

## **Proposal to Eliminate Academic Program**

### **Pursuant to UW Regulation 6-43**

#### **B.A. Russian**

#### **Statement of the reasons for elimination of the program:**

The academic program review for the B.A. in Russian indicates that the degree had 14 graduates in the past five years. The degree is currently taught by one APL (at times by teaching at overload but this is no longer allowed). Additional resources are needed to sustain it. There is a summer program of long-standing with Saratov University that is well-received by students.

The College recognizes UW's growing emphasis on internationalization and globalization; this is part of the draft A&S strategic plan. The draft campus plan also includes a goal of preparing students to compete in a global economy. There is discussion of an international certificate or a required international experience for all undergraduates. Language study will become even more important in that event.

That said, there is not a strong rationale for keeping this B.A. Additional resources cannot be justified. With the exception of ONE introductory course at a Casper high school, there are NO 'feeder high schools' offering this language around the state. The department (and students) have expressed interest in adding Chinese (where we currently have only a minor). With limited resources, A&S must carefully examine historical programming in light of changing student interest.

It is the recommendation of the Dean that the B.A. in Russian be discontinued, keeping only a minor at this time. [The Department of MCL has indicated a possible new degree—a unified World Languages M.A. for Wyoming teachers—to which Russian might contribute a very small number of 4000 level courses.]

#### **Description of the program and relevant data:**

##### **Describe the mission, curriculum, content and format of the program:**

As a department of foreign languages, literatures, and cultural studies, we prepare our students for life and careers in an increasingly global world. Our program in Russian enables students to combine their language training with interdisciplinary study of the regions where their language is spoken through study-abroad opportunities in our long-time sister state, Saratov Province. Russian, a language spanning 11 time zones and numerous cultural ethnicities, is a critical/strategic language (as defined by the U.S. Department of State), as well as a language of relevance to 21st-century geopolitics. The cultural legacies of Slavic countries continue to shape fields such as literature, art, music, film, philosophy, history, and political science.

## Curriculum

RUSS 2040: *2<sup>nd</sup>-year year Russian II*  
RUSS 2140: *Intro to Reading in Russian*

RUSS 3050: *3<sup>rd</sup>-year Russian I*  
(study abroad) RUSS 3060: *3<sup>rd</sup>-  
year Russian II* (study abroad)  
RUSS 4070: *4<sup>th</sup>-year Russian I*  
(study abroad) RUSS 4080: *4<sup>th</sup>-  
year Russian II* (study abroad)

RUSS 3150 (3990/4990): *Intro to Russian Literature*  
(independent study) RUSS 3205 (3990/4990): *Russian  
Folklore & Folk Life* (independent study)

The strategic plan for the Russian program confronts the reality of historically modest enrollments combined with a talented – at times gifted – student clientele, along with the need to offer these students a vibrant and challenging course of study towards the minor or major, while also recognizing the imperative to run an economical program in times of diminishing budgets and teaching staff. Much of this paring- down has already been accomplished since 2007 and 2012 with two full professor retirements, and more recently as the second lecturer's position in Russian has been reduced, first from full-time to half-time, and now, by the end of Spring 2016, eliminated completely.

Given the reality of section staffing in AY 2016-17, it is necessary to devise a workable path towards the minor or major that can feasibly be accomplished in 3 to 4 years, given the platform of introductory courses that first must be taken (RUSS 1010/1020/2030 – the first 3 semesters of Russian language study). There are of course students already in the pipeline who must be accounted for, as well. The Curriculum plan provided above shows that students pursuing the minor can complete their 18 credits in three distinct stages:

1. 4<sup>th</sup> semester: 6 hours on campus (RUSS 2040 and RUSS 2140)
2. Summer abroad: 6 hours of intensive Russian (Saratov University)
3. 5<sup>th</sup> (and possibly 6<sup>th</sup>) semester: 6 hours of independent study

Assuming the continuation of the major, no additional on-campus costs (faculty, support staff, etc.) are required. Students simply complete a longer study abroad period (12-18 total hours).

