Former German majors Courtney Flynn and Ivie Myntti are now graduate students at Georgetown University.

Courtney Flynn (class of 2014) and Ivie Myntti (class of 2013) both graduated from Wake Forest with a major in German. Now they are in their first and second year respectively as graduate students at Georgetown University. Both are enrolled in the “Masters in German and European Studies” (MAGES). In this article, Courtney and Ivie talk about life as a grad students, and how Wake Forest prepared them for this experience.
Ivie Myntti (class of 2013):

I am currently a second-year at Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service in the Masters in German and European Studies (MAGES) program. I graduated from Wake Forest in 2013 with a double major in German and History. Graduate school is exceptionally challenging, but Wake prepared me well, particularly in terms of time management.

I chose the MAGES program because of its interdisciplinary approach to regional studies as well as its emphasis on gaining practical skills for professional involvement in global affairs. I specialize in EU-Turkey and US-Turkey relations, and I am currently learning Turkish. In addition to being a student, I am also a research fellow at the Bertelsmann Foundation. Ultimately I would like to work for the Department of State.

Over the summer I was able to intern at the German Marshall Fund of the United States in Berlin, Germany, on both the Development & Partnerships office, where I conducted in-depth donor prospect research on companies investing in the Atlantic Basin economic sphere, particularly European firms involved in Middle Eastern and North African emerging markets. I also worked with the Transatlantic Leadership Initiatives team to coordinate events to engage international leaders in the US-European dialogue.

Courtney Flynn (class of 2014):

After graduating Wake in 2014 with a double major in German and Classical Studies, I spent last year in Germany on a Fulbright grant, teaching English at a secondary school in Thuringia. The German Department was invaluable throughout the whole process by reviewing my application, writing recommendations and sparking my interest in Germany in the first place! I am currently enrolled in the Masters of German and European Studies Program at the Georgetown School of Foreign Service, along with Ivie Myntti. My focus is on diplomacy, specifically transatlantic relations. Ultimately I would like to work for the State Department in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, promoting international exchange and public diplomacy. Next semester I will be taking classes involving propaganda and society, a topic I began researching while at Wake. The rigor of Wake Forest has definitely prepared me for graduate school, as well as taught me the importance of taking advantage of opportunities to expand my scope. At Georgetown there are numerous events concerning global affairs, and I try to attend as many as possible in order to further develop my regional knowledge. Like Wake Forest, the MAGES Program fosters a great sense of community, which has made the transition much easier. We have lots of events, such as the annual student vs. faculty/alumni soccer game, which Ivie and I both played in. We practice together every Wednesday, and it’s a great way to get to know people and get some exercise. This year our efforts paid off, and the students were victorious! My degree in German has given me a solid foundation upon which to pursue my transatlantic interests, and I look forward to seeing where my graduate career will take me.

“A German major from Wake opens up countless opportunities.”
If you’re interested in learning about life in a foreign country, watching films is definitely the next best thing to being there. That’s why the Russian Section, in an effort to increase cultural awareness, shows three Russian films each semester, usually with a common theme of some sort. This fall the theme was "Music" and students got the opportunity to see three very different films involving music—two of them outright musicals. In fact, you might be surprised to know that Russians love musicals just as much as Americans do. The 1936 film “Circus” was shot in the heyday of the genre and showcases the talents of one of the first bona-fide Russian film musical superstars of the era, Lyubov Orlova, who also starred in 1934’s “Jolly Fellows” and 1937’s “Volga-Volga,” the latter of which was said to be Stalin’s favorite movie. So it must be good, right? You bet your zhopka, right! "Hipsters" (2008), meanwhile, is a very modern-style musical dealing with the conflict between the old Communist mindset, which frowned on Western cultural influences, and the new generation of young people who embraced 50’s-style rock and roll. The film was enormously popular in Russia when it first came out, not only for its high-energy rock and roll soundtrack, but also visually, with its eye-catching fashions, Elvis-style pompadours and exciting, no-holds-barred dance scenes. Finally, we presented 2012’s “The Conductor,” not a musical per se, but a tautly drawn portrait of a middle-aged conductor who travel to Israel for a concert performance and to attend the funeral of his estranged son. Intense and stunning!

