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CREECA Staff

Director

Ted Gerber
director@creeca.wisc.edu

Associate Director

Jennifer Tishler
assocdir@creeca.wisc.edu

Outreach Coordinator

Nancy Heingartner
outreach@creeca.wisc.edu

Financial Specialist

Maki Raymo
finance@creeca.wisc.edu

Events Coordinator

Julia Vasylenko
events@creeca.wisc.edu

Office Coordinator

Naira Ovsepyan
info@creeca.wisc.edu

Web & Publications Assistant

Alec Luhn
webmaster@creeca.wisc.edu

Building a Russian FLAGSHIP CENTER

New federally funded center will expand language learning options at UW-Madison

BY ALEC LUHN
 Web and Publications Assistant

Beginning in fall 2010, UW-Madison will host a federally funded Russian Flagship Center to allow undergraduate students to acquire professional-level Russian language skills.

In March 2010, the National Security Education Program (NSEP) at the U.S. Department of Defense selected UW-Madison to host the center as part of its Language Flagship initiative, awarding the university a three-year grant of nearly \$1 million. The new center will offer a program designed to enable students of all majors to achieve a Superior level of proficiency on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages scale. In addition to four years of Russian language classes, Flagship students will take courses on Russian culture and participate in extracurricular activities such as a Russian-language residence hall floor.

Even after studying abroad in Russia for a semester, most U.S. undergraduate Russian learners finish college with an Intermediate Mid level command of the language. This is only enough Russian to get along on a "basic survival level," said Karen Evans-Romaine, the director of the UW-Madison Russian Flagship Center and an associate professor of Slavic languages and literature. "What [the Russian Flagship Center] will be able to do is allow students who are motivated and capable to develop the ability ... to read, write, speak and listen, to function on a professional level" in settings such as a convention or press conference, she added.

UW-Madison joins four other Russian



Photo by Alec Luhn

The Flagship Center management team is, from left, Wendy Johnson, Karen Evans-Romaine, Dianna Murphy, and Anna Tumarkin.

Flagship centers and a total of 23 other Language Flagship centers in the U.S., each of which facilitates the study of a language "critical to U.S. competitiveness and security," according to the Language Flagship Web site. The center hopes to eventually recruit 20 students each year.

The selection of UW-Madison to host a center speaks to the breadth and strength of the existing course offerings related to Russian language and culture at the university.

"We already bring in one of the strongest language programs [through the Slavic department] and one of the strongest area studies programs through the CREECA faculty," Evans-Romaine said.

For more information about the Russian Flagship Center, please see russianflagship.wisc.edu.

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New Slavic prof brings varied talents

Flagship Center director Karen Evans-Romaine also Pasternak scholar, musician



Photo by Alec Luhn

BY ALEC LUHN
Web and Publications Assistant

Instructors of foreign languages often say that languages must be learned not just from a textbook, but through a variety of other pursuits. Karen Evans-Romaine, who joined UW-Madison’s Department of Slavic Languages and Literature in August 2009, has approached Russian language and culture from almost every angle imaginable and has also authored a Russian textbook to boot.

As a literary scholar, Evans-Romaine has written a book on Boris Pasternak. As a musician, she earned a degree in piano performance and enjoys playing Rachmaninoff. As a researcher at a think tank, she worked with citizen diplomacy organizations and monitored Soviet television and newspapers. Finally, as an administrator, she previously oversaw the Fulbright program in Russia, directed the prestigious Davis School of Russian at Middlebury College, and now heads the new Russian Flagship Center at UW-Madison.

“To help students gain proficiency in Russian is an incredibly inspiring task,” Evans-Romaine said of the Russian Flagship Center, which will begin accepting students during the 2010-11 school year.

As is obvious from the range of her pursuits, Evans-Romaine has come a long way since she and her best friend signed up for an adult education evening class in introductory Russian language in 1979. Then a high school student in Bethesda, Maryland, she had become interested in Russian partly through ballet and music, including performances by celebrated émigrés and exiles from the USSR, such as cellist Mstislav Rostropovich and dancers Rudolf Nureyev and Mikhail Baryshnikov.

“Russia was in the center of every Washingtonian’s attention at that time,” she remembered.

“To help students gain proficiency in Russian is an incredibly inspiring task.”
– UW-Madison professor of Slavic languages and literature Karen Evans-Romaine

After earning a bachelor of arts degree in Russian and Soviet Studies and a bachelor of music in piano performance from Oberlin College in 1986, Evans-Romaine worked as a research assistant at the Washington Research Institute in San Francisco. She entered the graduate program in Slavic languages and literatures at the University of Michigan in 1987, where she first became engrossed in the poetry of Boris Pasternak during a graduate seminar on poetics and metrics. In 1997 her dissertation on the poet and author was published as a book titled

Boris Pasternak and the Tradition of German Romanticism.