1. 4<sup>th</sup> semester: 6 hours on campus (RUSS 2040 and RUSS 2140)
2. Summer abroad: 6 hours of intensive Russian (Saratov University)
3. 5<sup>th</sup> semester Fall abroad: 12 hours (Saratov University)
4. 6<sup>th</sup> semester: 3-6 hours of independent study

If the summer preceding the 5<sup>th</sup> semester Fall abroad is not feasible for a given student, the person can extend his/her UW on-campus studies into the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> semesters with upper-level HIST, POLS, and LANG electives which will apply toward major credits, thereby making the 30 major hour accessible – at no extra cost to the institution, as well as providing enrollments in those non-RUSS classes.

Strategically speaking, Russian language is of course endeavoring to fortify enrollments by way of an active involvement in Departmental activities such as World Languages Day, which marked its 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year this March and in which the Russian section offered language and culture workshop sessions for Wyoming junior high and high school language learners, thereby encouraging and facilitating the eventual transition to UW language courses.

**Describe the role of the program within the context of the college and the mission of the University:**

**It should be noted in the context of the remarks below that the recommendation is the closing of the Russian BA degree. The Russian language will continue to be taught AND a Russian minor will be available.**

A key element in the primary mission, vision, and strategic goals of UW (articulated at least as early as the UW Academic Plan of 1999 and continuing on into the 2015-2020 University Plan) is that of internationalizing the curriculum:

**Goal 1:** *Prepare University graduates to compete in a global economy*

**Objective 1:** *Involve all undergraduates in at least one active learning experience (study abroad, internship, apprenticeship, etc.)*

**Objective 3:** *Strengthen internationalization and cultural diversity – Increase participation in study- abroad programs by 50% by 2020.)*

(Source: [http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/plans/14-20/up4\\_draft.pdf](http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/plans/14-20/up4_draft.pdf))

The centrality of *all* programs within Modern & Classical languages towards this effort is impossible to overstate. Internationalization is, essentially, the business of MCL, and Russian has been at the core of this mission for over half a century. While

not one of the historic “big three” languages (French, German, Spanish), Russian has for nearly 55 years been taught at UW, and for 45 years has remained a charter member of the four languages in MCL, in which students at the University of Wyoming are able to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree.

If languages are the front door to internationalization, then critical languages are the high-speed elevator. Russian is currently spoken natively by about 145 million people. An additional 132 million speak it as a second language. Large communities of Russian speakers exist in the U.S., Israel, China, Canada, Germany, and the former Soviet republics (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Moldova, Ukraine, etc.). Russian is used as a lingua franca among various ethnic minorities in the Russian Federation. Russian territory occupies a vast swath of the earth’s land mass, nearly 12%. (No small feat, considering that there are roughly 233 countries in the world at present.) Russian, along with Chinese, Arabic, Farsi, and a half dozen others, is a ‘critical language’ – that is, a language with a high demand for experienced professionals, but with very limited supply. Part of the definition of ‘critical’ is the important distinction of that language being strategic to U.S. security concerns and/or economic interests. This also implies an international relationship that is at times problematic and possibly even adversarial. All signs currently point to greater conflict with Russia as societies in the Middle East and Russia’s ‘near abroad’ further deteriorate.

Remaining engaged in and cognizant of this reality is an important acknowledgement of the spirit of University Plan to “serve the needs of our state and nation,” but also of the imperative to offer our students this important stepping stone and window into the world at large, providing our country with sorely needed expertise and informed perspective in precarious times ahead.

Russian heritage: Descendants of Russian and German-Russian immigrants are scattered throughout communities in Wyoming – particularly Rock Springs, Worland, Torrington, and Wheatland. In the words of Phil Roberts, Professor of History at UW: “One of the main values to teaching Russian at UW is to give an opportunity for descendants from these numerous communities in Wyoming a chance to learn the language of their ancestors.” (For further insights from Professor Roberts, please see Appendix B.)

