



A newsletter devoted to diversity and opportunity in Eastern Europe and Eurasia, published by the Duke-UNC Center for Slavic, Eurasian, and East European Studies

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Internationalization in the Classroom: Freshmen Journey to Russia

Saint Petersburg was founded on May 16, 1703 by Peter the Great. On October 10, 1997, twenty-seven Duke freshmen discovered it for themselves as one of the most beautiful cities in the world. A city of many names, including the most recent Petrograd and Leningrad, Saint Petersburg still inspires a sense of awe in its visitors. For six days, the freshmen participating in the FOCUS program, *The Changing Faces of Russia*, experienced an intense exposure to the cultural life of this Russian capital.

The city of St. Petersburg contains over 90 rivers and canals, 400 bridges, 60 parks, and 150 gardens. A 32-kilometer long section of the Neva flows within the city limits. The city's 21 administrative units cover 620 square kilometers and 5 to 6 million inhabitants. The events of the week included visits to the Hermitage, Russian Museum, Peter and Paul Fortress and Cathedral, Smolny Cathedral and Institute, the Kirov/Mariinka Theatre, the Musorgsky Theatre, the philharmonic and an evening of folk dancing and music at the Palace of Petersburg.

There were several unusual aspects to this "field trip" to Russia. I was fortunate enough to raise the money for the trip through alumni donors with the help of our Duke programs in Russian, so the trip was free for the students. The University of St. Petersburg was very cooperative in providing room and board at the rate of \$27 per day. With the help of our faculty friends in Russia, we were able to purchase all of the theater tickets at student rates, and I personally hired a private bus that stayed faithfully by our side for the entire six days. Such a program involved an enormous amount of planning and organization, but the rewards were truly remarkable. Although I anticipated that such an experience could make a positive impact on our freshmen, I failed to imagine the full extent of their gratitude and the intellectual stimulation that they would receive from the experience.

One reason for this success was the intensive preparation our students underwent for six weeks prior to departure. The Russia FOCUS program consists of four courses: 20th century history, literature, legal traditions, and culture. In addition to

these classes, the students and faculty met each Monday evening for dinner and a class on a topic selected in advance. In conjunction with their regular course work, these evenings helped to fill in the gaps and prepare the students to better absorb the enormous amounts of information they would be exposed to in Russia.

It is not uncommon these days to hear universities talking about the importance of internationalization. I am concerned that these words often fail to make the desired impact on our programs. By reimagining what the classroom experience might include, our students may find themselves literally in a completely different world. This may not always include actual travel, but if the opportunity presents itself, I highly recommend such field trips as a way of injecting excitement into learning.

Edna Andrews

Professor, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures
Duke University

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### **Learning Sorbian in Leipzig**

With the help of a Foreign Language Area Studies Grant from the Center for Slavic, Eurasian, and East European Studies, I was able to spend the summer of 1997 learning Sorbian at the University of Leipzig, Germany. The Sorbs are a small Slavic minority, numbering approximately 60,000, who consider their traditional homeland to be a region known as Lusatia in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR). Most Germans know the Sorbs because of the Spree Forest, a popular tourist spot near Berlin, where Sorbs dress in traditional costume for the benefit of visitors. Lusatia, however, extends further south of Berlin along the Spree river to the Czech border. I went to Germany to prepare for my dissertation project, which will be a comparative study of Sorbian and Jewish ethnic identity in the GDR.

The University of Leipzig's Institute for Sorbian Studies was one of many state-sponsored Sorbian institutions established in the late 1940's and early 1950's to publicly foster Sorbian culture. The Sorbs had an official "protected" status in the

GDR, and the state show-cased its "Sorbian friends" as a token of cultural sensitivity. Since German unification, some of these institutions appear to be in flux facing a loss of funding, yet the institute at the University of Leipzig continues to have a thriving program teaching courses in Sorbian language, literature, and history. In addition, the University of Leipzig has a close working relationship with a research center in the nearby city of Bautzen, where scholars work in the fields of Sorbian linguistics, history, and anthropology. Some of these researchers are now beginning to examine the status of Sorbs in the GDR to analyze the contradictions in their putative "protective" years.

