



Middlebury Schools Abroad Evaluation: 2007-2008

Evaluating your period of study abroad is one of the most valuable services you can render Middlebury College and future students planning to study abroad, and it is one of the most important ways you can help us maintain the highest possible standards. For this reason, until this form is submitted to International Programs and Off Campus Study a hold will be placed on official Middlebury transcript requests for Middlebury College students who studied at Middlebury Schools Abroad (this does not apply to non-Middlebury students). Please note: If you studied abroad for two semesters on two different programs, you must submit two separate evaluations.

The staff of the Middlebury Schools Abroad/International Programs and Off Campus Study welcomes the opportunity to hear about your experiences abroad; please feel free to stop by or call and talk with us!

This document contains respondents between 1 and 2 inclusive.

1. Home Institution

Middlebury College

Other Institution

If other than Middlebury, please indicate your home institution:

University of Kansas

2. Your academic program

Major

Russian & East European Studies

Month & Year of (expected) graduation

May 2009

3. What was the period of your study abroad?

fall semester

spring semester

academic year

spring semester followed by fall semester

4. Given that educational systems abroad differ significantly from our own, please reflect on your adjustment to your host country's educational environment. What effects did this different academic environment have on your learning, both inside and outside the classroom? In what ways did you benefit from being in a different academic environment?

The schedule of classes was very similar. I took 15 credit hours and my classes were spread out throughout the week. It was extremely difficult at first adjusting to classroom environment because everything was taught in Russian. I never learned grammatical terms (such as "passive participle," "instrumental case," etc.), so it was frustrating. However, once I adjusted, it was extremely beneficial and now I have a wider reading vocabulary for Russian (especially when it comes to linguistics and whatnot).

5. AFTER studying abroad, how do you now view the differences/similarities between the culture of your host country and that of your own?

	Identical	Very Similar	Mostly Similar	Somewhat Different	Very Different
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Please Comment:

I went in with a lot of stereotypes and I came out with some very different impressions. For example, I had no idea how much communism still affected Russians today. Because elections were going on for the Duma and the President, I had a lot of "political" conversations with my host family, friends, and strangers. It was interesting to see their viewpoints on what is important in their society and what they're looking for in a leader (compared to us in the U.S. and our elections, especially). There were other day-to-day cultural differences: I think Americans are much more private and there were many times when my hostmom would come into my room unannounced or she would ask extremely personal questions, it drove me crazy when she asked me how much I paid for something I had just bought and then went on to lecture me about how I spend too much money, dealing with gender issues. I also like to run and go to the gym, but in Russia I found that to be very different. For example, I joined a gym in my city and the first time I ran on the treadmill the trainer came up to me and told me that it had been 10 minutes. I said ok and just kept running. After another couple of minutes he approached me again and wanted to make sure that I knew how to turn it off. I told him I did and kept running (usually I run for at least 30min.). At the 20min mark, he came up to me and told me that I should not be running that long and I will hurt myself and that I should do something else. So I switched to weights. However, there were "men" weights and "women" weights (god forbid a girl has "man" muscles, haha). I always noticed little things like that. It was humorous, but also culturally different. All in all, though, people are people and on the individual level I think we're pretty similar everywhere.

7. In what ways has study abroad contributed to your personal growth? What personal characteristics did you find most useful during your time abroad?

Academically, I became a much better student. I would say that I have good work ethic - I always do my homework and generally my papers receive good marks, but I used to rarely speak up in class. However, because our classes were so small in Russia, I was forced to speak up and get out of my comfort zone (especially since it was in another language). I'm no longer afraid to make mistakes or sound "stupid" in class.

8. How has study abroad influenced your academic and career goals? How has it influenced your personal goals?

I study Russian because I want to be a Foreign Area Officer in the Navy (I'll commission as an officer when I graduate). I went abroad to immerse myself in the language. That was my number one priority. However, I think the lessons I learned about the people and the culture are just as valuable and I cannot wait to go back.

9. What was your housing situation during your study abroad?

- Homestay
- Dormitory/Student Residence/Foyer
- Apartment
- Other (please describe)

10. Do you feel that your housing situation provided you with an opportunity to integrate into the host culture, and/or provided you a context for gaining insight into the host culture?

