

International Summer University Macedonia 2005

External Evaluation Report

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Executive Summary:

The International Summer University Macedonia (ISUM) was held in Skopje July 11-22, 2005. It brought together 372 students, who were placed in 13 courses in Business, Law, Education, management, and public administration. The participating Macedonian universities included Sts. Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje, Southeast European University, St. Kliment Ohridski University of Bitola, and Tetovo State University. The goals of the project were to provide a high quality educational experience to the students, to build collaboration among Macedonia's universities, to promote reform within higher education in Macedonia, and to build confidence between members of the ethnic Macedonian and ethnic Albanian communities in the country. An additional goal of the ISUM is the advancement of the Bologna process in Macedonia's higher education system, and the adoption of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). Students who successfully completed the course of study received a certificate and 2 academic credits.

Overall, the ISUM has largely achieved the goals set out in the original ISUM grant proposal. It has proven to be an effective mechanism for the fostering of inter-university cooperation in Macedonia, and for the building of relationships and confidence between Macedonia's two largest ethnic groups. The program furthers the agenda for higher educational reform by stressing interactive methods of teaching and learning. The Macedonian co-professors are exposed to these interactive teaching methods through their co-teaching with foreign visiting professors. Such cooperation among local and foreign professors is likely to leave a lasting effect on the Macedonian co-professors. The topics of the courses are consistent with the principles articulated in the 2001 Ohrid Framework Agreement, and bring a fresh perspective on issues of democratization, Eu integration, economic transformations in post-Communist societies, reform of public administration, educational assessment, and pedagogical methods. The ISUM built upon the success of the International Winter University Macedonia (IWUM) held in January 2005, and incorporated many of the recommendations of the IWUM external evaluation report.

In their evaluations of the ISUM, the students and faculty seemed generally pleased with the courses, the social and recreational programs, and the overall organization of the summer university. Some problems did emerge, including student complaints about the conditions in the dormitories, and the fact that the dormitories were quite far from the location of the classes at Skopje University. In discussions with university officials and a representative of the Macedonian Ministry of Education, it also became apparent that the goal of furthering the Bologna process in Macedonia has encountered some difficulties. These difficulties were exemplified in the fact that only students from the SEE University reported that they would earn transfer credits for the ISUM courses. Several other problems emerged in the coordination among the universities, and some logistical glitches may have been caused because of the short amount of time between the receipt of the funding and the beginning of the ISUM; this short time frame seems to have precluded the envisioned week-long study trips of the co-professors to the institutions of the visiting professors. Nevertheless, the ISUM is a positive step for Macedonian higher education, and its impact will be strengthened when the ISUM is extended for an additional week in 2006 and 2007. The ISUM was well organized, and ATA has done a fine job in adhering to its proposed goals and outcomes. The faculty and student evaluations were overwhelmingly positive regarding the quality of the academic experience provided.

Recommendations:

The Academic Program:

- Additional topics should be included among the courses, especially in the area of the social sciences. The Ohrid Agreement also addressed constitutional issues, so a Constitutional Law class would be appropriate. Other areas addressed in Ohrid not represented in the ISUM courses were minority languages, bilingualism, decentralization, and reforms within the military and police. The suggestion in the co-professor evaluations for additional courses on human rights and creative teaching methods should be adopted. In order to include these new fields, partnerships would have to be extended to new faculties; ATA should explore the possibility of partnering with the newly accredited private European University/ Republic of Macedonia and its Faculty of Economics and Faculty of Law and Political Studies.
- The credits earned at the ISUM should become transferable at all four participating Macedonian universities. Perhaps this goal can become part of the agenda for the Inter-University Conference.

Venue and Logistics:

- An effort should be made to find an alternate location for the next ISUM. Since classrooms in Skopje University have limited or no possibilities to include multi-media materials (films, internet, audio, etc.), it would be best to identify a location that does have such classrooms. The students were rather unsatisfied with the conditions in the dormitories, and new venues in Tetovo, Bitola, or Ohrid should be explored. In the proposed 3-week-long ISUM for 2006 and 2007 the time could also be split between Skopje and another city, since Skopje does provide important venues for field trips and access to important national institutions.