In the spring the theme will be "War," when we’ll be showing the classic "The Cranes Are Flying" (1957), about two young people in love in Moscow who are then separated by the advent of the Second World War. Then there’s "The Cuckoo," from 2002, an off-beat tale about two WWII soldiers, one Finnish and one Russian, who find themselves being looked after by a feisty young Lapp/Sami woman whose husband has died. Talk about a language barrier! Finally, we’ll present “The Ninth Company” (2005), which examines the effects of war on Soviet troops fighting in Afghanistan in the late-1980s. Directed by Fyodor Bondarchuk, it is a tour-de-force account based on actual events and is not to be missed. All of our films start at 6 on selected Wednesdays and a finalized schedule will be announced at the beginning of the spring semester. So come learn a little bit about Russia and Russian cinema. We’ll bring the popcorn!
This summer, I had the wonderful opportunity to intern abroad and I wouldn’t trade the experience for anything else. My internship was with bab.la, an online dictionary company under Oxford Dictionaries, and its headquarter was located in Hamburg, Germany. I interned from late May (about a week after graduation) until mid-August. I absolutely fell in love with the city. Hamburg had a characteristic of its own— the atmosphere was refined yet fresh, the people were tireless yet relaxed, and the city’s close proximity to a body of water added the finishing touch near perfection. The only downside of Hamburg was the frequent rain and cold, even during the summer months. Too often I had to wear a warm jacket and scarf to work in the middle of July. However, when the sky was clear, there were various places I enjoyed going to, including the bank of the Alster River by Jungfernstieg, Stadtpark, Planten un Blomen, and Mönckebergstraße for shopping. Surprisingly, the food I enjoyed the most in Hamburg were fish and chips, Vietnamese noodles, burgers, and falafels. There weren’t many restaurants selling authentic German food. However, I did get to eat some currywurst, spätzle, and schmalzkuchen during the wine festival or any other special event in town. There was always something going on, which kept me busy every day after work hours.

At bab.la, most of the work involved translation. I anticipated translating German into English or Korean, but because bab.la does not have a Korean-German dictionary yet, my concentration was the Korean-English content. I translated English texts into Korean for the website, input new words and their definitions into the Korean-English dictionary, created language quizzes for Korean and English learners, wrote articles in English and Korean for Lexiophiles (bab.la’s language blog), and took part in some social media marketing by taking care of bab.la’s Google Plus page. Through this internship, I learned a lot about how start-ups or small companies function and what it feels like to work in such environments. I also learned what working for an international company was like. One of the great things about working for bab.la was becoming close friends with the other interns there, and that all the interns were of different nationalities. I enjoyed the flexible dress code and the young atmosphere as well. The interns were all friendly and though they switched out frequently, it was always fun to meet new people and go visit the old people in their hometowns. I traveled to Belgium with another intern to visit an earlier intern who was originally from there. We stayed over at her place and she was able to guide us to all different areas of Belgium. It was a lot of fun.
Overall, my internship in Germany was very satisfying and filled with learning. I definitely recommend others to take the opportunity to intern abroad because not only does it help one obtain other internships or jobs afterwards, but it also gives one the chance to work in an international setting and gain such a valuable experience earlier on in life.

With that said, my internship at bab.la helped me to land another internship, but this time in New York City. I am currently an intern at the Neue Galerie and assist mostly in administrative work, but I also help out all the other departments with many tasks. For example, I help organize contact information for the press department, I file and organize financial data for the finance department, and I translate letters and information of certain paintings from German to English for the registrar. I have the most fun translating German texts into English and because of my previous internship with Old Salem, I feel more comfortable and confident in translating German to English. The Neue Galerie internship provides a good look into all the different departments of an art gallery or museum and how each department specifically operates, and hopefully it will help me figure out what my next step will be afterwards.
How did you get interested in Russian?

