

University of Pittsburgh
Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures

Russian 0420: Russian Newspapers and Magazines
Fall Semester 2003 (04-1)
Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00 — 12:15
CL 1432

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Office Hours: Mondays 11:00—12:00, Tuesdays 10:00—11:00, Thursdays 1:00—2:00;
and by appointment

I. REQUIRED TEXTS:

All texts for Russian 0420 will be selected from recent issues of Russian newspapers and magazines. The instructor will select appropriate articles, photocopy them, and distribute them in class. Texts will **not** be re-distributed during the following meeting of the class. It is each student's responsibility to obtain, read, and study the texts before the following meeting.

Texts chosen for distribution in class will be examined in terms of vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and idioms before there are any classroom discussions of the ideas expressed in the articles. Special attention will be paid to verbal prefixes, aspects, and verbs of motion. Each text that will be distributed in class will be covered in two to four sessions depending on the length and difficulty of the material selected.

Texts will be chosen from the social and human sciences (politics, history, sociology, economics, daily life, etc.) Texts will be selected on the basis of two criteria: relevance to the **immediate** state of socio-cultural life in Russia and relevance to constructing an accurate editorial model of the source newspaper or magazine in present-day Russia.

II. PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS:

All readings, discussions, mini-lectures, oral presentations, quizzes, and examinations—as well as the presentation of Russian grammar—will be conducted in **Russian**. Students are encouraged to meet periodically with the instructor during office hours (or by appointment) to discuss any difficulties with the assigned materials; they are especially encouraged to disagree with the instructor during the classroom discussions.

Each meeting of the class will consist of **some of** the following: (i) a review of problematic vocabulary in the assigned reading; (ii) a quiz on the vocabulary; (iii) a review of the major points of the assigned reading; (iv) a quiz on the major points of the assigned readings; (v) a question period for students to request clarification; (vi) a mini-lecture (10-15 minutes) on the source publication; (vii) a comprehension quiz on the mini-lecture; (viii) a discussion of the assigned reading—examining both what the text emphasizes and what it fails to consider; (ix) questions posed by the instructor about the assigned reading or mini-lecture.

All students are required to participate in conversations, discussions, question-and-answer sessions, quizzes, and examinations.

III. ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES:

Attendance is mandatory for all scheduled meetings of the course and all absences will be noted in the roster. **Students will receive daily grades for each meeting of the course.** Grades will be assigned on the basis of each student's participation in and contributions to the discussion, as well as on the basis of grammar and syntax. Students are allowed four unexcused absences during the semester. All unexcused absences will receive an automatic grade of "UE" for that session. Five such "UE" grades will result in an "F" for the course. All **excused** absences—personal health and deaths in the family—**must be** documented.

Students are encouraged to review their session grades periodically with the instructor.

IV. QUIZZES:

There will be a number of announced and unannounced quizzes in this course, some oral and some written. Quizzes will (for the most part) be based on materials either covered in class during the preceding meeting or contained in the homework for that meeting. Oral quizzes will last a maximum of 10 minutes; written quizzes will last no longer than 15 minutes.

Students who take an unexcused absence on the day of any quiz that has been announced in advance will receive an automatic "F" for that quiz; students with an excused absence for the day of an announced quiz will not be penalized. No quizzes will be re-scheduled and there will be no make-up quizzes.

V. EXAMINATIONS:

There will be three in-class examinations during the semester: Thursday, 25 September; Thursday, 30 October; and Thursday, 4 December 2003.

All examinations will be in Russian. Except for medically excused absences, there will be no make-up examinations scheduled.

Each examination will last 75 minutes and will cover material that was introduced and practiced during the preceding five week period. Grading criteria for the examinations include effective communication, use of appropriate vocabulary, and grammatical accuracy. The written portion of the examination will consist of three parts: (i) vocabulary, (ii) grammar, and (iii) essay.

VI. ORAL PRESENTATIONS:

Each student will be required to make two short (maximum 5 minutes) oral presentations during the semester. The first presentations will begin the week after the first examination is returned; the second presentations will be scheduled during the penultimate week of classes.

The subjects/topics for the first presentations will be distributed in class on the day the instructor returns the first examination; subjects/topics for the second presentation will be distributed after the second examination. Students are encouraged to discuss their presentation topics with the instructor.

Immediately after each oral presentation, the other students in the class will have 5 minutes to pose questions about the presentation to the presenter before the instructor begins to pose questions to all members of the class. All questions must be based on materials covered in the presentation itself and all students will receive a grade for this exercise.

VII. HOMEWORK:

Students are expected to prepare at home in order to participate in classroom activities. Homework will include reading, translation, answering questions, vocabulary study and memorization, grammar exercises, short compositions, and preparation for presentations. Any

homework missed due to absence (excused or unexcused) must be made up by the student before attending the next class.

VIII. EVALUATION AND GRADES:

In addition to the grades for each session, students will receive grades for their presentations, quizzes, and examinations. The final grade for the course will be determined by calculating **all** grades received for work done in the course: daily session grades (15%), presentations (20%), quizzes (20%), and three examinations (15% each).