International Connections: The UW Russian program is the nucleus from which the Wyoming-Saratov Initiative sprang into being in 1993. Since that time UW students have been afforded the opportunity to take part in a direct study- abroad program (summer, fall, and spring semesters) in Saratov, Russia. Summer 2016 marks the 24<sup>th</sup> consecutive intensive Summer School in Saratov, the oldest program of its type at the University of Wyoming. This unique partnership, predicated on mutual trust and benefit through cooperative effort, has played a significant role in the democratization of Saratov Province, and as such, the Initiative has seen exchanges of faculty, administrators, staff, state and government officials, in numerous spheres of activity that extend far beyond the study-abroad program that was its genesis. Happily, the study-abroad continues to thrive – and that is thanks (on the U.S. side) to the existence of the Russian language major at UW. Recently, one of our majors exemplified the best of this connection – literally as an ambassador-to-be – when he came to the aid of an automobile accident victim in Saratov.

The Saratov Program adds no extra expense to the delivery of UW courses, and its existence attracts international students from the Saratov region to UW. Essentially, the UW Russian language program is the anchor that continues to secure UW's relationship with Saratov University. And as on-campus Russian courses are diminished it is even more vital to maintain this long-standing connection to Saratov University, so that UW students will have a viable path towards completing major/minor requirements.

Contributing to programs across campus: UW students of Russian have always looked beyond the language alone as a major and have well understood its capacity to effectively augment a second or third major. As a result, most students of Russian are also students of international / global area studies, history, political science (the near 'satellites' of Russian language). Students from majors as far afield as music, art, and engineering also combine those more distant subject-area degrees with Russian language with particular success. Our close connection to the departments of History, Political Science, and International/Global Area studies is a positive force for interdisciplinarity, as well as the overall UW institutional strategy.

The following courses are certified H-Courses: RUSS 1010, RUSS 1020, RUSS 2030, RUSS 2040.

- RUSS 2140 offers the Arts & Sciences CH/G USP component.
- RUSS 3050 is a certified COM2 course
- RUSS 4200 is a certified COM3.

Many A&S degrees have a foreign language requirement such as History, Anthropology, Global & Area Studies, African American & Diaspora Studies, American Indian Studies, Art, Art History, Communication, Criminal Justice, English, Geography,

Humanities/Fine Arts, Journalism, Music, Music Performance, Political Science,  
Religious Studies, Theater & Dance.

**Financial data relevant to the academic program:**

Cost data is for ENTIRE department and is not disaggregated by degree.

Ratio of student credit hours per FTE (AY 2014/15): 742.6

Direct instructional expenditures (FY 2015): \$1,888,419

i) Per student FTE: \$5,456

ii) Per total degrees awarded: \$52,456

iii) Non-personnel expenditures / total academic FTE: \$4,627

Course enrollment (AY 2014/15)

i) Classes falling under university minimums: 18

ii) Lower-division courses falling under university minimums: 7

Research expenditure per tenure-track FTE (FY 2015): \$0

**Other Instructional Cost Drivers**

**Section Fill Rates**

Average Students per Course: 9.6

(574 total enrolled in group A courses / 60 courses)

Lower Division Fill Rate: 414 enrolled in 30 courses;

Average Lower Division Students per course: 13.8 Average Upper Division Students  
per course: 5.3

Fill Rate Per 25 cap course:  $16.8 \text{ ave.} / 25 = 67\%$

Fill Rate Per 20 cap course:  $7.5 \text{ ave} / 20 = 33\%$

Fill Rate Per 15 cap course:  $5.3 \text{ ave} / 15 = 35\%$  Overall Fill Rate: 45%

**Course Completion Rates**

Not available at this time.

