

# Ukrainian Fulbright Graduate Students in the USA 2003-2004



## Orysa Hachko

Orysa Hachko completed a Master's Degree in Women's Studies as part of the Fulbright Graduate Student Class of 2002. She studied at Drew University in New Jersey, in the Women's Studies program. Orysa focused on religion, joined the American Academy of Religion, the Society of Biblical Literature, the International Federation of University Women, and attended the annual meetings of these professional organizations. In the Women's Studies Department at Drew, she was a student convener who organized and administered specialized seminars and projects. She intends to publish the results of her Master's research in the near future. Orysa's current interest takes her in the direction of Masculinity Studies — a largely undeveloped field in the United States and one that has yet to be introduced in Ukraine. As Orysa describes her experience in the United States, she recalls the odd feeling of studying with so many older "nontraditional" students. "My first impression was that all these people were my professors. I was pretty scared."

## Denys Danylenko

Denys Danylenko studied Child Psychology at Georgia State University. The highlight of his first year of study was receiving a Graduate Research Assistantship. So far he has visited Florida International University and Harvard University. He writes, "At this moment both studying and research activities are in process and it is a little bit early to mention any definite results. But I must say that my experience as a student and as a scholar has already been enormous. These six intense months have given me a lot of specific information both in my field of study and in general outlook and I eagerly take any opportunity to learn more."

Living in sunny Atlanta, Denys was lulled into meteorological complacency during his first months in the South. Before the fall exams, Denys and friends decided to make a quick trip to Boston. Writes Denys, "My mistake was that I didn't take into consideration the vulnerability of air travel to weather conditions. So I left warm and sunny Atlanta

for cold and windy Boston. The weekend was really great. On Sunday evening it started to snow... We came to the airport to find all departures canceled. Instead of two days we had to spend an entire week. I had to call my professors and explain my situation. It was a great relief that they agreed to postpone my exams."



## Viktoria Bokova

Viktoria Bokova's Fulbright fellowship took her to the California State University at Fullerton, where she completed a Master's Degree in Linguistics. Her essay dealt with intonation of imperatives in English office discourse. Viktoria attended

many conferences and meetings, including those of the Linguistic Society of America in Boston and the Historical Linguistics and TESOL meetings in the Los Angeles area. She also visited MIT, Harvard, and UCLA. When asked to describe her accomplishments, Viktoria wrote, "For me as a professional, the

biggest accomplishment was talking to such great linguists as Noam Chomsky and Ray Jackendoff. Chomsky even expressed willingness to come to our university. His excitement about this idea can be explained by his Ukrainian heritage, as his grandfather came from Kyiv." Viktoria added a TESOL certificate to her M.A. degree, which enabled her to create a new English Phonology course for her home institution in Ukraine. Moreover, she studied the process of grant application, and intends to use these skills to generate funding for a language laboratory in Mykolayiv. She returns to Ukraine with a wealth of TOEFL, GRE and GMAT material which she plans to share with students who apply for exchange programs.



Noam Chomsky and Ms. Bokova



## Ivanna Pytlyar

Ivanna Pytlyar was enrolled in the MA program in Political Campaign Management at New York University. She reveals Ten Secrets for Success While Studying in the USA

### 1. Enjoy Your Classes

Enjoying your coursework is the most important aspect of your Fulbright experience. Do not expect the studying to be easy. It will be very intensive. For this reason you must study what truly interests you. Be very careful in choosing which classes you take. It is easier to study when you are highly interested in your subject.

2. Communicate and Be Active  
Be involved in class activities. Your success depends largely on how you interact with your professors and classmates. It will be difficult at first. You will feel that your spoken English is far from ideal. But you must practice to make it

better! Realize that the more you speak the sooner you will become part of that environment and will be able to study successfully. If you have a question, always ask! Americans are always eager to help but only if they are asked.

### 3. Keep in Contact with Your Professors

American professors are really great (at least most of them). They truly want to teach, to share their experience, to make learning easier for you. When I had just started my first semester, I received an assignment that put me in an embarrassing position. I was supposed to write an analysis of some political debates that were shown on TV. But I was not able to do the assignment because I did not have the particular channel at home. I e-mailed the professor and explained the problem. He immediately called me back and told me that he would videotape the debates for me so that I would be able to do the assignment. So, if you have problems, try to reach the professor. It is very easy to do!