Not at all - it was isolating

Somewhat helpful, but less than I expected

As helpful as I expected

Somewhat more helpful than I'd expected

Very helpful in terms of fostering insights and/or my integration



11. Please comment on your response to the question above.

My host family consisted of a mother, father, and 28-yr old daughter. The father constantly worked and I did not see him much. The daughter also worked a lot and had her own separate things going on, so we really didn't talk too much. The mom and I, however, talked all of the time. I attribute much of my language skills to her (in fact, I've had Russians tell me that I speak sometimes like an old Russian lady, haha). She would sit with me at tea time and at every meal and we would talk about anything and everything. She had a great sense of humor and was always in a cheerful mood. When I first arrived, she took me on several walking tours around the city to point out stores, bus stops, museums, statues, etc. - she was very proud of her city. I couldn't have asked for a better host family.

12. Did you take courses alongside students from the host country?

- Yes
- No

13. If you answered yes to the question above, how well do you feel that your mainstream classes helped you to develop relationships with nationals of the host country or integrate into the host culture?

- Poor
- Neutral
- Helpful
- Very Helpful
- Not Applicable

Comments

The class was only once a week and, although I talked with many of the students in class, it was difficult to establish relationships with them outside of class (but that's to be expected).

14. Did you participate in any extra-curricular activities or internships?

- Yes
- No

15. If you answered yes to the question above, were your extra-curricular activities helpful in assisting your integration into the host culture?

	Not helpful at all	Only slightly helpful	Somewhat helpful	helpful	Very helpful
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

16. Please describe the extra-curricular activities or internship in which you participated, and make any additional comments about these activities that you think would be helpful to Middlebury staff or future students.

I took flute lessons at the local music school in town. Although many of the students were younger than me, they were much more willing to interact and have conversations with me. Also, if I saw them around town, they would stop and say hello and ask me what I was doing, whereas students my age or older didn't talk to me that much. I joined a gym both semesters and I HIGHLY recommend it. First of all, it gave me a place to relax and do something familiar. Secondly, I made some friends at the gym and because I went a few times a week, I saw them on a more regular basis and we talked much more often than I did with students at the university (who I only had class with once a week).

17. What kind of progress did you make in your listening comprehension of the language?

No
improvement

Little
improvement

Improved
somewhat

Improved

Very much
improved

18. What kind of progress did you make in your ability to read in the language?

No
improvement

Little
improvement

Improved
somewhat

Improved

Very much
improved

19. What kind of progress did you make in your ability to write in the language?

No
improvement

Little
improvement

Improved
somewhat

Improved

Very much
improved

20. What kind of progress did you make in your ability to speak in the language?

No
improvement

Little
improvement

Improved
somewhat

Improved

Very much
improved

21. Please comment on the progress you made in your target language. Was it greater or less than you had expected? What do you think were some of the factors that contributed to your progress (or lack thereof), either on your own part or on the part of the program? Do you have any specific suggestions for the program and/or for future students that pertain to language learning?

I improved a great deal in all aspects of the language. I started at an Intermediate Low and ended at an Advanced Medium, so I was more than pleased with the results. As far as listening comprehension goes, I watched a LOT of tv (in the native language and without voice-overs and it helped tremendously). I also read the newspaper on a weekly basis and that helped to improve my reading. Obviously schoolwork also helped with reading and especially writing. As far as speaking the language goes, I admit that I wasn't very strict with the language pledge, especially first semester. Second semester I shaped up and spoke much more Russian with the other students. My most progress in the language, however, came from speaking with my host mom.

22. Are there any particular academic strengths of your host university/program that you would recommend to other students?

- Yes
- No

Please explain:

The teachers were amazing, and I cannot stress the importance of everything being taught in Russian by Russians. I also recommend taking a mainstream and Middlebury really helped when it came to finding one that suited my interested and fit into my schedule.

23. Are there any particular academic weaknesses of which other students should also be aware?

- Yes
- No

Please explain:

I have no complaints.

