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Русский язык 203
Intermediate Russian (Third Semester)
Tulane University
Fall, 2009

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Dear Students,

Welcome to Russian 203, the third semester of Russian language. Prerequisite: Russ 102 or equivalent, or placement in 203.

This class is the gateway to advanced study, in Russian, of Russian literature. Congratulations for going into the second year of this fascinating but difficult language! If you will stay on board for Spring 2010, you'll get a close look at Dostoevsky's masterpiece Преступление и наказание.

As you have seen in your past studies of Russian, this language is complex—it has full declensions of nominal phrases, for example—and it is relatively more foreign than Romance or Germanic languages in its less recognizable vocabulary and in some of its syntax. Nonetheless you have seen that much progress can be made very rapidly, especially if you have an on-site study tour in Russia as your goal! You can do it, and you can derive immeasurable delight in the process. I studied Russian for Dostoevsky's sake, and discovered a rich a subtle literature no less remarkable for its poetry than for its monumental novels and moving short stories. Russian is just as valuable for the student of law, business, science, and engineering. Stay with it!

Course Description

Russian 203 presents a continuation of the study of noun declensions, verbal aspect in the past and in imperatives, verbs of motion, simplex and prefixed, destination, source and location in movement constructions, conditionals and irrealia, comparative phrases, numerals, participles and verbal adverbs, and other grammatical topics essential for reading and speaking. Aural-oral skills will be

fostered in class presentations and group study of some of the podcasts “A Taste of Russian,” while writing and accuracy of expression will be cultivated by regular assignments of essay-like complexity; reading, by internet news, poetry, excerpts of short stories. **The class will be conducted in Russian**, except for some grammatical explanations early on.

Course Outcomes:

The student completing Russ. 203

- (1) will read with accuracy and understanding expository texts of light to moderate difficulty on any subject
- (2) will speak on a variety of academic and everyday-life topics (бытовая жизнь), will ask and respond to questions with pertinent vocabulary and coherence, using complex utterances, conditionals, impersonal constructions, indefinite subjects and much much more
- (3) will write clear and accurate paragraphs on a variety of subjects
- (4) will understand spontaneous Russian speech at slow to moderate tempi, with relatively high comprehension
- (5) will have attained the level of skill performance in reading, writing, speaking and understanding equivalent to the mid-second year of university Russian
- (6) will be well prepared for a study tour in Russia which demands preparation of two-to-three years of university study

Texts

Smorodinskaya, Lubensky, Ervin, Jarvis. *Начало. When in Russia...* 2001. Book Two. Second Edition. With accompanying Workbook and Laboratory Manual. Audio materials and accompanying video are available in the Language Learning Center, 402 Newcomb Hall.

Dingley, Cummins. *Notes and Helps to Russian Grammar*. Guide in pdf (on my website).

A Taste of Russian. Podcast and pdf texts. Internet.

I also recommend, but do not require, Genevra Gerhart’s brilliant *The Russians’ World*, in its new post-Soviet revised trim. This book has been a standard since the 70s and there is a wealth of material in it. You can order it from amazon, I expect.

Mission Statement

By active participation in the course students will develop knowledge, skills and values as defined in the mission of the Department of Slavic Studies and Tulane University, and

skills equivalent to the language proficiency requirement of the School of Liberal Arts, Tulane University. Да здравствуют профсоюзы, матери–героини, герои социалистического труда, артисты ордена Ленина, призрак оплаканного великого Леонида Ильича, и т.п.

Course Requirements:

Attendance is essential for success in acquiring language skills and is mandatory in this class. Unexcused absences will be reflected in the participation grade (see below); after four such absences, the final grade will be reduced by one point (A > A-, A- > B+, etc.) for each absence. Students are strongly encouraged to attend as regularly as possible, and in return have the instructor's word that they will not be badgered, grilled, or punished for incomplete homework assignments. All students who attend this class are sure to learn some Russian and will be treated with respect.

Note: *“Instructors are not authorized to excuse absences that extend calendar holidays. Only the student's dean may excuse such absences. A student who has excessive unexcused absences or ceases to attend a course without an official withdrawal will, at the instructor's request and with the approval of the associate dean, be withdrawn from the course and receive a grade of WF.”* (University policy)

May I quote to you from our departmental policy on introductory and intermediate language classes: “Actively participating in class, that is, interacting with others in the target language, is the single most important aspect of language learning.” Participation includes not only attending class and participating in discussion and debate, but also completing homework on time, reading and preparing the assigned text materials, and asking questions when you do not understand.”

I ask you to do written homework assignments on time as much as possible, to participate in class recitation and discussion, to ask questions when I am unclear, to take quizzes and tests with good humor and equanimity. The key to learning a language is good, steady work, work that is sustained and pleasurable that is goal-directed toward real results. Be prepared to enjoy what you are doing and to do it regularly.

In the course of the semester we will have scheduled in-class conferences to discuss your progress and your grades in Russian.

Outcomes:

- (1) regular attendance will stimulate regular learning of speaking and writing skills, learning of grammar and vocabulary
- (2) attendance will allow students to have immediate response from the instructor on written and oral work and to prepare strategies for study
- (3) regular submission of homework assignments, even if in incomplete form, will make

the tasks clear and understandable

Tests

I will offer weekly or bi-weekly quizzes summarizing class material; no midterm; a comprehensive oral and written final.

Outcomes:

- (1) quizzes will aid the student in synthesizing all the principles and materials of a weekly or biweekly lesson
- (2) quizzes will serve as a weekly check on vocabulary building and grammar
- (3) quizzes, as they are graded, will give the student a rough notion of how she's doing (and, as we know, students are very conscious of their grades)
- (4) quizzes will incentivize achievement and reward good work
- (5) quizzes will help the instructor evaluate and regulate his teaching plan, identify and correct weak or poorly presented material

Grades:

The course grade will be computed on the basis of:

recitation, classwork	40%
homework, papers	40%
final exam	20%

Scale:

93-100	A	72-76	C
89-92	A-	69-71	C-
86-88	B+	67-68	D+
82-85	B	62-66	D
79-81	B-	58-61	D-
77-79	C+	x-57	F

Final Examination Outcomes:

- (1) counting 20% of the course grade as it does, the exam permits the student to make a systematic review of selected material the instructor wishes to highlight and be rewarded for his effort
- (2) the exam, in the instructor's view, may serve as a springboard for the student to boost her final course grade by demonstrating a cumulative knowledge and understanding of writing and understanding that surpasses his average

Disabilities

If you have special needs related to a disability that may affect your performance in the course, please speak to the instructor after class or arrange an appointment to discuss your needs privately. This should be done as early as possible in the semester.

Schedule of Work

I will interview y'all in class and determine where we should start in *Начало*. Grammar material will be excerpted from the lesson for special attention; we will lean heavily on the Video as well. As we move through the semester we will work more from my *Notes and Helps* and from readings.

All assignments will be posted in advance on my site.