### **Curricular Complexity**

Depending on which scale is used – DLI (Defense Language Institute), or FSI (Foreign Service Institute) – Russian is a Category 3 or 4 language (“a language with significant linguistic and/or cultural differences from English”). Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean are examples of Category 4 or 5, depending on the scale.

The complexity of the entire Russian curriculum emanates from this reality of the language acquisition curve. In it lies the basis for the structure of the major and minor, and for the necessity that students engage in a diverse range of challenging courses, as well as an extended study abroad period during the arc of their major or minor.

### **Faculty Courseload**

6 Group 1 courses and 6 Group 2 courses per term  
22 credit hours of lecture/seminar teaching; 6 independent study courses offered

### **Research expenditures per tenured/tenure-track FTE**

Not applicable.

### **Comparing Data to National Benchmarks**

No data available at this time.

### **Other Cost-Related Factors**

The Russian program is supported by a well-endowed scholarship: James R. Burman Memorial Language Scholarship, whose criteria includes first preference given to a student studying Russian.

The single FTE faculty member is dedicated to putting in extra hours to keep this program alive. For Fall 2016 two prospective Russian majors have expressed interest in attending UW to study Russian with this program.

**Admission, enrollment and graduation data relevant to the program, including the number of students currently enrolled and the status of their progress toward graduation:**

Number of graduates over 5-yr period:

2011-12: 2

2012-13: 3

2013-14: 2

2014-15: 6

2015-16: 2

TOTAL: 15

(Degree-seeking students in Russian typically comprise **35%-40%** of the overall enrollees in Russian language, and even as high as 45%.)

Enrollment in major over 5-yr period:

Declared majors:

2011-12: 12

2012-13: 13

2013-14: 14

2014-15: 13

2015-16: 17

(Source for majors: WyoWeb advisee listing. Number taken from Spring semester of each of the above 5 academic years).

Fall 2011 to Spring 2016: 2,273 total credit hours delivered  
1704 (lower division)  
569 (upper division)

Recent graduates (year of graduation):

- Graduated Dec. 2015: Studied abroad in Saratov. *Rosemarie Martha Spitaleri Award for Outstanding Graduating Woman* (Spring 2016).
- Graduated May 2015: Studied abroad in Saratov. Boston College of Social Work; Direct support staff Ark Regional Services.
- Graduated May 2015: Studied abroad in Saratov. Used Russian for

individual research project, constructing blog-site about the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

- Graduated Dec. 2014: Studied abroad in Saratov, and then used Russian during a trip to Kyrgyzstan, and for an individual research project on education in Kyrgyzstan and Turkey.
- Graduated Dec. 2014: Studied abroad in Saratov. Continuing travel in Namibia, posting blog.
- Graduated Aug. 2013: living in Karlsruhe, Germany.
- Graduated May 2013: service in Iraq (approx. 15 months); *A&S Top Undergrad* 2013; continuing UW student in Economics. Multiple study-abroads in Saratov.
- Graduated Dec. 2011: Studied in Saratov; legislative intern for Senator John Barrasso (Jan-Apr 2012); Digital and Creative Services Manager/Office Manager *Passport Magazine* (Dec. 2013-Present).
- Graduated May 2010: Studied in Saratov; EU-Russia Studies M.A., Tartu University, Estonia (Aug. 2015-Present); Internship with U.S. Department of State.

It bears mentioning that determining whether students of the humanities are “working in their field” is not always a simple matter, especially as this applies to recent graduates, who may still be finding their niche in the real world. An expression of a humanitarian education might even be best realized in that the person is able to adapt, improvise, and evolve into a role that was not pre-ordained by the specific title of the person’s degree. Such has been the case with many Russian language majors.