24. Please select your course from the drop down menu, if applicable.

- CHINA: Fall Semester: Speaking & Pronunciation (1 on 2)
- LATIN AMERICA: Cuaderno
- MIDDLE EAST: Fall Semester: Modern Standard Arabic
- RUSSIA: Fall Semester: Intensive Russian Language I (Grammar/Composition)

25. Please tell us about the courses you took, including what level (intro/upper/seminar.) If you did an independent study project or internship, please describe it.

Course Title #1

Intensive Russian Language I

At which institution/university did you take this course?

Yaroslavl State University (Middlebury)

Means of assessment (e.g., papers, exams, homework, etc.)

homework, exams

Please describe the course content:

lectures on Russian grammar

Please describe the means by which the material/concepts for this course were conveyed, particularly if the teaching style was different from what you are used to.

I was very straightforward and clear teaching with many examples to fall back on.

Other comments about this course:

It was more of an overview of what I've learned in the past, but going more in depth. I felt like I thoroughly understood the meanings and nuances of the grammatical subjects.

26. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"I learned a great deal in this course."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

27. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"The instructor's teaching in this course was effective."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

28. Please select your course from the drop down menu, if applicable.

- CHINA: Fall Semester: Classical Chinese
- MIDDLE EAST: Fall Semester: Egyptian Colloquial Arabic
- RUSSIA: Fall Semester: Intensive Russian Language II (Conversation/Speech Practice)

29. Please tell us about the courses you took, including what level (intro/upper/seminar.) If you did an independent study project or internship, please describe it.

Course Title #2

Conversation and Speech Practice

At which institution/university did you take this course?

Yaroslavl State University (Middlebury)

Means of assessment (e.g., papers, exams, homework, etc.)

homework, exams

Describe course content

topics of business and scholar styles of speech, holidays, and general colloquial expressions

Please describe the means by which the material/concepts for this course were conveyed, particularly if the teaching style was different from what you are used to.

lectures and handouts

Other comments about this course:

.....

30. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"I learned a great deal in this course."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

31. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"The instructor's teaching in this course was effective."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

32. Please select your course from the drop down menu, if applicable.

- CHINA: Fall Semester: One-on-One Tutorial (Please describe in the boxes below)
- MIDDLE EAST: Fall Semester: One-on-One Tutorial (Please describe in the boxes below)
- RUSSIA: Fall Semester: Russian Civilization and Culture

33. Please tell us about the courses you took, including what level (intro/upper/seminar.) If you did an independent study project or internship, please describe it.

Course Title #3

Russian Culture

At which institution/university did you take this course?

Yaroslavl State University (Middlebury)

Means of assessment (e.g., papers, exams, homework, etc.)

homework, exam, papers

Describe course content

Russian icons, folktales, literature, idea of the "collective", university culture, business culture, etc.

Please describe the means by which the material/concepts for this course were conveyed, particularly if the teaching style was different from what you are used to.

Lectures, we went to see a Russian play

Other comments about this course:

Best Russian course I've ever taken. The teacher was amazing and I think it should be mandatory of all students.

34. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"I learned a great deal in this course."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

35. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"The instructor's teaching in this course was effective."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

36. Please select your course from the drop down menu, if applicable.

- CHINA: Fall Semester: Elective #1
- MIDDLE EAST: Fall Semester: Media Arabic
- RUSSIA: Fall Semester: Phonetics (or Russian Film for students in Irkutsk)

37. Please tell us about the courses you took, including what level (intro/upper/seminar.) If you did an independent study project or internship, please describe it.

Course Title #4

Phonetics

At which institution/university did you take this course?

Yaroslavl State University (Middlebury)

Means of assessment (e.g., papers, exams, homework, etc.)

homework, exam

Describe course content

speech practice

Please describe the means by which the material/concepts for this course were conveyed, particularly if the teaching style was different from what you are used to.

we used poetry, songs, and riddles to help learn the language, which made it more interesting

Other comments about this course:

extremely helpful

38. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"I learned a great deal in this course."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

39. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"The instructor's teaching in this course was effective."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

40. Please select your course from the drop down menu, if applicable.

- CHINA: Fall Semester: Elective #2 (Please describe in the boxes below)
- MIDDLE EAST: Elective: Fall Semester: History of the Middle East
- RUSSIA: Fall Semester: Spetskurs (Please describe in the boxes below)

41. Please tell us about the courses you took, including what level (intro/upper/seminar.) If you did an independent study project or internship, please describe it.

