

**Academic Program: B.A. Russian**  
**Plan for Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes**  
**The University of New Mexico**

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**A. College, Department and Date**

1. College: Arts and Sciences
2. Department: Foreign Languages and Literatures
3. Date: May 20, 2014

**B. Academic Program of Study\***

B.A. Russian

**C. Contact Person(s) for the Assessment Plan**

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**D. Broad Program Goals & Measurable Student Learning Outcomes**

**1. Broad Program Learning Goals for this Degree/Certificate Program**

- A.** Students will be able to read and write non-specialist texts with clear identification and expression of key ideas.
- B.** Students will be able to communicate effectively (orally and aurally) in common situations in Russian.
- C.** Students will be able to distinguish salient features of Russian culture in its historical and contemporary contexts.
- D.** Students will be able to evaluate their own language abilities and formulate life-long learning strategies.

**2. List of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for this Degree/Certificate Program**

**A.1.** Students can use and comprehend common morphological (inflectional and derivational), syntactic, and stylistic patterns in Russian, such as aspect, case, register, and others.

**A.2.** Students can produce and synthesize the content of narratives and descriptions of a factual and abstract nature in Russian.

**B.1.** Students can recognize and use common word patterns and idiomatic expressions in an accent comprehensible to native speakers.

**B.2.** Students can participate in conversations by initiating, sustaining and bringing to a close a range of daily communicative tasks.

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\* Academic Program of Study is defined as an approved course of study leading to a certificate or degree reflected on a UNM transcript. A graduate-level program of study typically includes a capstone experience (e.g. thesis, dissertation, professional paper or project, comprehensive exam, etc.).

**C.1.** Students can contextualize and interpret significant forms of representation in the spheres of Russian literature, arts, and popular culture.

**C.2.** Students can analyze and evaluate the main periods, figures, and achievements in Russian cultural history.

**D.1.** Students can assess their own levels of abilities in all four aspects of Russian language (speaking, writing, reading, and understanding spoken language).

**D.2.** Students can demonstrate specific ways they could continue studying and using Russian after graduation

**E. Assessment of Student Learning Three-Year Plan**

All programs are expected to measure some outcomes annually and to measure all priority program outcomes at least once over two consecutive three-year review cycles. Describe below the plan for the next three years of assessment of program-level student learning outcomes.

**1. Student Learning Outcomes**

*[Insert at least 2-5 priority learning outcomes that will be assessed by the unit over the next three years. Each unit will select which of its learning outcomes to assess]*

Relationship to UNM Student Learning Goals (insert the program SLOs and check all that apply):

<b>University of New Mexico Student Learning Goals</b>				
<b>Program SLOs</b>	<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Skills</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Program SLO is conceptually different from university goals.</b>
<b>A.2.</b> Students can produce and synthesize the content of narratives and descriptions of a factual and abstract nature in Russian.	XX	XX		
<b>B.2.</b> Students can participate in conversations by initiating, sustaining and bringing to a close a range of daily communicative tasks.		XX		
<b>C.1.</b> Students can contextualize and interpret significant forms of representation in the spheres of Russian literature, arts, and popular culture.	XX	XX		
<b>D.1.</b> Students can assess their own levels of abilities in all four aspects of Russian language (speaking, writing, reading, and understanding spoken language).			XX	

**2. How will learning outcomes be assessed?**

**A. What:**

- i. *For each SLO, briefly describe the means of assessment, i.e., what samples of evidence of learning will be gathered or measures used to assess students' accomplishment of the learning outcomes in the three- year plan?*

- (A.2.) Students' skills in reading and writing narratives and descriptions (i.e., their creative thinking) will be assessed through standardized exam in Russian that will be administered in the semester prior to graduation (RUSS 302 or RUSS 401).
- (B.2.) Students' ability to participate in conversations that aim that are based on a range of daily communicative tasks will be assessed through a capstone oral exam conducted in Russian that will take place in the semester prior to graduation (RUSS 302 or RUSS 401).
- (C.2.) Students' knowledge of the landmarks of Russian cultural history and the ability to interpret them (i.e., their critical thinking) will be assessed through a research paper in English that will be administered in the semester prior to graduation (RUSS 338 or RUSS 340)
- (D.1.) Students' responsibility of self-assessment in all four aspects of Russian language (speaking, writing, reading, and understanding spoken language) will be assessed through the ACTFL 'Can-do' statements part of the ACTFL guidelines for L2 acquisition

ii. *Indicate whether each measure is **direct** or **indirect**. If you are unsure, then write "Unsure of measurement type." There is an expectation that at least **half of the assessment methods/measures will be direct** measures of student learning. [See attached examples of direct and indirect measures.]*

(A.2.) Direct measurement through capstone written examination in Russian.