Every other year, Bautzen attracts students and scholars from Poland, the Czech Republic, Germany, Russia, and the United States, and in the past, even Japan, who come there for the Sorbian Summer Language Program. Some have a firm grounding in other Slavic languages and want to add Sorbian to their list, while often Germans living in Lusatia come to learn the language of their neighbors. I urge American students to take advantage of the programs in both Bautzen and Leipzig. This is a friendly, close-knit community eager to teach the language of the last of many Slavic speaking groups who used to occupy the region between the Oder and Elbe rivers. In addition, Sorbs provide an important case-study for the status of ethnic minorities in Germany and the centuries-long interaction between Germans and Slavs.

**Cora Granata**

Graduate Student, Department of History  
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

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Summer in St. Petersburg

Thanks to a generous FLAS fellowship, I spent seven magical weeks in St. Petersburg this past May and June, studying with the infinitely charming and knowledgeable Professor Kira Rogova at St. Petersburg University, attending engaging lectures on contemporary literature at the Smolnyi Institute and wining and dining with the recent literary superstar Mikhail Kuraev. While this Duke in Russia program afforded me excellent resources for improving my Russian through one-on-one classes on Contemporary Women's Literature and Literature of the Silver Age with Dr. Rogova, it also offered invaluable cultural opportunities which made this experience stand out from other previous stays in the Window on the West.

Of course, there was the ballet, the Philharmonia and the dazzling tours of the palaces and gardens of Pushkin, Pavlovsk and Peterhof (not to mention Petrozavodsk). But it is really some of the little things, the details that never failed to entertain when our thoughts turned sadly homewards, that grab my attention when I think about what I learned in Russia this summer. I will not soon forget the mildly overzealous tourguide who could not but consistently give one a profound new appreciation for the import and the beauty of Peter's City

of Superlatives each time we sped through the streets in our dusty little minivan. I look forward to visiting again the lively, energetic women staffing the Center for Gender Studies (or is it the *tseñtr imeni Gendera*? Gender- isn't that some German philanthropist?) and exploring their rather impressive, ever-expanding library.

I will long cherish memories of sunbathing in the seaside dump known affectionately as the "Chaika Gardens," admiring the Bay of Finland through the skeleton of a rusted out, overturned bus (but admittedly I ventured out only after they had tamed the trash fires). Taking a break from Ulitskaya and Belyi, I enjoyed indulging in the novel thrill of Russian tabloids to flex my Russian reading muscle (when men breast feed, is their milk really sweeter? who knew!?). And oh!, the phrases I learned conversing in line (where else?) with other indignant revelers when the kegs ran dry at Petersburg's birthday beer garden! Perhaps this is all just a sad reflection on the low brow pastimes I find entertaining and how they got me through seven weeks in Russia. Nevertheless, what I find extremely valuable in these experiences are the interesting, unforgettable personalities and the unexpected cultural encounters which gave me an experience of life in Russia I wouldn't otherwise get in any American college classroom. I could not have been more pleased with how I met my academic objectives with Dr. Rogova's instruction - I loved my readings and her lectures greatly enhanced them. However, what contributed most directly to my comfort and confidence with Russian language and culture in every day Russia were many of my experiences outside the classroom, in the pages of "SPID-info," in the shadow of a giant inflatable bottle of Baltika porter.

Carrie Levesque

Graduate Student, Slavic Languages and Literatures
Duke University

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## Jews and Slavs in Czech Lands

I received a FLAS for the 1997-98 academic year to study first-year Czech. Learning Czech will enable me to comparatively investigate the area of Slavic-Jewish relations: Polish, Russian and Czech. I have looked at Polish and Jewish and Russian and Jewish literary representations both before and after World War II, and am particularly interested in borders and boundaries between the two communities.

