

CENTER FOR RUSSIA, EAST EUROPE, AND CENTRAL ASIA

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NEWSLETTER

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Wisconsin Russia Project Young Scholars Conference Held in Madison



Photo by Jeff Miller, University of Wisconsin-Madison



WORKSHOP ON DISSENT



WISCONSIN RUSSIA PROJECT



CESSI IN 2018



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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Scott Gehlbach



Scott Gehlbach, CREECA Director



See article on pg. 3: Dissent and Revolution: Bringing the Czechoslovak Experience to Teachers. Teachers listen to a presentation at the workshop 68.77.89: Czechoslovakia from Invasion to Revolution (Photo: Yasha Hoffman)

Greetings to members of the CREECA community! This is my first letter as CREECA director, and I am reminded as a political scientist that the greatest luck for any public servant is to take office during good times. Times have never been better for CREECA. Over the past several months, we have received one congratulatory email after another as various funding requests have been supported.

A federal Title VI grant under the National Resource Centers (NRC) and Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships programs, administered by the U.S. Department of Education, reinforces CREECA's status as a center of excellence in teaching, research, and public outreach. Another competitive grant from the U.S. Department of State's Title VIII program provides critical funding for students to study regional languages at CESSI, the Central Eurasian Studies Summer Institute. Finally, a large grant from

Carnegie Corporation of New York provides renewed funding for the Wisconsin Russia Project, thus solidifying UW-Madison's status as arguably the leading institution in North America for Russian studies in the social sciences. Please join me in thanking my predecessor Ted Gerber, CREECA associate director Jennifer Tishler, and CREECA assistant director Kelly Iacobazzi for their outstanding work securing this support for our intellectual community.

The following pages provide a flavor of the numerous programs and activities funded with these resources. The July 2018 educator workshop on "68.77.89" provided Wisconsin teachers the opportunity to explore Czechoslovakia's culture of dissent alongside UW-Madison scholars and invited speakers. Also in July, the Wisconsin Russia Project welcomed fifty young scholars to campus to share and build expertise in political science,

economics, law, sociology, demography, and migration. And as if that were not enough activity for one summer, CREECA organized the pre-college Pushkin Summer Institute for Russian language and hosted its eighth CESSI, offering instruction in Kazakh, Uyghur, and Uzbek.

Even as we celebrate the work of CREECA's numerous faculty, staff, and affiliates, it is a great pleasure to welcome two new members to our CREECA community: Maksim Hanukai and Kirill Ospovat, both in the Department of German, Nordic, and Slavic.

Please stay in touch: we want to know what you are up to. For the latest on what is happening here, follow us on social media, listen to the CREECA podcast, and visit the CREECA website: creeca.wisc.edu.

Scott Gehlbach
Professor of Political Science
Director, CREECA

Dissent and Revolution: Bringing the Czechoslovak Experience to Teachers

On July 11-13, 2018, CREECA, in partnership with the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library, held a three-day workshop for Wisconsin and Iowa educators titled 68.77.89: Czechoslovakia from Invasion to Revolution. Kelly Iacobazzi, CREECA's assistant director for operations, and David Danaher, professor of Slavic Languages and Literature at UW-Madison, organized the workshop, which was held at the Madison Concourse Hotel.

According to Iacobazzi, "This was a great opportunity for educators to get together with some of the leading experts in Central European history and to brainstorm new ways to engage students in that history." 68.77.89 explored the causes and legacies of Czechoslovakia's culture of dissent as witnessed during the 1968 Prague Spring uprising, the Charter 77 movement, and the 1989 Velvet Revolution.

Among those who presented at the workshop were Kimberly Elman Zarecor, associate professor of architecture at Iowa State University; Kieran Williams, a visiting professor of political science at Drake University; Craig Perrier, a high school curriculum developer; and Nicholas Hartmann from the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library (NCSML).

The NCSML, located in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, is the primary center for the preservation of Czech and Slovak culture and history in the United States. In recent years, the museum has strengthened its focus on issues of human rights and the perseverance of dissident movements in Czechoslovakia. The museum views the excep-

tional history of the region as indicative of timeless human struggles. "Czechoslovakia is a unique country in terms of its Communist past," explained Nicholas Hartmann, Director of Learning and Civic Engagement at the NCSML. "Its desire to humanize its Communist ideology led to an invasion. Its artists and creatives took the government to task on their human rights promises. And its artistic community was very devoted, not just to democracy, but also to morals and thinking in terms of big pictures."

