

OCREECAS Newsletter

2023-2024 Academic Year

About OCREECAS

The Oberlin Center for Russian, East European, and Central Asian Studies ([OCREECAS](#)) is designed to strengthen the study and teaching of Russian, East European, and Central Asian studies at Oberlin. Created in 1998 with support from the Clowes Fund, Inc. and other private contributions, its mission is twofold: to foster the development of new courses and cultural activities on campus focusing on the region, and to support student opportunities through OCREECAS grants.

Director [Kristina Paabus](#) and Internship Director [Maia Solovieva](#) provide the administrative support and resources essential to develop innovative programming for Oberlin students and recent graduates. They also assess participant safety and program quality within the rapidly changing conditions of the region.

OCREECAS is committed to providing Oberlin students with opportunities for the study of Russian language, and for studies in, about, and with the cultures and countries of the OCREECAS region. The OCREECAS region is defined as the following: Armenia, Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. *Please note that student travel to Belarus, Russia, Turkmenistan, and Ukraine is not currently supported by OCREECAS.*

Statement on the Russian War in Ukraine

OCREECAS and REEES continue to condemn Russia's unprovoked attack and ongoing war of aggression in the sovereign nation of Ukraine. We grieve for the victims of this war, and we stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine, along with all those who have protested the Russian government's actions.

OCREECAS Supported Events

OCREECAS supported a wide array of programming, events, and experiences by working with REEES (Russian, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies) as well as the larger campus community during the 2023-2024 academic year. This included the following OCREECAS sponsored events:

Academic Year 2023-2024

- Continuing with the success of *"The Russian Revolution and the Global South Reading Group"* from 2021-2023, students continued their studies under the tutelage of Visiting Assistant Professor of History, Nicholas Bujalski, during the 2023-2024 academic year by examining two texts; *"Red Star over the Third World"* (2017) by Vijay Prashad, and *"To See the Dawn: Baku, 1920 – First Congress of the Peoples of the East"* (1993) by John Riddell, ed.

Fall 2023

- REEE 220 - *Ukrainian Literature and Film in the Twentieth Century: Colonial Encounters*. Visiting Assistant

Professor of Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies, Anna Lordan, brought the following speakers to her course through video conferencing:

- Mariia Shuvalova, Literary Critic, National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy
 - Olha Poliukovych, Associate Professor at the Department of Literature of the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy
 - Sasha Dovzhyk, Writer and Director, INDEX Institute for Documentation and Exchange, Lviv
 - Alyssa Virker, PhD candidate in Slavic Languages and Literatures, Stanford University
- In October, OCREECAS joined numerous departments across campus to support bringing author [Grace Cho](#) to campus to discuss her memoir *"Tastes Like War"*.
 - Dr. Maia Solovieva, Senior Lecturer in Russian, invited Curtis Ford to meet with students in *RUSS 411 - Special Topics: Mikhail Bulgakov in Historical Context*. Dr. Curtis Ford holds a Ph.D. in Slavic Linguistics from the University of North Carolina/Chapel Hill, and his presentation *"Language and Identity in Ukraine and Russia"* outlined general sociolinguistic concepts in the context of historical and contemporary tensions around language usage in Ukraine.