“What captivated my attention and still holds it are [Pasternak’s] underlying optimism and love of life, no matter what the historical circumstances,” Evans-Romaine explained. Other captivating aspects, she added, include “his musicality, and the nature of his work; it is an endlessly fascinating puzzle.”

Evans-Romaine completed her dissertation research and met the Pasternak family during a stint as the Fulbright Representative for the Russian Federation from 1993 to 1996. She likened her Fulbright work to playing Santa Claus, since her job involved traveling around Russia lecturing about grant opportunities and answering questions about the American way of life and educational system.

In addition, Evans-Romaine witnessed one of the most turbulent eras of post-Soviet Russia including the 1993 constitutional crisis and the reelection of then-president Boris Yeltsin in 1996. In October 1993, she stayed barricaded inside for two days as pro-parliament protestors tried to storm the Ostankino television station and pro-Yeltsin army tanks fired on the parliament building.

“Street names changed overnight, currency reforms made money suddenly worthless, rules changed constantly,” Evans-Romaine recalled. “At night I could hear gunfire and the explosions of street kiosks being blown up in what I assume were mafia turf battles. Despite all this, I felt as if I were witnessing the birth, albeit difficult, of a democracy.”

In 1996, Evans-Romaine joined the faculty of Ohio University as an assistant professor of Russian and was promoted to associate professor in 2002. She also taught Russian at Middlebury College each summer from 2001 through 2003,

Continued on page 9

News & Updates *Continued from page 10*

Lauren McCarthy (Political Science) published a paper “Beyond Corruption: An Assessment of Russian Law Enforcement’s Fight against Human Trafficking” in the winter 2010 issue of *Demokratizatsiya*.

Undergraduate students

Congratulations to Russian major **Cecilia Leugers**, who received an ACTR Post-Secondary Russian Scholar Laureate Award.

Flagship *Continued from page 1*

Flagship status, however, will allow UW-Madison to expand students’ options for the study of Russian both inside and outside the classroom. To help all students at the center achieve the required four years’ worth of Russian language instruction, a new year-long intensive program will teach students the same amount of material as is normally covered in two years of coursework. Beginning in 2011, intensive programs in second- or third-year Russian will be offered over the summer.

Students in the program will also take a year-long culture course and a senior capstone seminar in Russian, as well as individual and small-group tutorials. In addition, students will write Russian-language research papers in their major discipline and will take two courses in area studies or their major with a one-credit Russian-language component. CREECA will work with the Russian Flagship to introduce small-group tutorial Russian language modules to area studies courses in political science, history, sociology, and geography in which students will read and discuss course materials in Russian.

According to Evans-Romaine, area studies centers like CREECA will play an important role in facilitating Russian-language components, as well as continuing to provide area studies expertise. For example, in fall 2010 CREECA director and professor of sociology Ted Gerber will offer a new first-year interest group (FIG) called “Russia in the Contemporary World” that will allow students to examine Russia from the fields of sociology and political science while commencing their study of the Russian language. The FIG cluster will include a core Sociology course in population and society in contemporary Rus-

CREECA is a Department of Education Title VI National Resource Center. It was established in 1993 to unite the efforts of two long-standing University programs—Russian and East European Studies and Central Asian Studies. CREECA consists of roughly 100 members including many nationally and internationally known experts in their fields.

UPCOMING EVENTS ♦ SUMMER 2010 ♦

We welcome suggestions from faculty and students for speakers in the Thursday CREECA lecture series. Please send recommendations for fall 2010 to Jennifer Tishler (assocdir@creeca.wisc.edu).

Tuesday, June 15

Contesting Nature and Nation in Latvia
Katrina Schwartz,
University of Florida
7 p.m. 1140 Grainger Hall, 975 Univ. Ave.

Thursday, June 17

Chernobyl Town Hall Meeting
With Ukrainian experts who work in the contaminated territories
7:30 - 9 p.m. 1651 Mosse Humanities, 455 N. Park St.

Tuesday, July 6

Caught in Between: Citizenship, Identity, and

Save the Date!

** Free public lecture by social commentator
Andrei Codrescu (see creeca.wisc.edu for updates)
Oct. 4, 2010 at 7 p.m. in the Union Theater*

** Annual celebration of children’s/young adult
literature sponsored by WI Int’l Outreach Consortium
Nov. 20, 2010 (see wisc.wisc.edu for details)*

Young Ethnic Russians in Estonia
Ted Gerber, UW-Madison
7 p.m. 1140 Grainger Hall, 975 University Ave.

sia, together with “Introduction to Comparative Politics” (Poli Sci 106) and first-semester Russian (Slavic 101). Evans-Romaine hopes that course offerings like those included in this FIG and other area studies courses will spark an interest in the Flagship Center.

