

Foreword

Joshua Farquhar

My time at the University of Texas at Arlington was not exactly traditional. I started as a dual-credit high school student in the fall of 2016. A desire to learn Russian had brought me to UTA; after some research, it seemed to be the best opportunity in the area to study the language and learn the culture. My first classes were with Dr. Iya Price, who was teaching accelerated beginner and intermediate Russian that fall and spring. During these classes, I fell in love with language learning, and my interest in Russia as a cultural and geopolitical subject was piqued. I branched out into courses on advanced Russian grammar, and Russian literature (taught by Dr. Lonny Harrison), among others. I graduated from high school in May 2019, and through the study abroad program at UTA, was able to travel to Omsk, in Western Siberia, for a month-long immersion program.

That trip was eye opening. I had traveled to other nations before, but living abroad, alone, for an entire month, was a completely different experience. I gained a deeper understanding of the culture and the people who lived there, and I was able to make meaningful connections with both classmates and volunteers at Dostoevsky Omsk State University. On my way back, I had the chance to stay in Moscow with friends of an acquaintance at UTA. The chance to see such a politically and historically significant city was inspiring.

Upon returning to the United States, I began an undergraduate degree in politics, philosophy, and economics, while continuing to study Russian through private lessons and practice. The opportunities provided by UTA to study both domestically and abroad were major factors in my decision to continue my education with a Master's in International Studies at Dallas Baptist University. I have focused much of my research on Russia and the Eastern European region, and I am currently engaged in research regarding the challenge of global health, honing in on the tuberculosis endemic in Russia. My paper in the current number of Global Insight was written during my analysis of this issue.

Six years ago, when I first came to UTA as a high school student, I did not imagine I would be providing my analysis of Russian political questions in a setting more formal than dinner conversation. I have learned much over the past years, and I am excited to continue growing in my understanding of a region as intriguing as Eastern Europe and Russia. I would especially like to thank Dr. Iya Price for the investment she made in me as I undertook the journey of learning a foreign language. She served as a mentor as well as a professor, and she always sought ways to enhance my education. She served as an example of what a true teacher is. It is entirely possible that without her influence I would not be writing in this journal today.

— Joshua Farquhar, August 2022