Spring 2024

- In February of 2024, OCREECAS held a grant programs informational session for current students. The featured speakers were two 2023 OCREECAS Internship Awardees and the 2024 Winter Term Grant recipient. Raavi Asdar ('21) presented on his 9-week internship at Pheasant's Tears where he learned about traditional ceramics and winemaking processes in Georgia. Sam Merrick ('21) shared about their 3-month internship at TYPA Printing and Paper Art Centre in Tartu, Estonia, where they volunteered at a community-based arts non-profit, examined the role of the arts in resistance movements, and conducted creative research. Emi Kawamura ('27) discussed her OCREECAS Winter Term Grant project "Bulgarian Traditional Dance", in which she organized 3 weeks of Bulgarian dance programming and education for the Oberlin community.
- Anna Lordan, Visiting Assistant Professor of Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies, brought two speakers to campus for virtual presentations.
 - Emily Channell-Justice, director of the Temerty Contemporary Ukraine Program at the Ukrainian Research Institute at Harvard, spoke about her work on self-organization in Ukraine during the 2013-2014 Euromaidan events and self-organization during Russia's full-scale invasion, as well as about the importance of studying Ukraine and listening to Ukrainians as part of the practice of decolonization.
 - Sashko Protiah, from [Freefilmers](#), Ukraine, and Victoria Donovan, Professor of Ukrainian and East European Studies at the University of St Andrews, Scotland, presented a Freefilmers Solidarity Screening and workshop.
- *CMPL/GERM/RUSS 251: Gone Writing* Lecturer in German and Russian, Olesya Ivantsova, brought two guest speakers to her classroom via video conferencing.
 - Alex Kotelvas, a PhD Candidate from the University of Florida, discussed his research on mid-20th century Soviet travelogs.
 - Professor Emerita of Russian, German, and the Liberal Arts from Carleton College, Diane M. Nemeč Ignashev, presented a lecture about interpretations of Aleksandr Sokurov's Russian Ark in the postcolonial context.
- Vladimir Ivantsov, Assistant Professor of Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies, organized four guest lecture events for students.
 - Viktoria Lomasko, artist and writer, came to the Oberlin campus to present her work and meet with students in numerous classes.
 - Adalyat Issiyeva joined students via video conference in *REEE 446: The Myth of Lenin* to speak about the musical aspects of Dzuga Vertov's film *"Three Songs About Lenin"*.
 - Historian and musicologist Rebecca Mitchell (Middlebury) joined *RUSS 242/CMPL 242: From Pushkin to*

Pussy Riot to present on “*Sergei Rachmaninoff in the Context of Modernism*”.

- Musicologist Adalyat Issiyeva joined *RUSS/CMPL 242: From Pushkin to Pussy Riot* to present on “*The Caucasus in Russian Literature and Music*”.

- Dr. Maia Solovieva, Senior Lecturer in Russian, invited two guests to campus.
 - Evgeny Dengub, Russian language educator joined students in *RUSS 204: Intermediate Russian* via video conference.
 - Uzbek journalist, Nikita Makarenko, presented a public lecture on campus, “*Central Asia is Not Russia’s Backyard*”.
- In a collaboration between OCREECAS, Politics, REEES, History, and the Alumni Association, Michael Kimmage (OC ’95), author, professor, and former state department official presented a public lecture at Oberlin and discussed his new book “*Collisions: The Origins of the War in Ukraine and the New Global Instability*”. Read more in the [Oberlin Review](#).



Nikita Makarenko lecture, “*Central Asia is Not Russia’s Backyard*”
February 2024, Oberlin College Language Lab.



OCREECAS Grant Programs Information Session, March 2024, Oberlin College Language Lab.
Pictured left to right: 2024 OCREECAS Winter Term Grant recipient Emi Kawamura, and
2023 OCREECAS Internship awardees Raavi Asdar (Georgia) and Sam Merrick (Estonia).

OCREECAS Student Grants

OCREECAS continued grant programming in 2023-2024 to support students with three distinct award opportunities: the OCREECAS Russian Language Study Award, OCREECAS Winter Term Grant, and the long-standing OCREECAS Internship Award. *OCREECAS had unclaimed funds in each award category during 2023-2024 and strongly encourages more student applications in the upcoming academic year!*

OCREECAS Russian Language Study Award

In AY 2023-2024 OCREECAS provided monetary awards to students who wanted to supplement their Russian language learning with additional educational opportunities. Students generally use these funds during winter or summer to enhance their understanding of the Russian language in the US and abroad. This award is designed to promote language learning, and is open to first, second, and third-year currently enrolled students who have taken at least two consecutive semesters (fall, winter, or spring) of Russian language and intend to continue studying Russian at Oberlin. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis and require a brief statement, confirmation of participation in a program, a detailed budget, and brief letter of support from an Oberlin Russian language faculty member. Please note that the overall annual budget for this programming is \$6,000, and awards are allocated first-come-first-serve with a maximum amount of \$2,000 per student.

2023-2024 OCREECAS Russian Language Study Awards:

- In April 2024, Kai Andersson ('26) received an OCREECAS Russian Language Study Award to continue his language studies through the Intensive Russian summer program at Indiana University, Bloomington.
- In May 2024, Gigi Timoner ('26) received an OCREECAS Russian Language Study Award to continue her language studies through the Russian Practicum program at Columbia University's School of Professional Studies during summer 2024.

OCREECAS Winter Term Grant

In January 2024, OCREECAS intended to award four grants (up to \$1,000 each) to assist students with winter term projects that were thematically related to the OCREECAS region. Projects could be individual or collaborative in nature, and focus on creative, scholarly, or other pursuits. The OCREECAS Winter Term Grant was open to all currently enrolled

students, with priority given to REES students and majors, and additional consideration towards demonstrated financial need. The project location could be almost anywhere, but proposals required a thematic relationship to Russia, Eastern Europe, or Central Asia.