### 4. Find a Way to Approach American Classmates

I know that it is much easier to have friendships with international students. They have the same problems as you have and will certainly understand you and support you. But it is much more useful to communicate with Americans. Your spoken English will improve and you will get used to the new environment much faster. At first American classmates might not be tolerant of you as an international student. But just be yourself

and try to figure out what is not appropriate to do and never do it. You will feel the results very soon!

### 5. Feel the Power of Deadlines

Realize that a Deadline is a Deadline. It is very important. When a paper or an assignment is due on January 12 at 5 pm, it means that no paper or assignment will be accepted after that time. To study well you have to be a highly-organized person. It is very useful to hang a calendar in your room and mark all deadlines and terms there. It will keep you organized and you will never miss anything important.

### 6. Buy a Computer and Connect It to the Internet

Be forewarned: it is almost impossible to study without a computer. It is very difficult to write all of your papers and assignments in the lab. So try to buy one! As for me I applied for a computer loan from IIE and it helped me greatly. Internet access is extremely important as well. You will realize that e-mail seems to be the most important way of communication in the USA. If you are not able to use it at home you will be cut off from your classmates, professors and even friends. Moreover, the university posts all important information for students on the university Web site. At this site you can find your grades, assignments, contact information of professors and school officers, etc.

### 7. Practice Your English

To be successful in America you must speak English. In order to speak English you have to practice. My English seemed to be very good before

I came to the U.S. But after I arrived I realized that American English is different from what I learned in school. The only option for you is to speak as much as possible! If you live in a city with a Russian-speaking community, try to minimize contact with those people. As for me I live in Brooklyn, NY, which has a very large Russian-speaking community. At the beginning I had the feeling that when I stayed home for a weekend and spoke only Russian with my roommate, on Monday my English was much worse than it was the previous Friday. Language requires practice, and if you do not practice you won't be able to speak in a decent way.

### 8. Get Some Job Experience

You are not eligible to work in the United States, but you can always participate in an internship. It will be very useful for your future career in Ukraine. Moreover, by taking on a job you will get used to this environment sooner and easier. Try to find a company that does what you really want to do in the future and do your best to get as much knowledge and experience as you can. It will bring results!

### 9. Have Fun

Try to find some interesting diversions on the weekends. Try to see and to visit as much as you can. You will enrich yourself by visiting various performances, exhibitions, shows, etc. Try to fill every weekend with events to remember. You will feel that this gives you a lot of energy and determination for your studying.

# Ukrainian Fulbright Graduate Students

## 10. Try to Travel

Try to visit as many places as you can in the U.S. It is not that expensive and it is worth all of the money you will spend. The best time for traveling is winter and spring break. But be warned — you have to plan your trip in advance if you want to save money. Try to visit Florida. It is really cheap to fly there by Spirit Airlines and it is paradise! It will be very helpful for you if your school is in a cold state. You will come back to your cold climate full of energy and positive emotions.

And finally, realize that this is a wonderful time in your life! Try to get 100% out of your fellowship! In the U.S. you will have many opportunities to enrich yourself, to gain knowledge and experience, and to find ways of applying it to the future! Enjoy and good luck! If you have any questions feel free to e-mail me at [ivanka2204@yahoo.com](mailto:ivanka2204@yahoo.com).



## Andriy Myachykov

2002 Fulbright Fellowship took him to the University of Oregon, where his research in the Psychology Department focused on cognitive mechanisms of language processing. The results of his research are already impressive. In addition to a forthcoming research paper, Andriy has co-authored a chapter in *the Neurobiology of Attention*, as well as a paper on attention and empirical studies of grammar that will appear in a special issue of *The Linguistic Review*. These results of his research have also been presented at three international conferences. While in the U.S., Andriy spoke at a number of workshops and colloquia at the University of Oregon. The

Office of International Programs chose him to deliver the welcoming address to beginning international students at Oregon. In the fall of 2003, he participated as a panelist in discussions for international graduate students and represented the Oregon student body as a member of the search committee for a new

International Student and Scholar Advisor. Capping off Andriy's list of achievements are two awards that confirm Fulbright's recognition of his potential: the 2004 University of Oregon International Service Award and the 2004 International Cultural Service Program award.



