

Eurasian Studies Minor

(Courses will be abbreviated as EUS and listed in the 2003-2004 catalog under the new rubric "Eurasian Studies" (after "Classical Studies" under "Modern and Classical Languages")

25 credits consisting of the following:

A. Obligatory courses: 14 credits SEE Website: <http://pandora.cii.wwu.edu/vajda>

- EUS201 Introduction to Russian Civilization 5 credits (Humanities GUR)
- EUS210 Nomads of Eurasia 5 credits (Multicultural GUR)
- EUS 310 The Origins of Europe 4 credits (new course, prerequisite EUS201 or EUS 210)

B. And at least 11 credits from the following:

- East Asian Studies 313 Early Inner Asia 4 credits (prerequisite EUS210)
- East Asian Studies 314 The Mongols 4 credits (prerequisite EUS210)
- History 287 Introduction to Islamic Civilization 5 credits
- Anthropology 362 Peoples of Asia 5 credits
- Russian language 201 Intermediate Russian (4 credits)
- EUS 450 Topics in Eurasian studies 3 credits (prerequisite: EUS201 or EUS 210) (variable topics, repeatable up to nine credits)

Rationale for Minor in Eurasian Studies

Most universities in Russia and other East European countries place special emphasis on what they call "Eurasian studies". This term might be most readily be defined negatively: It does not include the study of West European colonial powers, nor of the great farming-based civilizations of East and Southeast Asia – China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam. Rather, it focuses on the origins and destinies of all of the peoples and cultures located between these two geographic poles. These include, among other, the Russian, Turks, Mongols, native peoples of Siberia and the Caucasus, as well as the Persian, Indo-Aryans, Arabs, and peoples of Afghanistan. Eurasian studies focuses mainly on the vast interior spaces of Europe and Asia – the all too poorly known hinterland out of which so much of world history and culture has emerged. This area has been the vector for many unexpected tragedies that have befallen the more familiar worlds at either end of the Eurasian supercontinent. One need only mention the Huns, the Arab conquerors who succeeded Muhammad, Chingiz Khan, the Ottoman Turks, and Tamerlane. One might even add the current wave of world terrorism to this list. But it would be lopsided to mention only the negative aspects of Inner Asia. This area is also the vast hearth for numerous cultures that are fascinating and beautiful in their own right. It is the birthplace both of European-style farming as well as nomadic pastoralism. Eurasian cultures can only be properly understood when treated as the core focus of an academic discipline.

The minor pulls together various types of information on this area into a cogent whole in a way that cannot be done through programs focused on East Asia or Europe. Contributing courses involve language and cultural studies, as well as archeology, human ecology, anthropology, and history. This eclectic approach reveals the ancient origins (a topic all too often taken for granted) as well as the eventual destinies of the modern peoples of Eurasia.