Although UW students have participated in Language Flagship programs in the past, these were previously restricted to post-baccalaureate students. Michael Baumann, a Russian major who graduated in spring 2005 and spent the past two years as a Foreign Affairs officer in the State Department, had completed the Russian Flagship program in St. Petersburg in 2006-07. In 2006, the Language Flagship began implementing undergraduate programs, of which the new UW center is one.

With UW-Madison’s new center, undergraduate students will be able to complete a capstone year abroad in St. Petersburg, Russia. The program at St. Petersburg State University will offer a language sequence in political science and economics in the fall and one in literature and culture in the spring. Capstone students will have approximately 80 contact

hours of Russian language use per week, in comparison to the 40 contact hours on most study abroad programs.

“[The capstone year abroad] is focused on aspects of the language not usually taught on a study abroad program,” Evans-Romaine said.

Finally, students in the Flagship program commit to participating in extracurricular activities organized by the Flagship Center’s management team and affiliated faculty. Russian outside the classroom is vital for developing skill in the language, Evans-Romaine explained. To this end, a Russian language floor will offer a Russian-language immersion experience to interested students beginning in September 2011. The floor will be a part of UW-Madison’s International Learning Community, located in Adams Hall.

Students who complete the Flagship Center curriculum will receive a certificate from NSEP. The center also hopes to arrange a certificate from UW-Madison certifying completion, Evans-Romaine said.

News & Updates

Faculty

As part of her recent sabbatical project, **Halina Filipowicz** (Slavic) has developed a new course, “Ethical Issues in Representing the Holocaust in Poland,” which she plans to offer in the spring 2011 semester. The course will initially be offered under the rubric “Topics in Slavic Literature and Culture” as Lit Trans 247/Slavic 245. Additionally, Professor Filipowicz was named an Honored Instructor by students living in University Housing for the spring 2010 semester.

Also named an Honored Instructor for spring 2010 was **Karen Evans-Romaine** (Slavic). Read more about Professor Evans-Romaine and the new Russian Flagship on page two of this issue.

Faculty associates and on-campus affiliates

Karen Rosneck (Memorial Library) reports that her book *Understanding Nadezhda Khvoshchinskaya's short story collection 'An album: groups and portraits': the literary innovations of a 19th century Russian writer* is scheduled to be published by the Edwin Mellen Press in fall 2010.

In fall 2010, REECAS M.A. alum **David Dettmann** (Assistant Director, Center for East Asian Studies) will teach a course titled “Islam in China” (East Asian Area Studies 301), focusing on the Muslim populations of China's Northwest and beyond.

Off-campus program associates

Joseph Peschio (Slavic, UW-Milwaukee) was awarded an NEH/ACTR/NCEEER Collaborative Research Grant for a project to be carried out in spring and summer 2011 with Igor Pilshchikov of Moscow State University, the journal *Philologica*, and the Russian on-line “Fundamental Digital Library of Russian Literature and Folklore” feb-web.ru. The research partners will work with colleagues at the Institute of Russian Literature (Pushkin House) to compile and publish a digital scholarly edition of the archive of “The Green Lamp,” an underground literary society to which Alexander Pushkin belonged.

In addition, our colleagues in the **Slavic Languages Program at UW-Milwaukee** (UWM) have other department-wide news to share: In collaboration with the UWM Graduate Certificate in Translation Program, the Slavic Languages Program is launching a new curricular initiative in 2010-2011 which will serve as the foundation for a proposed undergraduate degree track and certificate in Russian-English translation. This program is designed specifically for heritage and native speakers of Russian, who comprise roughly 20% of students taking Russian at UWM, with the aim of providing them a means to capitalize on their native or native-like proficiencies in Russian. As part of this initiative, two new courses are being offered in fall 2010 at UWM: Introduction to Literacy for Native and Heritage Speakers (Russian 210) and Introduction to Translation (Russian 499).

Donald Pienkos (Political Science, UW-Milwaukee) reports that the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Polish Studies Committee, whose members also include UWM professors **Michael Mikos** (Slavic), **Neal Pease** (History), and Winson Chu (History), will serve as the local (Milwaukee) host for the 68th annual national meeting of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America. This interdisciplinary scholarly association, headquartered in New York, sponsors the quarterly journal *Polish Review*. On April 13, 2010, Professors Pease and Pienkos were featured guests on Wisconsin Public Radio to discuss the tragic plane crash that killed Poland's president and many other top political and military officials.