The Students:

- The dropout rates among students from the various Macedonian universities were uneven: Skopje (15.3%), Bitola (14%), SEE University (24%), and Tetovo State (29%). Early intervention during the first 2 days of the ISUM may help prevent these disparities in dropout rates, and special efforts should be made to reduce dropout rates from Tetovo State and SEE University.
- ISUM students should be told that the filling out of the evaluation forms is a requirement. The percentage of students returning the evaluation should be higher than the percentage in ISUM 2005 (forms were returned by only 84% of total number of students who did not drop out). Only 63% of non-dropout students from Tetovo State University returned the evaluation, while 98% of participants from Bitola returned the forms (the 2 extremes from among Macedonian universities). If possible, follow ups should also be made with dropout students and data collected on the reasons that they left the ISUM.
- More international students from outside the SEE region should be brought to the ISUM; with only 10 such students in 13 courses, there were several courses without any international students. ATA should consider more heavily recruiting among EU

students, and could seek to conclude exchange agreements with select EU universities. Perhaps some scholarships should be reserved for EU students.

- The ISUM should consider maintaining a relationship with ISUM students through an ISUM Alumni Association. Former students of IWUM and ISUM 2005 from Macedonia should be encouraged to return to selected events in ISUM 2006 and ISUM 2007. Such follow-up with “graduates” of ISUM will allow for the reinforcement of the principles inculcated through the ISUM experience and foster a long-term commitment from the graduates to the goals and ideals of the ISUM.

Visiting Professors and Co-Professors:

- ATA should continue to be responsible for recruiting the visiting professors. However, the recruiting of visiting professors should begin early in the autumn, and special efforts should be made to recruit visiting professors from more European Union countries. An advertisement should also be placed in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* in the USA.
- ATA should consider setting up partnerships with 3-4 universities outside Macedonia from which visiting professors could be regularly recruited.
- In the future all co-professors should have as a minimum a Master’s degree.
- The proportion of junior as opposed to senior faculty co-professors was improved in the ISUM (as opposed to the IWUM, as indicated in the IWUM External Evaluation Report); however, more efforts should be made for more junior faculty to be chosen particularly from Skopje University and Bitola University.

Debates and Public Forums:

- The debates should be moderated by 1 or 2 co-professors from different institutions. These co-professors should plan the panel, topic, and format of the debates several months in advance of the next ISUM. Efforts should be made to bring in individuals with potentially opposing views and to strictly limit their presentations to 15 minutes each.

Recreational Program

- Professional guides fluent in English should be hired to lead the weekend sightseeing trips.
- The recreational program should also include visits to places of interest to the ethnic Albanian community in Macedonia.
- Consideration should be given to organizing an overnight stay to allow for a more in-depth visit to a region or city and to minimize the amount of time spent on buses.

Overview:

The ISUM 2005 offered 13 courses to a diverse student body consisting of 302 students from Macedonia, 60 students from the broader Southeast European area, and 10 students from outside the SEE region. Each course enrolled up to 30 students, and met intensively for 3-4 hours per day over 10 days during July 2005. The courses were co-taught by visiting professors from outside of Macedonia and co-professors recruited from Macedonian universities. The project was implemented by the Academic Training Association (ATA) with funding from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Skopje.

