March 24 Concurrent Session Descriptions

11:00 am – 12:00 pm UNDERSTANDING RUSSIA AND ITS NEIGHBORS

1. Russia and the European Union
   Holger Moroff, Visiting Assistant Professor, Center for European Studies, UNC at Chapel Hill

   The EU sees Russia as part of its Eastern neighborhood among countries like Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, etc. Russia, on the other hand, views those countries as its own neighborhood or ближнее зарубежье (near abroad). A constellation of overlapping "back yards" seems to have emerged over the last decade in which the future of those countries is shaped by the foreign policies of the EU on the one side and Russia on the other. As much as the two can be viewed as opposing forces within the region, they need each other and cooperate on a wide range of global and strategic issues in an increasingly multipolar international system. This session will provide a closer look at the complex and conflicted relationship between the most powerful forces in Europe today.

2. Why Russians Don’t Smile: Russian Culture at Home, School, and on the Streets
   Zhenya Arutyunyan, Teacher, Charlotte Country Day School

   Travelers visiting Russia often comment that Russians do not smile. Well, they do, just not always when Americans smile. This session will provide a native insight into the Russian culture, including educational approaches and behaviors. This session will help travelers to Russia understand its people, as well as provide American educators with an insight on the behaviors and attitudes of students from the former Soviet Union.

3. Muslims in the Post-Soviet Era
   Charles Kurzman, Co-director, Carolina Center for the Study of the Middle East and Muslim Civilizations, UNC at Chapel Hill

   Twenty years after the Soviet Union imploded, its legacy still shapes the identities of the 70 million Muslims in the region. In this session, we’ll discuss how post-Soviet Muslims are reaching for inspiration to pre-colonial history and Middle Eastern models, and how their new identities are still largely defined by national boundaries, political structures, and cultural traditions that grew out of the experience of communism.

4. Posters, Propaganda, and Perestroika
   Pamela Kachurin, Visiting Assistant Professor, Art, Art History, and Visual Studies Department, Duke University

   What factors contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Empire in 1991? An examination of the propaganda posters from the Gorbachev era give visual form to the intangible ideas of "Perestroika" and "Glasnost" and the great extent that Gorbachev's policies ultimately led to the delegitimization of the Communist Party and the resulting collapse of the Soviet Union. Participants will receive a disc with selected posters for classroom use.
1:15 pm – 2:15 pm

TEACHING RUSSIA ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

GRADES K - 12

1. **Russian Folk Music**  
   *Vitaly Bezrodnov, Dima Busov, Sergey Pudov, Golden Gates, St. Petersburg, Russia*

   Moscow Nights is an ensemble of world renowned, award-winning musicians from Russia. Their repertoire is centered on masterpieces of Russian folklore and represents the diversity of the culture using the balalaika, bayan accordion, unique Trashotky & Loshky, dance and vocals. This session will present an authentic picture of Russian folk traditions and educational resources for on-site school performances.

2. **Integrating Russian Language in the Classroom**  
   *Richard Uzzell, English and Russian Teacher, Enloe High School, Wake County Public School*

   Two decades after the fall of the Iron Curtain, Russian language study is still in its infancy in American public schools. A wealth of federal dollars is flowing into the study of a language, still classified by the state department as a critical "security" language. As a result, well-funded opportunities for student, teacher, and administrative study of the language and culture are widespread. In this session educators will learn more about language opportunities, learn some of the language, and strategize for increasing enrollment in this critical field.

3. **Technology Strategies for Teaching Russia and Its Neighbors**  
   *Kate Althaus, Russian and East European Studies, UNC at Chapel Hill*

   Technology tools can be great resources for engaging students and moving lessons to the next level. In this session participants will learn some of the most innovative, versatile, and free tools for teaching students of all ages about Russia and its neighbors. In addition to a short survey of each tool/site, participants will be given a list of technological resources and lessons to take back to the classroom.

GRADES 9 - COMMUNITY COLLEGE

4. **Teaching Russia and Eastern Europe through Literature and Film**  
   *Elena Clark, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, UNC at Chapel Hill*

   Literature and film are rich resources for exposing students to Eastern European culture and sparking discussions about their own culture. However, Eastern European literature has a well-earned reputation for being lengthy and serious, which can intimidate students and teachers alike. This session will suggest texts and films that American students may find more approachable than War and Peace, and discuss strategies for making them relevant for American high school and college students.

5. **Russia: Geography, Mapping, and Images**  
   *Amanda Henley, GIS Librarian, UNC Libraries*

   A solid understanding of geography helps students make connections between many areas of study. Over the past few years, availability of and access to geographic information and tools has increased dramatically. Now the average person has access to state-of-the-art mapping technology through a multitude of free and easy-to-use online mapping sites. This session will introduce free geography tools and allow you to see and share Russia like you’ve never before!