Course Title #5

Modern Russian Politics

At which institution/university did you take this course?

Yaroslavl State University (Middlebury)

Means of assessment (e.g., papers, exams, homework, etc.)

homework, paper

Describe course content

history of Russian politics, 2007/2008 Duma/Presidential elections

Please describe the means by which the material/concepts for this course were conveyed, particularly if the teaching style was different from what you are used to.

lectures, videos (a lot of media from the news), we visited the Electoral commission

Other comments about this course:

very interesting especially since it was during election time

42. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"I learned a great deal in this course."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

43. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"The instructor's teaching in this course was effective."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

44. Please select your course from the drop down menu, if applicable.

- RUSSIA: Fall Semester: Spetskurs #2 (Please describe in the boxes below), or...
- RUSSIA: Fall Semester: Mainstream class (Please describe in the boxes below)

45. Please tell us about the courses you took, including what level (intro/upper/seminar.) If you did an independent study project or internship, please describe it.

Course Title #6

International Politics

At which institution/university did you take this course?

Yaroslavl State University

Means of assessment (e.g., papers, exams, homework, etc.)

exam, paper

Describe course content

theories of international politics

Please describe the means by which the material/concepts for this course were conveyed, particularly if the teaching style was different from what you are used to.

lecture and seminar

Other comments about this course:

I already knew the course content but it was another place where I could speak Russian and interact with Russian students

46. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"I learned a great deal in this course."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

47. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"The instructor's teaching in this course was effective."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

48. Please select your course from the drop down menu, if applicable.

- CHINA: Spring Semester: Speaking & Pronunciation (1 on 2)
- MIDDLE EAST: Spring Semester: Modern Standard Arabic
- RUSSIA: Spring Semester: Intensive Russian Language I (Grammar/Composition)

49. Please tell us about the courses you took, including what level (intro/upper/seminar.) If you did an independent study project or internship, please describe it.

Course Title #7

Russian Grammar

At which institution/university did you take this course?

Yaroslavl State University (Middlebury)

Means of assessment (e.g., papers, exams, homework, etc.)

homework, exams

Describe course content

sentence syntax and structure

Please describe the means by which the material/concepts for this course were conveyed, particularly if the teaching style was different from what you are used to.

lecture

Other comments about this course:

.....

50. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"I learned a great deal in this course."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

51. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"The instructor's teaching in this course was effective."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

52. Please select your course from the drop down menu, if applicable.

- CHINA: Spring Semester: Elective #2 (Please describe in the boxes below)
- MIDDLE EAST: Spring Semester: Elective: History of the Middle East
- RUSSIA: Spring Semester: Spetskurs #1 (Please describe in the boxes below) OR ...
- RUSSIA: Spring Semester: Mainstream Course (Please describe in the boxes below)

53. Please tell us about the courses you took, including what level (intro/upper/seminar.) If you did an independent study project or internship, please describe it.

Course Title #11

Journalism

At which institution/university did you take this course?

Yaroslavl State University (Middlebury)

Means of assessment (e.g., papers, exams, homework, etc.)

homework, papers, exam

Describe course content

we read and analyzed contemporary Russian newspaper articles, we also talked about subtleties of language

Please describe the means by which the material/concepts for this course were conveyed, particularly if the teaching style was different from what you are used to.

We read a lot of newspaper articles.

Other comments about this course:

This course should be mandatory. I learned the most from this class and the teacher (same as Russian Culture) was amazing.

54. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"I learned a great deal in this course."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

55. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"The instructor's teaching in this course was effective."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

56. Please select your course from the drop down menu, if applicable.

- RUSSIA: RUSSIA: Spring Semester: Spetskurs #2 (Please describe in the boxes below) OR...
- RUSSIA: RUSSIA: Spring Semester: Mainstream Course #2 (Please describe in the boxes below)

57. Please tell us about the courses you took, including what level (intro/upper/seminar.) If you did an independent study project or internship, please describe it.

Course Title #12

Modern Russian Literature

At which institution/university did you take this course?