Besides providing a high-quality academic experience, the ISUM is a mechanism for increasing cooperation and understanding between Macedonia's largest two ethnic communities—ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians. These relations were severely strained during the first decade of Macedonia's independence, and deteriorated in an alarming way during the 2001 conflict between Macedonian security forces and ethnic Albanian insurgents. Prior to the 2001 conflict, the tensions between the two communities were heightened over issues surrounding education, language, and national symbols. In 1994, the Albanian community sought to gain state funding for Tetovo University where the language of instruction was to be Albanian. However, the Macedonian authorities refused to recognize or fund such a University for the country's Albanian community, and as a result the university operated clandestinely for approximately 10 years. The issue of Tetovo University was a source of much tension between the two communities. Macedonia has made some progress towards ethnic reconciliation through the 2001 Ohrid Framework Agreement, and through both the privately funded Southeast European University formed in 2002 and Tetovo State University established in 2004, the ethnic Albanians now have several choices for higher education in their native language. This situation could be viewed as a double-edged sword. As Tetovo State University is predominantly catering to ethnic Albanians, and Skopje and Bitola mainly attract ethnic Macedonians, the new reality could be viewed as "separate but equal" education, which could further isolate and ghettoize the country's two main communities. The ISUM is an excellent means to counter the emerging educational apartheid in Macedonian higher education. It is a project that can only succeed if the country's four universities cooperate, and if the mixture of ethnic Macedonian and ethnic Albanian students in the ISUM can be maintained. The cooperation exhibited for ISUM 2005 suggests that ATA has succeeded in promoting better relations among the universities, has furthered the Bologna process in Macedonia, and has allowed for collaborations among students of diverse backgrounds. It is essential for this project to continue in order to reverse educational separateness for Macedonia's ethnic communities, and to increase trust between the country's Macedonian and Albanian communities.

The ISUM took place about six months after the pilot International Winter University (IWUM). Even though there was not a lot of time to prepare for the ISUM, the organizers managed to build on the success of the IWUM and created a larger program, with more than double the number of students and an increase in the number of courses from 8 to 13. Some of the issues identified in this report may have been caused precisely because of the shortness of the preparation time, particularly in the recruiting of visiting professors, external evaluators, and support staff during the ISUM. Despite the glitches, the ISUM has gone a long way to fulfill the objectives set forth in the original grant proposal, and ATA did an excellent job in organizing the program.

The Evaluation: Materials and Visit

The two external evaluators for the ISUM project, Dr. Robert Greenberg and Mr. Helmut Schramke, visited the ISUM between July 12 and July 19, 2005. Prior to the site visit, the evaluators received several electronic documents, including the Evaluation Guidelines, the External Evaluation for the IWUM 2005, the Proposal for the ISUM 2005, and the Budget Proposal for ISUM 2005. Additional materials were made available upon arrival of the external evaluators, including copies of the Welcome Packets for visiting professors and students, and an overview of the ISUM courses. ATA staff members were always extremely helpful in supplying all additional documentation during the site visit and in all matters surrounding arrangements and appointments during the site visit.

Dr. Greenberg visited the ISUM between July 12 and July 17. His activities included: attendance at two debates; attendance at the dinner for professors and co-professors; visits to 5 of the courses; , interviews with approximately 45 ISUM students from Macedonia; interviews with several professors and co-professors; interviews with ATA staff; individual meetings with Mr. Guido Tielman, the First Secretary of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Skopje, Mrs. Emilija Stavridis of the Macedonian Department of Education, and Assistant professor Vladimir Filipovski of the faculty of Economics at Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje; a group meeting at SEE University with Prof. dr Alajdin Abazi, the SEEU Rector, Marco Roccia, the Associate Dean of the SEEU Department of Law, and Prof. Xhevair Memedi, the Secretary General of the Inter-University Conference; and participation in the weekend recreational program in Krushevo and partially in Ohrid. Dr. Greenberg and Mr. Schramke conferred for several hours on Sunday, July 17 in Ohrid. Mr. Schramke remained with the group for the afternoon of the 17th, and had 2 final days in Skopje, departing back to Bulgaria on July 19.

Following the site visit, the ATA staff provided the evaluators with some additional documentation, including the results of the visiting professor, co-professor and student evaluation forms and final statistics regarding the number of students involved with ISUM 2005, beginning with the number of applications to the number of certificates awarded and a summary of the grades the students received.