2024 OCREECAS Winter Term Grant:

- Emi Kawamura ('27) received an OCREECAS Winter Term Grant to support her project “Bulgarian Traditional Dance” during January 2024. Emi organized 3 weeks of events that brought traditional Bulgarian dance programming and education to the Oberlin community, engaging with over 150 people along the way.

OCREECAS Internship Award

In long-established grant programming, OCREECAS awarded two grants (up to \$5,000 each) to send students to internships in the OCREECAS region during 2024. OCREECAS has some affiliate internships, but students are also strongly encouraged to develop their own internship opportunities with recognized institutions. Students are required to have at least one affiliate institution in the host country, and most internships are 1-3 months in length. OCREECAS Internships are open to currently enrolled students and graduates within the past two years, with priority given to REES students and majors who have not previously received OCREECAS Internship Awards.

2024 OCREECAS Internship Awards:

- Wade Bursleson ('24) will be traveling to Budapest, Hungary for a 3-month internship with [BPZines](#), a Risograph printing studio and independent publisher.
- Martina Taylor ('24) will be conducting two internships focused on textiles and print in Hungary with [Threadwritten](#) and [Printa](#).



Emi Kawamura (center) with members of the Bulgarian Folk Performance group, *Otets Paissii*, OCREECAS Winter Term Grant 2024

Sponsored By: OCREECAS Winter Term Grant
Contact ekawamura@oberlin.edu for Questions!

BULGARIAN TRADITIONAL DANCE

Classes

6-7 PM
WARNER STUDIO 2,
30 N PROFESSOR ST

Open to the Public
Free!
Beginner Friendly!



1. 1/13 (SAT)
2. 1/15 (MON)
3. 1/17 (WED)
4. 1/18 (THURS)
5. 1/22 (MON)
6. 1/24 (WED)

****1/20 (SAT)
MASTERCLASS
WITH YALE
PROFESSOR:
10:30-12:00 PM****

Emi Kawamura, Poster for "Bulgarian Traditional Dance" classes, OCREECAS Winter Term Grant 2024



Emi Kawamura, students dancing. OCREECAS Winter Term Grant 2024

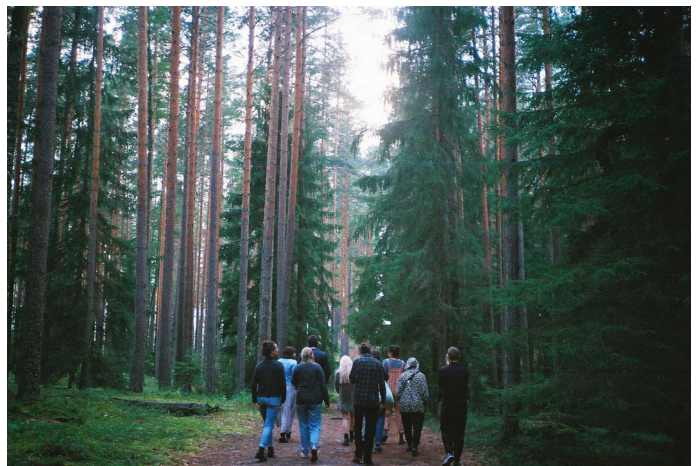


Raavi Asdar, 2023 OCREECAS Intern, Pheasant's Tears Winery, Georgia





Sam Merrick, 2023 OCREECAS Intern, TYPA Printing and Paper Art Centre, Tartu, Estonia



Sam Merrick, 2023 OCREECAS Intern, TYPA Printing and Paper Art Centre, Tartu, Estonia

OCREECAS is thankful to the following people:

Edith Clowes

Alyssa Nickley, Administrative Assistant for Russian, East Asian Studies, and German

OCREECAS 2022-2023 Committee Members:

- Vladimir Ivantsov, Assistant Professor of Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies
- Anna Lordan, Visiting Assistant Professor of Russian and East European Studies
- Tom Newlin, Professor of Russian and Chair of Russian
- Kristina Paabus, OCREECAS Director, Chair of Studio Art, Associate Professor of Reproducible Media
- Maia Solovieva, OCREECAS Internship Director and Senior Lecturer in Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies
- Pam Snyder, Executive Director, Foundation, Government & Corporate Grants

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