

Title: Preparing Students for Immersion Study Abroad: Challenges and Prospects  
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Abstract:

There are hundreds of study-abroad programs for full-time college and university level students. However, there is one steadily growing group of learners of Russian that has been left behind – individual adult learners, many of whom need training to perform tasks requiring language skills in the US government agencies as well as in the private sector. Many programs do not bring real benefits for specific job-related linguistic requirements (bilingual training, building specialized terminology, listening comprehension, etc.). To meet the educational needs of this group of learners with specifically defined academic goals, the National Non-Proliferation Security Administration (NNSA) Center for Strategic Language Training in association with the Graduate School USA, developed a collaboration with the Russian academic institutions to create new training materials and individually tailored programs to minimize academic and cultural assimilation challenges (A. Berdichevskii *Cross-Cultural Assimilation Course for Professionals* 2014). The presentation addresses the growing need for more effective student preparation for academic and cultural differences they will encounter at Russian universities. Given the time constraints of the working adult, the foundation course on Russia and its civilization is taught in English and consists of ten seminars (S. Weber 2012). To bring real life into the classroom, the course is supplemented with an educational multimedia course *Live From Russia* (by M. Lekic and D. Davidson] based on the daily experiences of a young American in Russia. Students at a more advanced level take an additional course written by Russians, sharing their experiences teaching and hosting American students. *How to Deal with Russians* by A. Pavlovskaya is written in English and Russian, and provides ample materials for seminars, workshops, and discussions. Discussion will focus on collaboration with Russian academic institutions in creating new training materials and individually tailored programs minimize academic and cultural assimilation challenges.