

**RUSS 110**  
**Russian for STEM and Professions**  
**Spring 2024**

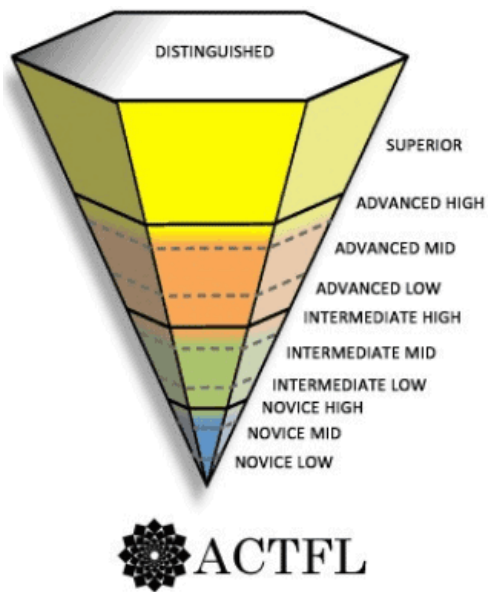
**Veronika Egorova** (egorova@fas.harvard.edu)  
**MWF 12:00-1:00 p.m. Barker 373**

**Canvas site:** <https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/132436>

### **Class description**

In this fourth-year advanced-level Russian language course, you will explore some of the most innovative areas of scientific study, while expanding your vocabulary in STEM domains and the language skills needed to share scientific information within your community. Focuses on developing advanced-level reading, speaking, and writing skills through discussing STEM-related topics in technology and society, such as education, math and physics, development of internet technologies, and environmental issues. Students participate in class debates and discussions and create a final presentation on a topic of professional interest. Course materials combine articles, book excerpts, films, interviews, and project-based tasks.

### **Course goals and learning outcomes**



This course aims to build your competence in Interpretive, Interpersonal, and Presentational communication modes at the Advanced Low level of language proficiency as defined by the [American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language](#) and to understand the culture of the Russian-speaking world.

**For Interpretive** (non-participative, overheard; books, essays, reports, etc.) mode the broad course outcome is the following:

- Understand the main ideas and many details on STEM topics that are presented through documentary films, video interviews, and presentations
- Read and understand the main ideas and many details in nonliterary texts, such as articles, reviews, summaries, and opinion pieces on STEM-related topics
  - Interpret visual information (graphs, infographics)

**For Interpersonal** (interactive, two-way communication) mode the broad course outcome is the following:

- Express ideas and opinions when engaged in conversation related to their professional fields
- Ask questions, participate in discussions and debates on topics covered in class readings; use discussion strategies and support a point of view
- Conduct an interview with a native Russian-speaking specialist on professional themes
- Communicate with a native Russian-speaking specialist in written forms via detailed emails in a formal style to invite them to an interview and to thank them for participating

**For Presentational** (one-way, non-interactive) mode the broad course outcome is the following:

- Describe professional interests and career paths with clarity and introduce yourself in written and oral forms.
- Write short summaries of source articles using conventions of academic style.
- Describe a process or a principle; explaining how something works.
- Deliver an oral presentation on a STEM topic.

**For Intercultural**

- Increase knowledge of target culture and use knowledge of cultural differences to interpret texts and communicate effectively on contemporary problems in science, technology and society.

**Career Readiness**

Russian for STEM course aims to equip you with relevant, transferable, and highly desirable competencies that pave the way to your future success on in the workplace and lifelong career management. Throughout the course, we will be working on the tasks that develop the following career-readiness competencies:

- Analytical & Critical Thinking
- Oral & Written Communication
- Applied Problem Solving
- Ethical Reasoning & Decision Making
- Innovation & Creativity
- Digital Literacy
- Engaging Diversity
- Adaptability
- Self-motivation
- Teamwork & Leadership

## Course materials

- Reader (Russian for STEM) on Canvas
- Readings, videos, quizzes, interactive vocabulary study materials (*posted on Canvas*).