Yaroslavl State University (Middlebury)

Means of assessment (e.g., papers, exams, homework, etc.)

homework, papers

Describe course content

we read famous works of Modern Russian literature

Please describe the means by which the material/concepts for this course were conveyed, particularly if the teaching style was different from what you are used to.

reading

Other comments about this course:

We usually don't study these works in US schools (especially in Russian)

58. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"I learned a great deal in this course."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

59. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"The instructor's teaching in this course was effective."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

60. Did Middlebury provide you with an appropriate orientation on arrival?

	Poor		Good		Excellent
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

61. Did Middlebury provide you with sufficient support while you were abroad?

Poor

Good

Excellent

62. Were the on-site staff (Resident Director, Academic Director, Resident Coordinator, support staff, etc.) helpful to you during your study abroad?

Not helpful

Somewhat
helpful

Very helpful

63. Did you see or experience any form of discrimination or harassment in your host country?

Yes

No

64. If you answered yes to the question above, what advice would you give to future students? Likewise, if you have advice for Middlebury staff, please share that as well.

You shouldn't be speaking English, but if you do...be careful when and where you speak. You will be drawing quite a bit of (unwanted) attention to yourself.

65. Would you recommend that other students attend this program or university? Why or why not?

Yes

No

Please explain:

If you can afford it, it's great and provides a lot of opportunities for the students. We all had different interests and needs, but for the most part, we all were satisfied and made the experience our own.

66. What advice would you give to other students considering study abroad in general, and this program or university in particular?

Do it. You cannot fully understand a culture until you are put right in the middle of it. You can read all you want about St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Siberia, but until you are living among the Russians and interacting with them, asking questions, having conversations with complete strangers on the train, etc., there is no way you can fully grasp the culture. The language consideration is obvious and as long as you work for it and stay involved in your school and Russian community, your progress will be quite evident.

67. MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE STUDENTS ONLY: Did you attend Middlebury's on-campus pre-departure orientation meeting(s)?

Yes

No

68. MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE STUDENTS ONLY: Did you find the pre-departure meetings and handouts useful?

- Yes
- No
- N/A - Did not attend meetings

69. ALL STUDENTS: What aspects of the pre-departure process did you find particularly useful (or not), and how would you recommend that we improve the pre-departure meeting or supplemental materials?

The handbooks were very helpful, especially the ones geared towards our specific cities. I also took advantage of the list of previous students and asked them for advice before I left.

70. How did you learn of the Middlebury program? (Check all that apply.)

- searching the web
- a friend who attended a Middlebury program
- a friend (who did not attend a Middlebury program)
- a sibling or other family member
- a faculty member at my college/university
- by attending the Middlebury Language Schools
- a study abroad fair
- a study abroad office/adviser
- a news article

Other

.....

71. Why did you choose this particular program and site?

Middlebury is very well-known for its language programs. I also wanted a reliable program that offered study abroad sites in smaller cities (other than Moscow and St. Petersburg).

72. Did your expectations of the program as advertised before you went abroad match the reality of your experience during your study abroad?

- Completely matched
- Was what I expected for the most part
- Was somewhat different from what I expected
- Was vastly different than what I'd expected

Comments

.....

73. Did you receive acceptance and pre-departure information in a timely fashion?

- Yes
- No

74. Did you find the mailings and online resources useful?

- Yes
- No

75. Were there particular challenges unique to you as a student from another institution? Please explain.

It was a little difficult to get some of the courses transferred. I wish there was a syllabus for each class that I could've brought back to show my teachers.

76. Further comments:

I had a great time, thanks!

1. Home Institution

Middlebury College

Other Institution

If other than Middlebury, please indicate your home institution:

Hobart College

2. Your academic program

Major

Russian Area Studies

Month & Year of (expected) graduation

May 2009

3. What was the period of your study abroad?

fall semester

spring semester

academic year

spring semester followed by fall semester

4. Given that educational systems abroad differ significantly from our own, please reflect on your adjustment to your host country's educational environment. What effects did this different academic environment have on your learning, both inside and outside the classroom? In what ways did you benefit from being in a different academic environment?

The small class sizes and practically non-stop communication with professors increased my learning potential substantially, and I tried to use the new words from class outside of class regularly. A more tight-knit academic environment was vital to my steady development in the language.