The relations of Jews and Slavs in the Czech-speaking lands differ markedly from those in Russia and Poland. I am curious to what extent a concept of Eastern European vs. Russian treatment of the Jewish communities existed and how this has been played out in Poland and the Czech lands. Having a FLAS has provided me with the time to begin some of these investigations.

**Maria T. Stalnaker**

Graduate Student, Slavic Languages and Literatures  
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

## Calendar

Please join us for **Dostoevsky Day at Duke on Saturday, December 6**, in Room 305, Languages Building, Duke West Campus from 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Both faculty and students will present papers. The featured speaker will be Professor Robin Feuer Miller of Brandeis University, who will present her lecture "Dostoevsky, William James and the Perilous Journey to Conversion." Professor Miller will speak at 1:30 p.m. For more detailed information, please call 660-3140 or send an e-mail message to [bhayes@acpub.duke.edu](mailto:bhayes@acpub.duke.edu).

**Will Current**, graduate student at the School of Dentistry, UNC-CH, will speak about his experiences as an American dentist in Saratov, Russia, on **Tuesday, January 20, 1998**, at 4:00 p.m. in the conference room at the University Center for International Studies, 223 E. Franklin Street, Chapel Hill.

A small symposium on "**The Appropriation of Folk Music by Eastern European Composers**" will be presented in the afternoon on **Friday, January 30**. Speakers include Richard Taruskin, UC Berkley; Michael Beckerman, UC Santa Barbara; Margarita Mazo, Ohio State University; and Stephen Press, Graduate Student UNC-CH. The three guest speakers are internationally known for their expertise in Eastern European Music and Mr. Press is completing a dissertation on Prokofiev's early ballets. In the evening, the Lanier Trio (piano, violin, and cello) will perform works by Smetana, Dvorak, and Haydn in Hill Hall Auditorium.

## Slavic and Eastern European Jobs Fair

The Center for Slavic, Eurasian, and East European Studies is proud to announce our first annual Jobs Fair on **Monday, January 26** at UNC from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in 211-212 Student Union. The Fair will feature a panel of three speakers: Jeff Smith, a local businessman who owns and manages a software development company in Eastern Europe; Collin Schnell, a recent UNC graduate, who works for the US government; and Liz Kellison, another recent UNC graduate who works in the field of education. This panel will be moderated by Vicki Lotz, from the University Career Services. Learn about current job opportunities, job-related websites, and other resource materials.

Duke's Jobs Fair will be on **Tuesday, January 27**. Please contact Michael Newcity for more information.

Don't forget to stop by the Russian Table at Caribou Coffee on Franklin Street on Wednesdays afternoons between 3:30-5:00.

## News from Davis Library, UNC

Recent purchases made by the department of **Slavic and East European Resources (SEER)** include the following three CD-ROMs. The **Russian National Bibliography CD** includes all book publications received by the Russian Book Chamber, a national depository. Two new **SovLit CD's** cover Soviet History, and Soviet Literature and Literary Criticism. CD-ROMs are located in the Electronic Information Services Department near the Reference Department. Recent microfilm purchases include **Archives of the Soviet Communist Party** (Fond 89, The Soviet Communist Party on Trial; Fond 6, Opisi 1-9; Fond 2, Opisi 1, vols. 1-10). These Microfilms are available in the Microfilm Reading Room on the second floor of Davis Library.

Inquiries, requests, and suggestions are welcome at the department's email address ([slavlib@email.unc.edu](mailto:slavlib@email.unc.edu)). A new webpage (<http://www.unc.edu/~slavlib/serials.html>) lists many of the irregular serial publications currently received but not on subscription or standing order through Davis' Serial Department. Remember to check the library's online catalog for exact holdings information. SEER's homepage (<http://www.unc.edu/~slavlib/SEER.htm>) is currently under construction but should be available by early Spring. The completed page will include a description of the department and links to other sites on campus and abroad. Some of this information is currently available through the Collection Development webpage (<http://www.unc.edu/~slavlib/nadia.html>).

