Editor's Note

Two of the department’s former German majors, both secondary school teachers at this point in their lives, spent time in the East African country of Rwanda in recent years. Brian Crawford went to Rwanda this past summer conducting research for his young adult novel The Weaver’s Scar: For Our Rwanda (Royal Fireworks Press, 2013). Zach Fox taught English for two years at both public and private Rwandan high schools in Kigali, the country’s capital, before moving on to pursue a Master’s degree in Education at Vanderbilt University. We thought it would be interesting to ask them to share their experiences with other UGA alumni, not only because Rwanda’s recent history—which is as compelling as it is confounding—brings up important issues relevant to all of us, but also because their reports showcase the fact that the rich potential of your education in this department is often thrown into sharp relief outside of the immediate context of German or Russian studies.

Lessons from Rwanda

Zach Fox

In December 2009 I moved to Rwanda for a one-year volunteer teaching service with the Rwandan Ministry of Education through a placement with WorldTeach, an international education NGO. I had few concrete expectations but was interested in working in international development. Education was the means to achieve that goal. Ironically enough, teaching in Rwanda unexpectedly ignited a passion for classroom teaching. At first blush, it would seem neither Rwanda nor classroom teaching have much to do with German or the UGA German department. Scrape a little at the surface though, and there are some striking and intriguing intersections. I would contend that learning German grammar in all of its complexities also makes one a much better user and teacher of English. German also became an intermittent safe space with Jella and Sara, two freiwillige [volunteer] teachers who worked nearby during my first year in Rwanda. Most importantly, however, learning a language is humbling but empowering, and humility is central to being an empowering teacher.

I was initially drawn to Rwanda by its history. It’s a small, landlocked, densely populated country located in east central Africa. Most Rwandans live in rural areas and are subsistence farmers, but Rwanda’s capital Kigali and other major cities are developing quickly. The government of Rwanda has a vision to transform Rwanda into an east African

My Name Is Not Muzungu

Brian Crawford

In the U.T.C., the only shopping mall in Rwanda, I found a t-shirt that read, white letters on a red background:

MY NAME IS NOT MUZUNGU

The shirt looked homemade with iron-on letters, and it stood out from the other, more authentic-looking keepsakes: dashiki shirts, hand-woven baskets, carved gourds, and drums. The vendor was asking 7,000 Rwandan francs. About ten dollars. But, he said, he would be happy to give me a better price; why don’t I come take a look?

Westerners in Rwanda learn the word “muzungu” quickly, mostly from children shouting from dusty red hills and side-alleys. Depending on the dictionary, “muzungu” can mean “white person,” “Westerner,” or “person who replaces another.” Whenever I heard it, I never assumed any judgment; it seemed more a banal observation, like “Look, a car!” That is, until I learned the etymology: originally a Swahili word, “mzungu” (the Swahili version) designates an “aimless wanderer” or someone with “a dizzy, lost look.”

Sixteen years ago, while I was finishing my undergraduate degree in German and French
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LETTER FROM MOSCOW

Boren Fellow Sarah Norris reports

NEW FACULTY MEMBERS

Dr. Sasha Spektor
Dr. Joshua Bousquett
Dr. Katie Chapman

DEUTSCH ROCK(T)

Babu Chalam rocks with the Toten Hosen

Publisher & Editor .... Dr. Martin Kagel
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UGA Printing
technology and service industry hub.

Rwandan society has traditionally been made up of the majority Hutu and minority Tutsi and Twa tribes. These names are probably familiar to those who know or learned about the 1994 Rwandan genocide. In roughly 100 days, set against the backdrop of a four-year civil war, 800,000 minority Tutsi and moderate Hutu were murdered, often by friends, neighbors, or colleagues. Unfortunately, reductionist narratives of the genocide often ignore the fact that Hutu and Tutsi aren’t really typical tribes or ethnic groups. They frequently intermarry, belong to the same clans, and live in the same neighborhoods, towns, and regions. Both speak the same language and are predominantly Christian.

Despite the genocide’s terrible toll, I firmly believe there is enormous potential in Rwanda’s young population to be nurtured through education. Unfortunately the world outside of the classroom seems to offer confusing messages to Rwanda’s young people. There is little political freedom and a great deal of self-censorship. Some topics are dangerously controversial. At the same time, many students struggle to think critically, engage in meaningful discussions, and transcend narrow perspectives due to education policy and systemic forces.

The convergence of learning outcomes and society’s repressed nature in Rwanda is intellectually fascinating but also deeply troubling. My students’ shortcomings in the classroom were not unique, but Rwanda’s history of violent social and political divisions and its tenuous recovery from the genocide underscored a latent danger in such a convergence.

When a student’s immediate reality undermines fundamental objectives of quality education, the effect is corrosive. Safe space to integrate lessons into broader social and political concerns becomes harmfully limited. As a result, learning is debased and clarity of thought is corrupted. Competency is then stunted and moral education, the development of compassionate and socially responsible young people, is compromised.

My experience as a debate coach in Rwanda best crystallizes these observations. Competitive debate requires rigorous research, careful thought, and a critical eye. Among dozens of students I have coached in debate, very few succeeded in all three, but I always delighted in my students’ incremental progress.

More troubling though was debate in Rwanda often seemed to reinforce the very system it should have been helping students overcome. I vividly remember attending a multi-school national competitive debate at which the final ‘motion’ was “Gacaca promotes reconciliation in Rwanda.”

Gacaca are traditional courts used to clear overwhelming backlogs of genocide cases. Strikingly, not a single student, among dozens participating, argued gacaca hindered reconciliation. Even Mikhail, my brilliant debate team leader with whom I had previously discussed gacaca’s advantages and disadvantages at length, entirely eschewed the negative. Incidentally he won the debate and was crowned a national champion. I exulted in his victory because it was a just reward for the team’s diligent preparation and his dramatic performance. However, I also concluded the ‘debate’ wasn’t a debate at all. The government considers gacaca a successful reconciliation measure; to question it would be to objectionably question the political status quo.

