Recommendations
B.A. Russian

To learn more about how you can make the most of your educational experiences within and beyond the classroom contact:
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PARTICIPATE

Community Service

Sites/experiences
In Columbia, we encourage our students to become acquainted with members of Columbia’s Russian émigré community; students have assisted elderly Russian emigrates with adjustments to life in the US and have tutored Russians in English. In Russia, students have participated in spring-break service trips to various Russian cities to do volunteer work organized by the American Home in Vladimir, Russia. We have also had several students teach English to young Russians in Aigir, a camp outside of Ufa, Russia.

Why this is important
Using Russian language in an everyday setting that helps others combines intellectual and personal growth and is an ideal combination: learning Russian and helping others at the same time.

Global Learning

Related course
RUSS 298 (prep course for USC study abroad program in Ufa, Russia)

Timing for “study abroad”
After two years of college Russian

Destinations
USC study abroad trip (annual, May-June) to Ufa, Russia; other locations in Russia and its neighbors (Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, Latvia, and elsewhere) via programs approved by USC Russian Program director and USC Study Abroad

Opportunities
We present information at Study Abroad fairs and make the students in our courses aware of these exciting opportunities. The Russian Program director advises students extensively on study abroad options, timing, and opportunities for funding.

Other
We encourage students to apply for any fellowships that will fund study abroad.

Why this is important
Study abroad is increasingly important and expected for Russian majors to solidify linguistic and cultural knowledge and demonstrate such knowledge to future employers. Moreover, the very experience of being immersed in a culture and language one has studied intensively is exciting, worthwhile, educational, and life-changing!

Peer Leadership

Student Organization(s)
Russian Club

Opportunities
Opportunities for tutoring less advanced language students

Other Recommendations
Russian Table (weekly conversation table)

Why this is important
Students run the Russian Club and organize activities (this year including College of Charleston Russian students as well). Holding officer positions in the Russian Club demonstrates leadership and commitment, important as many of our students apply for highly competitive national fellowships and scholarships.

Internships

Recommended sites/work experiences
Teaching English in Aigir (near Ufa, Russia), noted above, is an ideal way for students interested in a teaching career to gain valuable experience while studying abroad. In addition, as we have increasing numbers of International Business students studying Russian, we encourage these students to participate in newly created business internship study abroad programs in Russia.
Professional Organizations

Students, both undergraduate and graduate, have presented papers at regional and national Slavic conferences, thereby increasing job and graduate school marketability.

Other

We have had several Russian majors win Fulbright teaching grants to Russia over the past years, and we continue to encourage students to apply!

Why this is important

Work before graduation is enormously helpful in later, relevant job seeking.

Research

Related courses

RUSS 399

Sample research projects or topics

Topics for independent research projects have included Terrorism in Russia; Women’s Lack of Participation in Contemporary Russian Politics (research in Russia funded by a Magellan grant); Old Church Slavic Language; The Bering Strait Region; and more. Students have presented their research at Discovery Day and used it in graduate school and fellowship applications. Russian Program faculty also regularly advise Honors theses; topics in recent years have included Homosexuality in the USSR and Nazi Germany; Studies in Dostoevsky’s The Brothers Karamazov; and A Comparison of Dr. Zhivago and Gone with the Wind.

Why this is important

Working with a professor and learning the skills necessary to conduct research and then applying what one has learned to create new knowledge and skills is exciting and inspirational: students often come away from a research project with a new commitment to their field and to learning itself, and they inspire their professors in the process!

INTEGRATE

How to Integrate

Our fourth-year Russian language students always end the semester with a presentation on a topic of their choosing; this allows them to integrate the skills they have learned in one activity. They prepare for this through a series of smaller presentations and creative activities in other RUSS classes and activities, including activities such as the ever-popular Russian Cuisine Day we hold at least once a year! We encourage Russian students involved in the arts to share their work with their fellow-students: an art student may create a work based on Russian culture (a recent project for the RUSS course “Homer in Russia” inspired a spectacular painting of a Homeric Achilles as Russia’s St. George, for instance), or a music student may perform a work by a Russian composer.

It is gratifying to hear from students that they are using their Russian language in summer jobs to communicate with fellow workers, for example, or that they are using their knowledge of language and culture while abroad to facilitate interactions and achieve their goals, be it in an educational or work/internship setting.

Students’ faces light up when they tell us that they used their Russian while at a restaurant to order, or to help a Russian-speaker who was struggling with English, or to explain to a friend or family member just why President Putin seems to reacting in a given way to a particular event. Students learn to use what they have gotten from class to understand situations they encounter elsewhere.
LEAD

Initial career opportunities
Government work, including Foreign Service, CIA, State Department, translating; teaching either in the US or abroad; international business; law enforcement; international NGOs. RUSS students tend to be successful in national fellowship competitions as well, which then lead to greater career opportunities.

Related graduate programs
MA in Russian Area Studies, leading to diverse career options; law school; business school with focus on international business; PhD in Russian, History, Literature, Comparative Literature, Linguistics.

Future career opportunities
Legal profession (international law); College/University Teaching; Political Analyst and Career Diplomat; Professional Translator; NGO Administrator/Officer; International Business Executive

Other career comments
A Russian major demonstrates to prospective employers that this is not a typical candidate, but rather someone who enjoys challenges, is particularly good at communication and interacting with people from diverse cultures, is open to learning about new fields, and can analyze information effectively and efficiently. Since Russian is designated a National Security Language, students with a RUSS major find national security job opportunities.

The listed experiences are a sample of options for your major. See the USC Connect experiences database to search for more opportunities.
www.sc.edu/usccconnect/participate