5. AFTER studying abroad, how do you now view the differences/similarities between the culture of your host country and that of your own?

	Identical	Very Similar	Mostly Similar	Somewhat Different	Very Different
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

6. Please Comment:

For better or worse, Russia is a nation of tradition, communalism and familial closeness, aspects which seem to be less prevalent in American society. I was especially surprised by their communalistic attitudes, as it effects their orientation towards laws, customs and everyday interaction.

7. In what ways has study abroad contributed to your personal growth? What personal characteristics did you find most useful during your time abroad?

It has greatly widened my horizons with respect to how I conceptually view the world, before I used to get caught up in the policy initiatives of the United States, but now I also take into account the larger impact of many of those issues, as the United State's relationship with Russia has always suffered from lack of understanding on both ends. My ability to modify my expectations to the surroundings helped me while in Russia, as once I got used to a new way of life Russia became a great new environment for me.

8. How has study abroad influenced your academic and career goals? How has it influenced your personal goals?

It has influenced my academic goals by enabling me to change my major from philosophy to russian studies, as I think russian studies is more suitable to my talents and long-term goals. My personal goals have been influenced in that I have seen how far I can progress in the language by spending time in the host country devoting myself to study, as before I left I was barely able to speak in other than prearranged sentences, while after leaving I can speak on a broad range of subjects in a similar pace to speaking English.

9. What was your housing situation during your study abroad?

- Homestay
- Dormitory/Student Residence/Foyer
- Apartment
- Other (please describe)

10. Do you feel that your housing situation provided you with an opportunity to integrate into the host culture, and/or provided you a context for gaining insight into the host culture?

	Not at all - it was isolating	Somewhat helpful, but less than I expected	As helpful as I expected	Somewhat more helpful than I'd expected	Very helpful in terms of fostering insights and/or my integration
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. Please comment on your response to the question above.

My homestay was slightly strange because my host brother was somewhat abnormal, but my host mom made up for his deficiencies by spending a great deal of time with me, as we would watch tv together regularly and comment on the interesting stories. I would say we had a good relationship overall, as it seems we sometimes got on each other's nerves, but were glad to have each other around.

12. Did you take courses alongside students from the host country?

- Yes
- No

13. Did you participate in any extra-curricular activities or internships?

Yes

No

14. If you answered yes to the question above, were your extra-curricular activities helpful in assisting your integration into the host culture?

Not helpful at all

Only slightly helpful

Somewhat helpful

helpful

Very helpful

15. Please describe the extra-curricular activities or internship in which you participated, and make any additional comments about these activities that you think would be helpful to Middlebury staff or future students.

I participated in a program called Cross Cultural Communication, which included a couple English speakers and a number of Russian speakers who discussed social situations, and how we might respond to them. The group was a lot of fun, and while it was difficult, it was very rewarding in the long run, as I became very good friends with several of the Russian speakers, and the activities we did were often a lot of fun.

16. What kind of progress did you make in your listening comprehension of the language?

No improvement

Little improvement

Improved somewhat

Improved

Very much improved

17. What kind of progress did you make in your ability to read in the language?

No improvement

Little improvement

Improved somewhat

Improved

Very much improved

18. What kind of progress did you make in your ability to write in the language?

No improvement

Little improvement

Improved somewhat

Improved

Very much improved

19. What kind of progress did you make in your ability to speak in the language?

No
improvement

Little
improvement

Improved
somewhat

Improved

Very much
improved



20. Please comment on the progress you made in your target language. Was it greater or less than you had expected? What do you think were some of the factors that contributed to your progress (or lack thereof), either on your own part or on the part of the program? Do you have any specific suggestions for the program and/or for future students that pertain to language learning?

It was much greater than I expected, I think the greatest factor to my improvement in the language was the fact that several of the students in my group were committed to speaking in Russian out of class. The teachers were great in facilitating fun and interesting activities, but if I had not used those words out of class, I don't think I could have made nearly as much progress. My only suggestion would be to try to find people willing to only speak the language, as if you do, abiding by the language pledge and doing well in classes will be much easier.

21. Are there any particular academic strengths of your host university/program that you would recommend to other students?

Yes

No

Please explain:

The teachers were amazing. It was unlike any academic experience I had previously, all of my teachers were great and fully committed to wonderful classes.