My teaching position at a prestigious private school in Rwanda’s capital is also illustrative. The school was a unique and exciting teaching opportunity because the students are almost entirely Rwandan, many the children of the elite. I taught international curricula which prize critical thought, inquisitiveness, open-mindedness, creativity, and service. Students at this particular school are arguably the best educated in Rwanda, many attend universities outside east Africa, and most eventually return to live and work in Rwanda.

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I arrived in Moscow to begin my Boren Fellowship in January 2014. It was the middle of winter, and Moscow was a different city than the one I remember leaving in summer 2010, when I first studied there. The parks were bare, the circus closed, and there was no life on the streets—except for people hurrying from one place to the next.

Classes at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO), in accordance with my fellowship plan, began with private lessons. These lessons eased me into living the Russian language again. Finding my feet was hard in January, since that month is reserved for exams and student holidays. Both city and university life seemed emptier than I remembered.

Semester courses began in February. In addition to language courses, I attended a regular course on nuclear nonproliferation. I have met many Russians and people from the CIS, and people in my language classes are from Poland, Mongolia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and so on. My classmates from Eastern Europe, from Poland for example, have an easier time with the Russian language. It is more familiar. However, because I have 5 plus years of excellent Russian education—both at UGA and in my graduate program at the Monterey Institute—I feel sufficiently comfortable to converse freely.

I also put in hours as an intern at Carnegie Moscow Center (CMC). CMC has been publishing some of the most expert analysis on the Ukraine situation, and it’s been a privilege to be on the inside (even if no one is ever in the office!). As a student of nonproliferation and security, I know that the Crimea crisis will have significant impact on future bilateral nuclear arms control negotiations with Russia. The crisis affects not only my career, but the entire disarmament machinery and any hopes for multilateral nuclear disarmament; the sound relationship between the U.S. and Russia is, after all, indispensable in arms control. Perhaps it is just me, but I have sensed a hesitancy in the NGO community—both in the U.S. and in Russia—to publish predictions on this topic at the moment. Twitter makes a lot of noise, though, and the situation seems to speak for itself.

From a foreigner’s point of view, everyday life in Moscow appears, superficially, to be unaffected by the Maidan protests, the Crimean crisis, and information battles between the “West” and Russia. Both opposition and state-sponsored marches have occurred around Moscow, but I am unable to give a personal account of these events. However, I find that most Russians consistently share the views that the Crimean referendum is legitimate and desired in Crimea itself. Being submerged in the culture “on the other side” brings a whole new dimension of learning to my fellowship.

I was hoping that, following a huge, traditional, Maslenitsa celebration I attended in the woods outside of Moscow in early March, spring would arrive, just as called. She is unfortunately holding out until April, but Moscow is waking up regardless. As I spend the spring and summer months in language classes and interning, I may be wishing for the snowy nights again.

Sarah Norris received her A.B. in Russian and International Affairs in 2012.
New Faculty: Sasha Spektor

Heather Seger

If you’ve ever wondered what it was like to come to the United States from the Soviet Union, go have a chat with Alex (Sasha) Spektor, the new professor of Russian literature in the Department of Germanic & Slavic Studies. Born in Ukraine, he came to the US when he was just 14 years old. When asked what it was like, he responded, “It was like going to the future. That’s what it was like for Soviet kids; the West was the future. It was the land of wildest fantasies that we were allowed tiny glimpses of when we were growing up.” This isn't surprising considering the disparity of conditions between the two countries in the late 1980’s. At the time, only those with money in the Soviet Union could enjoy such luxuries as VCRs or even bubble gum, things I took for granted growing up in the US.

The appeal of luxuries aside, the move was not entirely easy for him. His parents were divorced and his father remained in Ukraine along with a much-loved sister. He was enrolled in 9th grade, due to his age and lack of English language skills, but since he had been close to completing high school in the Soviet Union where there were only 10 grades at the time, the work was too easy and he was bored by his senior year. As a result, he dropped out of high school, got his GED, and began attending a Community College in the Chicago suburbs. By that time, his father had moved to Portugal, and Sasha soon joined him there intending to attend college to study geology. His father enrolled him in high school again, so that he could learn Portuguese, but one boring high-school experience was more than enough for Dr. Spektor, so instead of staying in Portugal, he returned to the US seven months later and completed his undergraduate degree at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. During his time there, he spent a semester abroad in St. Petersburg. This trip was instrumental in developing his interest in Russian literature, particularly its ethical component.

The question, “What is it about imaginative literature that helps us become better human beings?”, became the focus of his doctoral thesis which he completed at Harvard University. His research focused on the works of Fyodor Dostoevsky, Vladimir Nabokov, and Witold Gombrowicz, and he is now re-working his dissertation into a book. As one of his students, I can attest to how this interest comes across in his teaching. During the course of his classes, he encourages students to engage deeply with the text and consider nuances in meaning, not just focus on the broad, overarching themes of the works being studied. It is a challenging, but rewarding experience that I would recommend to anyone with interest in Russian literature.

Initially, desiring to stay close to his family, Dr. Spektor started his teaching career in Chicago. He taught at the University of Chicago in 2007 for a year after which he taught classes at the University of Illinois at Chicago and the Art Institute of Chicago. He called this period his “teaching boot camp” since there were semesters during which he had to teach 5 classes at once. In 2011, he received an Andrew Mellon Fellowship to support a career move to Vanderbilt University as a Visiting Assistant Professor. In the fall of 2013, he came to Athens as an Assistant Professor at the University of Georgia.

When asked what the best part of his new home in Athens is, Dr. Spektor speaks warmly of the faculty, saying that the atmosphere here is genuinely welcoming and supportive. What he likes about Athens most of all is “the spirit of community and cooperation between the university and the local population.” As for the university, Dr. Spektor says that what he appreciates the most is “how the students value getting a first-rate education, and how this is reflected in their ambition and hard work.”