(B.1.) Direct measurement through capstone oral examination in Russian.

(C.2.) Direct measurement through capstone written examination in English.

(D.1.) Indirect measurement through self-assessment report in English.

iii. *Briefly describe the **criteria for success** related to each direct or indirect means of assessment. What is the program's performance target (e.g., is an "acceptable or better" performance by 60% of students on a given measure acceptable to the program faculty)? If scoring rubrics are used to define qualitative criteria and measure performance, attach them to the plan as they are available.*

(A.2.): Students' success will be measured by a student's ability to produce and to summarize the content of a short narration or description in Russian. The following basic elements of the language will be evaluated in student's performance: vocabulary, grammar/usage, style, and meaning. The evaluation of these elements will be done on the standard 100 % scale. The performance target is 70 % or higher score on this scale. In addition, assessment will be correlated with the qualitative writing standards of the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) in order to obtain a comparison of our program with Russian programs in other colleges. Acceptable performance on that exam corresponds to 'intermediate-high' according to the ACTFL standards in writing.

**ACTFL guidelines: Writing at the "Intermediate-mid" level:**

"Writers at the Intermediate-high level are able to meet all practical writing needs such as taking notes on familiar topics, writing uncomplicated letters, simple summaries, and compositions related to work, school experiences, and topics of current and general interest. Intermediate-high writers connect sentences into paragraphs using a limited number of cohesive devices that tend to be repeated, and with some breakdown in one or more features of the Advanced level. They can write simple descriptions and narrations of paragraph length on everyday events and situations in different time

frames, although with some inaccuracies and inconsistencies. For example, they may be unsuccessful in their use of paraphrase and elaboration and/or inconsistent in the use of appropriate major time markers, resulting in a loss in clarity. In those languages that use verbal markers to indicate tense and aspect, forms are not consistently accurate. The vocabulary, grammar, and style of Intermediate-high writers essentially correspond to those of the spoken language. The writing of an Intermediate-high writer, even with numerous and perhaps significant errors, is generally comprehensible to natives not used to the writing of non-natives, but gaps in comprehension may occur."

**(B.1.):** Students' success will be measured by oral responses to prompts given by the instructor in Russian on topics covered in the student's course of studies. Students' responses will be evaluated according to the following criteria on a percentage scale from 56 % to 100 %: content, fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. The performance target is 70 % or higher on this scale. In addition, assessment will be correlated with the qualitative speaking standards of the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) in order to obtain a comparison of our program with Russian programs in other colleges. Students should meet the 'intermediate-mid' criteria of ACTFL standards in speaking.

**ACTFL guidelines: Speaking at the "Intermediate-mid" level:**

Speakers at the Intermediate Mid sublevel are able to handle successfully a variety of uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations. Conversation is generally limited to those predictable and concrete exchanges necessary for survival in the target culture. These include personal information related to self, family, home, daily activities, interests and personal preferences, as well as physical and social needs, such as food, shopping, travel, and lodging. Intermediate Mid speakers tend to function reactively, for example, by responding to direct questions or requests for information. However, they are capable of asking a variety of questions when necessary to obtain simple information to satisfy basic needs, such as directions, prices, and services. When called on to perform functions or handle topics at the Advanced level, they provide some information but have difficulty linking ideas, manipulating time and aspect, and using communicative strategies, such as circumlocution. Intermediate Mid speakers are able to express personal meaning by creating with the language, in part by combining and recombining known elements and conversational input to produce responses typically consisting of sentences and strings of sentences. Their speech may contain pauses, reformulations, and self-corrections as they search for adequate vocabulary and appropriate language forms to express themselves. In spite of the limitations in their vocabulary and/or pronunciation and/or grammar and/or syntax, Intermediate Mid speakers are generally understood by sympathetic interlocutors accustomed to dealing with non-natives. Overall, Intermediate Mid speakers are at ease when performing Intermediate-level tasks and do so with significant quantity and quality of Intermediate-level language.

**(C.2.):** Student success will be measured by written responses to an essay question in English pertaining to the literary production and/or reception of Russian literary and cinematographic works and their authors/directors covered in the student's course of studies. The essay will be evaluated on the basis of four criteria that are measured in percentage scale from 56 % to 100 %: focus on the issue, evidence, structure, scope, and originality. Each student should score 70 % or higher on this scale. In addition, assessment will be correlated with the qualitative writing standards of the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) in order to obtain a comparison of our program with Russian programs in other colleges. Acceptable performance is considered 'intermediate-high' level in the ACTFL writing standards (cf. the description of these standards above).