Randall Poole (History, College of St. Scholastica) announces the publication of *A History of Russian Philosophy, 1830-1930: Faith, Reason, and the Defense of Human Dignity* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), which Poole edited together with G.M. Hamburg. Professor Poole contributed the chapter “Vladimir Solov'ev's Philosophical Anthropology: Autonomy, Dignity, Perfectibility.” Other CREECA scholars who contributed to the collection include **Judith Deutsch Kornblatt** (Slavic, UW-Madison), who wrote “Eschatology and Hope in the Silver Age Thought” and **Patrick Michelson** (Honorary Fellow, CREECA), who translated the lead chapter by preeminent Russian philosopher Sergey Horujy.

Together with co-author Sabrina P.

Ramet, **F. Peter Wagner** (Political Science, UW-Whitewater) published “Post-Socialist Models of Rule in Central and Southeastern Europe” in Sabrina P. Ramet, ed., *Central and Southeastern Europe since 1989* (Cambridge University Press, 2010). Professor Wagner also contributed an interview to the collection *1989-2009: The incredible adventure of democracy after communism* [in Romanian] (Institutul European, 2010).

Russell Zanca (Anthropology, Northeastern Illinois University) recently published his book *Life in a Muslim Uzbek Village: Cotton Farming after Communism* (Wadsworth, 2010). It is the first English-language ethnography on Uzbekistan.

Graduate students

Congratulations to **Maria Belodubrovskaya** (Communication Arts), who has been awarded a 2010-2011 Andrew W. Mellon/American Council of Learned Societies Dissertation Completion Fellowship for her dissertation “Banned Films: Soviet Cinema under Stalin and the Failure of Power.”

Ryan Goodwin (REECAS) plans to spend summer 2010 on an internship at the U.S. Embassy in Astana, Kazakhstan.

In April 2010, **Justin Krawitz** (Music) worked with Czech-American composer Karel Husa on Husa's “Piano Sonata No.1.” Born in Prague in 1921, Husa has garnered an array of prestigious awards over the course of his career, including a Pulitzer Prize and the Grawmeyer Award. Krawitz presented a performance of Husa's Piano Sonata No.1 at the Great Lakes Regional Conference of the College Music Society in March 2010 and has been invited to perform the work at the 32nd EPTA European Conference in Ljubljana in October 2010 in a session titled “Another Slav in Paris: Karel Husa's Piano Sonata No.1.”

Colleen Lucey (Slavic) received the Stanley F. and Helen Balcerzak Award from Polanki, the Polish Women's Cultural Club of Milwaukee. Founded in 1953, Polanki is dedicated to promoting knowledge and appreciation of Polish culture among Milwaukee Poles and non-Poles alike and sponsors a variety of programs that highlight the richness of Polish culture.

Continued on next page

UW partners with Kazakh university

UW to develop models for New University of Astana under contract for partnership

UW-MADISON NEWS

The following is a reprint of a press release issued March 4, 2010 by University Communications

A newly created partnership will increase cooperation between the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a new university in Kazakhstan.

Aslan Sarinzhapov, CEO of JSC New University of Astana, and additional members of a Kazakh delegation joined UW-Madison Chancellor Biddy Martin in signing a contract for partnership March 4 in Bascom Hall.

The contract pledges that UW-Madison, through the Division of International Studies in cooperation with the College of Letters and Science, will undertake a feasibility study to develop models for a School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the New University of Astana. Uli Schamiloglu, chair and professor of Central Asian Studies, will head the study that will include other UW faculty and staff.

“We are honored and delighted to be selected by Kazakhstan as a partner as they embark on establishing a new university to bring the benefits of education to their people and the entire region in the tradition of the Wisconsin Idea,” says Gilles Bousquet, dean of International Studies and director of the International Institute.

UW-Madison is the only university in the United States teaching the Kazakh language. Its Central Asian Studies Program includes faculty, staff, and other resources dedicated to the study of Kazakh history, literature and culture.

The government of Kazakhstan has supported thousands of students in their studies outside of the country. With construction of the New University of Astana (also known as Nursultan Nazarbayev University, after the country's president), Kazakhstan hopes to provide students with a world-class, English-language education in their home country.

The university is modeled after top universities around the world, including other institutions with whom the university has signed similar partnerships. These include University College London and several leading U.S. universities, including Carnegie-Mellon, Harvard, and Duke.



Photos by Jeff Miller/University of Wisconsin-Madison

At top, Chancellor Biddy Martin speaks with New University CEO Aslan Sarinzhapov. At bottom, Martin stands with chair and professor of Central Asian Studies Uli Schamiloglu, who will head the UW study.