## Other Opportunities

**American Historical Society of Germans From Russia** in Lincoln, Nebraska, has flexible, short-term internships available for students interested in the history of Germans from Russia in Russia, Central Europe, and North America. Student internships primarily involve indexing and translating German language materials and taped interviews into English. For more information on internships or other opportunities and resources, contact Tracy Lauritzen Wright, Research Team, American Historical Society of Germans From Russia, 631 D St., Lincoln, NE 68502-1199; tel. (402) 474-3363; fax (402) 474-7229; [ahsgr@aol.com](mailto:ahsgr@aol.com).

**The Civic Education Project** places faculty and advanced graduate students in social sciences departments in Eastern Europe and the CIS for one year of teaching and program development. CEP fellows assist with a variety of university restructuring projects including curriculum reform, faculty retraining, and development of specialized libraries and resource centers. Both faculty and advanced graduate students may apply. Associated with Yale University and the Central European University. For information, contact CEP, PO Box

205445 Yale Station, New Haven, CT 06520-5445; tel. (203) 781-0263; info@cep.yale.edu; http://www.cep.yale.edu

**The Office of International Affairs** at the School of Medicine, UNC, has available the following two items: *Traveling Healthy* (July 97) contains an excellent article on health concerns for travelers in the Former Soviet Union. *Common Health* (Summer 97) reports on a conference on the changing health care environment in nine Central and Eastern European countries held in Zagreb, Croatia in May 1997. Please call the OIA at 962-0000.

**ACTR/ACCELS**, a private, non-profit, educational and exchange organization, offers services and programs to students and scholars of Russia, Eastern Europe and Eurasia, including language/culture programs, homestays, volunteer service opportunities and visa and other support for research trips. Financial assistance is available. Contact Russian-Eurasian Programs, 1776 Massachusetts Ave, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20036, tel. (202) 833-7522; fax (202) 833-7523, stephens@actr.org, http://www.actr.org.

**Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars EES Short-Term Grants** provide a daily stipend of \$80 to advanced graduate students and post doctorals doing scholarly research with the specialized resources of the Washington area. Stipends require graduates to remain in Washington and to forego other obligations during the grant period which can last a maximum of 30 days. Quarterly deadlines: Dec. 1, Mar. 1, June 1, Sept. 1. For information

contact: East European Studies, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 370 L'Enfant Promenade, Suite 704, Washington, DC 20024; tel., (202) 287-3000; ees-wwc@erols.com.

**Third Annual Conference on World Literature** at Appalachian State University, April 24-5, 1998, is soliciting papers, especially proposals on film, cultural studies and art, and the pedagogy of world literature. The deadline is January 20, 1998. For proposal information contact William Atkinson, English Department, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC 28608; tel. (704) 262-2890/2978. For registration forms contact Wendy Ellis, Conferences and Institutes, University Hall, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, 28608; tel. (704) 262-2744.

**1999 Special Olympics World Games** will be held in North Carolina from June 26 through July 4, 1999. This will be the largest sporting event in the world during 1999. Preceding the games, communities throughout the state will be hosting visiting international teams. 2500 Volunteer Interpreters will be needed in approximately 40 languages. Anyone interested in serving as a volunteer interpreter or delegation assistant is asked to complete a preliminary language skills survey. For information, call 1-888-767-1999 or visit [www.99games.com](http://www.99games.com).

More information on any of the above opportunities can also be obtained at the UNC-CH Center for Slavic, Eurasian and East European Studies, 223 E. Franklin Street, Chapel Hill.

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Any contributions and announcements that you would like included in *inflections* should be sent to the Center in Chapel Hill. The deadline for contributions to the next issue of *inflections* is January 19, 1998. For more information on any of the above events or opportunities, please feel free to contact the Center on either campus or stop by and browse through our bulletin board postings. We can be reached as follows:

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We look forward to seeing you soon!

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