New REES MA Scholarship

Bramlage Family Establishes Scholarship for Kansans

KU-REES is pleased to announce the first recipient of Bramlage Family Foundation Scholarship is freshman, Matthew Smith. A native of Kansas, Matt completed his B.A at Grinnell College in Iowa, where he majored in Russian. Matt has been studying in Moscow since January 2004 on a program sponsored by the American Councils.

Through the generosity of the Bramlage Family Foundation, REES is able to offer a $3,000 scholarship to students who meet the following eligibility criteria:

· Residency in Kansas, being a native Kansan, or another Kansas tie;
· 3.5 GPA in the major;
· Two years of Slavic language study or willingness to begin intensive language study;
· BA degree in humanities or social science; other degrees as appropriate to the field;
· Acceptance into the KU-REES MA Program.

How Can We Help?

Need to add a Russia/East Europe component to your literature, history, political science, economics, music, or business class? Looking to spice up your International Club meetings or add a cultural component to your in-service or teacher conference?

KU—CREES can help you! We can visit your organization to share Eastern European culture.

We also offer classroom resources and curriculum counseling so that you may add an Eastern European component into your own educational programs. If you are interested in any of our services, contact Jodi Simek, outreach coordinator, (785-864-4237) jsimek@ku.edu.
Poland on Its Way to the European Union
Advantages, Discontents and Away from Central to Western Europe

Tomasz Kamusella of the Library of Congress and Opole University in Poland spoke on 3 May on the recent enlargement of the EU, which included a number of Slavic countries. In the eyes of Central Europeans, this act makes up for the Western betrayal of this region (i.e., the WWII Western Allies’ agreement to the Soviet domination of this territory). Poland regained sovereignty after the withdrawal of the Soviet/Russian troops in 1993, at which time Poland and its Central European neighbors asked to join NATO and the European Community. Western Europe was not eager to accept them, because of uncertainty of where the Soviet bloc would be in the near future.

These regions introduced necessary reforms during the 1990s. In 1998 the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland joined NATO. In the same year the three states, along with Slovakia and Slovenia, began accession negotiations with the EU, and they all joined the EU on 1 May.

These economic and political events were paralleled by discourse on the place of these states in Europe. Central Europe elites perceived the Soviet domination as a negative process resulting in the West's placing Central Europe into part of Eastern Europe. In the 1970s, Central European emigre intellectuals sought differentiation from this category, using the term East Central Europe and then, later, Central Europe.

The West continued to give these Central European countries the cold shoulder, prompting postcommunist elites to elaborate on the need for a return to Europe, understood as Western Europe or the EU. When accession negotiations opened, this discourse gave way to a new attitude: "we do not have to return to Europe as we have always been part of it." Though, now, Central European elites tend to speak about their states as belonging to Western Europe.

On 27 April, Asst. Prof. Andrzej Karcz (KU-Slavic Languages) spoke on Poland’s pending accession into the European Union. Dr. Karcz convincingly demonstrated that it was not a question of Poland rejoining Europe, but rather that Poland had never left.

Congratulations to Maj. Terry Anderson (left) of our FAO program graduating with an MA in Russian & East European Studies!
Colonel Thomas Wilhelm gave a lecture titled Central Asian Security on the Frontlines of the War on Terror. Wilhelm has worked as a Defense Attaché in both Tajikistan and Mongolia and is now Professor of Eurasian Studies at the Marshall Center in Germany. He is a 1991 KU REES MA Graduate.

The following is an excerpt from a story by Dave Ranney, which was published in the local Lawrence paper (Journal-World) on March 11, 2004.

It’s all about building bridges that, when finished, look the same from both sides of the river.

That’s how U.S. Army Col. Tom Wilhelm sees the future of foreign relations.

“Think about it,” Wilhelm said, addressing a standing-room-only crowd of admirers Wednesday in the Pine Room at Kansas University’s Kansas Union. “It doesn’t make much sense to build a bridge if you don’t know where it’s going to end up, what it’ll look like or what purpose it’s going to serve.”

The best bridges, he said, are built with lots of understanding. And for Americans that means realizing that many of the values they take for granted — such as the notion that everybody wants to distinguish themselves — are not shared in other countries.

Wilhelm, a West Point graduate who spent a one-year residency at Kansas University’s Center for Russian and East European Studies in 1988-1989, is now associate dean for Eurasian studies at the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in Germany.