UW-NUA update

Since the March 2010 contract for partnership was signed, Professor Schamiloglu led a delegation of faculty members and administrators to the New University of Astana (NUA) for a site visit in April. Following that, the members of the delegation and others involved in the project held a workshop on May 7, in which they presented their findings and explored various

aspects of the feasibility study. UW-Madison submitted a feasibility study to NUA for how a proposed “School of Humanities and Social Science” might look. If it is approved by both parties, the eventual plan will create a core undergraduate curriculum in the liberal arts embracing the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, with an emphasis on teaching critical thinking skills.

— Compiled by CREECA staff

Class tackles Central, East Europe

For 10 years interdisciplinary course has been adding breadth to study of Europe

BY JENNIFER TISHLER
Associate Director

First offered in spring 2000, the course “Eastern and Central Europe: An Interdisciplinary Survey” (cross listed as Geography, History, Political Science, and Slavic 254) was initially created by CREECA and the four listed departments in order to provide undergraduate students with a broad background in Central and Eastern Europe through an interdisciplinary approach. Within that rather expansive framework, the lead instructor has leeway to craft the class according to his or her own background and expertise, but the challenge has always been to maintain a common narrative in a class that cuts across disciplines and across borders.

For the spring 2010 semester, David Danaher, professor of Slavic languages and literature, chose to examine the culture of dissent in Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Yugoslavia. By examining the dissident period in these countries through the lens of literature, history, politics, and film, the course challenged students to consider the subject of dissent in Eastern and Central Europe not so much as a historical curiosity (from a 21st-century American perspective), but as something relevant to their own lives that teaches them about themselves. Taking a humanistic approach to the teaching of this course, Professor Danaher maintained a central focus on “faces of dissent” or the stories of individuals involved as “dissidents” in the countries under consideration.

Throughout the semester, students in 254 were exposed to a variety of viewpoints and fields of expertise from guest lectures by UW-Madison professors as well as specialists from other universities. Professor Danaher, a specialist on Czech literature and culture, called upon colleagues from his own department to share their expertise with students, with Professor Halina Filipowicz presenting on the Polish writer Janusz Glowacki and Professor Tomislav Longinovic lecturing



Photo by Alec Luhn

Slavic 254 teaching assistant Naomi Olson leads a discussion of Matthew Collin’s book about a Serbian pirate radio station, *Guerilla Radio*.

on dissent in Yugoslavia. Milan Hauner, an honorary fellow in the Department of History, lectured on Czechoslovak dissident history, speaking about the Prague Spring and Charter 77, while Jan Miernowski, a professor of French who was active in the Polish Solidarity movement in the early 1980’s, gave a personalized talk on that topic. Other speakers included Brian Porter-Szucs, professor of history at the University of Michigan, who spoke on Polish dissent and the role of the Catholic Church, and Jonathan Bolton, associate professor of Slavic languages and literatures at Harvard University, who addressed the origins of the dissident movement in the Czech Republic.

With so many topics and speakers, the role of the teaching assistant is especially vital in helping students to find and articulate connections, and even contradictions, between the various lectures. Naomi Olson, a dissertator in the Slavic department with a background in Russian and East European literature, took up that challenge willingly. Her responsibilities extended far beyond running the weekly discussion sections; she also assisted Professor Danaher with

planning the class, including the design of tests and projects. “Because of this greater level of input,” noted Naomi, “I was more responsible for the success of the class – and as a result I was very invested.”

“The course material covered a wide breadth of topics and individual movements and there truly is something for everyone to get excited about.”
– Freshman Nell Koring

The challenge to students who take an interdisciplinary survey course such as 254 is how to synthesize material from so many different presenters. Naomi drew upon her own training as a literary scholar and encouraged students to employ the training they are receiving in their own major departments.