22. Are there any particular academic weaknesses of which other students should also be aware?

Yes

No

Please explain:

.....

23. Please select your course from the drop down menu, if applicable.

CHINA: Fall Semester: Speaking & Pronunciation (1 on 2)

LATIN AMERICA: Cuaderno

MIDDLE EAST: Fall Semester: Modern Standard Arabic

RUSSIA: Fall Semester: Intensive Russian Language I (Grammar/Composition)

24. Please tell us about the courses you took, including what level (intro/upper/seminar.) If you did an independent study project or internship, please describe it.

Course Title #1

Russian Grammar

At which institution/university did you take this course?

Yaroslavl State University

Means of assessment (e.g., papers, exams, homework, etc.)

exams, homework

Please describe the course content:

We took notes regularly in class and did exercises from a number of grammar books.

Please describe the means by which the material/concepts for this course were conveyed, particularly if the teaching style was different from what you are used to.

mostly notes written on a white board

Other comments about this course:

not overly fun, but very informative and helpful

25. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"I learned a great deal in this course."

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

Agree

Strongly agree

26. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"The instructor's teaching in this course was effective."

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

Agree

Strongly agree

27. Please select your course from the drop down menu, if applicable.

CHINA: Fall Semester: Classical Chinese

MIDDLE EAST: Fall Semester: Egyptian Colloquial Arabic

RUSSIA: Fall Semester: Intensive Russian Language II (Conversation/Speech Practice)

28. Please tell us about the courses you took, including what level (intro/upper/seminar.) If you did an independent study project or internship, please describe it.

Course Title #2

Speech Development

At which institution/university did you take this course?

Yaroslavl State University

Means of assessment (e.g., papers, exams, homework, etc.)

exams, homework

Describe course content

we would usually focus on a given topic for a class period, and try to use the new words in scenarios that the professor gave us

Please describe the means by which the material/concepts for this course were conveyed, particularly if the teaching style was different from what you are used to.

worksheets, we did some note-taking on these sheets

Other comments about this course:

a great course, always interesting, sometimes fun, not overly difficult

29. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"I learned a great deal in this course."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

30. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"The instructor's teaching in this course was effective."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

31. Please select your course from the drop down menu, if applicable.

- CHINA: Fall Semester: One-on-One Tutorial (Please describe in the boxes below)
- MIDDLE EAST: Fall Semester: One-on-One Tutorial (Please describe in the boxes below)
- RUSSIA: Fall Semester: Russian Civilization and Culture

32. Please tell us about the courses you took, including what level (intro/upper/seminar.) If you did an independent study project or internship, please describe it.

Course Title #3

Russian Culture

At which institution/university did you take this course?

Yaroslavl State University

Means of assessment (e.g., papers, exams, homework, etc.)

regular mini-essays, homework, final paper

Describe course content

over the course of the semester, we discussed many topics relating to russian culture, such as russian icons, collectivism, russian norms, etc, most of it was very interesting

Please describe the means by which the material/concepts for this course were conveyed, particularly if the teaching style was different from what you are used to.

we usually went over the homework for the day, which was a worksheet and discussed issues relating to it, lots of discussion

Other comments about this course:

a wonderful course, classes were great, this was definitely my hardest course

33. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"I learned a great deal in this course."

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

Agree

Strongly agree

34. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"The instructor's teaching in this course was effective."

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

Agree

Strongly agree

35. Please select your course from the drop down menu, if applicable.

CHINA: Fall Semester: Elective #1

MIDDLE EAST: Fall Semester: Media Arabic

RUSSIA: Fall Semester: Phonetics (or Russian Film for students in Irkutsk)

36. Please tell us about the courses you took, including what level (intro/upper/seminar.) If you did an independent study project or internship, please describe it.

Course Title #4

Phonetics

At which institution/university did you take this course?