The following assessments are made on the basis of the written documentation and the site visit. Unfortunately, as of the writing of this report, they reflect only the experiences of Dr. Greenberg, despite repeated efforts to engage Mr. Schramke in the preparation of this report. In the future, ATA should be more rigorous in screening the applications from potential external evaluators, and should consider having each external evaluator sign a contract upon receipt of any advance payments made to the evaluators.

The Academic Program:

The first goal mentioned in the ISUM proposal was to provide a high quality academic experience. The student evaluations suggest that this goal was achieved, since the average satisfaction rate was deemed to be 4.3 on a scale from 1 to 5, where a score of 5 is the maximum. None of the courses received overall ratings below 3. These satisfaction rates are similar to those recorded in the IWUM 2005. As noted in the report on the student evaluations, one of the courses had somewhat lower ratings, but was still not rated on average below 3.0.

Visits to the classes revealed that the students were attentive and engaged, and the class presentations were lively with good teamwork exhibited between visiting professors and co-professors. However, in none of the classes was technology observed in use, i.e., power point presentations, overhead projectors, the internet, audio or video materials. An effort should be made to identify a location for future ISUM classes that will allow for easier access to technology, and visiting professors should be encouraged to plan on using technology as an enhancement to their teaching. The Welcome Packet for Visiting Professors is vague about the possible equipment that could be provided in the classroom by the logistics officer (section 3.3, "Teaching Equipment"). It would be better if the Welcome Packet could provide a more specific list of equipment that an instructor could possibly arrange to have in class. The current text seems to imply that overhead projectors can be arranged, but no other equipment is listed-- are VCRs available, or slide projectors, or DVD players? At least one-third of the visiting professors indicated in their evaluation forms that they had not been sufficiently informed about the conditions of the classrooms and teaching equipment at Skopje University.

The 13 courses offered at ISUM 2005 were as follows:

1. International Criminal Law
2. Management of Medium and Small Enterprises
3. Democratization of Southeastern Europe
4. Educational Methodology
5. Educational Assessment
6. Media, Technology and Education
7. Introduction to the European Union
8. Global Economy
9. Economic Policy and EU Integration
10. Public Management
11. Academic Reading
12. Contemporary Approach in Organizational Modeling
13. Protected Witness and Comparative Law

These areas are consistent with the sections of the Ohrid Framework agreement relating to legal issues, democratization, and education. However, many of the provisions of the Ohrid Agreement addressed issues of constitutional reform, minority rights, human rights, minority languages, reform of the military and the police, decentralization of the state, and reforms of public administration. When the number of courses is increased to 20 in 2006 and 2007, presumably some of these areas can be addressed; however, in order to better diversify the courses, partnerships should also be formed with Faculties in Macedonia that are home to the social scientists—sociologists, political scientists, and ethnographers. Courses on Human Rights, Constitutional Law, Minority Languages, bilingualism, Public Administration,

decentralization of the state, and military reform in post-Communist societies would be wonderful additions to the array of offerings. With the recent accreditation in 2005 of the European University (formerly the Faculty of Social Sciences in Skopje and Struga), it would be worth exploring including this new private university's Faculties of Economics and Law/Political Studies in the next ISUM.

The ISUM academic program has helped advance the Bologna Process in Macedonia. However, as Emilija Stavridis of the Ministry of Higher Education indicated, the Ministry has had both few resources and few personnel working towards the implementation of the Bologna action lines by the projected 2007 deadline. In addition, through conversations with individuals from Skopje University and the Inter-University Conference, it became apparent that the adoption of a European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) in Macedonia will require greater commitment from University administrators from across Macedonia. From among the students interviewed, only the ones from SEE University were aware of the credit system, and expected to receive academic credits for the courses at the ISUM. Students from the state-funded universities were not expecting to receive any transfer credits at their home institutions. This aspect should be clarified in future ISUM sessions. Section 4.6 of the student welcome packet is rather vague in this regard; it states only that "students will be able to transfer ECTS credits from one institution to another." This statement does not explicitly inform students that their home institutions within Macedonia would accept the credits, and at least at Skopje University's Faculty of Economics, it sounded as though the credits would not count towards the student's degrees. The next Welcome Packet should have a clearer statement, such as "Students will be able to transfer the ECTS credits to their home institution, as well as to any other institution that is part of the European Credit Transfer System."