“Ultimately, one of the main goals of an undergraduate education is to pre-

Continued on next page

Georgians come to see distance learning tech

Info specialists from Republic of Georgia visit Madison

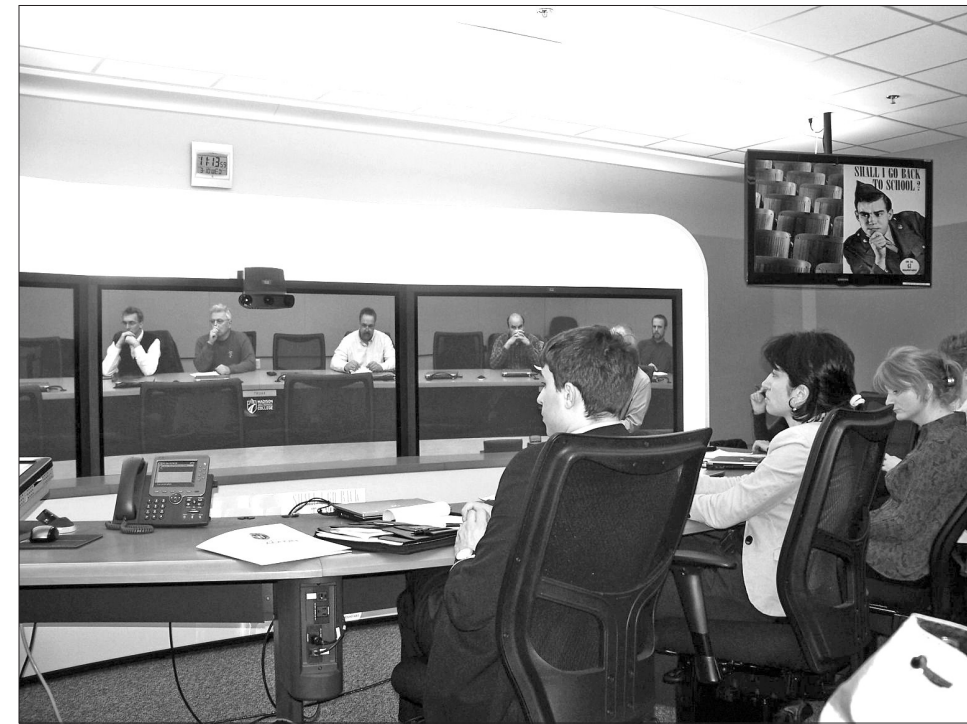


Photo courtesy of Lori Schilz

Georgian technology and media specialists participate in a conference via distance learning technology at Madison Area Technical College.

BY JENNIFER TISHLER
Associate Director

From March 5-13, 2010 Northwestern Technical College (NTC) in Wausau, Wisconsin hosted a delegation of six information technology and media specialists from the Republic of Georgia who came to Wisconsin under the auspices of the Open World Leadership Center to learn about distance learning, new media, and information technology in higher education.

CREECA partnered with NTC staff members to set up meetings and training sessions for the delegates in Madison on March 10-11. During their visit to Madison, the Georgian educators consulted with staff in the Division of Continuing Studies and the School of Education at UW-Madison, including CREECA faculty member Mark S. Johnson (Educational Policy Studies). The group learned about the Wisconsin Center for the Ad-

vancement of Postsecondary Education (WISCAPE) and participated in a demonstration and seminar with the “Games, Learning and Society” working group at the School of Education. They learned about asynchronous distance education courses taught at UW-Madison, saw samples of televised lecture courses that were broadcast on Wisconsin Public Television between 1991-2004, and viewed new online courses that utilize a combination of streaming audio and video.

The educators, who represented a cross-section of Georgian institutions of higher education, including the Georgian Institute of Public Administration and Chavchavadze State University (both in Tbilisi), Telavi State University in eastern Georgia, and the Georgian Ministry of Education, also received a working demonstration of the next generation of distance education technology: a CISCO TelePresence room at the MATC Westside Campus (pictured above).

Evans-Romaine *Continued from page 2*

moving up to direct the college’s Davis School of Russian. Her time at Middlebury helped Evans-Romaine to formulate a philosophy to which she continues to adhere in planning the Russian Flagship Center at UW-Madison. In both settings, the overarching goal includes creating a community of Russian learners and promoting Russian language use outside the classroom.

Since she stepped down from her position at Middlebury and joined UW-Madison as an associate professor of Slavic languages and literature in August 2009, Evans-Romaine has found the Slavic department to be a “family-friendly place in every sense.”

“My colleagues have been wonderful and supportive since before my arrival,” she said. “The faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates are phenomenal.”

At the same time, Evans-Romaine retains several ties to fellow Michigan alumni. Alumnus (and former UW-Madison professor) Ben Rifkin (College of New Jersey) had first asked her to teach at Middlebury, and alumnus Richard Robin (George Washington University) invited her to join the team of authors for the third edition of the Russian language textbook *Golosa*. She and her co-authors are currently working on the fifth edition.

“A number of us Michigan Slavic alumni have joked about the ‘Michigan mafia’ in language teaching, and [that] a passion for teaching, and for Russia and Russian studies, are the common elements that brought us together,” she said.

Nonetheless, Evans-Romaine doesn’t believe that this phenomenon is unique to the “Michigan mafia.”

“I see many of the same features in my current graduate students here at UW-Madison, and those graduate students and PhD alumni from UW-Madison with whom I worked at Middlebury,” she explained. “I see great things coming from our UW grads!”

Russian folk artists play Wisconsin

Zolotoj Plyos brings rich musical tradition to audiences in Madison and McFarland



Photo by Eric Severin Peterson

Zolotoj Plyos performs at McFarland High as students dance in the background.

