European shift alters curriculum

By David Sonderman
Lantern staff writer

Because many East European countries have undergone significant change in the last several months, OSU courses dealing with these countries are changing as well.

Instructors are finding it an exciting time to teach these classes but it can be difficult to keep teaching the same material after all of the changes, without up-to-date texts.

Associate Professor Goldie Shabad said, "someone has suggested to me to do something dramatic at the beginning of the class -- to take my old notes and rip them up."

Shabad, who teaches a political science class dealing with international affairs, said her syllabus is mostly the same because it is important to study the history of these countries to understand what is going on today.

Jiri Hochman, a journalism professor who teaches courses about international communications, said he probably will not prepare any particular format and will have to add lectures as he goes along in the quarter.

Some classes are changing focus. Ante Cuvalo, who teaches an introductory class on Eastern Europe for the Department of International Studies, said his class will be concentrating more on current events than on cultural and historical background.

Cuvalo said his classes will discuss current events and write reports using newspaper accounts. He said he hopes to contrast the new era with historical background.

"There was not much to study on Romania last quarter, but now we can study developments in Roma-

Professor Jiri Hochman lectures on the first day of his Journalism 643 class, Global Journalism. "It is still important to study remaining communist systems, such as Bulgaria, Albania, China and the Third World system, Hochman said.

"Not with this quarter, but starting with next academic year, there will have to be academic articles or studies based on the collapse of communism in Europe," he said.

"You can not teach a class without textbooks, so I will have to improvise a little if I want to keep current." Hochman said.

Textbooks for these classes can be five years out of date and without current texts, instructors are relying on news reports to supplement their teaching.

Shabad believes it is important to continue studying the history of these countries. "It is very important to understand the last few years of East European history and the nature of communism if you want to understand what is going on today -- or why it is going on."

Major changes in these classes would be a mistake, as far as teachers are concerned.
Eastern European students visit OSU on study tour

By Jeff Merritt
Staff writer

Changes in eastern Europe have promised much, but citizens need greater personal freedom if they are to unite and continue to work for democracy, said visiting students from eastern Europe.

The six students come to the OSU campus last Wednesday and Thursday as part of a two-week study tour in the United States, sponsored by frontlash and the League for Industrial Democracy.

Daniel Popescu, a medical student at the University of Bucharest in Romania, is part of a student group trying to make people realize that since the Romanian revolution last December, high hopes have led to no real change.

In April, police violently dispersed a massive yet peaceful demonstration in Bucharest, said Theodor Nitu, a friend of Popescu and a co-founder of the Romanian Student's League.

Twenty league members were arrested and detained for a week and 23 more were hospitalized after being beaten, he said.

Nitu said the league pursues liberties of speech, religion and law and has no specific ideology apart from being non-violent.

Popescu said in Romania, there is no assumption of innocence until guilt is proven.

He also explained severe restrictions of the mail system in Romania. If a letter is sent to Romania from America, it will arrive at its destination only after the government has read and approved it. Citizens often receive only the envelope in which their letter was sent, he said.

Popescu said a friend of his received a letter from Australia. Though the envelope was correct, it contained someone else's letter--from Sweden.

Grzegorz Czarnecki is an employee of the Solidarity Foundation in Poland and is a member of Lech Walesa's presidential campaign. Until last year, he was also the editor of a student paper at the University of Gdansk.

Until this year, that paper was illegal.

Czarnecki explained that in the early 1980's, at the beginning of martial law in Poland, he or his colleagues would have been arrested without question for such involvement.

In the last few years, though, the police became less concerned with suspending people than with disbanding their media, he said.

"The young man who can shout doesn't change anything," Czarnecki said. But the man with the loudspeaker does, he said. They were after his loudspeaker, not him.

Czarnecki called current Polish society a zoo, saying that while biologists might go to Africa to study animals in the wild, Danish students of sociology come to Poland.

Some of the students also met with faculty and members of the OSU chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists to discuss the possibility of university aid to their various organizations.

Jiri Hochman, associate professor of journalism, explained various academic and governmental exchange programs that exist between American and eastern European universities.

However, Czarnecki emphasized repeatedly that such projects do not help independent groups such as his, which are not affiliated with a school.

Popescu said the Romanian government also monitors such exchanges and makes sure that only communist students participate.
Democracy requires economic power, students say

By Jeff Merritt and
Jim McCoy
Lantern staff writers

In the wake of revolution that has swept eastern Europe, nations need greater economic strength if they are to continue to work for democracy, according to eastern European students.

