

Фулбрайтівські спеціалісти Fulbright Senior Specialists

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My Eight Weeks as a Fulbright Senior Specialist in Ternopil: Advice Backed by Deeds

During and since my Fulbright Fellowship in Ukraine in 1992, I have been involved in developing and supporting several educational projects in that country. In particular I have been instrumental in selecting, translating, and publishing seventeen top textbooks in the field of economics, business, and medicine. Several of these texts were distributed and tested at six summer workshops for instructors from diverse universities. In another project, I initiated and guided through publication a series of books from University Kyiv-Mohyla Academy titled «Global Perspectives,» consisting of Western «best sellers» by such luminaries as Nobel Prize winner Joseph Stiglitz and Zbigniew Brzezinski.

Because of my longstanding support of education in Ukraine, I have received various requests from Ukrainian academic institutions for similar support, and I have tried to help them by networking with several non-profit institutions and friendly philanthropists.

I received an invitation from the Ternopil Institute of Social and Information Technology (TISIT), a recently formed private college emphasizing social sciences, business, and international studies. Not surprisingly, the leadership of that institution is in the hands of Jaroslaw and Bohdanna Bakushewycz, who spent a year at the University of Cincinnati on a Fulbright fellowship. I must have done something right, because now I can pride myself on being on the TISIT Board of Trustees. Again, this honor obliges me not only to stand ready to give them good advice but also to provide tangible support for their library as well as for the research and publication projects of several of their faculty members. Being a Fulbright senior specialist opens up interesting opportunities for offering educational help in varied and tangible forms.



Professor J. Wanzer Drane and Professor Maryna Naboka

J. Wanzer Drane

Professor of Biostatistics, University of South Carolina.

Senior Fulbright Specialist at Kyiv-National University of Construction and Architecture.

For two weeks in July 2005 I was in Kyiv, Ukraine, as a Fulbright Senior Specialist. The purpose of my visit was to present lectures and lead seminars and workshops in a variety of subjects to professors, graduate and undergraduate students, and other interested persons. Out of 14 days in Kyiv, I ended up doing professional activities on 11 days.

Richard Cornell

Emeritus Professor, Instructional Systems University of Central Florida, Orlando, Florida.

Host Institution: National Aerospace University, Kharkiv
Dates of Grant: April 12, 2005 — May 9, 2005

As a Fulbright Senior Specialist during 2005, I helped develop pedagogy and strategies for Distance Education at the National Aerospace University in Kharkiv (KhAI). My task during my month-long assignment was to work with the Chair of the Department of Philosophy who wanted to develop an online course aimed at the humanities. Additionally I gave lectures in the form of a 24-hour course, and I met with administrators, faculty, and undergraduate and graduate students. Both within and outside the university I had many interesting and productive experiences. To spare readers the suspense of knowing the answer to the question, «Would you do this again?» I can only say, «YES!»

I was the first American to come to this institution, and one of my main accomplishments was to serve as a positive role model for American professors coming to Ukraine. Once on site, I learned that my host institution had hoped I could help forge an agreement between their university and the University of Central Florida, and I was able to get this in motion. I also showed them several different means of presenting information using technology and employing participative pedagogical strategies in the classrooms with both faculty and students. I analyzed their distance education needs for the coming decade and identified their near-term priorities. Beyond Kharkiv, I toured Kyiv and the Sevastopol area in the Crimea. The memories of my Kharkiv adventure remain strong in my mind and always will.

What did it all mean? What conclusions might be drawn from the experiences? The meaning of this experience for me is extreme gratitude to Fulbright and to my hosts in Ukraine and Russia, all of whom demonstrated a common core of good will, generosity, curiosity, intellect, geniality, and humanity. Indeed, if one of the pillars of Fulbright is to build common cultural bridges between and among peoples of our world, this experience proved it works beyond any doubt!

What conclusions can be drawn from this experience? The answer to this remains more elusive. Given the slow movement of change within organizations, any results from my teaching will most likely be long-term rather than immediate. Ultimately, with my ongoing communication and involvement, I envision significant and positive change to the benefit of both faculty and students. I continue to stay in touch with my Ukrainian colleagues at the university two or three times a week.

In larger terms, Ukraine stands at the brink of either success or a lack thereof. Its new status as a democratic republic brings with it a host of complexities, not the least being the need to build their own infrastructure. Education, health care, pension schemes, law enforcement, transportation, commerce, construction, banking, the service industries, and manufacturing are all in desperate need of reconceptualizing and building anew. This is a direct result of choosing the democracy path rather than remaining dependent on Russia's financial support.