The hardest part about his job here is being separated from his wife who is getting her Master’s in Special Education at Vanderbilt. Since he often travels to see her on the weekends, he is currently not able to be as involved in the community and activities on campus as he would like. He assured me that they are both looking forward to her move to Athens, a city that she also loves, upon the completion of her degree.

At UGA, students value getting a first-rate education, and this is reflected in their ambition and hard work.

Heather Seger is a third year double major in Russian and International Affairs.
New Faculty: Joshua Bousquette

Sandra McGury

Dr. Joshua Bousquette joined our department in August 2013, shortly after he defended his dissertation at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. As an assistant professor at the University of Georgia, Dr. Bousquette thoroughly enjoys working as a linguist within a German program. This past semester, he taught two undergraduate classes: Contrastive Grammar: German – English and Elementary German. When asked what he thought was most rewarding about his new position in the department, he responded that, while he enjoyed simple things like finishing up a stack of grading or submitting a manuscript for review, the students’ positive feedback was most gratifying for him.

Dr. Bousquette is a historical linguist with a specific interest in Germanic languages, especially German, Dutch and Frisian. His research includes fieldwork with East-Franconian and Bavarian speakers as well as with the Frisian and German heritage communities in Wisconsin. He earned his undergraduate degree with a major in German and a minor in English at Alma College, a small liberal arts college in Michigan. Towards the end of his undergraduate studies, he already knew that he wanted to pursue a graduate degree in Germanic linguistics. Before he started his graduate studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, however, he took a year off and worked as a pharmacy technician to save up for grad school, prepare for the GRE and apply for graduate programs.

Dr. Bousquette is looking forward to next fall when he will teach his first graduate class, which will be cross-listed as a German and Linguistics class. As a University of Georgia Willson Center research fellow, he will also work on a book continuing his research on complementizer agreement, the topic of his dissertation.

When he is not teaching or doing research, Joshua Bousquette likes to play his guitar or is taking care of the cat that he and his partner Katie Chapman have rescued. Since his travels to Austria in high school, his free time has also been filled with visits to different countries in Europe as well as numerous places across the United States. During our interview, he named the upper peninsula of Michigan as well as California as his most favorite places in the US. While Athens cannot offer him the combination of mountains and water he favors, it offers the perfect climate to plant a garden, which is one of the activities Dr. Bousquette can see himself doing in the future. His interest in gardening stems in part from one of his favorite books, “Ten Acres Enough” by Edmund Morris, a nineteenth-century guide to independent farming. The immediacy of watching vegetables grow would certainly provide a nice counterpoint to the longer-term academic research projects he is pursuing and thus provide a nice balance.

Sandra McGury is a Ph.D. student in Linguistics and a Teaching Assistant in the Department of Germanic & Slavic Studies.
Rocking with *Die Toten Hosen*

Babu Chalam

Studying German can lead to all sorts of opportunities. You may even become a rockstar.

As I am ending my medical residency and ready to take on the world as a full-fledged physician later this year, I will not only reminisce about my medical studies but also about my studies of German. The latter continue to open up so many life experiences, such as traveling to various places and making wonderful friends. I must say, however, that no experience will likely be quite as unique as the one I had last summer on stage in Hamburg, Germany in front of 15,000 people, when I attended a concert of the German rock band *Die Toten Hosen*.

Although they have been around for quite a while, *Die Toten Hosen* is still one of the most popular German bands. Therefore, it was awesome to stand in the front row with all of my friends during their concert last summer. Yet that experience was magnified tenfold, when Campino, the lead singer, noticed my singing and invited me on stage to sing a song called “Paradies.” Campino does this often during the concerts, and it is customary for the fan to stand there still, sing and then do a stage dive. Some fans even forget the lyrics because they are so nervous.

Of course, when I got the opportunity to do this, I couldn’t just go along with the norm, so I not only sang the lyrics by heart, but also ran around on stage like a mad man with my shirt off (what can I say, German beer is strong). If you like, you can watch the video on YouTube. I must admit, I end up watching it every now and again myself.

It shows me the best thing about my experience learning and speaking German, which is the people who have come into my life. My friends actually got a professional photograph of my little performance and had all the band members sign it for me. They later mailed it to me as a Christmas present!

*Babu Chalam earned his A.B. in German in 2003 and his M.D. in 2014.*

*Video link: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=4stEBAxLqkYo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4stEBAxLqkYo)*
September 22nd, 2013 was a productive and fun day at the University of Georgia for German professionals who met for the AATG-GA Fall Workshop organized by Dr. Inge DiBella. Around 30 teachers, professors and graduate students came together at the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies to share their expertise, to gather new ideas to use in their classes, and to speak German. This year’s topic, Weiterdenken: New Ways of Teaching German, fulfilled all expectations. Everyone left energized and ready to try out the new strategies they had learned about.

Like last year, participants were greeted with a lovely breakfast sponsored by the department. That gave everyone a chance to catch up on the happenings in their schools and lives while practicing German. With everyone’s mind warmed up in German the program was ready to start; the inspiration began.

Technology is becoming more and more a part of our and our students’ everyday lives, and the workshop therefore appropriately began with a presentation on the use of three internet platforms, Pinterest, PhotoPeach and Padlet. Sanja Knezovic, former AATG-GA German Teacher of the Year, impressed the audience with her presentation on how to best use these internet resources with students. Another inspiring teacher, Steffi Legall, followed up with a presentation on using recent technology, such as Prezi, and new forms of expression employing avatars to motivate students. There was a lot of new information to take in, but there were also plenty of examples and a handout to take home and later refer to.

What would a German seminar be without a coffee break? So next we took a moment to have coffee and snacks and to once again chat in German. With full stomachs and eager spirits we were ready for more information.

Ulrike Drews, a graduate student, captured our attention by introducing us to a couple of contemporary German rap singers and how their music videos could be used effectively in teaching culture and vocabulary. Dr. Katie Chapman then presented her interesting research on measuring boredom and its causes in the classroom. With all that information to chew on, we were ready to break again for lunch.

