



# SPUTNIK

## СПУТНИК

**Sput-nik** Russian for (literally) ‘fellow-traveler’; each of a series of Soviet artificial satellites, the first of which (in 1957) was the first satellite to be placed in orbit.

annual student publication / issue 4 / summer 2017

### Congratulations to our Seniors!

This Spring, the Department graduated the following students:

<b>Jeremy Golant</b>	<b>Andrew Parsons</b>
<b>Miranda Lupion</b>	<b>Ben Griffiths</b>
<b>Stephanie Petrella</b>	<b>Jonah Rosen</b>

Our faculty and community would like to pass on our best wishes and congratulate our graduating seniors on their achievements!



### What does our department include?

- language programs for non-heritage and heritage learners;
- exciting lecture series and roundtables on a broad variety of cultural and political topics;
- talent shows, poetry readings, undergraduate research conferences, student trips;
- a family atmosphere (complete with tea, chocolate, and Cheburashka!)



### What did we do this year?

#### Russian Club in Northeast Philly

This spring, the Russian club organized a trip to Northeast Philly, where there are lots of Russian stores and Uzbek restaurants (with Central Asian and Russian cuisine). We went to Uzbekistan Restaurant and ordered Russian and Uzbek food. There were about 15 of us, and many of us only just met at this event. Personally, I met several Russian-speaking students, who I probably wouldn't have gotten to meet otherwise. We all got to know each other and had fun speaking Russian together. Being surrounded by Russian friends and acquaintances, I really felt like I was at home.

—*Malika Shukurova, E'19*

## **“The Grey War of Our Time: Information Warfare and the Kremlin's Weaponization of Digital Russian-Language News” by Miranda Lupion (C’17)**

*Students in our department often conduct original research using their language skills. One such project, Miranda Lupion’s senior thesis (abstract below), was recognized as winner of the Carnegie Council’s third annual research conference, and also received Penn’s Palmer Prize for best thesis in International Relations.*

While scholars have long studied the state’s propensity to alter its strategies in response to previous conventional military engagements, there is little literature that focuses on the development of “munition of the mind.” With the rise of hybrid warfare, the Russian government has actively developed its information warfare capabilities, including the weaponization of digital mass media. Drawing on Russian historical events and cultural themes to situate new stories in national narratives, state-led disinformation campaigns monopolize Russia’s airwaves, striving to increase domestic support for Moscow’s initiatives in former Soviet territories. From Russia’s influence campaign during the 2016 U.S. Presidential selection to the country’s cooption of media in East Ukraine, the Putin regime’s successful foray into the soft side of information warfare begs the question: over the past decade, how has the Kremlin developed its ability to weaponize media? To answer this question, I employed quantitative and qualitative content analysis to examine Russian-language digital news articles published by Kremlin-backed media outlets during two events – the 2008 Russo-Georgian War and the 2014 Crimean annexation. I found that from 2008 to 2014, Moscow improved its ability to capitalize on this benefit of digital news, rendering the 2014 sample more thematically sophisticated and thus more persuasive.



*Students presented papers at the Slavic Bazaar undergraduate research conference.*

## **Jeremy Golant C’17**

This spring, I traveled to the Naval Academy in Annapolis for a conference where I discussed geopolitical competition in the Arctic. I also completed my thesis on authoritarianism in Eastern Europe, and had two other research papers published in journals about politics in Russia and its sphere of influence. I took several classes in the Russian department, and the highlight this year was Professor Peter Steiner’s seminar on Central & Eastern Europe.

## **Natasha Kadlec C’18**

I spent the summer of 2016 studying Russian at Middlebury College. Spending time in the beautiful Vermont mountains helped make Middlebury’s intense program a doable and also genuinely enjoyable experience. The novelty of Middlebury’s program is that all the students promise to speak only Russian for eight weeks, even outside of class, in our dorms, at parties, and so on (and actually stuck to this pledge!). I had only studied Russian for one semester at Penn, so the first couple weeks were very strange, but survivable –and by the end of the program, I was ready to start third-year Russian at Penn.