My parents had both studied Russian at the University of Chicago; however, they didn’t use it in their careers. I was an avid equestrian as a child, and in 1990 the US Pony Club had an exchange program with Russia. My dad came along as a sort of chaperone because he knew Russian. A little later, my dad’s company started a joint venture in Russia, and they asked my dad to move to Russia. So, in 1993 our whole family moved to Russia. That was a very big change. We didn’t move to Moscow but instead to the Nizhgorodskaya oblast’, one of the provinces in central Russia.

Did you already know any Russian?

No, not at all. My parents taught me Russian, and I also had intensive tutoring at home. I later went to a Russian High School and to a Russian Language Institute in Nizhnii Novgorod.

So, you lived in Russia as a teenager. How was that?

Things were very hard. This was shortly after the fall of the Soviet Union, and this region in central Russia, where we lived, used to be a closed area. That means, they kept political prisoners there and they constructed MiGs [Name of a Russian fighter jet] there, things like that. There were no other foreigners, and the economic collapse was the worst at that time. It was difficult to find bread and flour. Of course, due to my dad’s job we had enough money but it was just difficult to find food. The school that I attended couldn’t afford heating. The little kids sat in warm rooms but the high school students were in cold rooms. We could often see our own breath. It got better after a few years though. This was also during the first Chechen War, and people were being sent away to the front, everyone was afraid that their sons would end up there. Everyone I know who lived in Russia in the 1990s….., it just fundamentally altered your world view.

Were things twice as hard for you because you didn’t know Russian in the beginning?

Not really, no. It wasn’t really that hard at the time. I just accepted it. I studied Russian every day, and it was a total immersion for me. We had some fun, too. We did some adventurous things like skiing. In the winter, you could just open the front door and ski out of the house. Also, although we were in a province, it opened up the more cosmopolitan world of Europe to me. For example, I started watching MTV Europe, and I was able to listen to music from all over Europe. My parents gave me a trade-off. For each hour that I studied Russian at home I was allowed one hour of MTV Europe. And since I used to study up to six hours of Russian a day….. Even though we were in the middle of nowhere I felt plugged into western and eastern Europe, and I started watching international news.

What happened after High School?

I went back to the U.S. for college. However, I had no intention of studying Russian. I took German as my language. Then I went back to Europe and studied Italian. I lived in England and Italy for a while. Finally, my family moved back to the U.S., and I finished my degree at college in International Studies with a focus on Russian. I got my MA at Columbia, and originally, I wanted to work for the government. But then I got accepted into a really good PhD program at Chapel Hill, and here I am…
With your knowledge of other foreign languages, would you say that Russian is more complicated?

Dr. Clark: I’d hate to say that it’s difficult. But it is significantly more difficult than other commonly taught languages. For example, when I took German after having studied Russian, I was just blown away how easy it was. But it’s mostly the Russian grammar that is difficult; the alphabet is actually quite easy.

B&B: Can you give an example?

Dr. Clark: Well, plural formation in Russian is quite different. It depends on the number of objects. The number one and any other number that involves one, like twenty-one or one hundred and one, take the nominative singular. Numbers two, three, and four, and any numbers involved with them, take the genitive singular. And anything with five or more takes the genitive plural.

B&B: Wow, and I thought German plurals were difficult……. What is your specialty in Russian?

Dr. Clark: My PhD was in Russian literature. I took literary analysis and poetry in graduate school. I also have a very strong interest in language teaching. I would say that my main interest at the moment is poetry, especially 19th century poetry. Most of my writings and publications are also on this topic.

B&B: How do you like Wake Forest?

Dr. Clark: First of all, I enjoy being back in North Carolina. I really enjoy the small classes and the relationships with students. It’s very helpful, and it provides a good framework for intellectual advancement as well as advancing as people. I also like how this encourages classroom discussions about all kinds of topics. We really have created a safe space for free and open expression here.

B&B: One last question: what are your future plans?

Dr. Clark: I am very interested in Finland. I have studied Finnish on and off for the last ten years. Finland used to be a part of the Russian Empire, and the Russians’ view and relationship with the Finns is quite different than the way they depict Americans or Germans. I would like to do a study on Russian identity formation based on Finns and Finland.