After lunch, Dr. Brigitte Rossbacher shared her experiences about online teaching. She had taught a second-year language course entirely online last summer. We were interested in hearing about her students’ online learning experience as compared to the traditional classroom as well as about how instructors assess online students. Teaching online offers both special challenges and special opportunities. Clearly, teaching “live and in color” could never be replaced by technology, yet, in certain contexts, such as in summer teaching, online courses are a viable alternative to the more traditional classroom.

This year there was a new addition to the schedule, a facilitated discussion session. Participants chose between two topics, either discussing how to strengthen German programs or how to lead a successful exchange. The input from colleagues was helpful as we hope to continue to promote thriving German enrollments in Georgia.

Finally, we learned about the latest results of the German federal election, which happened to be taking place that very day. Thomas Coon gave a summary of the election campaign and guided participants through the most up-to-date online news as participants asked questions and offered their viewpoints. It was great to watch the preliminary election results in real time.

In order for participants to receive professional learning credits (PLU) an option to watch the movie Lore (2012, dir. Cate Shortland) was offered at the end of the workshop. Several participants took advantage of the opportunity for credit and/or to enjoy the relaxing time with colleagues while learning about a movie that might also be useful in instruction.

The annual AATG-GA Fall workshop was a great success. There was something for everyone, and we all went home with new ideas and newly energized to carry these ideas back into our classrooms. Some of the participants are already looking forward to the next workshop and learning more about new ways of teaching German.

Jennifer McNulty is a German teacher at Chamblee High School. The next AATG-GA workshop will take place in October 2014, at UGA.
“If you are enjoying yourself, that’s what makes you come back, that’s what makes you remember, and that’s what makes learning meaningful to you.”

New Faculty: Katie Chapman

Alexander Byrnes

For Dr. Katie Chapman, a new lecturer in the Department of Germanic & Slavic Studies, creating a meaningful learning experience for her students is paramount to success. Whether teaching grammar to a beginning German class or leading a discussion about the political system in Germany in an advanced course, Dr. Chapman always brings with her into the classroom a sense of joy that helps bring about this learning experience, creating a supportive atmosphere conducive to language learning.

A native of southern California, Dr. Chapman began her study of German at Chapman University in Orange, California. She then continued studying student/teacher affect in the foreign language classroom at the University of Wisconsin-Madison before coming to the University of Georgia, and now brings the expertise gained in her studies into the classrooms of Joe Brown. Dr. Chapman’s students are always encouraged to participate in engaging activities that give them a chance to learn and use their developing language skills in personal and meaningful ways. Music and theater are two of Dr. Chapman’s hobbies and also means she employs in the classroom to engage her students and enrich their learning experience. For example, last fall she led her Elementary German I course in traditional Trinklieder [drinking songs] with accordion as an activity for a unit on southern Germany. Likewise, she looks forward to sharing her interest in theater with students in an upper-level undergraduate German theater course next fall semester.

Students in Dr. Chapman’s classes, keen to participate in class, are met outside of class by a professor equally eager to help her students. Invested in her students’ success, Dr. Chapman admits that her favorite part of her job as a lecturer is working with her students one-on-one and seeing the students grasp the topic at hand. “It’s most rewarding to see people get into it, put the effort into it, and improve.” Her commitment to student learning is also reflected in the large amount of time Dr. Chapman invests in her preparation, developing in-class activities, lessons, and assignments for her students every day.

Dr. Chapman also takes pride in her ability to help students build self-confidence. To provide all students in the department with the opportunity to practice their foreign language skills, Dr. Chapman has established a new department tradition: Kaffeestunde, a low-stakes conversation table where students of German have the chance to practice their conversation skills with classmates, other students, and faculty. Of course, Dr. Chapman adds, the conversation will be accompanied by coffee, tea, and sweet snacks to create an atmosphere of true Geselligkeit [community].

Lastly, Dr. Chapman is currently working with faculty inside and outside of the department on implementing a dual degree program in partnership with UGA’s College of Engineering. This program is designed to endow students of engineering with German intercultural and language skills integral to success in competitive international job markets.

Al Byrnes just completed his first year as a graduate student in German. This coming year, he will be a Teaching Assistant in German.
My Name Is Not Muzungu

at UGA, Rwanda was far from my mind. If anything, I was a clueless wanderer myself—a dizzy muzungu in my own land—wondering where I was headed after my A.B. Though I was enrolled in graduate school in Modern German Culture and French Literature at Indiana University, I also knew that I was doing so not from any calling to become a literature professor, but because I did not know what else to do—I was lost.

Unbeknownst to me at the time, my finding my way had its roots in my undergraduate education. While at UGA, I had developed a deep interest in the Holocaust, which I explored in several German classes with Dr. Goozé and Dr. Kagel; and at Indiana University, I devoted my graduate thesis to post-war representations of Jewish characters. Years after I completed my M.A. and became a middle-school language arts teacher, my ongoing interest in the Holocaust brought me to teach Anne Frank’s diary each spring to my eighth graders. But in 2010, it occurred to me that students also needed to know about the Rwandan genocide of 1994— to know that the world’s promises of “Never Again” were largely empty. At the time, my knowledge of Rwanda was limited to what I had gleaned from Hotel Rwanda and my own memories from 1994 news broadcasts. To make matters worse, I could find no age-appropriate historical fiction that had been written in English—translations from French and German, yes, but nothing that presented a story with an American teen readership in mind. Seeing a curricular void, I dove into research that culminated in a trip to Rwanda in 2013 and the publication of my novel, The Weaver’s Scar: For Our Rwanda, last October.

