



27 January 2017

Dear STARTALK Parents and Students,

We have received several letters from parents and community members asking why the UW Startalk Program is not offering the Russian Student Program this summer. Here are a few things to help you better understand the current situation:

1. STARTALK is a federally funded grant. Each year we write a new proposal, and each year they decide whether to continue funding it. So, at any point, the grant-funded program could end. The UW has no independent funding for it.

2. The UW STARTALK Russian Student Program was not abolished. The STARTALK team did not apply for Russian for the Student Program for 2017 for several reasons:

- In the past several years, we have had fewer and fewer Russian teachers participating in the UW STARTALK Teacher Program (just one in 2016). Therefore we were concerned about having adequate staffing for a Russian Student Program in summer 2017. The UW STARTALK Teacher Program for 2017 DOES welcome Russian teachers to attend it. If we get enough, it would be much easier to plan for a Russian Student Program in 2018.
- The UW hired a new Portuguese Instructor last year, who was very enthusiastic about taking on the Lead Instructor role for a UW STARTALK Student Program in Portuguese in summer 2017. Since he attracted 7 Portuguese teachers to the STARTALK Teacher Program last summer (2016), we knew we would have an adequate number of staff for Portuguese.

3. We are going to apply for the STARTALK grant for 2018. If the Russian community shows us support and involvement and we have adequate staffing for Russian in 2018, we are likely to apply for Russian. We invite you to become involved. All parents who are interested and enthusiastic about volunteering for the UW STARTALK Russian Student Program are invited. **The first meeting will take place on Friday, 17 February 2017, at 7 p.m. in Denny Hall Room 159, at the University of Washington.**

4. For the Russian Heritage Language Student Program to run in the future, we need to find permanent non-STARTALK grant funding for Russian language programs for heritage speakers. We urge you to work with the UW Slavic Department to make offering such programs a priority, and then with the Russian business community and others to raise the funds needed to make the program a reality.

5. For those Russian heritage students who want to take STEM-based Russian classes and earn 5 UW credits in 2017 we have a new course. Thanks to the success of the summer UW STARTALK Russian Student Program, the Slavic Department has already added RUSS - A316 Extended Russian through STEM next fall. This is a 5-credit course, which is open to

World  
Languages  
and Cultures

Akkadian  
Amharic  
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Aramaic  
Bengali  
Bulgarian  
Cambodian  
Chinese  
Croatian  
Czech  
Danish  
English  
Estonian  
Finnish  
French  
German  
Greek  
Hebrew  
Hindi  
Icelandic  
Indonesian  
Italian  
Japanese  
Kazakh  
Kirghiz  
Korean  
Latin  
Latvian  
Lithuanian  
Lushootseed  
Mongolian  
Navaho  
Norwegian  
Persian  
Polish  
Portuguese  
Romanian  
Russian  
Salish  
Sanskrit  
Serbian  
Slovak  
Somali  
Spanish  
Swahili  
Swedish  
Tagalog  
Tamil  
Thai  
Turkish  
Uighur  
Ukrainian  
Uzbek  
Vietnamese  
Zulu

high school students, Russian Heritage learners, and will take place twice a week (4-5:20 pm) on the UW campus. Please help promote that course in the Russian community.

Please, join us on the UW STARTALK Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/UWSTARTALK/>

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul K. Aoki". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paul" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Aoki".

Paul K. Aoki, Ph.D.  
Language Learning Center, Director,  
STARTALK Principal Investigator

UW STARTALK Russian Team