B&B: Good luck with your research, and thank you very much for the interview!

Elena Pedigo Clark

BA, UNC-Charlotte, International Studies

MA, Columbia University, Russian Translation

PhD, UNC-Chapel Hill, Slavic Languages and Literatures
Having only traveled outside of the United States to Germany, I was quite happy to be able to add Austria and Switzerland to that list, all within the one week leading up to the start of the IES Abroad Language and Area Studies program in Freiburg, Germany. I have thought for a while that spending a significant amount of time in Germany was the next necessary step to achieve the level of fluency that I have desired. To learn in a classroom setting for years is helpful, but it can only slightly mitigate the shock that one inevitably experiences in the first week abroad. I was confident in my German abilities, but was still overwhelmed by the seemingly faster, more mumbled, and more colloquial speech that I heard from the native Germans. IES therefore insisted, and rightly so, that we speak only German with the other Americans in the program. Only through this awkward and labored formulation of less than perfect German utterances can we begin improving our fluency. Throughout the first few weeks, IES ensured that we were well oriented and settled in our new homes and with our new friend. Day trips to Triberg in the Black Forest, and to the Swiss Alps accentuated Freiburg’s convenient location in the Southwest of Germany, only an hour from the French and Swiss borders. In this orientation period, we took two weeks of intensive German language instruction in preparation for the coming courses from all academic faculties.

While IES offers their own courses targeted toward learners of German, one can diversify this experience with classes at the Universität Freiburg, just as the Germans here would. I am currently taking IES courses on German History, European Integration, and the Social Market Economy in Germany. These have been in session since the beginning of October, while the University courses did not start until the third week of October, though they will run until the middle of July. At the University, I am taking a philosophy class on phenomenology, and a class on Fachsprache, which is a German language class that teaches technical jargon in the fields of history, philosophy, philology, and other social sciences. While this language class is in a division of the University that is designed for international students, the philosophy class is a good example of a typical German University course. This Proseminar, as opposed to a strictly lecture-style Vorlesung, relies heavily on the students teaching not only themselves, but also their classmates. Each student is responsible for one class meeting, for which they read the assigned texts, and then provide a ~30 min. Referat (report) to the class. Following the Referat is a class discussion of what was presented, and this report-discussion combination is the basis of the course. At the end of the semester, one writes a Hau-
sarbeit (term paper), which is, in most cases, an elaboration of the Referat from earlier in the semester. While trying to learn and be able to teach phenomenology the other students in German is certainly intimidating, this is exactly the sort of unmitigated abroad experience that I was seeking.

While academics are first priority, IES maintains the philosophy that what happens outside of the classroom is nearly just as crucial to a proper semester or, in my case, year abroad. They have already hosted a field trip to Berlin and Hamburg (where I had the opportunity to see Angela Merkel receive the Swedish PM), as well as one to Padua, Venice, and Verona in Italy. For my European Integration class, I will be traveling to Strasbourg, France to tour the European Parliament, which will bring my tally of counties visited during this trip to five. It seems it is nearly every day, though, that I have some experience that makes me take a moment to reflect and realize just how special this trip has been. I am very fortunate to have already made a number of great friends, both students from IES and native Germans. I live in a dorm with 16 other students on my floor, and coming together nearly every night to cook dinner in the kitchen has given me a genuine look into German student life, not to mention the incredible impact it has had on my language skills. Freiburg is, at its core, a college town. With countless things to do and see, whether going to the Münster Market, a student café, bar or club, or hiking into the surrounding black forest, I have almost forgotten what boredom feels like. The bicycle-dominated city, however, is still able to maintain a strong sense of community, and so much so that after only a month and a half, I truly feel at home. Having already experienced so much in such a short time, I can only look toward the next nine months with sheer excitement.
Oktoberfest

On Wednesday, September 23, students, faculty and many visitors from the greater Wake Forest– and Winston-Salem-community gathered on the “Manchester Wiesn” to celebrate this year’s Oktoberfest with authentic German food, good beer (of course), live music, and games. Splendid weather and sunshine in an otherwise dreary week made this year’s celebration a highlight of our past semester.