David Danaher, the faculty lead for the 68.77.89 workshop, insists on the importance of the past for understanding the present and beyond. "The larger frame in which a study of 68.77.89 ought to take place," Danaher said, "is the fundamental question of what it means to be human in the modern world, and that is a perspective on the culture of dissent in Czechoslovakia that we are highlighting."

Danaher, who also gave the keynote lecture at the workshop, is quick to draw parallels to recent trends in world politics. "Dissent is 'in,' dissent is cool. Actually it never went out of fashion," he said. "There is, however, an understandable sense of urgent concern about our current situation that makes studying the culture of dissent in East Central Europe a deeply practical matter for those of us living in the 21st century world. This concern is perhaps even stronger among younger people who ponder their future with a sense of trepidation."

"I hope teachers found a lot of inspiration in the stories: student engage-

ment, nonviolence, fights against censorship, civic cooperation," said Hartmann, adding: "These are hot-button issues now, and this will get not only educators interested, but also students."

A crucial component of the workshop is the creation of curricular materials that teachers can use with their own students. "What was different about this workshop," said Hartmann, "...is that the teachers came out of it with not only a fair deal of subject knowledge, but also a curriculum for their classrooms." The lesson plan for the workshop was developed by the NCSML in conjunction with a board of advisors, many of whom are experts in various fields relating to Czech and Slovak history. Some of the same specialists who wrote the curriculum for the NCSML presented at the workshop and facilitated discussions with teachers on how to use the resources in social studies and history classes.

This workshop and other learning opportunities are regularly organized by CREECA as part of the center's mandate as a U.S. Department of Education Title VI National Resource Center. Under the program, CREECA acts as an educational resource on Russia, Eastern and Central Europe, and Central Asia, provides training to educators and the community, and supports research and area language instruction at UW-Madison.

For information on upcoming public outreach events for educators, contact Kelly Iacobazzi at iacobazzi@wisc.edu.

Inaugural Young Scholars Conference Held in Madison



Zuzanna Brunarska, assistant professor at the University of Warsaw Centre of Migration Research, responds to a question following her presentation on Russian attitudes towards immigrants, July 27, 2018. (Photo: Yasha Hoffman)



Participants at the 2018 WI Russia Project Young Scholars Conference listen to the presentation “Ethnicity, Language, and Migration” on July 27, 2018. (Photo: Yasha Hoffman)

On July 27-28, 2018, more than fifty Russia experts from across Europe, Russia, and the United States gathered in Madison, WI for the Wisconsin Russia Project Young Scholars Conference.

During the two-day conference, emerging social scientists had the opportunity to share and build their expertise in a variety of research topics, including political science, economy, law, sociology, demography, and migration. Senior scholars in these fields also attended the conference to offer feedback and direction to their younger counterparts.

“Russia has the second largest stock of migrants of any country in the world. After the U.S., it is the only

country that has a similar magnitude of this kind,” said Professor Ted Gerber, former CREECA Director, head of the Wisconsin Russia Project, and a panel discussant at the conference. “It is great to see that we are now seeing an emerging body of work that deals with these issues.”

Gerber led the discussion for a session on “Ethnicity, Language, and Migration,” which featured presentations on the interactions between language, politics, and identity in the Russian context, as well as a study on the perceptions and experiences of refugees displaced by the conflict in Ukraine. Of particular interest to two presenters—Dmitri Dubrov from the

National Research University Higher School of Economics in Moscow and Zuzanna Brunarska from the Centre of Migration Research at the University of Warsaw—is how society reacts to the increasingly multiethnic demographic makeup of the Russian Federation.

Russia’s relative economic strength and extensive porous borders make the country a preferred destination for migrants, in particular those from Central Asian countries such as Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Meanwhile, the Russian Federation itself contains a number of autonomous republics and regions dominated politically and demographically by non-Russian groups.