The European students met in a panel discussion with OSU students Thursday evening as part of a two-week study tour in the United States. The tour was sponsored by Frontlash and the League for Industrial Democracy.

The OSU students were mostly international studies, business, economics, political science or European language majors. The panel was coordinated by Steve Hill, professor of management and human resources.

THEODOR NITU, co-founder of the Romanian Student’s League, was questioned about the possibility of another Romanian revolution. He said when a political revolution does not bring change, more attempts can certainly follow.

“But what if we have nothing to replace (the government) with?” Nitu said.

The country needs an economic revolution, he said.

The United States gave Romania $80 million after its revolution, Nitu said, but what the country needs is updated technology and equipment and training in using it.

“WE CAN’T WORK in the 20th century with our hands empty,” he said.

Nitu said the National Salvation Front, the governing group in Romania, wants to spend 20 years in transition. It could be completed in three, he said.

Zoltan Bajeci, a foreign trade specialist and a member of the Federation of Young Democrats in Hungary, said the federation is currently working toward an independent market economy. The idea of joining with the European Economic Community in 1992 is “craziness,” he said.

THE HUNGARIAN ECONOMY must be made compatible with a general standard before it could be part of the EEC. This task could not be completed before 1995, he said.

A stock market exists in Hungary, but it is extremely small, Bajeci said.

The situation in Poland is even worse.

Pawel Piskorski, a University of Warsaw student and chairman of the Alliance of Independent Youth Organizations in Poland said the economy has been “completely broken by Communism.”

HE SAID POLAND receives products such as butter from other European countries as aid, but the imports lower the demand for Polish products and actually hurt the economy.

“Nothing has changed,” said Daniel Popescu, chief of foreign relations of the Medical Students’ Society in Romania.

Popescu said conditions in his country have changed a little, but they are still not good.

“When you are receiving two loaves of bread instead of one or some meat instead of nothing, you can say that life is changing and it is better,” he said.

Popescu said when he first came to the United States he was impressed with the stores and how much they had to offer.

“I had to shop when I came to this country,” he said.

POPESCU SAID ROMANIA is trying to start a market economy, but when it comes to economic conditions there is no improvement.

Petra Kopplowa, a student from Czechoslovakia, said if you are a doctor in her country the income for a month is about 4,000 pounds.

“For 4,000 pounds you can buy two pairs of winter shoes, or you can buy two coats,” she said.

ALL OF THE students agreed that what is needed the most in their countries is a strong media.

Kopplowa said during the chaotic times in Czechoslovakia, the daily newspaper in Prague was instrumental in helping the revolution along. The revolution started in Prague and the newspaper reported it. But in the countryside, there would be no reports of the revolution, so the citizens knew nothing about it.
World events affect courses

By Karin Gross
Lantern staff writer

For citizens of Eastern European nations and of the former Soviet Union, change has been rampant lately. But the changes haven’t been limited to the Eastern Hemisphere.

CSU courses about the culture, economy and politics of the former Soviet Union are being altered because of the changes that have occurred there during the past six months.

The failed coup, new free market economy and dissolution of the Soviet government began an era of change in Russia that educators and students must keep up with, OSU professors say.

“Professors at Ohio State will not change their approach as much as they will be changing the actual course material,” said David Patton, assistant director of the Center for East European and Slavic Studies.

“There is no way that publishers of textbooks can keep up with the changes,” Patton said.

“There’s certainly a great deal published about glasnost and perestroika, but that was news then and it’s almost old news now,” Patton said.

Almost all textbooks covering the former Soviet Union are dated, said Tatyana Nestorova, professor of international studies.

“They become dated immediately when they are published, so it’s sort of a losing game,” Nestorova said.

Nestorova said she uses the newest editions of textbooks about Russia and Eastern Europe, but the texts themselves aren’t enough.

“I do rely on newspapers a lot these days for the latest developments,” she said.

A textbook completed in June would be up-to-date by normal standards, but it would not cover the break-up of the former Soviet Union into 12 new countries, said Warren Eason, professor of economics.

Dr. Eve Levin, professor of political science, said the new edition of a book used last quarter has been held up because the text’s publishers are waiting to see what is going to happen in Russia.

“I’ve only been using lectures because there isn’t any material recent enough that is in print,” Levin said.

Students must learn how to describe Russia in its new condition by using the past tense when referring to Soviet politics, economy and geography, Levin said.