As my departure date drew nearer, however, I found myself plagued by worry. Not about encountering massacre sites, scarred survivors, and tangible remnants of the most brutally efficient genocide...
in modern history. No, I feared that I would find myself looking at Rwandans and wondering: Is he Hutu? Tutsi? What was he doing in 1994? For I knew that since 2003, president Paul Kagame had released some 60,000 génocidaires from prison; chances were, therefore, that I would encounter a killer face-to-face without knowing it. Would I find myself labeling those I met? Classifying them as “Others” different from myself and from each other? Would I continue the unfortunate trend of splitting Rwandans into categories and letting my experience be defined by Rwanda’s bloody history? My M.A. thesis had focused precisely on the problems created by the perpetuation of past-defined stereotypes; I now didn’t want to be guilty of the same.

Once there, however, I found myself in a culture different from anything I’d ever known: not the Hutu, Tutsi, or Twa culture, but the Rwandan culture. And to my surprise, I never once found myself labeling or dividing Rwandans by former “ethnic” categories; instead, I interacted with the people I met as just that: humans with their own, unique story, all of whom seemed interested in this curious muzungu who’d travelled half-way around the world to visit them. And who’d bothered to learn their history, culture, and (part of) their language to meet and understand them on their terms. During my weeks in Kigali and Nyamata, I met survivors, students, teachers, government workers, American NGOs, and orphans; I tasted goat-meat brochettes and sipped Primus beer; I wiped the ubiquitous red dust from my eyes as I traveled by bus to the Eastern and Southern provinces, where I met health workers and school administrators; and I spent many days working and playing with the students of Nyamata—mostly girls whose guardians struggled to pay their $250 per year school fees. Students whose own responsibilities to their families, coupled with their poverty, often impeded their adequate academic progress. And students whose future depended upon receiving a solid, secondary education.

But of all the people and events that I encountered, only one nearly brought me to tears: “Pacifique,” an 11-year-old boy with deteriorating shoes and an ocular condition that might well have been treatable with adequate health facilities. One afternoon, during a game of tag with nearly 40 students, “Pacifique” was chasing me through a dusty schoolyard in Nyamata. I would let him get close and then speed up, clearly toying with him. And as I did so, I heard from behind me his laughter—it was a childish, innocent, joyous laughter. One that revealed that, despite his poverty and hardships, despite his parents’ struggles to send him to school, and despite his own academic challenges, he was a child. A child who deserved to laugh in this way.

It was in that moment that I ceased being the dizzy muzungu of my post-undergraduate years. I knew that, if anything, my job as an educator—my calling as a human being—was to ensure that as many children as possible would have as many chances as possible to laugh the way “Pacifique” did that day. For we don’t have to go to Rwanda to encounter poverty; we don’t have to travel to other countries to meet suffering; our own, American children face challenges every day. And it’s not even a question of poverty, for kids from affluent families can feel just as overwhelmed at times. Just ask any teenager. As adults, we sometimes look back and think, “Oh, it’s not that bad. When you’re older, you’ll realize it’s not the end of the world.” But when you’re young, your life is the world, and obstacles can sometimes feel overwhelming, even if outsiders—adults—don’t see them as such. For sometimes disaster for a teen is not fitting in at school, being embarrassed, or wanting more of your parents’ affection. And the absolute worst thing we can do as humans is judge another’s suffering, because in that judgment, we dismiss; and when we dismiss, we add to the pain. Instead, let us work to bring out the laughter—in children, in our peers, in adults, in strangers. For it is by cultivating joy in others that we make the world a better place. Don’t believe me? Just follow Mother Teresa’s advice, “Let no one come to you without leaving happier.” And when you do, you will feel—if only for a moment—what it means to be not an American. Not a German. Not a muzungu. Not a Rwandan. A Human Being.

Brian Crawford graduated in 1999 with an A.B. in German and French. He is now a resident of Seattle, Washington, where he teaches 7th- and 8th-grade Language Arts at Seattle Country Day School, an independent school for the gifted.
On the one hand, I saw my position at this school as an excellent opportunity to help shape Rwanda and her ostensible future leaders. Rwanda needs creative, humane, intellectually gifted leaders to overcome the genocide’s legacy. My constant motivation was to mold students who would create a safer, more stable, more prosperous Rwanda through their compassion and intellect.

My constant motivation was to mold students who would create a safer, more stable, more prosperous Rwanda through their compassion and intellect.

On the other hand, the largely foreign faculty and senior administration were keenly aware of limits in the classroom, in part because the school’s students are children of the elite. The foreign faculty was understandably advised to avoid discussions of sensitive political or social issues, which only reinforced the impression that my students were being robbed of important opportunities for expression and discourse.

These experiences were very frustrating and, I became convinced, reflected conditions directly at odds with the essential purposes of teaching. Despite prizing some hard-won lessons, I yearned for a more fertile environment to teach more openly and honestly. I returned to the U.S. seeking the necessary tools to better understand and relay my classroom teaching experience in Rwanda into meaningful solutions to education challenges in the U.S.

Students of German history, particularly post-war, post-Nazi Germany will probably recognize some parallels between Rwanda and Germany in what I describe above. Both countries’ histories provide dark examples of language twisted into perverse contortions to serve the most terrible ends. Much of that perversion was closely tied to the dehumanization of neighbors, friends, and family members. In both countries, individuals and communities struggled mightily to come to terms with what had been perpetrated against hundreds of thousands of innocents. Debates continue about how to educate young people in both countries about the respective genocides.

I contrast this with my experience in the German department during my time in Athens when language drew me closer to others to create friendly, even familial, bonds and community. It’s this double-sided nature of language, like the convergence of Rwandan students’ learning outcomes and Rwandan society’s repressed nature, which is fascinating and pivotal as a teacher. Fascinating because I think we really plumb the depths of human experience when we reflect on the grave danger and great promise of language. Pivotal because I firmly believe all meaningful learning rests on respectful communication approached with a humble, unassuming perspective. As I prepare to wrap up my fourth year as a classroom teacher, I’m thankful for the ways in which my time in the German department and in Rwanda remind me to maintain that perspective.

Zach Fox graduated in 2009 with an A.B. in German.

By the way...