Dr. Howards enjoys the sunshine

Dr. Wiggers enjoys his beer

Dr. McAllister enjoys good company

Sprechen Sie Bayrisch?

Each year the mayor of Munich has the honor of tapping the first keg. Nobody will drink or cheer, however, until the mayor speaks the magic words: “O’zapft is!” (it is tapped). In High German this would be: “Es ist angezapft”. But the hallowed and boozy grounds of the Theresenwiese must not be sullied by High German!
Every Oktoberfest brings back old friends, such as former students and professors.

Larry West, Professor Emeritus of German, with provisions, or is that “Viktualien”?

Nichts geht ohne Tara! The fabulous Ms Ogletree makes sure that every Oktoberfest is a success!

Erin Merritt, class of 2010, thought that the Oktoberfest was an especially festive gathering this year. “The German food and music were the perfect accompaniments for visiting with the German Department and other friends from the Wake Forest community. As always it was fun to meet the new generation of German majors and hear about their exciting study abroad and career plans.”

Prinzessin Therese von Sachsen-Hildburghausen, the real cause of the Oktoberfest. On the occasion of her wedding in 1810 to the Bavarian King Ludwig I (not the mad one), the citizens of Munich celebrated the event on a field called “Theresenwiese”. And ever since, the party is being repeated while getting longer and longer. First only in Munich, then in other German cities, and now all around the world.

Family: Lamar Ogletree and Kate McFarland

Members of DPA and student volunteers ably handled the Sicherheitskontrolle
Profile in Research: Kurt Shaw

B&B: What sparked your interest in Hungarian literature?
Answer: I am teaching a course “East-European Literature” in translation, and I wanted to be more inclusive and cover authors from Central Eastern Europe, such as Bulgaria and Hungary. In the process, I came across George Konrad, a Hungarian writer, and I was impressed by his way of writing, and the great metaphors that he used. His book “A Feast in the Garden”, which is part of a trilogy, has some absolutely marvelous digressions. He is a very interesting writer, and not a whole lot had been done on him in terms of research.

B&B: What happened then?
Answer: I was fortunate enough to find a private tutor back in 2002 and started taking private lessons in Hungarian.

B&B: So now you can read Konrad’s books in their original language?
Answer: Yes, I can. It took ca. 1 ½ to 2 years to be able to read in Hungarian. At first I used to work simultaneously with English translations. It is interesting if you can read these works in their original. Sometimes I come across mistakes in the English translations, something that I definitely did not expect to see. Being able to read in Hungarian is very rewarding, and it allowed me to make comparisons between different editions of Konrad’s work. In fact, my second article on Konrad addressed these differences.

B&B: Is George Konrad very famous in Hungary?
Answer: Yes, very. He won many major awards there. His identity as a writer stems mainly from being Jewish and from being involved in the dissident movement in Hungary during the Cold War. He was a former social worker, and he was not allowed to publish when Hungary was under Communist rule. He worked a lot in the USA and Germany during that time and he kind of peaked as a writer during the 1970s and 1980s. He is still alive today. [Konrad was born in 1933].

B&B: This brings me to a related topic. The canon of world literature seems to be dominated by ca. a dozen countries, such as England, France, the US, Russia, Germany, and maybe a South-American country to make it more inclusive. However, we almost never hear anything about writers from Hungary or the Netherlands, for that matter. What do you think are the reasons for this?
Answer: I think there are several reasons for this. Publishers do not like to take chances, they want a sure chance when they publish something. So, the lesser known authors from lesser known languages get squeezed out. Also, people like the familiar, they want to read something by someone that they are familiar with. Incidentally, Konrad is very popular in the Netherlands. One of his books was “Novel of the Year” there. Maybe that isn’t a coincidence though. But credit definitely goes to those publishers who go out on a limb and dare to publish authors like Konrad.