"I feel like Russia really gives you a wide research perspective and is just an interesting country for a social science researcher, especially one interested in inter-ethnic relations," explained Brunarska, whose research exploits this variation in demography to examine more closely the attitudes of both ethnic Russians and members of titular ethnic groups towards different migrant groups.

Support for the 2018 Young Scholars Conference was provided by a grant from Carnegie Corporation of New York. The \$1 million grant funded the first phase of the Wisconsin Russia Project (WRP), an initiative to strengthen Russian studies, to broaden the pool of Russia experts at UW-Madison, and to build an international network of social scientists who study contemporary Russia. The WRP has been administered by CREECA at the University of Wisconsin-Madison since 2017.

During the July 2018 conference, participants took full advantage of the opportunity to connect with peers and senior scholars from distant locales. Graduate students and junior scholars from as far away as Far Eastern Federal University in Vladivostok and Ural Federal University in Ekaterinburg met with counterparts from Columbia University and Stanford to discuss common areas of research.

An important goal of the conference was to provide young scholars of social science in Russia with feedback, mentorship, and guidance that complements or surpasses that available

in their respective fields of research. Discussants from UW-Madison and other universities challenged participants to identify common threads between the various papers and suggested potential strategies for moving forward with publication and future research.

"The comments and feedback were very useful, not only the comments from the audience, but also talking afterwards with Ted Gerber and Yoshiko Herrera," explained Brunarska. Senior scholars not only offered their advice, but they also pushed participants to clarify their train of thought for an audience working in a broad range of disciplines. "If somebody is asking questions which I think I have answered," said Brunarska, "it means that I have not yet answered it properly. There is always a better way to explain things."

The conference participants represented a wide variety of policy institutes, think tanks, and centers of research beyond institutions of higher education. These include, among others, the Moscow-based Institute for Law and Public Policy—which assists Russian lawyers in submitting cases to the Russian Constitutional Court and the European Court of Human Rights—and the Institute for Employment Research in Nuremberg, Germany, which conducts labor market analysis on an international level.

Despite their different academic and research backgrounds, however, participants at the conference were united by their knowledge and endless curiosity

for Russia's social, economic, and political scene.

"When doing research on Russian regions, something that we should hold on to as researchers is this incredible diversity in key variables—these differences in ethnicity, culture, and institutions," said Paul Dower, an assistant professor of agricultural and applied economics at UW-Madison and the discussant for a session on political economy. "We should take advantage of this, and these young researchers do a great job of illustrating those variations."

According to Gerber, the social science work highlighted during the conference presents unique opportunities for comparative research. "It is important that this kind of work engages with theories that have been developed in other countries," he said. "By looking at Russia and the U.S. or Germany, we get a sense of whether or not those theories are transportable or generalizable, or if Russia differs in such a way that it leads us to question them."

As the inaugural WRP Young Scholars Conference came to a close, participants were eager to maintain new relationships with their peers and senior researchers. Many also expressed hope that the conference will become a regular event. "I will be happy to see it developing, not only in terms of going to another conference," said Brunarska, "but also in terms of trying to keep this new academic network alive."

Thanks to continued funding from Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Wisconsin Russia Project plans to hold a second Young Scholars Conference in summer 2020. CREECA extends a special thanks to the 2016-18 WRP graduate project assistant Kristin Edwards for her work in organizing the 2018 Young Scholars Conference.

Carnegie Corporation Awards \$900,000 to UW-Madison for Russian Studies

A project established in 2016 to strengthen Russian studies at UW-Madison will continue through 2020, thanks to a \$900,000 award from Carnegie Corporation of New York. The renewed funding will allow the Wisconsin Russia Project (WRP) to continue to build Russian studies programming, to broaden UW-Madison's pool of Russia experts, and to create an international network of social scientists who study contemporary Russia.

The WRP, which is administered by CREECA, has already made significant progress in its first two years. So far, 13 postdoctoral fellows, graduate student fellows, and researchers have spent a semester or more at UW-Madison under the auspices of the WRP. These select visiting scholars and students from the U.S. and Russia collaborated with Wisconsin researchers in the fields of sociology, political science, law, and political economy.

"This grant will permit the Wisconsin Russia Project to build upon the momentum it has achieved," said Ted

Gerber, professor of sociology and faculty director of the initiative. "Now we can consolidate our advances toward accomplishing the project's objectives, and take it in new directions."