Martin Kagel was recently featured on German national television as an expert on the work of Hungarian-Jewish-German writer George Tabori. The feature, entitled Der Spielmacher: George Tabori in Amerika [The Playmaker: George Tabori in America] aired at primetime on May 24, 2014, Tabori’s 100th birthday (the writer passed away in 2007). Dr. Kagel and UGA professor David Saltz Head of Theatre & Film Studies are currently planning a conference on the writer entitled George Tabori and the Theater of the Holocaust, which is scheduled to take place February 26-28, 2015 on the University of Georgia campus. The meeting, put on in conjunction with the University Theatre’s production of George Tabori’s play Mein Kampf (directed by Del Hamilton), will feature speakers from Germany, Austria, England, Poland, Canada and the United States whose areas of scholarly expertise include Jewish studies, German studies, and theater and performance studies. We hope that many of our alumni and friends will come to campus to attend both the conference and the play. All conference events are free and open to the public. Tickets will need to be purchased for the theater performance. Please check back on our Facebook site later in the fall or contact the department directly for more information at 706.542.2445.
The Department of Germanic & Slavic studies is pleased to announce the development of a double degree program in German and Engineering. The program, in development since 2012 when both programs began discussions, is a joint effort between the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences and the newly-established College of Engineering. The program seeks to combine technical and practical aspects of the scientific field of engineering with the cultural and linguistic competency and study abroad aspects of Germanic Studies, in order to create something far greater than the sum of its parts, both in the student experience and in the career opportunities available to graduates. Foreign investment—especially from technological fields, including the auto industry—have made Atlanta, in particular, a nexus for well-educated, employable individuals with not only the technical background, but also the intercultural knowledge to participate as world citizens in a global economy.

The program owes its progress to this point to a productive working relationship between department head Dr. Martin Kagel and recently-hired Dr. Katie Chapman (in German) and Dr. Thomas Lawrence and Dr. David Stooksbury (in Mechanical and Agricultural Engineering, respectively). The partnership with Drs. Lawrence and Stooksbury has been in all respects positive; both share an enthusiasm not just for the success of the double degree itself but also for German language and culture (they have both studied German and visited Germany several times).

The program consists of a rigorous course of study in both Engineering and German, to be completed in 5 years. Students’ fourth year of study will be spent abroad in Germany, and will consist of one semester of study at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) followed by a semester-long internship in their field of study. Professor Lawrence has just recently returned from his second visit with faculty at that institution, shoring up a program of international study consistent with the opportunities afforded to students at UGA. The umbrella agreement that is currently underway will allow for reciprocal exchange of students between KIT and UGA, with UGA sending undergraduate students and KIT sending graduate students who will be eligible for research assistantships in engineering. The response from the faculty in Karlsruhe has been overwhelmingly supportive and enthusiastic, and it is possible that the first KIT students will be on their way to UGA as early as next academic year. The first cohort of UGA students will be ready to study in Karlsruhe in 2016.

Beginning last semester, the focus has been on establishing the first cohort of double degree students to pilot this program. Dr. Chapman made several visits to Driftmier in the Fall in order to garner interest. At the time of this writing, 10 students have set out to pursue the double degree; most of these are currently enrolled in their first semester of German language instruction. Several gatherings of the cohort have already taken place this semester—a group dinner at Transmetropolitan, and a book-club style discussion of the bestseller Stasiland by Anna Funder. The latter was not only very educational for the students who participated, several of whom knew admittedly very little about the GDR before reading the book, but was also important to underscore the program’s commitment to developing cultural as well as linguistic and technical competence.

A program in its infancy is not without its challenges, as it seeks not only to encourage students to undertake a double major program, but also to provide the encouragement and incentive to complete it. Future endeavors in student advising can build on the foundation laid this academic year, and all involved—faculty and students alike—are optimistic about the future of this program at our state’s flagship university.

Dr. Katie Chapman is a Lecturer in German in the Department of Germanic & Slavic Studies. She also coordinates the German-Engineering program in the department.
The disintegration of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1991 ushered in a period of intense political and military conflict. The turmoil in the region was accompanied by a heightened focus on language as a symbol of national identity. What had been officially considered during the Yugoslav period as one language, known as Serbo-Croatian, eventually became four official languages: Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin, and Serbian. Within Croatia, the assertion of Croatian’s status as a language in its own right, distinct from Serbian, was seen by many as crucial for the recognition of the Croats as a distinct nation with the right to political self-determination.

Attempts have been made to implement changes in the language, primarily in the lexicon, but also in the orthography and to a lesser degree in the grammar, both out of a desire to return Croatian to some idealized ‘pure’ state before it had been subject to what many saw as undue Serbian influence throughout the Yugoslav period, and also to heighten the differences between the contemporary Croatian and Serbian norms in order to support the claim that they are two separate languages. Those who did not conform to the emerging norms of ‘pure’ Croatian usage sometimes encountered hostile reactions or had their identity as Croats called into question. Heated polemics were conducted in the pages of academic journals, newspapers, and magazines, and those whose views on the language were seen as being insufficiently patriotic were sometimes branded as “communists,” “Yugo-nostalgics,” or “traitors.” At one point in the 1990s the satirical tabloid Feral Tribune announced that an academic study had concluded that only four words were purely Croatian and that these would be the only words that could be spoken in the Croatian Parliament from that point on!

I have been studying the relationship between language and national identity in Croatia for over a decade, both independently and in collaboration with Dr. Anita Peti-Stantić of the University of Zagreb. Our work on this topic has culminated in the writing of two books. The first, *Hrvatsko jezično pitanje danas: Identiteti i ideologije* (*The Croatian language question today: Identities and ideologies*) was published in Croatia in 2013 and featured in a weekend edition of Jutarnji List, one of the top Croatian daily newspapers. The second, written in English, is entitled *Language Planning and National Identity in Croatia* and will be published by Palgrave Macmillan in September 2014.

