

## Independent Language “R” Tutorials

Students who are interested in studying a language not normally offered by the department (e.g., less commonly taught Slavic languages such as Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Slovak, etc.) may propose a plan of study according to the tutorial model (“R” courses). It is primarily the student’s responsibility to identify an instructor or tutor and to create a plan of study for the semester. To propose an “R” course, please read these guidelines and download the informational documents linked at the Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures website (<http://slavic.fas.harvard.edu/pages/language-study>). Follow these instructions on how to fill out and submit the online form available at:

[https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_2mWlgg6I4lwMhtH](https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2mWlgg6I4lwMhtH)

For students with the requisite placement or background, courses in advanced Czech and Polish and both intermediate and advanced Ukrainian are regularly approved in the Department. Students with a demonstrated academic need for Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian also regularly receive approval and we have available instructors on hand to conduct these tutorials.

Some additional non-Slavic languages of Central and Eastern Europe (e.g., Estonian, Hungarian, Lithuanian, etc.) as well as languages of the Caucasus and Central Asia (e.g., Georgian, Kazakh, etc.) may be appropriate for sponsorship by the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. If you are interested in studying a non-Slavic language from these areas of the world, please contact the Director of the Language Program, [Dr. Steven Clancy](#).

There is no guarantee that tutorials can actually be set up or approved, so students should not rely on them until approval is received. These tutorials take time to set up and involve considerable effort on the part of students. If you are looking for a traditional language course experience you should not apply.

We must receive all proposals by no later than Wednesday of the second week of classes and preferably by Friday of the first week of the semester as timing is critical for gaining approval and successfully launching these tutorials, which must be approved by both the Department and the Dean’s office. If you are uncertain, it is better to submit a proposal on time and later withdraw it than to submit your proposal late. You should assume that late proposals will not be accepted.

Your proposal should include a summary statement at the end of the form based on the models presented below regarding why you wish to study this language, including the academic purposes for studying this language (e.g., in-country research projects, internships, thesis reading in the original language, relation to degree or professional goals, extension of knowledge already gained in other languages, etc.). Family heritage, intellectual curiosity, or other personal reasons may be supplemental to your justification, but are usually not sufficient for us to gain approval for your proposal.

### Course meetings and content

These courses typically meet for one hour each on two separate days of the week throughout all weeks of the semester. Describe how you will use the remaining 8-10 hours a week that you are expected to be studying on your own. Expect that these courses will emphasize reading, structure, and grammar over speaking, since your opportunities for interacting in the language will be limited and the emphasis will be in gaining a solid foundation in the language for purposes of achieving the goals you lay out in the proposal.

Consider that these tutorials are more facilitated independent study than a language course. It is your responsibility to propose how you will undertake this study. Your teacher may have suggestions or make modifications, but you need to show that you are an independent learner who can study and make progress without daily class meetings and without a traditional course structure and syllabus.

Speaking with a teacher in advance of submitting your proposal does not excuse you from addressing in detail the question of how you would ideally structure your own course. Do not assume that any information is already “known.” Write for the administrators who do not know you. Students who only provide reasons

such as “in order to study beginning language, grammar and vocabulary”, “in order to read short works by authors X, Y, and Z”, “in order to develop language skills I first gained by speaking the language at home”, etc. are not likely to receive approval for the course. Your proposal should be sufficiently detailed and reflective of forethought regarding the proposed plan of study and the academic justifications for the study.

What resources will you use? How will you make up for the lack of class time? You should reflect on past language study and include in your proposal suggestions that pertain to how the ways you learn languages best. Students who have never studied a foreign language or are inexperienced language learners are advised not to apply for these tutorials.

You should also be prepared to push yourself beyond what might be expected in a traditional course. Since these tutorials are intended for people with serious academic reasons for study, you should be motivated by your own goals, not merely by a syllabus or a grade. At the same time, wildly ambitious goals may indicate largely inachievable goals for what can be done in a tutorial setting.