On the other hand, we do not have to look far to find examples where the UW Russian degree translated directly to eventual employment working with Russian language. Joseph Peschio, a 1996 UW Russian graduate, proceeded directly to MA and PhD work in Russian language and literature at University of Michigan. After completing his PhD, Dr. Peschio was quickly hired at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 2004 and is now Associate Professor and Coordinator of Slavic Languages and Literatures at that university (which, by the way is an important cooperating institution in our yearly recruitment cycle for students in the Saratov Study Abroad Program).

It would be true to say that most students of Russian language encounter and embrace an unpredictable and circuitous path forward after completing their degrees. Such is the nature of the world that students are increasingly faced with adapting to, and this is the kind of ability we strive to instill in our students as humanitarians and forward-thinkers, especially given the historic unpredictability of Russia.

Graduates of our program have for over 40 years flourished in post-graduate studies, and found great success as well in Russian pedagogy, business, social work, politics, and the sciences. Older students of Russian, who have had sufficient time to build a career, often bear striking credentials:

- MD: Doctor of Psychiatry (employing Russian language in her practice).
- Graduated with a degree in Russian/Physics/Computer Science was hired by IBM in Denver and soon promoted through the ranks – thanks to his knowledge of Russian language – to serve as chief liaison officer in IBM’s business presence in Russia.
- Director, Regional Security EMEA for Merck & Co; moving to the DC area to serve as the Director of a Global Investigations and Compliance program.
- Studied Russian language and received a Bachelor’s in International Studies in 1994, and a Master’s in Chemical Engineering from UW in 1996. In 2002, graduated from the University of Washington with both a Master's degree in applied physics and a Ph.D. in chemical engineering. Following graduation, took a position as a Science and Technology Diplomacy Fellow with the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and then joined the United States Department of State, working as the senior nanotechnology advisor within the department.
- Accepted in the Slavic Languages & Literature Department at University of Michigan after graduating from UW, and is now an Associate Professor of Russian at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, which is a long-standing cooperative partner with UW in the study- abroad program with Saratov University.
- MA in International Relations; intern at U.S. Information Agency; Webster University – securing funding in international initiatives; vice-president for Advancement at Eden Theological Seminary.
- Project Logistics Executive – Volga-Dnepr Airlines, Houston, TX.
- DVM, CCRP, CVA: computer (Russian) consultant; doctor of veterinary medicine.
- Law school; work using Russian in law firm in Dallas, TX; law firm in Rocky Mtn region; General Counsel for oil & gas company; entrepreneur; Chairman of Wyoming Republican Party and member of Republican National Committee.
- After graduating from UW (with BA degrees in Russian and International Studies), accepted into George Washington University as an MA student in International Affairs. Upon completion of the MA degree, worked in various capacities as a resettlement case manager for the International Rescue Committee, as well as district administrative officer for U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

**Describe the administration of the program:**

The Russian B.A. is an undergraduate major/minor situated in the Department of Modern and Classical Languages, College of Arts & Sciences, Department Head Joy Landeira

**Describe the faculty and academic professionals who serve in the program, including their academic credentials, academic rank and length of service to the University:**

**Russian**

**Joseph Krafczik** (MA, University of Michigan 1986, Russian & East European Studies) – Section Head

Rank: Senior Lecturer

Length of Service: 28 Years (1988)

**Anna Shur** (Candidate Degree (PhD), Saratov State University 2010, Pedagogical Sciences; currently pursuing second PhD in Literacy Education, UW College of Education)

Rank: **TEMPORARY Lecturer** (while completing her 2<sup>nd</sup> Ph.D. in the CoEd)

Length of Service: 4 Years (2012)

Joseph Krafczik Awards:

- 1988 *Golden Apple Teaching Award*; 1995 *A&S Extraordinary Merit in Teaching Award*
- 1998 recipient of *Ellbogen Award for Meritorious Classroom Teaching*
- 2008 recipient of UW Mortar Board's "Top Prof" Award
- 2009 *Promoting Intellectual Engagement (PIE) Award*
- 2010 *Promoting Intellectual Engagement (PIE) Award*
- 2014 College of Arts & Sciences *Thumbs-up Award*