## Grading Criteria

Class participation (based on completed h/w and vocabulary study)	15 %
Homework assignments (readings, exe)	20 %
vocabulary quizzes	15%
Midterm (interview with a Russian-speaking professional)	20
Presentation on a topic of professional interest + Q&A	30 %

*No final exam*

## Outline of class requirements:

1. **Class participation (15%):** productive class participation will depend on your preparation and practice. In case if you are unable to join the Zoom session, please, contact me to arrange for make-up work or review. **Participation grade for the course also includes attending any 2 events in the Slavic department:**

February 28 – Ice Skating 3:30-4:30 PM (Veteran’s Memorial Rink, Somerville)

March 19 – Slavic game night and karaoke 5:00-7:00 PM (Thompson room)

April 26 – Slavic show 12:00-3:00 PM (Thompson room)

Every Wednesday 5:00-6:45pm at Lowell house dining hall – Slavic Conversation table (students are encouraged to attend this weekly for additional conversation practice)

1. **Homework (20%):** your progress and achievement really depends on how much time and effort you are willing to invest in your studying. Typical h/w tasks:
  - Review and practice of key vocabulary for the week;
  - Read texts, articles, watch videos + completing short comprehension tasks.
  - Complete short online search tasks to prepare for class conversation activities.
2. **Vocabulary quizzes (15%):** 4 quizzes on key vocabulary clusters.
3. **Midterm (20%):** you will interview a Russian-speaking professional in your field and submit a written reflection about your conversation.
4. **Presentation (30%):** this is the main class project, designed to enable you to read original sources and to develop a narrative on a Russia-themed topic in connection to your science and research interests. Possible topics include: describe a recent invention made by Russian scientists; describe a Russian scientists whose name you think is unjustly overlooked or unknown in the West; describe a problem or topic in your field which has seen important contributions from Russian scientists; describe a “hot topic” issue in Russian context (climate change, man-made disasters, internet security, global pandemic, etc.). Your main goal is to formulate a topic, find and read 3 sources in Russian (articles, interviews, online resources), develop an argument, prepare a presentation and key vocabulary list; deliver presentation and answer questions based

on your presentation. You should pick your topic by week 2 of the class, and schedule a meeting with your instructor to discuss your topic and sources. Detailed project description, including timeline, requirements, and grading rubrics are posted on Canvas.

### **Classroom policies**

1. Attendance will be tallied at the end of the semester (total maximum 24 points = sessions attended). Two unexcused absences are allowed per semester. Excused absences include academic and work commitments (e.g., interviews, conferences, etc.); religious holidays; family or health emergencies; personal health issues. Given the aftermath of pandemic, please, do take good care of yourselves and those close to you, and reach out in case if you are not feeling well and cannot join the class.
2. Try to speak Russian all the time in class and use Russian in your email communication with the instructor. Do not hesitate to ask for help and stop by during office hours, I'd be happy to assist you with guidelines for your readings, and offer tips for learning and additional speaking practice.
3. Classroom work will include many communicative and collaborative tasks. Please, be respectful and supportive of each other's learning styles and language learning level.
4. Students who require academic adjustments or accommodations because of a documented disability must contact both the instructor and Student Disabilities Services (SDS). All discussions will remain confidential.

**Statement on Academic Honesty:** all work in the course should be your own; please, give proper citations and attributions of all your sources. You can use online tools and search engines for reading and research purposes; in writing, you must use your own knowledge and practice the models that we cover in class. You can look up words and expressions (citing their sources, e.g., Google Translate, Reverso, Linguee, etc., but not use online translators at the sentence level.

Certain assignments in this course will permit or even encourage the use of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) tools such as ChatGPT. The default is that such use is disallowed unless otherwise stated. Any such use must be appropriately acknowledged and cited. It is each student's responsibility to assess the validity and applicability of any GAI output that is submitted; you bear the final responsibility. Violations of this policy will be considered academic misconduct. We draw your attention to the fact that different classes at Harvard could implement different AI policies, and it is the student's responsibility to conform to expectations for each course.