The proposal form has text boxes for your answers to the questions, but do not be constrained by the size of the box. Take as much space as is required to persuade us that you are an excellent candidate for independent study of the language you are proposing.

If your proposal is approved, it may be approved with emendations. Even if what you have proposed is excellently conceived, it may not be possible given the time and resources available in any one semester, especially if there are other students requesting the same language and level of study. This does not mean, however, that you should abbreviate or omit information about your plan of study, since it is required in order to evaluate and determine the potential of your proposed course.

### **Specialized topics**

Sometimes specialized topics can be accommodated (e.g., business language, legal language, medical language); sometimes they cannot. Frequently there is more generalized language study that will support the special topic without focusing directly on it. If you wish to take the tutorial only if it will address your special topic, you should indicate that in your proposal.

### **Additional Notes**

**Goals:** It is your responsibility to consider and articulate reasonable goals for your progress during the semester. Goals must be more specific than “improve my language ability”; explain in detail why you need to study this language, what you will be doing with it, and what specific content you expect to be dealing with.

**Textbooks:** It is your responsibility to review text materials which might be suitable for your purposes. You may wish to speak to an instructor for help with this selection, but you should be prepared to evaluate a textbook for your own specific purposes. You should suggest the kind of grammar, vocabulary, or other work which you would find most useful, and how you will undertake learning as much as you can on your own. If you have not studied this language it is still your responsibility to see what might be available. Visit Widener, Schoenhof's, and look at internet sites. See what is available and consider to what extent the materials you find correspond to your needs. Go beyond the textbook to consider how you can already, in the first semester, begin linking it with your academic purpose.

**Progress reports:** You are required to submit a progress report at mid-semester (due by October 20 in Fall and before Spring Break week in Spring) and a final evaluation on the last day of Reading Period. Progress reports should be brief but informative summaries of how your studies are progressing, including areas of particular success or where improved effort is needed. The purpose of the mid-semester report is self-evaluation of your progress with the possibility of feedback for suggested modification of your study program. The final report should be an effort to measure your accomplishment and make suggestions for your own future study. The mid-semester and final evaluations are required. You will not receive a grade for

this course if either progress report is not submitted, and you will not receive reminders, so put this information on your calendar now.

If you have any questions not answered here, please see address questions to Dr. Steven Clancy (sclancy@fas.harvard.edu).

Although you should propose an instructor for your tutorial, in some cases the Department may assign a different instructor. Instructors may already be available for Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, Bulgarian, Czech, Polish, Russian, and Ukrainian. For other courses, it will be necessary for you to find an appropriate instructor. Please check with Dr. Steven Clancy if you are in need of suggestions. It is possible we may have someone in mind.

If your proposal is approved, you are expected to meet all deadlines, on your own, without reminders.

These tutorials must be approved each semester. Even if you are pursuing a full year of study of a language, you must apply separately in Fall and Spring Semesters, even though your Spring proposal may be largely the same and merely a continuation of what was begun in the Fall.

No tutorials will be approved for courses that duplicate existing regular course offerings. (For example, a Spring tutorial request for a course that is regularly offered each F will not be approved.)

These courses are not part of faculty and instructors' regular responsibilities. Most instructors are delighted to teach them, but as tutorials they place much of the responsibility for course content and progress on the student. If you are not prepared to be committed to this course and put in the necessary time and effort, do not apply.

### **Summary of Your Proposal (Final Question)**

We may receive as many as two dozen such proposals and the submission and approval process is incredibly time consuming. For this reason, it is especially important that you provide all necessary information in your original submission so that it is not necessary to contact you for supplemental information or clarification.