Venue and Logistics:

The student evaluations indicated that the students were content with Skopje as the venue for the ISUM. Since the vast majority of Students were either from universities in Skopje or Tetovo, many of them were already familiar with Macedonia's capital city. From the student interviews, it emerged that many students commuted on a daily basis to the ISUM from their homes in Skopje and Tetovo. The students who took advantage of the dormitories complained mostly about the food and the mediocre sanitary conditions. The University classrooms were quite far from the dormitories, and some students complained about having to pay for buses or taxis to get to their classes. The University classrooms were adequate for the ISUM, although since they do not have any built-in multimedia capabilities, it seemed that most of the teaching did not include audio, video, internet resources, overhead transparencies, or slides. The rooms can also get very hot during the summer months.

ATA should continue to explore other locations for the future ISUM. In the IWUM report it was recommended to have the ISUM at SEE University in Tetovo, and in discussions with ATA staff it was noted that an arrangement was attempted with SEE University, but that it simply was not cost effective. A more cost-effective solution might be to hold the first week of ISUM in Skopje, and then to move for the last two weeks to Ohrid. This scheme will allow for the participants to take advantage of the many resources of Skopje in the first week, including the valuable field trips organized through individual courses, the tours of Skopje, and the visits to its cultural sites of interest. The remaining time in Ohrid would provide for better housing

conditions, whereby visiting professors, co-professors, and students could live in close proximity, contributing to greater and more frequent interactions among them. In addition, it is likely that a greater percentage of students would be residential rather than commuters should a significant portion of the ISUM be held in a location such as Ohrid. Other locations, such as Bitola or Struga should also be investigated.

Otherwise, the ISUM 2005 worked without significant logistical problems. ATA logistics officers received mostly positive evaluations from the visiting professors, and the types of problems with coordination with logistics officers noted in the IWUM report seemed to have been corrected in the ISUM.

The Students:

Of the 372 enrolled students, 302 were from Macedonia, 60 from the wider Southeastern European area, and 10 were self-financing students from outside of the region. The Macedonian students came from the following institutions:

Skopje University: 111 students
SEE University: 74 students
Bitola University: 49 students
Tetovo State University: 68 students

The admission process was most competitive from SEE University, where the acceptance rate was 37%, while the process was least competitive from Tetovo State University, where 50% of the applicants were accepted. The balance between ethnic Macedonian and ethnic Albanian students was adequate, although there was a much higher discrepancy between the number of contracts signed with students from SEE University (95) and the actual number of students who attended the ISUM from that institution (74). Compare, for instance, the same numbers from Skopje University—114 contracts signed, and 111 students attended, Tetovo State University (71 contracts signed and 68 students participated), and Bitola University (55 contracts signed and 49 students participated). This discrepancy occurred because the administration at SEE University had extended the examination period into the first few days of the ISUM, thereby preventing many students from attending. It is unfortunate that the same problem occurred at the IWUM. This coordination problem was not the fault of ATA; however, in the future, the ATA Coordination Committee should make every effort for such a problem not to recur. ATA should be firm regarding the participation of SEE University, and should such last-minute problems arise again in 2006, ATA should consider suspending or limiting participation of SEE University in 2007.

