



## Moscow & Kazan: a Cultural and Ecological Excursion

Summer Session I 2016 - Study Abroad Program – 8 credits

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**This study-abroad program will explore two great cultural centers of Russia, Moscow and Kazan.** Moscow is Russia's Eternal City, the old and the new capital of all the Russias. In Moscow, the group will take guided tours of major historical sites, including the Moscow Kremlin, the Armory Museum, the Tretyakov Art Gallery, Novodevichi Convent and Monastery, and more. Then participants will take a night train to Kazan on the Volga River, the very heartland and capital of Tatarstan, a semi-independent republic in the middle of Russia.

**Kazan was the capital of the last Tatar successor state**, re-conquered for Russia by Ivan the Terrible, in 1552. It is where the Asian East meets the Russian West, the population evenly divided between the Volga Tatars and Russians. The Tatars are Sunni Muslims, and the Russians are Eastern Orthodox Christians. In Kazan, student travelers will receive lectures on the culture, geography, and environmental history of Tatarstan from the faculty of Kazan Federal University. They will visit several cultural sites in and around the city, including the Kazan Kremlin, the city art museum, and archeological exhibits. Students will further engage in ecological field trips to protected areas, including the Volga-Kama Nature Preserve (*Zapovednik*).

The group will then return to Moscow, where, time permitting before our flights home, we will perhaps stroll along the Arbat, pay our respects at the monument of Russia's unknown soldier, lay some flowers at the foot of the statue of Russia's greatest poet, Alexander Pushkin, or spend a few quiet moments in one of the city's famous churches, listening to a Russian choir singing a sacred mass. **And wherever we go, we will enjoy Russian and Tatar food, sights, sounds and hospitality.**

### 8 credits

**Credit equivalencies may include:** Russian Studies, Political Ecology, and Geography

**Faculty:** Dr. Thomas Rainey and Dr. John Baldrige, with WA State Land Use Judge, Nina Carter, MPA

### Required Books:

- *Russian History: A Very Short Introduction*, by Geoffrey Hosking
- *An Environmental History of Russia*, by Paul Josephson, et al.
- *The Natural History of the USSR*, by Algirdas Knystautas

### Required Articles:

- A packet of articles will be provided by the program faculty.

## STUDY ABROAD FORMAT

This program will begin with two standard class period meetings, and conclude with a public presentation by each traveler in the program. In between, we will spend approximately three weeks in Russia, mostly in the city of Kazan, but with ample time in Moscow upon our arrival. Expect a lot of structured time during the weekdays, with some free time during evenings and weekends. We will definitely make time regularly for all of us to meet and talk about what we are learning by experience, how that relates to our readings, and so on. Expect surprises, frustrations, revelations, revels, reveries, and discoveries. We can almost guarantee that you will make new friends. Keep your daily journal filled—not only for credit, but for your own memories, as well. Most of the time we'll be sticking together, so take advantage of that by asking questions, sharing answers, etc.

**KEY LEARNING GOALS** for this program include:

- General knowledge of the ecology, human and physical geography, and cultural history of Russia and Tatarstan.
- Expanded knowledge of Russia's environmental history via readings, lectures, and field work
- Skills development in ecological field research through experiential learning
- Progress in learning the Russian language (from whatever baseline applies)
- Added competencies in international travel

## DAILY TRAVEL JOURNALS

Students will be required to maintain a travel journal, with daily entries. There will be a minimal structure and rough word length established for journal entries—decided after a discussion among program members. In any case, everyone will be expected to record a daily journal entry, and the Travel Journal will be a major factor in faculty assessment for student evaluations. Do take this seriously. Be ready to use your journal to draw specific connections, in writing, between our required readings and your own experiences. We expect that this will occasionally include quotations, properly cited and referenced, as part of your journal.

## FINAL PRESENTATION

All members of the program should be ready to give a presentation to the public on what you did—and more importantly, what you *learned*—from your own experience studying abroad. The structure and location of these presentations are TBD, but Traditions Café, in downtown Olympia is a possibility. These could be individual presentations of 10 minutes each, or some kind of joint presentation format that adds up to about 2 hours, including Q&A time.