**(D.1.):** Students' success will be measured by self assessment in all four aspects of Russian language (speaking, writing, reading, and understanding spoken language). Students should meet the 'intermediate-mid' criteria of ACTFL in all standards (writing, reading, listening and speaking) by using 'Can do' statements to evaluate their performance.

**ACTFL guidelines: Listening at the "Intermediate-mid" level:**

“At the Intermediate Mid sublevel, listeners are able to understand simple, sentence-length speech, one utterance at a time, in a variety of basic personal and social contexts. Comprehension is most often accurate with highly familiar and predictable topics although a few misunderstandings may occur. Intermediate Mid listeners may get some meaning from oral texts typically understood by Advanced-level listeners.”

**ACTFL guidelines: Reading at the "Intermediate-mid" level:**

At the Intermediate Mid sublevel, readers are able to understand short, non-complex texts that convey basic information and deal with basic personal and social topics to which the reader brings personal interest or knowledge, although some misunderstandings may occur. Readers at this level may get some meaning from short connected texts featuring description and narration, dealing with familiar topics.

**ACTFL guidelines: Writing at the "Intermediate-mid" level:**

Writers at the Intermediate Mid sublevel are able to meet a number of practical writing needs. They can write short, simple communications, compositions, and requests for information in loosely connected texts about personal preferences, daily routines, common events, and other personal topics. Their writing is framed in present time but may contain references to other time frames. The writing style closely resembles oral discourse. Writers at the Intermediate Mid sublevel show evidence of control of basic sentence structure and verb forms. This writing is best defined as a collection of discrete sentences and/or questions loosely strung together. There is little evidence of deliberate organization. Intermediate Mid writers can be understood readily by natives used to the writing of non-natives. When Intermediate Mid writers attempt Advanced-level writing tasks, the quality and/or quantity of their writing declines and the message may be unclear.

B. Who: *State explicitly whether the program's assessment will include evidence from all students in the program or a sample. Address the validity of any proposed sample of students.*

Due to the small number of graduates from the Russian program, all first and second Russian majors will be assessed.

**3. When will learning outcomes be assessed? When and in what forum will the results of the assessment be discussed?**

A.2., B1, C2, and D.1. will all be assessed in the semester prior to graduation. Results will be discussed by the Russian faculty each fall. Any proposed changes will be brought before the Committee of Undergraduate Studies composed of departmental faculty and will be also discussed with students in interest of improving their learning.

**4. What is the unit's process to analyze/interpret assessment data and use results to improve student learning?**

*Briefly describe:*

1. *who will participate in the assessment process (the gathering of evidence, the analysis/interpretation, recommendations).*

Program faculty members will administer and analyze the assessment. The data will be gathered by the program faculty members and the teaching assistant (for 100-level Russian). Recommendations will be given by the program faculty members and will be passed on to the Committee of Undergraduate Studies.

2. *the process for consideration of the implications of assessment for change:*
  - a. *to assessment mechanisms themselves*

The program faculty members will fine-tune the assessment instruments over time and create a bank of standardized examinations as well as entry- and exit-surveys..

- b. *to curriculum design,*

The results of the assessment and their implications for the curriculum design of the Russian program will be discussed first among program faculty, who will propose policy and curriculum changes (if needed) to the Committee of Undergraduate Studies. After the Committee of Undergraduate Studies meets and discusses changes in the curriculum, the matter will be brought up before the entire faculty of the department for a general vote.

- c. *to pedagogy*

In language teaching, and particularly, in teaching Russian, assessment results can measure the success of a particular teaching method and can offer insights for fine-tuning of these methods. The language assessment done during each semester falls under the category of 'Integrated Performance Assessment' (IPA). The IPA typically has three forms that cover all language performance skills: interpersonal, presentational and interpretative. Since the results of the IPA are always quantitative, they will be taken as an indicator of the area(s) that needs to be addressed in the interest of improving student learning.

3. *How, when, and to whom will recommendations be communicated?*

Recommendations of program faculty will be communicated in writing first to the Committee of Undergraduate Studies at their regular meetings. The proposed changes will be discussed during these meetings and the results will be conveyed to the faculty of the entire department for comment and approval. New policy will be kept on file, published on the departmental website, and included in the syllabi of program faculty. The projected time frame for these recommendations is the end of each Spring Semester, after all assessment data has been gathered and thoroughly analyzed.