BY JENNIFER TISHLER
Associate Director

On Friday, April 16, 2010, the prolific and talented Russian folk ensemble Zolotoj Plyos returned to UW-Madison with an all-new program of instrumental and vocal folk music. This is the fourth time that Madison-area audiences have been able to enjoy the virtuosity, spirit, and humor of Alexander Solovov, Elena Sadina, and Sergei Gratchev, all graduates of the Saratov Music Conservatory.

On the morning of April 16, the musicians journeyed to McFarland High School, accompanied by CREECA outreach coordinator Nancy Heingartner. Before an enthusiastic crowd of around 600 students and teachers, the musicians gave a rousing performance of Russian folk music, interspersed with demonstrations of various instruments and commentary about the music's origins and meanings. The musicians also

strove to incorporate their young audience into the performance, teaching the students the refrain of the popular song "Kalinka" and then inviting them to sing along. The culmination of the assembly was a lively dance number, in which local folk dance expert Michael Kuharski led the audience in a round dance through the school gymnasium.

"I can't tell you how many students ... have come up to me and said this was the best assembly they've ever seen."
— McFarland social studies teacher Bruce Fischer

McFarland social studies teachers Bruce Fischer and Elsa Banks, who organized the assembly at the school, expressed their delight at their students' very positive response to the perfor-

mance.

"I can't tell you how many students ... have come up to me and said this was the best assembly they've ever seen," Fischer said.

That evening, the trio gave a public performance in Ingraham Hall on the UW-Madison campus to an equally receptive audience of students, faculty, staff, and community members. The musicians of Zolotoj Plyos travel with and perform on 27 different instruments. Trio member Sergei Gratchev demonstrated his virtuosity on a number of accordions, including one less than four inches high and another in the form of a red boot. Their collection of instruments includes not only the more traditional accordion, three-stringed balalaika, and percussive wooden spoons (*lozinki*), but also instruments not normally associated with Russian folk music, including a Belgian soprano saxophone and a simple piece of plastic which Sadina holds up to her mouth to produce a bird call.

The appearance of Zolotoj Plyos was organized by the Slavic Department Graduate Student Organization, with assistance from CREECA and the Russian Student Association. Generous financial support was provided by Associated Students of Madison. CREECA would especially like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of GSO representatives Melissa Miller and Colleen Lucey for their role in overseeing this project from beginning to end, as well as the many Russian Student Association volunteers who assisted on the evening of the performance.

Slavic 254 Continued from page 4

pare students to be able to think analytically and on a sophisticated level about a variety of discourses," she said.

"I hope that the analytical tools I have brought from my discipline's perspective will help students think critically about the world," she added.

Naomi found that students in her discussion sections were eager to share their views on the course material. "In most of my sections I was lucky to have a confident student well-trained in his or her own discipline who would share that perspective," she explained. "Student contributions to class discussions are always invaluable, but especially so in a multi-disciplinary course like ours."

The students acknowledged the inherent challenges, but also the strong payoff, of an interdisciplinary course.

"I absolutely loved this class," said freshman Nell Koring, who plans to pursue majors in Political Science and International Studies. "Professor Danaher ... maintained a perfect balance between history, literature, and culture. The course material covered a wide breadth of topics and individual movements and there truly is something for everyone to get excited about."

"I think the variety of perspectives this approach provides helps students to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the history," said sophomore Francie Grogan, an English major who is also pursuing the undergraduate certificate in REECAS. "At times the constant succession of speakers was overwhelming and their biases confusing. However, having Professor Danaher and Naomi to clarify everything made this still an extremely effective approach. I think ultimately guest speakers require more work on the part of students to tease out what is important, but if you're willing to put in the work I think this style of teaching is all the more illuminating."

The course "Russia: An Interdisciplinary Survey" will be offered in spring 2011, with "Eastern and Central Europe: An Interdisciplinary Survey" returning in spring 2012.

Students attend Day in East & Central Europe



Photo by Nancy Heingartner

Madison folk dance legend Michael Kuharski leads a group of high school students in a klezmer dance to the music of local band Yid Vicious.

BY NANCY HEINGARTNER
Outreach Coordinator

Day in East and Central Europe, a triennial CREECA outreach event, took place on March 24th in the Memorial Union's Great Hall on the UW-Madison campus. Juniors, seniors, and teachers from Reedsburg Area High School, Madison's East High School, West Allis Central High School, Oregon High School, McFarland High School, and Assumption High School in Wisconsin Rapids participated in this fun and educational event.