Although they follow the same general plan and include a discussion of fundamental sociolinguistic concepts concerning the nature of language and its relationship to identity, which help make the works accessible to specialists in other disciplines, the two studies are not identical in content, since they are intended for different audiences. While both books focus on the changing status and norms of the Croatian language in the period following the creation of an independent Croatian state in 1991, the English version also includes an overview of the historical development of standard languages in the region and of linguistic controversies in the Yugoslav period in order to provide a context for understanding the contemporary linguistic situation, as well as a discussion of the status of Croatian on the international level.

The complex history of language standardization in the Yugoslav lands as well as the emphasis on language as a symbol of Croatian national identity and on language planning in Croatia following its independence make this an especially interesting case study, which contributes to our understanding of linguistic identity, language policy, and language planning issues in general.

Dr. Keith Langston is an Associate Professor of Slavic Studies, the Coordinator of the Russian Language Program, and the Undergraduate Advisor in the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies. He regularly teaches on the UGA Croatia Maymester program, which he helped to create and which is currently in its ninth year.
In 2012, Lauren Fountain participated in a UGA study abroad program working as a camp counsellor outside of Yoshkar-Ola, which is the capital of the Mari El Republic of Russia, approximately 450 miles east of Moscow. Through the connections that she made that year, Lauren found the work she is presently doing. After spending the summer of 2013 tutoring the children of a government official (a position previously held by another UGA graduate, Jessica Crowell), she was offered the opportunity to return after she graduated in December 2013.

Below are some impressions from life and work as a tutor and instructor in Yoshkar-Ola.

Currently, I am an instructor at a university in Yoshkar-Ola, Russia and also work as a private English tutor for the children of a government official. I began these jobs in January and thus have learned what cold truly is. While my friends were playing in the snow during the Athens snowpocalypse, I had just arrived here, where it was -22 degrees, without any warm clothes because the airline had lost my bags. Thankfully, I wore my parka on the plane and my friends lent me some necessities while I waited for my bags to be found.

This has been a very interesting time for me to be living in Russia, considering the surge of nationalism during the recent Olympic games and the ongoing Ukrainian crisis. Due to all of this, I have noticed a marked change in some people’s attitudes toward me as well as the dollar-ruble exchange rate. I usually avoid any type of political conversation, but being an American here during this political situation, that has become impossible. I am constantly asked my opinion on the matter and try my best to stay well informed by reading both sides of the news.

During this time, I went back to the states very briefly and it is amazing how differently the media portrays the situation in our two countries. Of course, I had been reading British and American news online, but I was still a little culture-shocked to return home and have everyone talk to me about the situation from the other side.

The overwhelmingly dominant opinion that I’ve heard here is that common people just want peace and that it is important for “us simple people” to remain friends. I recently traveled via a trolley-bus, two trains and the metro to get to the airport in Moscow and people were extremely and unexpectedly friendly to me along the way. On the 12-hour train, I shared a compartment with a very sweet old lady who shared with me both her food and her life story. And once she fell asleep, I met a linguistics student who struck up a conversation after noticing that I was reading Game of Thrones, and he ended up guiding me through the metro once we arrived in Moscow. Every step of the way, some average person took the time to help me. I hope this is a sign that despite the ongoing tension between the US and Russia there remains hope for common people from both countries to be unaffected by the us-vs-them, East-West mentality dominating the media on both sides.

Lauren Fountain is a 2013 graduate with an A.B. in Linguistics, including minors in Russian and French.
Congratulations to April Smith (German, Psychology; Communications) who obtained a paid summer internship through the Steuben-Schurz-Gesellschaft. She will be working for Java Marketing Services in Mötzingen, south of Stuttgart.

We also congratulate the six UGA students who obtained an internship through a collaborative program overseen by BridgehouseLaw in Atlanta and the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) in Frankfurt:

Megan Alpert (German, Marketing, and International Business): Megan will intern with Dorma, in Ennepetal near Dortmund;

Claudia Benson (German): Claudia will intern with DuPont in Neu-Isenburg, south of Frankfurt;

Erik Harkness (German, International Affairs): Erik will intern with Pfizer in Berlin;

Andrew Robison (Marketing, International Business; German): Andrew will intern with the Indiana Economic Development Corporation in Berlin;

Daniel Stone (German, Marketing): Daniel will intern with ITMS Marketing in Bad Nauheim, north of Frankfurt;

Joanne Studdard (German): Joanne will intern with Hitachi in Dreieich-Buchschlag, south of Frankfurt.

2014 marks the third year of the department’s participation in the AmCham program. These paid internships run from mid-May through early August. At a welcoming reception on May 13 in Frankfurt, all twenty-five AmCham interns will meet their company mentors and other business and community leaders. Later in the summer, all interns will travel to Berlin and Munich for presentations, cultural events, and sightseeing.

The UGA students who already went to Germany as AmCham interns in 2012 and 2013 were enthusiastic about their work experience in Deutschland. For instance, Jonathan Wolfe, who is majoring in Business Administration, Finance and International Business, was placed with AGCO, a company located in upper Bavaria producing farm equipment. “My duties included reviewing invoices, paying invoices, working in financial and accounting programs, and running travel budgets. My expectations were met, however, in the last 3/4 of my internship [when] I switched over to accounting full time in order to help out due to unusual circumstances.” Lindsay Quandt, majoring in Marketing, International Business and German, worked for ING Bank and after just a short while was put in charge of a major photo shoot. She was delighted to be offered the opportunity.

Also non-Business majors have been successful in securing an AmCham internship. Jakob Kagel, for instance, majoring in sociology and minoring in German, interned at the Hotel Schloss Kronberg, which is located north of Frankfurt. His job duties included working in the banquet service, in room service, as a server in the hotel’s restaurant and at the reception. Xieran Li, Mathematics and German major and a minor in statistics, worked as an Actuarial Intern at ARAG SE. His duties included analyzing product reports from the company’s European branches. Fresenius, a medical equipment company, employed David Douds, a 2013 graduate who majored in philosophy and German.