He’s also the subject of a feature story, “The Man Who Would be Khan,” a reference to his tour of duty in Mongolia, in the latest issue of The Atlantic magazine. In the article, author Robert Kaplan puts Wilhelm in the forefront of “A new breed of American soldier — call him the soldier-diplomat — (that) has come into being since the end of the Cold War.”

Wilhelm praised KU’s Center for Russian and East European Studies, calling it one of the best in the nation.

“I refer a lot of my students here,” he said. “I tell them the faculty will help them learn what they want to learn rather than expecting them to sit at the feet of the masters ... I loved it here.”

Congratulations to Gabe Murphy (left) and Niki Kalaf (above), both in our Russian track, graduating with an MA in Russian & East European Studies!
South Slavic

Slovenian Code-Switching: Its Not for Spies

Slovenian sociolinguist Nada Sabec, of the University of Maribor in Slovenia, spoke on April 26 at the University of Kansas on Linguistic, Social and Cultural Dimensions of Slovene-English Language Contact.

Sabec, a native Slovenian, is conducting research in the U.S. with Slovenian immigrant communities, and in Slovenia on the creeping of English into Slovenian vocabulary.

Her research concentrates on what sociolinguists call “code-switching.” Code-switching is the process by which bilingual groups switch back and forth between languages in spoken discourse.

In addition to the public talk on her research area, Prof. Sabec participated in the KU symposium on EU enlargement and met with Slavic Dept. graduate students interested in field work.

Prof. Sabec’ visit was sponsored by the Dept. of Slavic Languages and Literaeur.

Military Peacekeeping?


General (Ret.) William L. Nash, from the Council on Foreign Relations and former Commander of Task Force Eagle (Bosnia) 1995-97 gave a public lecture entitled From Bosnia to Baghdad: State-Building as a Military Task 17 February in the Kansas Memorial Union.

Nash explained some of the challenges involved in peacekeeping operations and those measures that the military can take to assist in state-building.

General Nash elaborated on some of the difficulties he initially faced with implementing the Dayton Peace Accords. While he felt that some of the warring parties were more guilty than others, he went out of his way to avoid any charges of partiality.

Nash also commented that, while it is true that US/NATO forces are still in Bosnia, 8 years after the cessation of hostilities, at least the warring sides were no longer fighting each other. He said that it will likely take years, combined with a significant economic investment, to establish stable, democratic governments in the Balkans.
Congratulations to Adrian J. Erlinger, in our Ukrainian track, graduating with an MA in Russian & East European Studies! Erlinger won the 10th Roy and Betty Laird REES Essay Competition for his essay on *Shock Art and Orthodox Thugs: Politics and Contemporary Art in Russia*. He will receive a check for $500, a book of his choice and have his name inscribed on the contest plaque hanging outside the REES office.

This past month saw the transfer of the Maria Palij Memorial Fund from the Department of History to the University of Kansas’ Center for Russian and East European Studies (CREES). The Palij fund has been administered until now by Professor Norman Saul of the history department. This fund was established by the generous donation of former University of Kansas Slavic librarian, Dr. Michael Palij.

Prof. Viktor Krevs (left) of Lviv National University- Ivan Franko conducted research at the University of Kansas for two months this spring. Krevs is an administrator of KU’s summer study abroad program in Lviv, a unique opportunity for American students in the former Soviet Republic of Ukraine. The program, directed here at KU by Prof. Alex Tsiovkh, is now in its eleventh year. Students on the program are given substantial language instruction and opportunities to pursue their own research, while working with LNU faculty in their area of interest. Dr. Krevs’ charming personality will be missed, although we know that the faculty of LNU were anxious for his return.

Prof. Mark von Hagen spoke at the Kansas Union on 26 April on *Hetman Skoropadsky of the Ukrainian State*. Von Hagen, formerly director of the Harriman Inst. at Columbia Univ. said that his research was precipitated by the recent publication of Skoropadsky’s memoirs. Von Hagen’s talk was paid for by the Palij fund.

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On 31 March, Professor Louise Shelley, of the Dept of Justice, Law, and Society and the School of International Service at American University, and founder and director of the Transnational Crime and Corruption Center (TraCCC), spoke on *Where does Russian Organized Crime Fit in International Organized Crime?* at the Kansas Union. Shelley outlined how rapidly Russian organized crime has thoroughly infiltrated the Russian economy and the various problems that are being encountered in combating it. Shelley claimed that organized crime is prevalent from Vladivostok to Odessa, in most areas of the economy.