

Assessment Snapshot, April 2009
Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia (CREECA)

The Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia (CREECA) is one of the major centers in the U.S. for teaching, research, and outreach on this critical world region. It has been a National Resource Center funded through the U.S. Department of Education since 1993. The goal of the program is to provide rigorous interdisciplinary area studies training for students interested in careers in or related to Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia. CREECA offers an undergraduate certificate in Russian, East European, and Central Asian Studies (REECAS) as well as an MA degree program, PhD minor, and graduate certificate in REECAS. The MA degree program in REECAS admitted its first cohort of students in 2001. Since then it has graduated 15 students, who are now applying their area knowledge in positions in the US military, federal government, and private industry. A few of our graduates have continued their education in PhD programs and others are conducting research in the field.

Since our last assessment report was submitted in spring 2006 we have continued to develop our assessment program. In response to student exit surveys requesting a greater “sense of community” and “more comprehensive view of area studies,” CREECA introduced in fall 2006 a weekly seminar series. All first-year MA students are required to attend, and attendance is strongly urged for undergraduate certificate candidates. Presentations are given both by guest scholars and by members of the CREECA faculty. By introducing all the students to members of the core faculty—as well as by providing them with an overview of methodological and analytical approaches—we hope to foster greater intellectual sharing between students and faculty in the program.

We plan to carry out our next comprehensive survey of alumni in summer 2009, in order to gather data about how and if our graduates are using their area studies and language knowledge in their careers or subsequent postgraduate study.