## Lyubov Shmyhol

Lyubov Shmyhol's Fulbright Fellowship in 2002 took her to Miami University at Oxford, Ohio, where she completed work for a Master's Degree in Philosophy. Miami University, famous as one of the first American universities to open its doors to women and minorities, and also as a hotbed of student activism during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's, provided an engaging intellectual climate for Lyubov. She was grateful for the contact she had with faculty members and fellow graduate students at Miami University, as this interaction allowed her to hone the topic of her research in very productive ways. Lyubov's exposure to American academic life was not limited to Miami University. She visited a



large number of other colleges and universities during her time in the United States, including the State University of New York at Buffalo, the University of Pennsylvania, Georgetown University, MIT and Harvard. Some of Lyubov's most memorable experiences involved her visit to the El Greco exhibition at the Metropolitan Art Museum and her work at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. Most of Lyubov's amusing experiences involved answering Americans' questions about her homeland. Some ("Where in Asia is Ukraine located?") were easier to answer than others...

## Maryna Vaschenko

Maryna Vaschenko spent her 2003-2004 Fulbright Fellowship at Boston University. Her research in the School of Education focused on a survey distributed to 40 veteran teachers throughout the United States. The goal of the survey was to elicit opinions regarding teacher education and the most effective ways to train future generations of educators.

As Maryna writes, "Critics of schools of education seem to be most exasperated by the fact that these schools do not provide aspiring teachers with rigorous academic or practical preparation, yet they generally take four years to 'make' a teacher. In response to this, alternative teacher certification programs, typically seeking to fast-track or circumvent traditional university-based teacher education, have been receiving greater support in America. There are a number of researchers who support complete removal of traditional teacher education programs from the academy."

Maryna intends to publish her findings in an article titled "Traditional vs. Alternative Teacher Preparation: Who Wins?" and to utilize the results of her study to establish a Master's degree program in Educational Administration at Petro Mohyla Mykolayiv Humanitarian University.



## Marianna Yakubenko

Marianna V. Yakubenko is currently a graduate student at the International Business School at Brandeis University near Boston. She is working toward a Master's Degree in International Economics and Finance with a concentration in International Finance. Among her accomplishments to date, Marianna lists a 3.80 grade point average and her

election as President of the International Business Women Association at the Brandeis International Business School. When not engrossed in her studies, Marianna has been active in spreading information about Ukraine. She states that quite a number of her graduate student acquaintances have expressed an interest in visiting Ukraine as a result of her efforts.



## Olena Yasynetska

Olena Yasynetska has recently concluded the first year of her Fulbright-funded graduate program at Ohio University. She expects to receive a Master's Degree in Linguistics in 2005. Her project focused on psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic aspects of metaphor in mass media. Olena is maintaining

an A average in her coursework and has begun her thesis research. During her first year in the United States Olena has become involved in the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International. She attends meetings of the teacher members of this organization and intends to deliver a presentation on educational institutions and issues in Ukraine.

## Anna Shapoval

Anna Shapoval joined the Fels Institute of Government Administration at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia as a Fulbright Graduate Student Fellow in Fall 2003. As an M.G.A. candidate, Anna chose a concentration in non-profit management and so far completed a number of courses required for the certificate program, including Budgeting for Government and Non-Profit Agencies, Non-Profit Management, Fundraising for Non-Profits, and Leadership in the Public Domain. As a graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania, Anna was elected as an International Chair of the Student Advisory Board and organized several school events, including International Night in January 2004. At the conclusion of her first academic year Anna was offered a summer position with the Open Society Institute (Soros Foundations Network) in New York City and was invited to develop a new OSI program initiative aiming to enhance organizational and financial sustainability of HIV-service NGOs in Ukraine. After obtaining her Master's degree in government administration along with a certificate in non-profit management from the University of Pennsylvania in December 2004, Anna plans to pursue a career in the third sector, working with social-service non-profit agencies in Ukraine.

