such as social justice, violence and its artistic representations, totalitarianism, witness-bearing, and the possibility of transcendence in suffering. Taught in translation.

RUSS B240 RUSSIAN THROUGH ART (1.0 Credit)

Irina Walsh

Course examines visual art in the Russian Empire of the 19th and early 20th century, in the Soviet Union, and in the Post-Soviet space. You will learn about major Russian-speaking painters and their work, as well as about important museums, collectors, and exhibits, both in and outside of Russia. You will learn about peredvizhniki, Mir iskusstva, avantgarde artists, socialist realism in art, Sots-Art, the Lianozovskaya group, and other important movements in the history of art in the last two hundred years. All texts and class interaction will be in Russian.

(Offered: Fall 2023)

RUSS B252 LOVE, DEATH, JUSTICE, & RUSSIAN LITERATURE (1.0 Credit)

Jose Vergara

Division: Humanities

This Inside-Out course will be conducted inside a correctional institution and will bring inside (SCI Chester) and outside students (BMC) into

dialogue. Can Russian novels and short stories help us understand our lives? We'll closely read and analyze works by several Russian authors and discuss how they each treat themes including life, death, family, love, the individual and society, generational conflicts, crime and punishment, and power dynamics. Finally, our broad goal will be to explore how these texts speak to contemporary issues, our lives, and eternal problems that all of humanity faces—what Russians call the “accursed questions.”

RUSS B258 SOVIET AND EASTERN EUROPEAN CINEMA OF THE 1960S (1.0 Credit)

Timothy Harte

This course examines 1960s Soviet and Eastern European “New Wave” cinema, which won worldwide acclaim through its treatment of war, gender, and aesthetics. Films from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Russia, and Yugoslavia will be viewed and analyzed, accompanied by readings on film history and theory. All films shown with subtitles; no knowledge of Russian or previous study of film required.

RUSS B271 CHEKHOV: HIS SHORT STORIES AND PLAYS IN TRANSLATION (1.0 Credit)

Timothy Harte

Division: Humanities

A study of the themes, structure and style of Chekhov's major short stories and plays. The course will also explore the significance of Chekhov's prose and drama in the English-speaking world, where this masterful Russian writer is the most staged playwright after Shakespeare. All readings and lectures in English.

(Offered: Spring 2024)

RUSS B277 NABOKOV IN TRANSLATION (1.0 Credit)

Timothy Harte

Division: Humanities

A study of Vladimir Nabokov's writings in various genres, focusing on his fiction and autobiographical works. The continuity between Nabokov's Russian and English works is considered in the context of the Russian and Western literary traditions. All readings and lectures in English.

RUSS B316 RUSSIAN AND SOVIET SHORT STORY (1.0 Credit)

Marina Rojavin

This new Russian language course will explore the nature and evolution of the Russian short story from the beginning of the 19th century through the beginning of the 21st century. We will begin with the stories of Pushkin and Gogol and continue with Garshin who proved instrumental in

developing the genre to its modern form. Students will then read stories by Chekhov, Bunin, Nabokov, Babel, Shukshin, Tolstaya, Pelevin — writers with distinguished voices who introduced a variety of groundbreaking themes, characters, and plots and whose art reveals the possibilities of the genre. All the readings and discussion will be in Russian.

(Offered: Fall 2023)

RUSS B317 POWER AND THE POET: RESISTANCE AND OTHERNESS IN RUSSIAN, SOV (1.0 Credit)

Marina Rojavin

In Imperial, Soviet, and post-Soviet Russia, literature and, later, cinema have served to augment voices calling for freedom and non-conformism in opposition to censorship and oppression. Vis-à-vis these calls for freedom, the concept of the Other has always occupied a prominent space in the Russian collective mindset, as well as in literature and art. Evoking the broad image of the writer, artist, philosopher, and thinker in Russian culture and embodying Otherness, the poet has often challenged Russian society to confront difficult issues. This course will examine how the so-called poet's Otherness has been imagined and depicted in Russian prose and poetry, cinema and media, and in the culture as a whole. By questioning underlying assumptions in Russian culture, students will explore the processes of constructing and representing the Other in terms of ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, and dissidence. Conducted in Russian

RUSS B319 ADVANCED RUSSIAN THROUGH CURRENT EVENTS (0.5 Credit)

Irina Walsh

This course offers an exploration of contemporary social, political, ecological, and cultural issues in Russia and on the territories of former Soviet Republics. By working with authentic materials, including articles and video clips, students will solidify Advanced-level reading, listening, writing and speaking skills (ACTFL 2012). All texts and class interactions will be in Russian.