This is not news to Ukrainians. The people and their leaders made the conscious decision to change their form of government and they are well aware that, in doing so, the process will be long and tedious. I remain struck by the unabashed optimism of the Ukrainian people. They are proud of their rich cultural heritage; they have endured countless wars over time, many of which devastated entire populations; and yet, they remain resilient and forward thinking.

From what I saw and experienced, I remain optimistic that Ukraine will develop its own unique national persona, one that manages to maintain its rich cultural past but emerge as a millennium nation. It will rebuild its infrastructure to meet the needs of its people and, in doing so; will reflect an energy and vibrancy unparalleled in their history. They do stand at the brink and with such an opportunity, the need for wisdom and responsibility must prevail. I am confident that the future of Ukraine will be one of prosperity and good will.

Deborah S. Rosenfelt

Professor, Women's Studies, University of Maryland
Senior Fulbright Specialist at Mykolaiv University

In March 2005, I was fortunate enough to visit Petro Mohyla University in Mykolayiv as a Senior Fulbright Specialist. My own background is in literature, but for many years now I have taught in the United States in interdisciplinary women's studies programs. At Petro Mohyla I was invited to give a short course to fifth-year students on the subject «Gender and Nation.» As I looked out at the engaged expressions of the students in my seminar, I was reminded of my graduate students in the

United States. It seems to me that students in both Ukraine and the United States are very serious, hard-working, thoughtful, and downright smart. Because some of you who read this will be going to the United States on Fulbrights of your own, I have been asked to reflect a little on some of the differences in graduate education that might affect your experiences in the United States.

First, in graduate schools in the United States there is perhaps more of an emphasis than in Ukraine on «theory»: literary theory, cultural studies, postmodern ideas about history, culture, and society, and so on. Some of this theoretical work is interdisciplinary (or transdisciplinary); graduate study at least in the humanities in the United States tends often to cross disciplines. Sometimes, there-

fore, you will be assigned readings that seem unrelated to your specific project, and it will be your task to figure out the connections among diverse readings and ideas. The emphasis is more on analysis, and less on mastering specific bodies of knowledge. (My own background is in the humanities, so faculty from the sciences and even the behavioral and social sciences might possibly disagree!) There are fewer classes required in a year of study in the U.S. than in Ukraine, but assignments at the graduate level are very demanding, and much of your final grade will probably depend on a major research paper that draws original conclusions from your research.

Second, we had some very good class discussions in my seminar at Mykolayiv, but not everyone participated, perhaps because of differences in language skills. In the United States, perhaps even more than in Ukraine, you will be expected to participate in class discussions, and your professors and classmates will be patient with you if your English language skills are less than perfect. If you do not understand some of the language or ideas, by all means go to your professor, or raise your hand in class and ask for help. American professors are required to hold office hours, and most of us really want to see our students personally and individually at that time — or in unscheduled sessions. We will even help you with writing papers if you need advice and editing, especially if you come and ask for help well before papers are due. (Not everyone in the United States is tolerant of heavily accented English, unfortunately. Americans are notoriously bad at languages, and many of us have a «tin ear»; you are FAR more linguistically adept than most Americans, many of whom speak and understand only one language, English!)

Lastly, as in Mykolayiv, the other graduate students in your cohort are your best source of both friendship and information. Get to know them, have study sessions with them, go out with them for pizza and beer. American graduate



students, like students here, are often very busy, since many of them hold jobs as well as taking classes. Yet most will respond warmly to gestures of friendship. The friendships you make with other students and the relations you build with your professors will ultimately matter perhaps as much as your academic work. Certainly that has been true for my own experience as a Fulbright scholar in Ukraine, where the hospitality of my colleagues and my students has made my stay as deeply memorable as my time in the classroom.

John Berg

Professor at Suffolk University, Boston, Massachusetts

I came to Ukraine in June as a Fulbright Senior Specialist, attached to the University «Kyiv-Mohyla Academy.» This is a short-term program — my grant was for 30 days — so I knew that I had to hit the ground running. That was just what I did — on my second day in Kyiv, on the way to meet my host, Pavlo Kutuev, I tried to hop away from an oncoming car and fell flat on my face, smashing a tooth on a projecting cobblestone. You can imagine my thoughts of despair. Would my visit be ruined? Did I need to find a dentist? Could I stop the blood gushing from the bridge of my nose? Most important, what could I do? I spoke no Ukrainian and only a few words of Russian — all I could think to do was hold a handkerchief to my cuts until it was time to meet Pavlo in half an hour.