It is especially important that you provide a clear and cogent justification for the course as an answer to the final question on the application. Departmental approval will depend on the entire application, but administrative approval is largely dependent on what is summarized in this question. Models are provided below of previously approved proposals as examples of what is expected. The goal is for Dr. Clancy to be able to approve the line: "His/Her request is highly justified and his/her plan for carrying out this study as a guided tutorial is solid and well-developed." Please peruse these samples below and think of ways your proposal can be similarly structured. Although heritage, future professional goals, and travel are mentioned as part of some of these proposals, they are supplemental justifications alongside the academic and immediate research goals. Don't feel that you can't mention these items if they are part of your reasons, but know that you must provide solid academic reasons for your study of the language. Note that you should write this paragraph in the third person so that it may be more easily compiled into the group summary provided to the Dean's office.

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**FirstName LastName**, a sophomore concentrating in Human Evolutionary Biology, requests an elementary tutorial in **Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian** (BCS Ar) for Spring 20\_ in support of research interests in archaeological sites related to human evolutionary biology, specifically the Vindija Cave site in Croatia. He plans to pursue fieldwork and in-country research in the future and would like to continue study of the language in order to earn a Foreign Language Citation. His request is highly justified and his plan for carrying out this study as a guided tutorial is solid and well-developed. The tutorial will be conducted with **BCS Instructor**, who has agreed to work with this student and others in an elementary tutorial.

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**FirstName LastName**, a graduate student in the Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures (GSAS, G1), requests an **elementary tutorial in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian** (BCS Ar) for Fall 20\_\_ in support of future field work and in-country research related to her dissertation and minor field. Study of the language is also imperative for fulfilling the requirements of her FLAS Fellowship. Her request is highly justified and her plan for carrying out this study as a guided tutorial is solid and well-developed. **StudentName** needs a professional understanding of the BCS literary languages so as to pursue comparative work with BCS and Russian literature in her dissertation. The tutorial will be conducted with **BCS Instructor**, who has agreed to work with this student and others in an elementary tutorial.

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**FirstName LastName**, a junior concentrating in Chemistry (AB expected 20\_\_), requests an **advanced tutorial in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian** for Fall 20\_\_. She is a student of Croatian heritage who would like to pursue study of the language for heritage purposes as well as for future study abroad and research interests. She plans to travel to Croatia next summer for an internship and has future plans to do pediatric work in Croatia. She is also currently working as a research assistant for **ProfessorName** at the Harvard School of Public Health on a project that monitors the well-being of Roma populations in several nations in Eastern Europe, including work compiling information from Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian newspapers. Her request is highly justified and she has a well-developed plan for the tutorial. The tutorial will be conducted with **BCS Instructor**, who has agreed to work with this student in an advanced tutorial focusing on medical issues and human rights in the Balkans.

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**FirstName LastName**, a senior concentrating in History (AB expected 20\_\_), requests an **advanced tutorial in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian** for Spring 20\_\_. He is a student of Croatian heritage who would like to pursue study of the language for heritage purposes as well as for future study abroad and research interests. His study of the language will directly support his proposed senior thesis research on the role of privatization in the transitional period of the former Yugoslav countries as well as Yugoslav-US foreign relations and economic diplomacy. He spent the past summer working with the President of Croatia and will likely have more professional opportunities in the region in the future. His request is highly justified and his plan for carrying out this study as a guided tutorial is solid and well-developed. The tutorial will be conducted with **BCS Instructor**, who has agreed to work with this student and others in an advanced tutorial.

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**FirstName LastName**, a freshman with undeclared concentration (AB expected 20\_\_), requests an **advanced tutorial in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian** for Spring 20\_\_. She is a student of Balkan heritage who would like to pursue study of the language for heritage purposes as well as for future study abroad and research interests. Last semester, she wrote a research paper discussing the healthcare system in Bosnia, a topic she found deeply engaging and which she hopes to continue learning more about when she travels to Bosnia to discuss the healthcare system with executives of various hospitals. She also plans to use this language and topic as a basis for her senior thesis. She would like to use this course as a way to improve her speaking, writing, and comprehension for furthering these academic goals. Her request is highly justified and she has a well-developed plan for the tutorial. The tutorial will be conducted with **BCS Instructor**, who has agreed to work with this student in an advanced tutorial.