Aside from gaining valuable professional experiences, all interns returned with greatly improved German language skills. The beginning of an internship, however, can be rough. Samantha Harris, who worked at the UPS Cologne branch, recalls, “I wasn’t super prepared when I first started working. I didn’t really know office terms like ‘stapler.’ However, my German improved so much. When I was in my last month, the people I worked with were very impressed with my German. It was flowing relatively smoothly and I didn’t really need to think a lot about what I was about to say.” Jonathan acquired a bit of a Bavarian accent, and he proudly states, “I can now understand most and reply as well, although circumnavigation may still be required.”

We wish the seven outgoing UGA interns the very best for this summer. They will gain a lot of insight into the German workplace, practice and expand their German skills, and will have rich cultural experiences to relate when their return.

Dr. Inge DiBella is a Senior Lecturer of German and German Study Abroad Coordinator in the Department of Germanic & Slavic Studies.
German Student Organization

Julian Stuebler

The German Student Organization had a busy spring semester. We hosted a Kaffee und Kuchen which gave all German Student Organization members an opportunity to meet each other. We also had two Stammtisches which are general meetings that allow everyone to speak German with each other. Apart from that, we had UGA women’s soccer team assistant coach Henry Zapata give a lecture about soccer tactics and the upcoming World Cup on April 24th. We also showed “Deutschland, ein Sommermärchen” at that time. We enjoyed an excursion on April 12th to the Atlanta Dogwood Festival to join our fellow Germans at the Goethe institute.

Julian Stuebler was GSO President this past spring. He just graduated with a major in Economics.

Russian Club

Anastasia Elizarova

The Russian Club at the University of Georgia is a student run organization that is a part of the International Student Life (ISL) umbrella. The main purpose of the organization is to provide an opportunity for students to learn more about the Russian culture as well as meet and interact with other members of the Russian community. The club typically hosts one event per month as well as a weekly Conversation Table. Once a semester, the club also puts on a picnic at Memorial Park here in Athens. The picnics are open to all members of the Russian community, and are a great opportunity to come together and spend a wonderful day in the park, enjoying plenty of food, and conversing with one another. Overall, Russian Club is an excellent organization for natives to learn more about their heritage while also providing non-native students an opportunity to learn about and experience the Russian culture.

Anastasia Elizarova was the Russian Club President in 2013-14. She is majoring in Accounting and International Business.
Greetings from Alaska! After graduating with a degree in German in 2011, I went on to earn a master’s degree from Georgia’s College Student Affairs Administration (CSAA) program. I am now working as a Residence Coordinator at the University of Alaska Anchorage. Living in the “final frontier” is an exciting challenge and I am loving every minute of it! Alaska is a beautiful place, though I am not sure any campus could ever beat Georgia’s. I look forward to many return visits to my alma mater, and welcome any of you to come visit Alaska if you are up to it!

Ryan J. Hill  
A.B. German, 2011

1983 MA graduate Carl Guilford is retiring from the Kern County (California) Department of Human Services after a 29-year career in social services, the last nine of which were as the director of the county’s children’s emergency shelter. Carl’s e-mail address is carlguilford@sbcglobal.net. Carl still enjoys watching German TV and visiting friends who live near Cologne. He continues to enjoy reading German literature and news publications, which help to broaden his perspectives on the world. His time at UGA opened cultural doors for him that have never closed. Viel Glück!

Carl Guilford  
M.A. German, 1983

My bilingual son is 14 and is finishing 8th grade at Christ Church Episcopal School in Greenville, the only school outside of Germany awarding the German Abitur. He wants to go on and study in Munich. My wife Angelika, originally from Augsburg, teaches the German BMW expatriate kids German and Math on an Elementary School level in conformity with the curriculum of the state of Bavaria. I work several part-time jobs: Teaching middle-school Spanish, being a stock-guy for Capel-Rugs and monitoring supervised visitation and exchanges (bilingual: Spanish/English) at Pendleton Place in the Family Bridges Program for non-custody carrying parents. I applied to the Emory Core Program in Psychoanalysis. I just turned 45.

Hans Schmidt  
M.A. German Lit, 1996

I have been working in Knoxville, TN, since August with AmeriCorps. I serve as the Nutrition and Education Coordinator at Beardsley Community Farm, and urban, organic farm that grows food and donates it to various food pantries. I teach nutrition classes and I run afterschool garden clubs for elementary and middle school students.

I have been awarded the US Teaching Assistantship in Austria. It is a fellowship awarded through the Fulbright Commission. I will be teaching at the Hochschule für Agrar- und Umweltpädagogik in Wein and the Höhere Bundeslehranstalt für Land- und Ernährungswirtschaft in Reidling. I am very excited because the schools both have focuses in Agriculture, Environment and Nutrition, three things that I am very passionate about and that I utilize in my current job. I feel so lucky to be able to not only use my language skills but also my love of environmental and public health.

Julianne O’Connell  
A.B. in German and Linguistics, 2013

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▲ Two recent graduates Ekarina Winarto, now pursuing a Ph.D. in Linguistics at Cornell University, and Kathrin Koehler, currently working on her Ph.D. in German Studies at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada.

▲ German Consul Christoph Sander discusses the 2013 results of the German national election with students and faculty in the lobby of Joe Brown Hall.
Selected Department Sponsored Events in 2013-14

- Fall Workshop, American Association of Teachers of German (GA-Chapter)
- Chamblee High School German Students Visit
- Reading and Discussion by Macedonian poet, Nikola Madzirov (co-sponsored)
- Discussion of Germany’s National Election with the German Consul General, Christoph Sander
- Public Forum on Gay Rights in Putin’s Russia led by Kevin Moss (Middlebury College)
- Lecture on Russia’s Contemporary Ideology and Politics, Dr. Nikolay Koposov (Georgia Institute of Technology)
- Lecture on Russian Narratives of Political Imprisonment by Dr. Yakov Klots (Georgia Institute of Technology)
- Graduate Student Colloquium
- German Studies Conference: Triangular Readings in German Literature and Culture