Tomislav Longinovic, Chair of UW-Madison's Department of Slavic Languages, set the stage with his keynote address titled, "Our Dark Legacy: The Vampire Legend in East-Central Europe." Afterwards, students were divided into small groups and spent the next two hours attending break-out sessions on a wide variety of topics. Presentations ranged from "Food and Hospitality in The Balkans" to "An Introduction To Polish Music: Hip-Hop, Rap, Reggae, and Chopin." Other

presentations included "Studying Abroad in The Czech Republic," "Ethnic Conflict, Estonia-Style," "Hungary 101," "An Introduction to Klezmer Dance," "Teaching High School in Peace Corps-Bulgaria," and "Human Trafficking in Eastern Europe."

CREECA is grateful to the many volunteers who shared their time and expertise for this event; presenters included UW-Madison faculty members, undergraduate, and graduate students, as well as community members. Day in East and Central Europe wrapped up with a rollicking dance party fueled by the beloved local klezmer band Yid Vicious.

"The students had a great experience," said one teacher of the day's events. "They were enhanced by all the workshops they were exposed to ... I liked the mix of culture, history, and contemporary [issues]."

More photos from "Day in East and Central Europe" can be viewed at creeca.wisc.edu/outreach/photos.html. Presentations from the event may also be accessed at creeca.wisc.edu/otherevents.html.

News and photos from CREECA community partners

UW-Madison professor emeritus Senn honored at Lithuanian celebration

On February 16, 2010, Madison-Vilnius Sister Cities (MVSC) held its annual commemoration of Lithuanian Independence Day at the Concourse Hotel in downtown Madison. The keynote speaker was Alfred E. Senn, UW-Madison professor emeritus of history.

CREECA director Ted Gerber read a proclamation from Madison mayor David Cieslewicz announcing February 16, 2010 as Alfred Erich Senn Day in recognition of Senn's scholarship and his service to the university, city, and state.

The evening opened with a performance by the Shumi String quartet, which played several pieces by Lithuanian composers, including a hymn written by the director of the Kaunas Symphony Orchestra specifically for this event. Following introductory remarks by MVSC president Milda Aksamitauskas and CREECA outreach coordinator Nancy Heingartner, CREECA director and professor of sociology Ted Gerber read a proclamation from Madison mayor David Cieslewicz announcing February 16, 2010 as Alfred Erich Senn Day in recognition of Senn's scholarship and his service to the university, city, and state.

Senn's talk focused on the Independence Day experiences of three distinct groups of people: those who were in Lithuania when independence



Clockwise from above: Two veterans laugh during the "Victory in Europe" commemoration; UW-Whitewater professor of history and CREECA program associate Elizabeth Hachten prepares for her opening remarks at the event; CREECA director Ted Gerber reads a mayoral proclamation honoring Alfred Senn, professor emeritus of history at UW-Madison; a Soviet and American veteran speak at the commemoration. Inset: Senn on Alfred E. Senn Day.

was declared in 1918, American diplomats who served in Kaunas, Lithuania in the 1920's, and a Lithuanian woman who was imprisoned in a Siberian labor camp in the 1940s. To learn more about MVSC, please visit <http://madisonvilnius.org/>.

Event commemorates U.S. and Soviet veterans on anniversary of V-E Day

On the afternoon of May 8, 2010, the Russian Educational Association, in partnership with the Wisconsin Veterans Museum, sponsored "Victory in Europe – 65 Years Later." This commemoration of the end of World War II in Europe examined the role of the Soviet army in ending this great conflict, as well as the cooperation between the Soviet Union



V-E Day photos courtesy of the Russian Educational Association



Photo by Gediminas Vidugiris



Photo by Csanád Siklós

and the United States during the war.

The program, which attracted a crowd of 150, featured remarks by Elizabeth Hachten, associate professor of history at UW-Whitewater, reminiscences by American and Russian veterans of the war as well as Russian civilians who survived the incredibly difficult home front conditions, and performances of wartime songs and poetry.

To learn more about the Russian Educational Association, please visit <http://www.russianedu.org/>.

Social workers travel to Ukraine to present info about mental illness

From May 10-20, 2010, social workers Donna Ulteig and Mona Wasow traveled to Ukraine, where they delivered several presentations on the topic of serious mental illness (SMI) to audiences at five psychosocial rehabilitation and community centers serving populations affected by the 1986 Chernobyl disaster.

The visit was sponsored by the Madison-based NGO Friends of Chernobyl Centers, U.S. (FOCCUS), which supports the community centers by providing education and training and by allocating grants to fund programs for children and families. Ulteig and Wasow spoke to audiences at the community centers about various facets of serious mental illness, including an historical overview of SMI, a description of the main illnesses and their treatments, and prospects for educating the public and professionals in Ukraine about SMI.

Wasow is clinical professor emerita in the UW-Madison School of Social Work and Ulteig is employed as a psychotherapist at Psychiatric Services, SC in Madison. To learn more about FOCCUS and its ongoing projects, please visit <http://www.friendsofchernobylcenters.org/>.