SLAV 240 – Introduction to the Languages and Peoples of East-Central Europe and the former Soviet Union (line no. 69240)

SLAV 241 – Introduction to the Languages and Peoples of East-Central Europe and the former Soviet Union, Honors (line no. 69241)

SLAV 540 – Language and Identity in East-Central Europe and the former Soviet Union (line no. 69242)

Instructor: Professor Marc L. Greenberg (Office: 2134 Wescoe, hours: Tuesday and Thursday 9:30–10:20 or by appointment; office phone 864-2349; e-mail: mlg@ku.edu)

Class meets: 8:00–9:20 Tuesday and Thursday in Wescoe Hall 4062.

Final Exam: Wednesday, May 18, 2005, Wescoe 4062, 7:30–10:00 AM.

Prerequisite and credit

All students must have a valid KU e-mail address (or a KU-registered) external address, which allows access to Blackboard. Syllabus, announcements, assignments, readings, and other materials will be posted on the course Blackboard site. Most documents will be in PDF or Word formats.

For SLAV 241: Honors status. Students enrolled in the Honors section will be expected to undertake a semester project similar to that assigned to the graduate students in SLAV 679 (540), but account will be taken of their undergraduate status when it comes to grading. There is no language prerequisite.

For SLAV 540: Graduate standing in Slavic Languages and Literatures or REES. Advanced undergraduates may enroll with the permission of the instructor. The course is designed to give both a broad, but rigorous, overview of the languages and sociolinguistic situations of East-Central Europe and the former Soviet Union. While it is preferred that students have a reading knowledge of one or more major East-European languages, certain other backgrounds may qualify a student to participate. A background in linguistics is not required, as the requisite technical knowledge will be acquired during the course.

What the course is about

Language is a central marker of ethnic and national identity, indeed it has arguably been the principle element in the construction of national identity in the cultural and political formation of East-Central Europe. In part the course is intended to give the student an appreciation of the unique historical circumstances that have formed the region linguistically, socially, and politically:

- Primordialist/essentialist, perennialist, constructivist views of identity.
- Sociolinguistic approaches to languages and communities of speakers.
- Philosophical and artistic views and expressions of language and identity.
SLAV 240 & 241 (Honors)-Intro. to the Peoples and Langs. of E.-C. Eur. and FSU
SLAV 540 – Language & Identity in E.-C. Eur. and the Former Soviet Union
Prof. Marc L. Greenberg, Spring 2005

- Symbolization, mythologization of language, nation, history, prehistory.
- Language families and groups (Indo-European, Uralic, Altaic, Palaeosiberian)
- Theories of language change and relatedness (Nostratic, punctuated equilibrium, etc.)
- Standardization (case studies: Serbo-Croatian, Karelian, etc.)
- Experiments with multilingual states (case studies: Soviet Union, Yugoslavia), language policy and politics after break-up of these states.
- Language planning and linguistic myth-creation (case studies: Serbo-Croatian, Slovene, Albanian, “East Slavic unity”)
- Sociolinguistic situations characteristic of or unique to East-Central Europe and the Former Soviet Union (case studies: Yiddish, Romani)
- Language policy and language use in the European Union after the accession of East-European states.

Students should come away with an appreciation for and fairly detailed knowledge of the linguistic landscape of the region. In doing so, s/he will better understand the cultural viewpoint of the peoples in question. Students enrolled in the Honors and Graduate sections will gain skill in conducting research on a linguistic topic connected with the subject matter of the course.

Structure of the course

The course will consist of readings, lecture and discussion. Honors and graduate students will have a research project. Grading will be based on the breakdown below (see under Grading). There is a differential workload based on the section in which the student is enrolled.

For students enrolled in the 240 section, the course serves as an introduction to the area and, this being the case, energy should be focused on mastering the material presented in lectures, readings and other supplemental material. For this reason, no project is required.

Students in the 241 (Honors) section are expected to do all the work required of the students in the 240 section, but will also undertake an independent research project. This project is meant to be a first foray into language research and is therefore less ambitious than the graduate project. The topic must be chosen and developed early on in the course of the semester (no later than the beginning of week 4) in consultation with the instructor. Students doing the 241 project will be required to meet both with the instructor and an assigned graduate mentor from the class at regular intervals throughout the semester. Further instructions are explained in the section Research project.