“It used to be that students coming into my 200-level class would use the words Russian and Soviet interchangeably because that’s the way they were used. One of the things it appears the events have done is to make American students much more aware of the differences of what is meant by Soviet and what is meant by Russian,” Levin said.

Although some students still view Russia as the “enemy,” they want to know more about the human aspect of Russia, Nestorova said.

The number of sections of Russian 101 has increased from one to five. In addition, International Studies 230 and 231 (Introduction to Russia and Introduction to Eastern Europe) have been filled to maximum capacity the last three quarters they were offered.

“People have been slightly less partisan. They don’t feel like they have to take sides nearly as much,” Levin said.

“Although the cold war mentality still exists, it has calmed a bit,” Patton said.

“There’s not quite as much of an antagonistic approach as there has been in years past towards the study of the former Soviet Union,” he said.
A little Russian culture, American style

By Taehyun Kim
Lantern staff writer

Neither musical instruments nor women's soprano voices could be heard during the performance by the Yale Russian Chorus at the Greek Orthodox Church downtown Saturday.

Instead, the tension and contrast of the music was created by high and low male vocal parts.

The chorus, established in 1953 by Latvian-born music student Denis Mickiewitz, preserves the musical tradition of Russian Orthodox "acappella."

Mickiewitz assembled the chorus almost accidentally. He was invited to The Yale Russian Club to deliver a speech on Russian music but instead of giving a speech, he passed out sheet music and taught the club members to sing Russian songs. The club soon changed its name and purpose to the Yale Russian Chorus.

"They are alive . . . I've known them for 15 years, and in every concert, they change their interpretation in different ways," said Margarita Ophee-Mazo a professor of music at Ohio State. Ohio State has its own Russian Chorus.

Ophee-Mazo said the OSU Russian Chorus sings mostly folk songs from Russian villages, while the Yale chorus performs the music of urban Russia.

Acappella became the tradition because Russian Orthodox monasteries and churches never allowed musical instruments or women to be included, Jamie Pedersen, chorus president, said.

Although the repertoire of the chorus includes many liturgical songs it was never the intent of the founders to restrict the membership to include only Russian Orthodox.

Pedersen said the chorus includes men with Jewish, Protestant, Catholic and Muslim religious backgrounds. The academic backgrounds of the members include men who have majored, or are majoring, in law, architecture, nursing and art.

Conductor David-Marc Finley said among their numerous tours of Russia and other Baltic states the 1987 tour would have been the most difficult experience.

"We were singing at the corner of the street in downtown Moscow, and crowds of people gathered to listen to our songs, but (the police) stopped us from signing," Finley said.

At the time, Russian society was politically unstable, so the Russian government was very sensitive about public performances.

For example, when the chorus played an original version of Rachmaninoff (who was exiled from Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution) at the Leningrad State University, the musical director of the university had to explain to the audience that the songs the chorus performed that evening had been revised, Finley said.

Finley became a director for the chorus in 1990 and was soon the first conductor to lead a western chorus in a performance inside the Kremlin.

The chorus has traveled to Russia and other Baltic states 13 times. It has even been used as a tool of diplomacy, a former U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union, William Averall Harriman once presented solemn liturgical pieces highlighted by the combination of incredibly sopranic tenor and extremely low bass voices.

During the second half of the performance the chorus presented folk songs from Russia and other Baltic countries with a dynamic and stunningly delicate variation of voices.

Not all of the chorus's repertoire is about religion. The song "Soltanashe" for (Soldier Boys") is about the young Russian soldiers who were once drafted for 25 year terms. The piece speaks of the adjustment the young men had to make to get to know their surrogate families once these terms had begun.

In the piece, a drill sergeant helps the new recruits to learn their new family.

"Hey, young soldier boys! Who are your mothers now?" The soldier boys quickly reply. "Our mothers are white tents!"

"Who are your wives?" "Our wives are our loaded rifles!"

"Who are your aunts then?" "Our aunts are two bottles of vodka!"

This is performed in Russian, but the sequence is explained in English before it is performed.

The chorus also sings about Russian emigres in Vechernii Zvon's "The Evening Bells."

Those evening bells. How many memories they bring back to me of my native land, of my youth of the place where I grew up and loved. There is the house of my father's. I shall never again see those bright days of that deceitful spring time."

The Chorus' visit to Columbus was sponsored by the OSU East European Study Center and the OSU Slavic Language Department, said Brenden Gitzinger program coordinator for Columbus Council on World Affairs.