## PORTFOLIO

Compile your portfolio in a well-organized binder or accordion folder, but be sure to label each part, to help faculty navigate its components. Your learning portfolio for this program will consist of the following:

1. Syllabus and signed Program Constitution
2. Your Travel Journal (if your handwriting is illegible, please include a typed translation along with the handwritten original, or copy)
3. Your detailed reading, lecture, and field notes, beyond the journal
4. Digital/print copies of any photographs you want to share that might be indicative of your experience in Moscow & Kazan
5. Digital/print copies of any visual presentations (e.g. PowerPoint or Prezi) that you used in your public presentation.
6. A draft student self-evaluation (required for full credit)—remember, this is a summary of what you *learned*, and not what you *did*. This is the document where you sum up the whole trip!

## **STUDENT EVALUATION OF FACULTY**

A student evaluation of faculty is required, submitted to the online system before end-of-quarter meetings. You can keep this confidential until after your credits are posted (this is recommended). Please do offer any comments you have about the quality of the faculty members who hosted, facilitated, or otherwise taught your program.

## **FACULTY EVALUATIONS OF STUDENTS**

You will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Your active participation in our learning community throughout the program
- The quality (and clarity/specificity) of ideas in your writing—note that this includes the use of Standard English grammar—and the inclusion of relevant quotations and references from our readings.
- Adherence to the syllabus, program requirements, social contract, and covenant.
- The content and completeness of your final portfolio

## **OTHER EXPECTATIONS**

We assume that you will complete all program assignments on time and comport yourself in Russia and Tatarstan as culturally sensitive ambassadors and in a courteous manner that will reflect well on your fellow sojourners, faculty, and college.

## **ADDITIONAL NOTES & INFORMATION**

- Check the Canvas website for information, discussion forums, and downloadable documents. This is our main clearinghouse for distributing information about the program, apart from our in-person meetings.
- There are several forms (waivers, etc.) that you must complete and submit to the college before departure. Be sure to have these completed and turned in during our first class meeting.
- “It ain’t over ‘til it’s over,” as they say. We expect everyone to attend and participate in the public presentation of our experiences in Russia during the final week of classes.
- You will need to bring the required texts (books and articles) with you, to read and discuss during our time in Kazan. Please do not forget them!

**MOSCOW & KAZAN TENTATIVE SCHEDULE + ITINERARY:**

This schedule is subject to change.

Wk	CLASS DATE AND ACTIVITIES	READINGS TO COMPLETE & ASSIGNMENTS DUE
1	<p><b>Tuesday, 21 June</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study Abroad Orientation</li> <li>• Presentation on Moscow &amp; Kazan</li> <li>• Seminar Discussion</li> </ul> <p><b>Thursday, 23 June</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation on Russian vegetational zones, flora, and fauna</li> <li>• Seminar on readings</li> </ul>	<p><b>For Thursday:</b> <i>An Environmental History of Russia</i> (Intro &amp; Ch.1); <i>Natural History of the USSR</i> (Foreword &amp; Ch. 1 and 2)</p>
2	<p><b>Sunday, 26 June</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depart for Moscow</li> </ul> <p><b>Monday, 27 June – Thursday, 30 June</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring Moscow</li> </ul> <p><b>Thursday, 30 June</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Night train to Kazan</li> </ul> <p><b>Friday, 1 July</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrival in Kazan</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reading: TBA</b></p> <p><b>Daily Journal Entries</b></p>
3	<p><b>Kazan Federal University Lecture Series, seminars, field work, museum visits, etc. in and around Kazan</b></p>	<p><b>Reading: TBA</b></p> <p><b>Daily Journal Entries</b></p>
4	<p><b>Kazan Federal University Lecture Series, seminars, field work, museum visits, etc. in and around Kazan</b></p>	<p><b>Reading: TBA</b></p> <p><b>Daily Journal Entries</b></p>
5	<p><b>Sunday, 17 July</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to US (late night arrival)</li> </ul> <p><b>Tuesday, 19 July</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jet lag recovery &amp; preparation of presentations (NO CLASS)</li> </ul> <p><b>Thursday, 21 July</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6pm: Meet on campus for debrief and seminar</li> </ul> <p><b>Saturday, 23 July</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public presentations of our experiences and learning in Russia (7PM, Traditions Café)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Public Presentation:</b> be prepared to offer at least 5-10 minutes, with visual aids (e.g. PowerPoint).</p>