Students in 540 will explore the language-identity connection through a more ambitious research project that aims for possible later publication and/or elaboration as a thesis. Because the research project is viewed as a substantial mentoring/apprenticeship component of the graduate experience, the final exam will not be required and the extra energy that would have been expended on the exam should be invested instead in the project. 540 students must select and develop a topic early in the course of the semester (no later than the beginning of week 4) in consultation with the instructor. In addition, 540 students will assist the Honors students by
serving as a “second set of eyes” to give feedback or peer review on the undergraduate research project. This is not only as service to the Honors students, but gives graduate students an opportunity to transition to the role of mentors/teachers themselves. Mentorees will be assigned by the instructor.

**Grading**

Homework assignments are designed to help students assimilate material and give some feedback on progress towards this goal. For these reasons, the homework assignments are not given letter grades, but, rather, a credit/no-credit grade. Credit for homework assignments is given if all of these conditions are met: (a) the assignment is done completely and with demonstrated effort to complete it correctly and thoughtfully; (b) it is turned in by the due date agreed upon.

Although attendance is not taken, it is inconceivable that students can assimilate and comprehend all of the material fully without attending the class lectures and discussions. It is therefore assumed that the attendance record will be reflected in the quality of work turned in and, consequently, the course grade itself.

In view of the differential needs of students enrolled in the various sections, grading will be weighted in the following way:

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>240</th>
<th>241 Honors</th>
<th>540 graduates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm 1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm 2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research project</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer mentorship</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
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**Required readings**


Articles available on reserve and/or KU Library Electronic Resources/Blackboard. Blackboard is available at [http://courseware.ku.edu](http://courseware.ku.edu). You will have to log in with your Exchange ID.

* Update, March 11, 2005: Since there are no mentorees, this requirement cannot be fulfilled. The 10% previously assigned to it has been reassigned to Midterms 1 and 2.
Research project

Students enrolled in 241 or 540 sections will be required to conduct a research project, which is due at the beginning of the final exam time (Wed., May 18, 7:30). The project must reflect original research work that consults a variety of sources (the mix of primary and secondary resources depends on the topic). Formal requirements for the document are spelled out in the document “Citation style, bibliography requirements and research guide for SLAV 241 and 540 research projects,” which is available on the Blackboard site under “Course Documents.”

Students must choose their topic in consultation with the instructor and meet at regular intervals throughout the semester to discuss the work as it progresses. In addition, 241 students must meet with their assigned graduate mentors at these same intervals. All meetings must be documented on Research Progress Forms, found on the Blackboard site under “Course Documents.” For full credit, these forms must be legitimately filled out and returned together with the project itself. 241 students are responsible for arranging meetings with the instructor and their graduate mentor(s) and their grade on the project will reflect whether or not they have fully carried out this consultation assignment. Graduate students (SLAV 540) are responsible for turning in a file documenting their work in mentoring the 241 students. Moreover, graduate student mentors will have a (non-binding) advisory role in grading the 241 students’ projects.

There is a very wide range of possible topics and they may range over a number of disciplines. As a rule of thumb, students should choose a topic that will help them to stretch their knowledge in an area that is new to them.

What do next?

If the subject matter of this course was compelling to you:

- Read some or all of the items on the “Further reading” list.
- Consider studying one of the languages discussed in the course and make long-range plan to spend meaningful time in the country where that language is spoken. Many of these languages, known as “Less-commanlly-taught languages” (LCTLS) are offered regularly at KU. Study-abroad programs are offered for some and, if not, individual study programs can be arranged for virtually any academic interest a student may have.
- Consider additional study or even majoring in the language, literature or area studies of the region. KU offers the BA, MA and PhD degrees in Slavic languages and literatures with concentrations in Russian, Polish and Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian and specializations at the graduate level in linguistics or literature. For more information, see the Slavic Department web-page at http://www.ku.edu/~slavic. The Russian & East-European Studies program offers the BA and MA in Russian and East-European Studies. For more information, see the CREES web-page at http://www.ku.edu/~crees. It is also possible to study the area in the framework of other degrees, such as anthropology, history, political science.