**Describe the program facilities, including classrooms and offices, library and equipment used by or dedicated to the program:**

Two Hoyt Hall offices – room 202 and 114

Typical classrooms used: Central Shared classrooms, e.g. Classroom Building 141, Wyo Hall 240

Software needs: Instructional software includes MyRussianLab (Pearson), Golosa

UW Library: Russian Language Repository - Over 60 years, the UW Library has amassed one of the finest Russian language repositories of any library along the Front Range. Holdings are both expansive and deep, with literally thousands of volumes – spanning Russian literature, critical writing, folklore, history, science, art, music, philosophy, linguistics, political thought, economics, and international relations.

**Evaluations from accrediting bodies or other reviewers of the quality of the program and its faculty and academic professionals:**

Not applicable.

**Comparison of the program with related or similar programs:**

**Uniqueness. There are no feeder schools teaching the Russian language in Wyoming.** The UW Russian program is absolutely unique within the boundaries of the State of Wyoming, not to mention the region (especially taking tuition into account). Limited access to beginning Russian language is available currently at Casper High School (an introductory course), and at Sheridan Community College (RUSS 1010/1020). CSU offers no major in Russian. CU Boulder has an extensive Russian language program with a good reputation. However, at a cost in the neighborhood of \$33,316 per academic year\* (for full-time out-of-state tuition, versus \$5,056 for full-time UW in-state tuition), attending CU is, very clearly, prohibitively expensive for all but the most well-to-do Wyoming students. A local, and affordable alternative for Wyoming students (not to mention Montana, Colorado, Nebraska, and New Mexico) is clearly necessary.

\*Source: <https://bursar.colorado.edu/wp-content/uploads/Undergrad-out-of-state-2016-17-tuition-and-fees-0041316.pdf>

**Describe the anticipated effects of elimination of the program upon the college in which the program is situated, upon other colleges and units of the University, and upon the University as a whole, including:**

As mentioned, the Russian undergraduate major has been an asset to the University of Wyoming. At one time, it had three people who served as instructors and thus was sustainable. It now has one ET APL. It offered students the opportunity for an international experience at Saratov University in Russia, thus leading the way for many other international exchange programs and relationships. **Since the minor in Russian will be retained, students will have the opportunity to study the language and possibly do an immersion program in Russia.** The size of the program is about the

same as German or French. A difficult decision-making process has led the college to the point in which choices about retention were necessary.

**Effects upon students enrolled in the academic program:**

Students will be informed about the discontinuation. They will have two years to complete the Bachelor's degree. If they do not manage it, their advisor will help them find other universities here or abroad to assist them. An international experience is the best solution for these students. It is possible that the WICHE program is another option.

**Effects upon faculty and academic professionals who serve in the program, including termination of any existing positions:**

The Russian minor will be retained, and coursework at the upper division level will be provided for the proposed World Languages MA that includes Russian. The instructor of the Russian language program will therefore be retained.

**Educational and financial effects upon other units of the University:**

The universities which offer Russian have decreased nationally **due to decreased student demand**. This does result in fewer options for students, but this is a national trend. There should have been some financial benefit for the university since the number of instructional personnel is so minimal, but in spite of UW's low tuition, students have NOT flocked to UW to study Russian.

**Effects upon faculty, academic professionals, staff, students and alumni of the University:**

It is possible to speculate that effects are minimal. The program was never large. For some alumni, the program offered a life changing experience. It is likely that former faculty, current instructors, staff, students, and alumni will regret the necessity of this decision.

**Effects on the State of Wyoming, including loss of benefits conferred outside the University by the academic program:**

Minimal. The state appears to be focused on China (and therefore the Chinese language) as a potential market. UW must consider that there are Chinese immersion schools in Wyoming, and these public school graduates will wish to continue in that language when they arrive at UW. Future student demand must be considered as investment is made in language instruction.