

Russian Studies, BA

an interdisciplinary major

russianstudies.gmu.edu



The Russian language program at Mason gave me the skills that initially landed me this job because being able to read, write, and converse in Russian was a requirement. I also draw a lot from the classes I took in Russian government and culture.”

—Danny Forbes, BA Russian Studies '00

Program Profile

Russia “is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.” Winston Churchill’s famous comment about Russia is as apt today as it was more than 40 years ago. If you love the challenge of solving a good mystery, you will enjoy studying Russia and its people, language, culture, history, and politics. As a Russian Studies major, you will learn all the fascinating details about Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great, Catherine the Great, Lenin, Stalin, Gorbachev, Yeltsin, and Putin. You will read literary masters such as Chekhov, Pushkin, Dostoevsky, and Tolstoy in the original Russian. You will have the opportunity to spend a summer or semester abroad earning credits at a leading Russian university that you can apply toward your George Mason University degree.

Careers in Russian Studies

The bachelor of arts degree in Russian Studies will prepare you for a wide range of rewarding careers in the private sector, government, and education. Mason graduates in Russian Studies are employed by U.S. firms that sell goods and services to Russia, in technology companies, in environmental organizations, as teachers, and in several U.S. government agencies.

Graduates also work as research analysts, intelligence analysts, trainers, translators and interpreters, international trade assistants, administrative assistants, and project managers. Some of the associations, private firms, international organizations, and government agencies employing graduates in Russian Studies are:

- American Councils for International Education
- American Bar Association (Moscow office)
- Central Intelligence Agency
- Defense Intelligence Agency
- DynCorp
- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- Geologistics
- Library of Congress
- Lucent Technology Worldwide
- Science Applications International Corporation
- Technology Management Company
- U.S. Civilian Research and Development Foundation
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Department of Commerce
- Voice of America

Apply online at admissions.gmu.edu

Contact Information

Russian Studies Program
Department of Modern and Classical Languages
George Mason University
Thompson Hall, Room 233
4400 University Drive, MS 3E5
Fairfax, VA 22030
Phone: 703-993-1220
Fax: 703-993-1245
Web: www.gmu.edu/departments/fld/RUSSIAN/home.html

Program Director

James Levine, PhD
Phone: 703-993-1233
E-mail: jlevin2@gmu.edu

Russian Club

www.gmu.edu/org/russianclub



Profile of Recent Alumnus

Danny Forbes, BA Russian Studies '00, is a program manager in the Moscow office of Technology Management Company, a Fairfax, Virginia, firm that provides management and support services to clients in the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union. In a recent interview for the *Mason Spirit*, a magazine for university alumni and friends, Forbes said, "This is my dream job! In my job as a liaison with the Russian ministries of Defense, Atomic Energy, and Foreign Affairs, I draw a lot from the classes I took in Russian government and culture."

"Understanding Russia's role in the world and in the region, particularly Russia's ties with the Scandinavian and Baltic states, has allowed me to critically analyze Russia's participation in our program much deeper and has made my contribution to the success of the program that much more valuable," he continues. "Also understanding the culture and local community has helped me develop personal relationships with our partners in Russia."

Program Objectives

Completion of the major in Russian Studies enables students to

- Work proficiently in the Russian language, using it effectively in academic, professional, and personal contexts.
- Function appropriately in routine social situations with native speakers of Russian, based on knowledge of contemporary Russian culture.
- Develop knowledge of the political, social, and cultural experience of Russia from the earliest times to the present.
- Gain general knowledge of major Russian writers and literary works of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Internships

Internships are available in a variety of settings. Many students take advantage of Mason's close proximity to Washington, D.C., to pursue internship opportunities in private consulting firms, professional associations, and federal government agencies, as well as in nongovernmental organizations. Recent Russian Studies students have held internships at the Smithsonian Institution's Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies, the Department of State, the Department of Commerce's Sabbit Program for Business Development in Russia, the Fund for Democracy and Development, and the AFL-CIO (Moscow). Through internships, students can earn credits toward their degree and sometimes an offer for full-time employment.

Faculty

The Russian Studies faculty is drawn from six departments and represents a range of specialties relating to Russia and Eastern Europe.

Core Faculty

Steven Barnes—*Russian and Soviet history*

Julie A. Christensen—*Russian language and literature, Soviet film*

Mark N. Katz—*Russian politics and foreign policy*

James S. Levine—*Russian language and linguistics*

Eric McGlinchey—*Politics of Central Asia, political Islam*

Tatiana M. Vasilyeva—*Russian language, literature, and culture*

Rex A. Wade—*Russian and Soviet history*

Claudia Verhoeven—*Russian history*

Affiliated Faculty

Peter Boettke—*Post-Soviet economy, transitional economies*

T. Mills Kelly—*Czech history*

Kristin Johnsen-Neshati—*Russian and Soviet drama*

Why Major in Russian Studies at George Mason University?

The largest country in the world, Russia shares a number of vitally important interests with the United States. For example, Russia recently became a crucial partner with the United States in international law enforcement and the fight against global terrorism. Russia plays a major role in the United Nations and in such areas as nuclear energy, ecology, scientific research, and space exploration. Aside from Russia's importance in the world, the Russian language, spoken by some 280 million people worldwide, is an important means of communication throughout the countries of the former Soviet Union, as well as in central and eastern Europe.

Recognized internationally for its innovation, diversity, and entrepreneurial spirit, Mason offers enterprising scholars and teachers, and a student body representing 135 countries and all 50 states. Located in Virginia, only minutes from Washington, D.C., Mason provides unparalleled opportunities in research, internships, and work experiences through strong alliances with business, the community, and government.

The university has an exciting, nationally recognized, interdisciplinary Russian Studies Program with faculty drawn from six departments, an active Russian club, and our own study-abroad program that provides opportunities for summer and semester study in Moscow and St. Petersburg.