Yaroslavl State University

Means of assessment (e.g., papers, exams, homework, etc.)

oral recitations, homework

Describe course content

phonetics from grade school books, we learned about the pronunciation of letters as well as phrases through intonation

Please describe the means by which the material/concepts for this course were conveyed, particularly if the teaching style was different from what you are used to.

we did a lot of reading aloud and the professor would correct us when necessary

Other comments about this course:

the professor made sure we pronounced things right, but the class was rather easy, definitely more laid back than the others

37. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"I learned a great deal in this course."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

38. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"The instructor's teaching in this course was effective."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

39. Please select your course from the drop down menu, if applicable.

- CHINA: Fall Semester: Elective #2 (Please describe in the boxes below)
- MIDDLE EAST: Elective: Fall Semester: History of the Middle East
- RUSSIA: Fall Semester: Spetskurs (Please describe in the boxes below)

40. Please tell us about the courses you took, including what level (intro/upper/seminar.) If you did an independent study project or internship, please describe it.

Course Title #5

Russian History

At which institution/university did you take this course?

Yaroslavl State University

Means of assessment (e.g., papers, exams, homework, etc.)

a couple short quizzes, final paper

Describe course content

we learned about Russia from the time of its formation to the 90s, most of the course focused from the peasants circa 1860s to the 90s

Please describe the means by which the material/concepts for this course were conveyed, particularly if the teaching style was different from what you are used to.

the teacher used power point presentations in an attempt to make the information more vivid in our minds, the lectures usually went by pretty quickly, as the instructor was very good at presenting the information

Other comments about this course:

not a bad course, the textbook was not easy to read, I think it was a middle school history book, so concepts weren't explained with the smallest words, but we were mainly supposed to understand general ideas

41. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"I learned a great deal in this course."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

42. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement:

"The instructor's teaching in this course was effective."

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

43. Did Middlebury provide you with an appropriate orientation on arrival?

	Poor		Good		Excellent
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

44. Did Middlebury provide you with sufficient support while you were abroad?

Poor

Good

Excellent

45. Were the on-site staff (Resident Director, Academic Director, Resident Coordinator, support staff, etc.) helpful to you during your study abroad?

Not helpful

Somewhat helpful

Very helpful

46. Did you see or experience any form of discrimination or harassment in your host country?

Yes

No

47. If you answered yes to the question above, what advice would you give to future students? Likewise, if you have advice for Middlebury staff, please share that as well.

I experienced some low level discrimination based on the fact that I was clearly an American, but I think everyone going to Russia expects a little disrespect from some of the less tolerant Russians.

48. Would you recommend that other students attend this program or university? Why or why not?

Yes

No

Please explain:

the teachers, courses and on-site staff were great, they were the reasons why I had such a memorable experience

49. What advice would you give to other students considering study abroad in general, and this program or university in particular?

I would advise them to strongly consider this program, and the Yaroslavl site in particular, as the city is beautiful, mid-sized and has a wonderful walkway along the river, and the courses make the academics enjoyable.

50. ALL STUDENTS: What aspects of the pre-departure process did you find particularly useful (or not), and how would you recommend that we improve the pre-departure meeting or supplemental materials?

I found that the materials were very useful, perhaps some pictures in the guide would have been nice, for some reason I thought Russia would look differently, but I guess that's my own fault for not researching it.

51. How did you learn of the Middlebury program? (Check all that apply.)

- searching the web
- a friend who attended a Middlebury program
- a friend (who did not attend a Middlebury program)
- a sibling or other family member
- a faculty member at my college/university
- by attending the Middlebury Language Schools
- a study abroad fair
- a study abroad office/adviser
- a news article

Other

.....

52. Why did you choose this particular program and site?

My college has a partnership with Middlebury for studying in Russia, but I also heard it was a great program.

53. Did your expectations of the program as advertised before you went abroad match the reality of your experience during your study abroad?

- Completely matched
- Was what I expected for the most part
- Was somewhat different from what I expected
- Was vastly different than what I'd expected

Comments

i guess i'm not good at anticipating events if i'm unfamiliar with the surroundings, as it took me a while from when i got there to make much of the information i received beforehand stick in

54. Did you receive acceptance and pre-departure information in a timely fashion?

- Yes
- No

55. Did you find the mailings and online resources useful?

Yes

No

56. How would you recommend that we improve in this area?

I think it was exceptional, the booklet on the specific program we would be attending was very thorough and helpful.

57. Were there particular challenges unique to you as a student from another institution? Please explain.

No.