I need not have worried. In America, a crowd might have gathered, but would only have watched until the authori-

ties arrived. Ukraine is different, I learned. A woman passing by took complete charge, showing me where I needed to stop the bleeding and, after a long discussion (all in Russian) with others, accompanying me 300 yards uphill to a first-aid post in the railway station, where she turned me over to the staff, who efficiently treated my wounds and sent me on my way—my first lesson in Ukrainian culture.

The accident did slow me down a bit, but I was soon in the thick of it, trying to sandwich in the obligatory (and fascinating) sightseeing with intensive meetings and discussions with graduate students, researchers, think-tanks personnel, and faculty and staff of Kyiv-Mohyla. Among other activities, I was co-opted onto the committee interviewing Ukrainian applicants for Fulbright graduate scholarships in the US, and spent the next 4 full days interviewing 60 Ukrainian young people — an experience that proved to be an excellent way of learning about Ukrainian higher education.

What did I learn? First that there is widespread corruption in the universities; second that, despite that, many stu-

dents are very well educated, far more up-to-date in their fields than I would expect from their US counterparts; and third, that there are tremendous disparities among institutions. There is certainly much to reform, but my impression is that such reforms can be built upon a very solid foundation.

One of my major tasks was to meet individually with graduate students. I tried to offer helpful comments on their work, but often found that they were way beyond me in their understanding of their specialties. However, the awarding of advanced degrees in Ukraine seems to be even more whimsical than in the US, so that in many cases the student's major problem was not in doing or presenting the research, but in complying with the procedural rules of submitting an application. Here I think some big changes could be made — an opinion I think that I share with many Ukrainians.

The high point of my visit came in the last week, when I delivered two public lectures, on consecutive days, at Kyiv-Mohyla, «Will There Be a New 'New Left' in America?» and «Ralph Nader, the Greens, and the Crisis of the American Party System.» I had been warned that I might have no

audience, since the university was not in session — and was very pleasantly surprised to find myself speaking to a comfortably-sized group, drawn not only from that university but from Taras Shevchenko, and from the wider community. I was even more surprised when, after each of the very long lectures (due to the need for translation, each took about two hours), the audience did not just walk out (in America, most of them would have left before I finished!), but began immediately to make comments and ask questions, and appeared ready to do so forever—we finally had to end it to meet another appointment. This intense intellectual atmosphere was one of the real joys of Ukraine.

Life in Kyiv was fascinating. The contrasts are tremendous. The cultural resources are great — opera, two symphonic concerts, and a ballet my first week, and the weekly open-air concerts in Mariinsky Park were outstanding. Most exciting of all was the sense that everything was changing and growing. Little shops seemed to sprout out of the sidewalk like mushrooms (as did gambling dens, it must be added!) — I wish I had seen the city 10 years earlier, and hope sincerely that I will be back to see it two or three years in the future. I expect by then that everything will be different again.

SIDE BAR #1

by: Tanya Soluk, Business and Management Grant, «Management, Marketing, and Public Relations in Post-Soviet Cultural Institutions: The Ukrainian Case»

«Holy Guacamole» AKA- A Dictionary of Winter Things in Ukraine:

Wipe-Out — NOT a surfing term. Rather it's when someone slips on ice and slams into the ground full force. I execute these complex maneuvers very gracefully. Or the way Katerina puts it, "Wow, that was good. It had a very distinct beginning with a little slide and glide, middle with some suspense that you'd save yourself, and end with the inevitable crash." Better than the Olympics!

Murse — contraction for «men's purse» which every guy in Ukraine carries. It's sort of like a really mini accordion briefcase on a wrist strap. We've tried without success to get expat guys to carry them, but they won't take any bet that mentions a murse.

Horilka — aka vodka. Best story I've heard: during the really bad minus 30 degrees celcius weather a zookeeper decided to give the elephant a bucket of horilka to «keep it warm.» Ironically, the drunken elephant then went on a rampage and destroyed the zoo's heating systems. By the way, this was in Russia, not Ukraine.

Chili-Bake Off — at the Marine House. Just when you're getting tired of meat and potatoes, and more meat and potatoes in all their various Ukrainian forms, the new embassy intern invites you to the marines' home/party headquarters for a chili bake off. My new vision of heaven has thirteen forms of chili in it. Ok, maybe twelve because the chili with the spaghetti in it was just plain weird.

Ukrainian Jeans — Never in my life did I think I'd buy, let alone wear, a pair of jeans that are embroidered, beaded, sequined, false pearl-ed, and bedazzled all at once. They are also fleece lined. Alleluia!

Guacamole — ast weekend, four of us Fulbrighters gathered around a kitchen table in L'viv and had an avocado. I didn't even know you could get avocados in Ukraine, but Michelle had located and bought one and made guacamole. Yum. Who'd have ever thought one avocado could make so many people sooooo happy.