B&B: You have spent quite some time in Budapest over the last years.
Answer: Yes, I have. Going to Budapest in 2005 and finding Konrad’s picture in the Literary Museum there was just great.

B&B: So, now you teach Konrad in your courses. How do the students like it?
Answer: I think they really like it. They seem to be attracted to his writing style. It’s surely not a bad choice for this course of being representative of Hungarian writers.

B&B: From your experience, do you think that the culture in Hungary is very different than ours or from other European cultures?
Answer: It’s not completely different but one finds definitely a sense of being apart in Hungary. There are not many other people who are naturally close to Hungarians, and so there is a sort of defensiveness there. Nobody seems to be particularly interested in Hungarian culture except strange people like myself.

B&B: And what are your future research projects?
Answer: I am going to take a break with research on Hungarian authors. I plan to work on the Czech writer Milan Kundera on one of his lesser known novels. I am really looking forward to it.

B&B: Good luck with it, and thank you very much for the interview!
This summer, German professors Tina Boyer and Molly Knight offered our department's first fully online course, created with the assistance of instructional designer and ITG Sarah McCorkle and a generous grant from the Provost's STEP initiative. The 10-week course, a version of German Masterworks in Translation (GES 340/HMN 340), focused on representations of monstrosity in Germanic literature and film. Students read a diverse body of texts, from the 13th-century Volsunga Saga to E.T.A. Hoffmann's The Sandman, and watched films such as Murnau's 1922 vampire film Nosferatu. Dr. Boyer and Dr. Knight filmed video lectures at various spooky sites on and around campus, and interacted with students via blogs and wikis on Sakai, as well as once-a-week Q and A sessions on WebEx.

The course will be offered again this summer. It fulfills the Division II requirement and runs across both summer terms – but you can take it in your pajamas, from anywhere in the world! Students (and professors) in the course last summer logged in from South Korea, England, Australia, Germany, Austria, and of course right here on the Wake Forest campus.
Santa’s Little Helper

On Friday, December 4, students and faculty alike were startled by the shrieking, cackling, and evil laughter of a cloaked figure who careened through classrooms and hallways. What had happened? Had an ancient evil arisen? Had Dr. Wiggers finally turned into a Frisian Werewolf? Or was it Dr. Boyer lamenting (yet again) that she forgot to pack her lunch? No, the truth was even more awful than anyone could have imagined: Krampus had descended on our department! Relentlessly and methodically, the horned monster paid a visit to every German class on this day. Many a student instinctively realized that Krampus had come to punish; to exact terrible revenge on those students who text during class or on those who believe that Goethe is the name of a Bavarian fir tree.

But on closer inspection it appeared that Krampus had a soft spot for German students. According to (unconfirmed) reports from Dr. Wiggers’ 153 class, she (yes, she; Krampusse are capable of switching gender at will, in case you didn’t know) was heard to murmur softly under her shrieks “There, there. Here is some candy for the adjective endings Dr. Wiggers made you memorize.” Things were further smoothed over when the She-Krampus was joined in every class by her boss, Nikolaus himself (uhm… actually herself; we didn’t know that Nikolaus could also switch gender, but what the heck). All in all, it seems that our students were very good in 2015 since everyone received a small package of candy lovingly prepared by members of DPA!

Thank you, Rachel Cox!

A man (woman) of many names…. In Austria and southern Germany, he is known as Krampus. In northern Germany, he is known as Ruprecht, and in the Netherlands children know him as Piet.

But who is he? Santa's dark shadow? Punisher of German students?

To find out, you will have to wait until December!

Meanwhile: please do not confuse Krampus-Tag with campus day.
**Dear Readers,**

I hope that you enjoyed the first issue of *The Boar & The Bear.*
If you have any comments, ideas, pictures, or stories that you would like to share for our next issues - no matter if you are a current student, a prospective student, an alumnus, or someone from the greater Triad community– please let me know by email or call me.

Many thanks to all contributors, and especially to Niki McInteer for all her help!

*Yours,*

Heiko Wiggers

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