*Middlebury is a strange but beautiful place to study Russian.*

## Our favorite events and traditions...

### **Russian Avant-Garde at MOMA**

Dr. Mila Nazyrova and Dr. Maria Bourlatskaya brought their Russian-language classes on science fiction and 20th century literature to a special exhibit at New York's Museum of Modern Art, featuring work of Russian avant-garde artists just before and after the October Revolution of 1917.



*Pictured: Miranda Lupion, Nick Akst, Dr. Mila Nazyrova.*



### **'Kapustnik' annual talent show**

I took Russian 463 with three other students. The four of us were in Mila's class. In class we discussed the texts we read and shared our opinions. But we rarely saw each other outside of class. When Mila asked us to prepare some sort of project for the «Kapustnik» event, we decided to film a video project together. To be honest, we rarely saw each other outside of class, but because of the project, we managed to meet a couple times to film the video, in which we played the roles of Putin, Trump, Pence and aliens. We had a lot of fun and at Kapustnik lots of Russian speakers got to meet up and laugh together. So I think Kapustnik at Penn is an important event where groups of Russian students can meet and we can entertain each other.

**-Malika Shukurova E'19**



*Students perform at the 2017 Kapustnik spring talent show.*

### **Poetry Reading—Aleksandr Skidan**

In October, Professor Kevin Platt hosted a bilingual poetry reading by the Russian-born poet and critic Aleksandr Skidan at Kelly Writers House (Skidan pictured left).

# Courses in Fall 2017

## LANGUAGE COURSES

**RUSS001 Elementary Russian I**  
Alley | Stuhr-Rommereim | Vassilieva  
**RUSS003 Intermediate Russian I**  
Peeney | Nazyrova  
**RUSS311 Advanced Conversation & Composition I**  
Alley  
**RUSS416 Business and Democracy in the New Russia**  
Bourlatskaya  
**RUSS360 Russian for Heritage Speakers I**  
Nazyrova  
**RUSS466 Russian Revolution**  
Nazyrova  
**SLAV590 Elementary Ukrainian I**  
Rudnytzky  
**SLAV592 Intermediate Ukrainian I**  
Rudnytzky  
**SLAV501 Elementary Polish I**  
Dziedzic  
**SLAV503 Intermediate Polish I**  
Dziedzic  
**SLAV530 Elementary Czech I**  
Staff  
**SLAV390 Serbo-Croatian-Bosnian I**  
Scepanovic-Ulia  
**EEUR121 Elementary Hungarian I**  
Mizsei  
**EEUR123 Intermediate Hungarian I**  
Mizsei

## COURSES TAUGHT IN ENGLISH

**RUSS196 Russian Short Story (Freshman Seminar)**  
Todorov  
**RUSS135 Cold War: A Global History**  
Nathans  
**RUSS136 Portraits of Russian Society: Art, Fiction, Drama**  
Peeney  
**NEW COURSE! RUSS160 Sex and Socialism**  
Ghodsee  
**RUSS164 Russian & East European Film from the October Revolution to World War II**  
Todorov  
**RUSS189 Soviet and Post-Soviet Economy**  
Vekker  
**RUSS191 Putin's Russia: Culture, Society and History**  
Platt  
**RUSS201 Dostoevsky**  
Steiner  
**RUSS220 From the Other Shore: Russia and the West**  
Peeney  
**RUSS240 Napoleonic Era and Tolstoy**  
Holquist  
**ARTH332 The Icon: From Sinai to Malevich**  
Drpic [counts for Russian major/minor]

*Please see the department's web page or PennInTouch for detailed information about courses and meeting times at [sas.upenn.edu/rees](http://sas.upenn.edu/rees)*

## Events coming up in 2017-2018

**Weekly / Russian Tea & Conversation**  
**December 2017 / New Year's Talent Show**  
**Spring 2018 / Slavic Bazaar: Annual Undergraduate Research Conference**

...and many more to be announced!

**Thank you, contributors to SPUTNIK 2017**

**Editing /** Natasha Kadlec

**Writing /** Malika Shukurova, Miranda Lupion, Natasha Kadlec, Jeremy Golant

**Photography /** Dr. Julia Verkholtantsev, Anton Relin, Miranda Lupion

**Original idea /** Alina Yakubova

Kremlin photo credit: <http://www.worldfortravel.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Kremlin-Moscow-Russia.jpg>