

Proposal for a Minor in Russian Studies

I. Title. Minor in Russian Studies, College of Liberal Arts, Department of Modern Languages.

II. Objectives. The Minor in Russian Studies will satisfy the growing demand for courses with a Russian focus. The objectives of the program are twofold: (1) to provide students with a solid foundation in spoken and written Russian and (2) to present broad and varied perspectives on Russian culture, literature, history, politics, and US-Russian/Soviet relations. These objectives are mutually enhancing and will allow students to develop a thorough understanding of Russia, Soviet Union, and post-Soviet states in a global context.

III. Description. The Minor in Russian Studies is an interdisciplinary, interdepartmental program in the College of Liberal Arts taught by members of Departments of Modern Languages, History, and Political Science. Students combine a solid foundation in the Russian language with broad and varied perspectives on Russia's history, culture, literature, and politics. The program includes in its scope not only Russia proper but also the geographical areas of which Russian is the "lingua franca," i.e. language of diplomacy, intelligence sharing, political and business contacts, and cultural exchanges: Central Asia, the Transcaucasus, the Baltic states, and the Slavic states. The Minor in Russian Studies includes all periods of Russian, Soviet, and post-Soviet history as well as American-Russian relations in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

IV. Rationale. Following a brief decline of interest in Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, Russia has again become increasingly important for the US global strategy. With the renewed US strategic interest in Central Asia and the expansion of NATO to Eastern Europe, the demand for experts on Russia has been on the rise. Because foreign language is a critical component in the preparation of area experts, Russian language has been named among the strategic languages by the US government. With Russia's concurrent integration in the world economy, corporate demand for professionals with expertise in Russian language and culture has only been partially met. Finally, since the former Soviet Union opened up to educational and cultural exchanges, many Americans have become interested in learning about Russia or rediscovering their Russian heritage.

An interdisciplinary minor in Russian Studies will provide an invaluable preparation for students planning a career in international politics, business and economics, public and military service, teaching, and any of the humanities and science disciplines. It will especially benefit students who major in another modern language, political science, history, social studies, and international business. In addition, it will serve a broad cross-section of students who have traditionally been interested in Russian offerings, including heritage speakers, Army ROTC cadets, and WPAFB employees.

Currently only a handful of public universities in Ohio offer minor or certificate programs in Russian studies. Those programs often combine an assortment of courses on Russia and Eastern Europe. Our program will be uniquely focused on Russia and geographical areas where Russian is spoken.

Because the language component forms a crucial part of the minor, the program will be anchored in the Department of Modern Languages, which will also contribute most courses to the minor. If the program is expanded to include more courses, some of these may be taught either by faculty in other CoLA departments or by those in colleges other than CoLA.

V. Admission. Students wishing to be admitted to the Minor in Russian Studies must:

- a. have been admitted to a major subject within CoLA or another WSU college, such as College of Business;
- b. have completed their first three quarters at Wright State University (i.e., have received at least 36 credits), with a GPA of 2.5 or better;
- c. have completed ENG 101 (Academic Writing and Reading) and ENG 102 (Writing in Academic Discourse);
- d. have completed RUS 101 and RUS 102 with the grade of C or better.
- e. have completed specific requirements or prerequisites attached to each minor course in particular.

VI. Requirements. The Minor in Russian Studies consists of 32 hours of course work divided between 200-level language courses (12 credits) and 300 and 400-level courses in Russian culture, literature, history, and politics (20 credits).

1. *Language Courses – 12 credits*

RUS 201 Intermediate Russian I (4 c.h.)
 RUS 202 Intermediate Russian II, (4 c.h.)
 RUS 203 Intermediate Russian III (4 c.h.)

2. *Area Studies Courses (select 5) – 20 credits*

ML 305 Russian Culture (4 c.h.)
 ML 313 Russian Literature in Translation (4 c.h.)

HST 415 Imperial Russia (Writing Intensive, 4 c.h.)
 HST 425 History of the Soviet Union (Writing Intensive, 4 c.h.)
 HST 485 United States Foreign Relations from 1914 (Writing Intensive, 4 c.h.)

PLS 453 Soviet Successor States (Writing Intensive, 4 c.h.)

VII. Course Descriptions

Department of Modern Languages

RUS 201 Intermediate Russian I

Grammar review, reading, and discussion of selected texts with practice in speaking and writing.

Prerequisites: RUS 103 or equivalent

RUS 202 Intermediate Russian II

Continuation of 201. Grammar review, reading, and discussion of selected texts with practice in speaking and writing.

Prerequisites: RUS 201 or equivalent

RUS 203 Intermediate Russian III

Continuation of 202. Grammar review, reading, and discussion of selected texts with practice in speaking and writing.

Prerequisites: RUS 202 or equivalent

ML 305 Russian Culture

Examines Russia's contributions to the world culture as well as important events and characters that have shaped the Russian mind over the span of a thousand years. The course consists of three parts: (I) the historic roots and cultural manifestations of Russia's unique Eastern-Western character; (II) the changes to the Russian life and mentality after 1917 as seen in essay, short fiction, film, and visual art; and (III) Russian contributions to the US culture.