In addition to bringing new knowledge and talent to university classrooms, the project has spearheaded other initiatives to enrich Russian studies at UW-Madison, including the creation of a new tenure-track position in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics. In 2017, a Russia-focused scholar on issues of land tenure—Paul Dower—joined the faculty as an assistant professor. The Wisconsin Russia Project also organized a July 2018 conference attended by more than 50 Russia scholars from across the U.S., Europe, and Russia (see article in this issue).

The second phase of the WRP will continue to support these initiatives while pursuing further potential for expansion. Gerber and colleagues plan to broaden the scope of the WRP by deepening collaboration with the UW's Robert M. La Follette School

of Public Affairs, bringing to campus specialists on Russia-related international dimensions of public policy and on regional analyses of Russia using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) techniques, and incorporating a teaching component into the project's postdoctoral fellowships.

"This renewed funding will significantly magnify our overall impact on the quality of social science research and training on Russia, multiply and reinforce cross-national research collaborations, and solidify Wisconsin's international reputation as a key center of excellence in this area," Gerber said.

The grant was awarded under Carnegie Corporation of New York's International Peace and Security program, which seeks "to build a more secure, peaceful, and prosperous world through independent analysis and action addressing critical global challenges." Carnegie Corporation of New York is a philanthropic foundation created by Andrew Carnegie in 1911 to do "real and permanent good in this world."

SUPPORT CREECA

We thank the many alumni, professors, staff members, and friends who have generously given to CREECA to support our mission of research, teaching, and outreach. Private gifts ensure that CREECA maintains its excellence as one of the leading centers for the study of Central and Eastern Europe, Russia, and Eurasia. Donations support research grants for graduate students, training in critical world languages, and lectures and cultural events that impact the wider community. Gifts of any size are most welcome and gratefully appreciated.

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Central Eurasian Studies Summer Institute Celebrates Eight Years of Learning and Exploration



Students socializing at a Dastarkhan-style meal organized by the Central Eurasian Studies Summer Institute (CESSI). In its eighth year of summer language instruction at UW-Madison, CESSI hosted an all-time high of 15 students. Yuan Gao (center) is a PhD student of history at Georgetown University, and Stu McLaughlin (right) recently started work in Azerbaijan with the Fulbright English Teaching Assistant program. (Photo: Yasha Hoffman)



Michael Zukosky, a professor of anthropology at Eastern Washington University, tells a Kazakh folk tale at the CESSI closing ceremony. Zukosky was one of eleven Title VIII fellows at CESSI; 2018 marked the second year CESSI awarded Title VIII fellowships for graduate students, scholars, and working professionals to deepen their expertise in Eurasian languages and studies. Thanks to support from the U.S. Department of State, CESSI will continue to offer Title VIII fellowships in summer 2019. (Photo: Yasha Hoffman)



Mollie Arbuthnot (left), a PhD student in Russian studies at the University of Manchester, and Uzbek language instructor Umida Khikmatillaeva examine an item at the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection in the UW-Madison School of Human Ecology. After studying Uzbek at CESSI, Arbuthnot spent six weeks as a visiting researcher at the Institute of History in Tashkent. (Photo: Kelly Iacobazzi)



CESSI students, instructors, and staff at the closing ceremony. 2018 was a summer of expanded access to CESSI: the institute welcomed its first international student and also introduced distance learning technology to meet the needs of a student who could not attend the program in residence. (Photo: Yasha Hoffman)

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Students from UW-Madison and Nazarbayev University in Kazakhstan take a break from summer courses on an outing to Devil's Lake State Park. (Photo: Aida Ramanculova)



Amanda Popp, MA student in REECAS at UW-Madison, shares her research on Georgia at a November 2018 conference on migration and displacement in Europe. (Photo: Elena Shirikova)



Emeritus Slavic faculty Alexander Dolinin and Galina Lapina at the October 2018 symposium "Two Centuries of Modern Russian Culture: From the Golden Age to Post-Soviet Space." (Photo: Elena Shirikova)



Uyghur instructor Mustafa Aksu leads a dance workshop at CESSI 2018. (Photo: Yasha Hoffman)