

EURUS E-Newsletter

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Student Research Profile: Rhys McGaw

The monthly EURUS newsletter showcases individual students' thesis or major research projects. The focus of this edition's research profile is Rhys McGaw, a second year EURUS MA student. Rhys conducted field research in the Caucasus in the summer and fall of 2011. He has travelled extensively throughout the former Soviet space.

"My research looks at the present situation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Azerbaijan and the government policies towards the settlement and integration of this group. These IDPs were displaced during the Karabakh War between Armenia (and Armenians living in Nagorno-Karabakh) and Azerbaijan and have been unable to return to their homes for what will soon be twenty years.

The topic both is and isn't within my original set of interests with regard to EURUS. I had wanted to work on a project that dealt with conflict in the former Soviet South Caucasus or Soviet political geography but at the same time try and take on something that was new for my studies, which in this case would be the issue of IDPs and refugees. The Azerbaijan case is generally unknown and certainly understudied in proportion to the number of people that have been affected there. The IDP issue has also undergone significant transition, as new political will and new sources of revenue from oil and gas have seen the government shift from a policy of leaving IDPs in camps and other, similarly deplorable conditions, to the goal of full resettlement. Something else that has also been very beneficial is while the topic deals with the very contentious issue of Nagorno-Karabakh, dealing specifically with the IDP issue and their relationship with their own government has allowed me to stay out of the mess and conjecture that surrounds the conflict.

I had also wanted to undertake a project that would allow me to undertake field research, and this certainly provided the opportunity. My brief time living in Azerbaijan interviewing members of the IDP community was certainly my most rewarding and interesting experience related to EURUS and a field work component, if applicable, is something that I strongly recommend."

Course Profile: EURR 5202 National Security Policy in the Post-Soviet Space

This course is an introduction to the basic concepts, theoretical debates, and issues around national security. The course is roughly divided into three sections. In the first part, students look at major theoretical schools of international relations, their definitions of the international system and the implications for security studies. In a seminar format, they discuss the meanings of concepts such as national security, national interest, and the security dilemma. In the second part, students conduct seminars for their colleagues examining national security issues in Russia and the post-Soviet space. The final section of the course examines regional security trends and their implications as well as multilateral mechanisms for security management. A prime objective of the course is to provide a framework for analysis of national security issues in the post-Soviet space and provide students with the ability to apply a variety of approaches to evaluate contemporary security issues facing a range of countries.

Each student is expected to lead a one and a half hour session (presentation and discussion/debate) on an individual post-Soviet state. Each presentation is supposed to identify security institutions in the country and decision-making procedures on security issues; outline the security infrastructure; analyze key security concerns and their evolution; describe how the country is addressing these concerns; set out key events/trends that have and will shape the country's security posture; and postulate as to which theoretical model best explains the country's approach to national security.

St. Petersburg Summer Language Study

Each summer a number of EURUS students participate in intensive Russian language training in St. Petersburg, Russia. Students usually spend six weeks in language training in July and August, although many choose to arrive early or stay in Russia after the program ends in order to take advantage of opportunities for independent travel both in Russia and neighbouring countries. While many students choose to live in student residence facilities at St. Petersburg State University, others choose to find their own accommodations in the city. Recently, a handful of EURUS students have chosen to attend intensive language training in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

One former EURUS student's experience in St. Petersburg is below:

"Much like the EU Study Tour, I was able to put into practice skills I had developed over two years in the classroom. While I am nowhere near fluent in Russian, the exchange gave me more confidence in my language ability, as I had to speak in Russian if I wanted to eat or have my laundry done. Languages aside, the six weeks in Russia also introduced me to the beauty of the Russian people and their fascinating history, politics and culture."

Upcoming Events: April 2012

April 25 – The Scaremongers: Europe's Fear of Islam, 5:00-6:30PM, Room 2224, River Building

April 26 – Inclusion/Exclusion: The Social and Political Boundaries of Citizenship in Europe, 8:45AM – 5:00PM, Senate Room, Robertson Hall

**Note: Registration is required for this event*

April 27-28 – ECSA-C Biennial Conference, Europe in an Age of Austerity: Integration, Disintegration, or Stagnation?, Ottawa, ON

**Note: Registration is required for this event*

carleton.ca/eurus/events

Summer Institute of Language & Culture

EURUS, along with SLaS and African Studies, was successful in receiving funding to start a Summer Institute of Language & Culture at Carleton University. The Institute will launch in 2013 and provide participants with intensive language training and other courses on international cultures and societies. More details to come!

EURUS has moved!

As of April, EURUS' new home will be in the River Building, located on the southwest part of campus overlooking the Ottawa River. EURUS faculty and student offices, seminar room, and student lounge will occupy the third floor of the new building. The new space features new furniture, lots of natural light, and a view of the river. Goodbye Dunton Tower!



EURUS Unveils New Logo!

The Institute of European, Russian and Eurasian Studies has a new logo. Congratulations to Numan Qardash, a second year EURUS MA student, for the winning design!



Winter 2012: Semester Highlights

NEWS

- EURUS launches monthly e-newsletter
- EURUS gets a new logo
- EURUS moves to the River Building

EVENTS

- Public lectures featuring prominent academics and politicians from China, Poland, and Russia
- Film panel at the Wakefield International Film Festival
- Two events on the Russian elections and their aftermath

UPCOMING

- Graduate student conference on Russia in Fall 2012 (stay tuned for more details)