News from Russia is an intermediate/advanced-level text on the Russian media intended for use in a one-semester course (3 semester credit hours).

News from Russia teaches the Russian language in context by introducing the learners to various aspects of modern Russian life as seen through printed mass media, especially Internet media sources. The approach and contents make News from Russia suitable for a broad range of audiences, from traditional language majors and minors to students majoring in the humanities, communication, and international business.

News from Russia serves as a launching pad to more advanced work with Russian media, such as live television news broadcasts. Understanding authentic spoken language, especially the official language of the news, requires very specific vocabulary skills, and News from Russia gives the basic cultural and linguistic background needed for such advanced work.

News from Russia deals with the factual themes most often encountered in the press, such as government and politics, business and economics, armed conflicts, and accidents and catastrophes. It starts with an introductory chapter, which explains the basic vocabulary of the press and the most typical layout of newspapers, including headings, columns, etc. It also gives detailed information about the history, popularity, and intended audience of various newspapers and magazines.

All five chapters have the same format. The section Vocabulary Development, intended mainly for homework, first introduces the key vocabulary and the most typical phrases. Following the vocabulary is a list of Roots, where applicable lexical items are grouped according to their etymology. These two presentations of the vocabulary are followed by contextual applications of the new lexicon.

The main section, called Class Activities, puts the vocabulary in action through various communicative tasks. When applicable, the tasks are preceded by background information dealing with the context, cultural nuances, or lexical idioms. The activities are based on authentic excerpts from Russian media sources, and they include discussions, oral reports, summaries, and reviews. In order to cater to the needs of students at different skill levels, most chapters have a variety of tasks best suited for advanced students of Russian. These activities are located in the Extra section at the end of the chapter.

In order to keep the materials current, News from Russia requires extensive use of the Internet. Each chapter has extensive written Web-based tasks, which can be accessed on the News from Russia Web site (http://mlc.utsa.edu/smi). These tasks will be constantly updated.

News from Russia is a multi-tiered textbook, which aims to achieve several interrelated goals. It develops cultural understanding by providing information about modern Russian society, not only in the main readings, but also in the form of charts, tables, and opinion polls. Although News from Russia focuses mostly on reading skills, oral interaction with the material in the classroom combined with written homework will enhance students’ skills in all four areas. The linguistic goal of News from Russia is to prepare students to read Russian mass media
sources on different themes and genres, to give oral reports, to participate in discussions, and to write summaries and reviews, to the degree appropriate for intermediate or advanced level skills.

*News from Russia* presupposes the knowledge of basic Russian grammar, and therefore it does not teach the structure of language beyond lexical and stylistic aspects. Rather, the authors assume that language acquisition takes place when students are involved in using the language for communication.

*News from Russia* is thematically linked with a Multimedia Distance Learning course housed at the Center for International Education at Lomonosov Moscow State University (http://dist-learn.ru). The course is based on original news stories from Russian television and can be used as a video supplement for *News from Russia*.

The following symbols are used in the textbook:

- 🌼 Roots, a section on Russian word formation
- 🔡 Class discussion or group activity
- 🔢 Answer key to the exercises, located on the textbook Web site (http://mllc.utsa.edu/smi)
- 🛡 Internet activity, accessed through the textbook Web site