Prerequisites: none

ML 313 Russian Literature in Translation

A survey of literary masterpieces from Kievan Rus, the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia in their historical and cultural contexts.

Prerequisites: none

*Department of History***HST 415 Imperial Russia (WI)**

Surveys major themes and figures in the history of the Russian Empire from the late seventeenth century to the collapse of the tsarist government in 1917.

Prerequisites: none

HST 425 History of the Soviet Union (WI)

Surveys the history of the Soviet Union from 1917 to 1991. Includes revolutionary class politics, the role of terror, nationalism and ethnic relations, everyday social practices, the experience of total war, the Cold War, the rise of political dissent, and gender. Discussion is based on reading primary sources designed to give students a sense of what it was like to live in the Soviet Union. Students will develop an understanding of how the Soviet System worked and failed as a society, culture, and state.

Prerequisites: none

HST 485 United States Foreign Relations from 1914 (WI)

Surveys the history of United States foreign relations from 1914 to the present. At least fifty per cent of the course is devoted to Soviet and post-Soviet matters, including the US-Soviet alliance in World War II, the origins of the Cold War, the Cuban missile crisis, Détente, Reagan and Gorbachev, and the economics and security of the post-Cold War world to the present.

Prerequisites: none

*Department of Political Science***PLS 453 Soviet Successor States (WI)**

Examines political, economic, and social characteristics of the post-Soviet space and its strategic importance to the US foreign policy. Includes the origins, functioning principles, and reasons for the collapse of the Soviet Union, the political nature of post-Soviet Russia and the 14 Republics of the former Soviet Union, problems they face and challenges they present to the US and global security.

Prerequisites: none

VIII. Program Quality. Because the Minor in Russian Studies includes a significant language component, entry to the program assumes basic preparation in the Russian language and an ability to complete the required language courses as evidenced by the grades of C or better in RUS 101 and 102, the minor prerequisites. The language component of the minor assumes a progression of courses from RUS 201 to RUS 202 to RUS 203.

The required completion of two years of Russian language in the Russian Studies Minor is consistent with the language requirement for the Russian Minor at Ohio State University. This will help articulate transfer between the two institutions.

Because HST 415, HST 425, HST 485 and PLS 453 are writing intensive, students will be required to have completed ENG 101 (“Academic Reading and Writing”) and ENG 102 (“Writing in Academic Discourse”) prior to declaring the minor.

The area studies component consists of 300- and 400-level courses that can be taken in any order, however the logic of the program suggests that (1) there is progression from 300-level to 400-level courses in number as well as in the level of difficulty, sophistication, and the amount of reading and writing required and that (2) 400-level courses should ideally be taken in the chronological order of events being discussed. Students will be advised to proceed from HST 415 “Imperial Russia” to HST 425 “History of the Soviet Union” to PLS 453 “Post-Soviet States” and HST 485 “United States Foreign Relations from 1914.”

The language and area studies components of the minor are complementary. No progression is assumed from 200-level language courses to 300- and 400-level area studies courses; the language and area studies components can be taken concurrently.

IX. Student Performance. Student performance in each course of the minor is geared to requirements of that course. To remain in the Minor program, however, the student must complete RUS 201, RUS 202, and RUS 203 with the grade of C or better and maintain a 2.0 GPA across courses in History and Political Science.

X. Curriculum Coordination. The Minor in Russian Studies will be housed in the Department of Modern Languages. Drs. Pugh and Bonch will advise minors and Dr. Pugh will sign off on graduation. These faculty will also coordinate scheduling among Departments of Modern Languages, History, and Political Science in order to allow students to complete the minor in a timely manner. The amount of scheduling coordination required will be minimal given that (1) all courses are offered regularly and (2) courses in Modern Languages are typically offered on a Monday-Wednesday-Friday schedule and courses in History and Political Science are offered on a Tuesday-Thursday schedule.

XI. Resource Coordination. The Minor in Russian Studies utilizes course inventories and resources already in place. No additional library, technology, or staffing resources are needed (see Program Staffing below).

XII. Program Staffing. No additional program staffing is required. The entire program will be staffed by existing members of the faculty.

Dr. Liam Anderson, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, full time.

Dr. Xenia Bonch, Associate Professor, Department of Modern Languages, full time.

Dr. Sean Pollock, Assistant Professor, Department of History (Ph.D. in Russian History), full time.

Dr. Stefan Pugh, Professor and Chair, Department of Modern Languages (Ph.D. in Slavic Linguistics), full time.

Dr. Jonathan Winkler, Associate Professor, Department of History, full time.

Adjunct faculty may continue to be occasionally hired to teach courses in Russian language. Given that program staff includes a Russianist and a Slavic linguist, the need for adjunct faculty will be minimal.