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**FirstName LastName**, a junior concentrating in Psychology (AB expected 20\_\_), requests an **advanced tutorial in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian** for Spring 20\_\_. She is a student of Croatian heritage who would like to pursue study of the language for heritage purposes as well as research. Her previous study of the language led to an internship in the region, after which she is pursuing further study of the language to continue research and writing ties with her collaborators there. Next summer she plans to again be in the region for research cooperation with professors at the Croatian Medical School and the Institute for Brain Research. She will also be leading a tour promoting the Croatian edition of Author's bestseller *Title* in the region in June 20\_\_. Her request is highly justified and she has a well-developed plan for the tutorial. The tutorial will be conducted with **BCS Instructor**, who has agreed to work with this student and others in an advanced tutorial.

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**FirstName LastName**, a graduate student in the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE, MA expected 20\_\_), requests an **advanced tutorial in Polish** (Polish Cr) for Spring 20\_\_. Study of Polish at the advanced level is necessary for StudentName's research on Polish university students' experiences in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s in comparison with the experiences of American students. She also plans to pursue this research at the doctoral level after completing the MA. Her request is highly justified and her plan for carrying out this study as a guided tutorial is solid and well-developed. The tutorial will be conducted with **Anna Baranczak**, who has agreed to work with this student and others in an advanced tutorial.

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**FirstName LastName**, a senior concentrating in Visual and Environmental Studies, requests an **advanced tutorial in Polish** (Polish Cr) for Spring 20\_\_. He has completed both elementary and intermediate Polish in our program and desires to continue at the advanced level in support of study abroad plans and in order to earn the Foreign Language Citation. He intends to conduct graduate study in communications and Eastern European history in Poland in the future. His request is highly justified and his plan for carrying out this study as a guided tutorial is solid and well-developed. The tutorial will be conducted with **Anna Baranczak**, who has agreed to work with this student and others in an advanced tutorial.

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**FirstName LastName**, a graduate student in the History program (G1, Ph.D. expected 20\_\_), requests an **elementary tutorial in Romanian** for Fall 20\_\_ as part of her future dissertation research and general preparation for future career goals. Her request is highly justified and her plan for carrying out this study as a guided tutorial is solid and well-developed. This course is essential for StudentName's plans to conduct field work in Moldova in Summer 20\_\_. The tutorial will be conducted with **TeacherName**, who has agreed to work with this student in an elementary tutorial.

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**FirstName LastName**, a graduate student in the REECA program (GSAS, G2, MA expected 20\_\_), requests an **advanced tutorial in Russian** for Spring 20\_\_ as part of his thesis research and general preparation for future career goals. His request is highly justified and his plan for carrying out this study as a guided tutorial is solid and well-developed. StudentName has designed a course of study in business and legal Russian which will enable him to conduct his thesis research and after Harvard he will use this knowledge working as a corporate lawyer for a firm with an especially large and influential Russian and Eastern European clientele. He would like to be able to reach a level of Russian where he could conduct business with clients from Russia in their native language. He already has some experience gained from working in corporate finance in Moscow. This course is essential for StudentName's plans to write his thesis and for his career goals after graduation. The tutorial will be conducted with **TeacherName**, who has agreed to work with this student in an advanced tutorial.

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**FirstName LastName**, a second-year graduate student (GSAS, G2), requests an **intermediate tutorial in Ukrainian** (Ukrainian Br) for Spring 20\_\_. Her thesis on Ukrainian shale gas development relies on numerous Ukrainian newspapers and journals, as well as governmental and NGO reports; materials unavailable in English. She is a heritage speaker of Russian and will bring this knowledge to bear on her study of Ukrainian. Her request is highly justified and her plan for carrying out this study as a guided tutorial is solid and well-developed. The tutorial will be conducted with **Volodymyr Dibrova**, who has agreed to work with this student and others in an intermediate tutorial.