(Offered: Fall 2023)

RUSS B365 RUSSIAN AND SOVIET FILM CULTURE (1.0 Credit)

Marina Rojavin

Division: Humanities

This seminar explores the cultural and theoretical trends that have shaped Russian and Soviet cinema from the silent era to the present day. The focus will be on Russia's films and film theory, with discussion of the aesthetic, ideological, and historical issues underscoring Russia's cinematic culture. Taught

in Russian. No previous study of cinema required, although RUSS 201 or the equivalent is required.

RUSS B380 SEMINAR IN RUSSIAN STUDIES (1.0 Credit)

Irina Walsh

Division: Humanities

An examination of a focused topic in Russian literature such as a particular author, genre, theme, or decade. Introduces students to close reading and detailed critical analysis of Russian literature in the original language. Readings in Russian. Some discussions and lectures in Russian. Prerequisites: RUSS 102 and one 200-level Russian literature course.

(Offered: Spring 2024)

RUSS B390 RUSSIAN FOR PRE-PROFESSIONALS I (1.0 Credit)

Marina Rojavin

Division: Humanities

This capstone to the overall language course sequence is designed to develop linguistic and cultural proficiency in Russian to the advanced level or higher, preparing students to carry out academic study or research in Russian in a professional field. Suggested Preparation: study abroad in Russia for at least one summer, preferably one semester; and/or certified proficiency levels of 'advanced-low' or 'advanced-mid' in two skills, one of which must be oral proficiency.

(Offered: Fall 2023)

RUSS B391 RUSSIAN FOR PRE-PROFESSIONALS II (1.0 Credit)

Marina Rojavin

Division: Humanities

Second part of year long capstone language sequence designed to develop linguistic and cultural proficiency to the "advanced level," preparing students to carry out advanced academic study or research in Russian in a professional field. Prerequisite: RUSS 390 or equivalent.

(Offered: Spring 2024)

RUSS B398 SENIOR ESSAY (1.0 Credit)

Jane Shaw

Independent research project designed and conducted under the supervision of a departmental faculty member. May be undertaken in either fall or spring semester of senior year.

RUSS B399 SENIOR CONFERENCE (1.0 Credit)

Division: Humanities

Exploration of an interdisciplinary topic in Russian culture. Topic varies from year to year. Requirements may include short papers, oral presentations, and examinations.

(Offered: Spring 2024)

RUSS B403 SUPERVISED WORK (1.0 Credit)

Jose Vergara, Marina Rojavin

Division: Humanities

(Offered: Fall 2023, Spring 2024)

Courses at Haverford

RUSS H001 ELEMENTARY RUSSIAN INTENSIVE (1.5 Credits)

Jane Shaw

Division: Humanities

Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)

Study of basic grammar and syntax. Fundamental skills in speaking, reading, writing, and oral comprehension are developed. Eight hours a week including conversation sections and language laboratory work.

(Offered: Fall 2023)

RUSS H002 ELEMENTARY RUSSIAN INTENSIVE (1.5 Credits)

Jane Shaw

Division: Humanities

Study of basic grammar and syntax. Fundamental skills in speaking, reading, writing, and oral comprehension are developed. Eight hours a week including conversation sections and language laboratory work.

(Offered: Spring 2024)

RUSS H249 THE SOVIET SYSTEM AND ITS DEMISE (1.0 Credit)

Division: Social Science

Domain(s): B: Analysis of the Social World

The Soviet system was inspired by some of the loftiest ideals of humanity. The entire society was redesigned so as to pursue common goals, rather than conflicting private objectives. The economy was run for people, not profits. The Soviet system is no more, but the ideas on which it was founded will probably always be with us. What does the largest social and economic experiment in history teach us? The course is 1/3 political science and 2/3 economics. Crosslisted: Economics, Russian Prerequisite(s): ECON 104, 105, or 106, or two one-semester courses in political science or history, or instructor consent

RUSS H356 TOPICS EUROPEAN HISTORY:THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT (1.0 Credit)

Linda Gerstein

Division: Social Science

Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts); B: Analysis of the Social World

the Russian Intelligentsia (from the Decembrists in 1825 to Dissidents in the 1970s.) Readings in primary sources (Herzen's memoir, Dostoevsky's novels, prison memoirs of Populist Terrorists, the Marxist underground and the SR terrorists 1900-1917, civil war resisters, resisters to Stalinism, the dissidents in the 1960s and 70s.
(Offered: Fall 2023)