Policy note: Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him/her from fully demonstrating his/her abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss the appropriate accommodations necessary to complete the course requirements.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td>(0) Th., Jan. 20, 2004</td>
<td>Housekeeping</td>
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<td>#2: Defining nations and nationalism, due 2/3; make appt. w/ MLG to discuss research topic</td>
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| (2) Feb. 1, 3   | Historical background: Romanticism, historical comparativism          | Buck 1916;                                                               | #1 due 2/1  
|               |                                                                      |                                                                          | #2 due 2/3  
|               |                                                                      |                                                                          | #3: Constructing identity, due 2/8 |
| I. Languages of the Former Soviet Union |                                                                      |                                                                          |                                                                             |
| (3) Feb. 8, 10  | Rus’ and the Eastern Slavic languages; Russian imperial language policy; Soviet language policy | Laitin 1998, Part 2: An Ethnography of the Double Cataclysm               | #3 due 2/8  
|               |                                                                      |                                                                          | NB: 241 and 540 students must choose research topic by Friday, Feb. 11.  |
| (6) Mar. 1, 3   | Case studies: Baltics; Soviet Karelian; 3/3: Guest lecture, Maria Carlson: “Book of Veles: seeking an unknown future in an invented past.” | Järve, Austin                                                            |                                                                             |
| (7) Mar. 8, 10  | Case study: Yiddish: history of multi-state settlement; origin theories; Soviet language planning and sociolinguistic developments | Herzog 1979; Peltz and Kiel 1985                                         |                                                                             |
| (8) Mar. 15, 17 | REVIEW; MIDTERM                                                       |                                                                          |                                                                             |
Lecture schedule continued.

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<td>Spring break, Mar. 22, 24</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. The languages of the former Yugoslavia</td>
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<tr>
<td>(9) Mar. 29, 31</td>
<td>Serbo-Croatian and the Yugoslav idea</td>
<td>Greenberg 1996</td>
<td>Begin reading Debeljak</td>
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<tr>
<td>(10) Apr. 5, 7</td>
<td>Serbo-Croatian and the Yugoslav idea; Apr. 7: Guest lecture by Prof. Stephen Dickey “Language &amp; identity in Bosnia”</td>
<td>Langston 1999</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(11) Apr. 12, 14</td>
<td>Case study: Slovene language and identity formation</td>
<td>Roter 2003; Debeljak 2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>(12) Apr. 19, 21</td>
<td>Albanian, Kosovo, Serbian; REVIEW FOR MIDTERM 2</td>
<td>Vermeer 1992</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. The EU and its languages in the globalizing world</td>
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<tr>
<td>(13) Apr. 26, 28</td>
<td>MIDTERM 2; Eastern Europe in the European Union</td>
<td>Beck 2003</td>
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<tr>
<td>(15) May 10, 12</td>
<td>DISCUSSION, RETROSPECTIVE REVIEW</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam: Wed., May 18, 7:30–10:00AM</td>
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Required readings

[BB] = available on Blackboard


For further reading

**General/theoretical works**


Hall, Edward T. 1976. *Beyond Culture*. New York: Doubleday. [Not about Eastern Europe nor language per se, but a fundamental work of cultural anthropology that proceeds from Sapir’s insights on language and thought. Introduces the key concepts of high- and low-context cultures.]

Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson. 2003. *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: Chicago University Press. [Not at all about Eastern Europe, but a seminal work supporting the view that language shapes world-view.]


**Area/case studies**


Filipovic, Rudolf and Damir Kalogjera, eds. 2001. *Sociolinguistics in Croatia (= International Journal of the Sociology of Language 147).*

Franklin, Simon and Emma Widdis. 2004. *National Identity in Russian Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [As of Nov. 04 I haven’t had a chance to read the book, but have read other things by Franklin that are good. The publisher’s blurb says it is “designed for students of Russian literature, culture and history.”]


Jelavich, Charles. 1990. *South Slavic Nationalisms – Textbooks and Yugoslav Union before 1914*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press. [Not primarily about language, though language plays a critical role in national education, ideological inculcation and, by extension, state formation.]


Sayer, Derek. 1998. *The Coasts of Bohemia. A Czech History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [A well-reasoned and detailed cultural-studies approach with emphasis on art, language, and literature. This book nearly made the required-reading list for this course, except that its focus was not squarely enough on language issues.]


**Handbooks**


**Periodicals**


*Nationalities Papers*. Oxfordshire: Taylor and Francis. [Frequently publishes language-related articles concerning national and ethnic identity issues connected with Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.]

*Spaces of Identity*. [http://www.spacesofidentity.net/][1] [“A multidisciplinary international web-journal dedicated to issues of tradition, cultural boundaries and identity formation in Central and Eastern Europe.”]