There was also disparity in the dropout rates among the various universities. Given as a percentage of the number of actual participants, the dropout rates were as follows:

Skopje University	15.3%
SEE University	24%
Bitola University	14%
Tetovo State University	29%

While ATA logistics officers phoned students in order to find out why they had missed class, no systematic effort was made to document the reasons for the dropouts. In the future, ATA should track the dropout students carefully, and try to assess the reasons for students to drop out. Special attention should also be given to the higher dropout rates from SEE University and Tetovo State. These statistics suggest that a higher percentage of ethnic Albanian students dropped out during the ISUM—was it due to the language barrier, difficulties in commuting, etc.? In the future, more efforts during the first 2-3 days of the ISUM should be geared towards retaining these students if possible.

The student evaluations of the ISUM were mostly very positive, and this impression was reinforced in the many interviews conducted with the students from Macedonia. Most of the students were very pleased with their professors and co-professors, enjoyed meeting people from diverse backgrounds, and thought that the ISUM was well organized and overall a worthwhile experience. However, some 16% of the students who completed the ISUM did not complete the evaluation form. Here, too, there are discrepancies in evaluation return rates at the four universities:

Skopje University	86%
SEE University	77%
Bitola University	98%
Tetovo State University	63%

The filing of student evaluations should be made obligatory for all students completing the ISUM. It can be made obligatory immediately after the final examination, where ATA logistics officers can be given the responsibility of collecting all the evaluation forms. The discrepancies in return rates from the various universities may be purely coincidental; however, it is somewhat worrisome that the return rates are lowest at the two universities with the highest dropout rates. Such worries can be laid to rest in future years if student evaluation forms are required of all students who complete the ISUM.

The number of international students should be increased in the future. While 47 such students were accepted, only 10 actually enrolled, and as a result this student group was not represented in each of the courses. ATA should consider partnering with 2-3 universities in European Union countries, and providing some financial assistance to students from the partner institutions. In addition, ATA should set as a goal enrolling approximately 40 international students. These students can bring to the classroom their own perspectives on interactive learning, would contribute to the diversity in viewpoints expressed in class, and could enhance the linkages between the ISUM and universities in EU countries.

In the interviews with ethnic Albanian and ethnic Macedonian students, it became clear that the ISUM was a successful mechanism for fostering inter-ethnic relations and increasing collaboration and understanding between students of Albanian and Macedonian backgrounds. In order for such relationships to continue, ATA should consider forming an ISUM Alumni Association for students who complete the program. Such an Association can sponsor debates, forums, lectures, and social activities throughout the year. During the ISUM 2006 and 2007 the

Alumni Association could sponsor a social gathering that would bring former and current ISUM students together. A portal on the ISUM website should be for alumni, where they can sign up for electronic notification on ISUM events or activities organized by ATA. A database of alumni should be developed and maintained. These alumni activities will help ensure that the positive experiences be reinforced for the students well beyond the time of the ISUM.

Visiting Professors and Co-Professors:

The thirteen visiting professors came from universities in the following countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Germany, Russia, Sweden, Turkey, and the USA. One of the expected visiting professors did not end up coming to Skopje, and a replacement professor was found from Bitola University. All of the 12 visiting professors from outside Macedonia completed the visiting professor evaluation forms. Their comments on the forms revealed a generally positive evaluation of the ISUM. Visiting professors were pleased with the information they had received in their welcome packets and with their communication before the ISUM with ATA. However, they were not as well prepared for the lack of technology in their classroom, and for the level of the students in their courses. The expectations about the students could be disambiguated in Section 3.5 of the visiting Professor Welcome Packet. This section is vague regarding the nature of the students; it does not stipulate that the students from Macedonia will include students from both the ethnic Albanian and ethnic Macedonian communities, and does not stipulate that all Macedonian students will have passed an English proficiency examination prior to the ISUM. In addition, it would be better not to mention that international students from outside the SEE region would be “more vocal” and helpful in stimulating class discussion. In visits to the classrooms, this kind of helpful role of the international students was not noted, and their numbers would have to be increased significantly if they are to make a difference in the classrooms.

Recruitment of the visiting professors should commence as early as possible. Many professors make summer plans many months in advance, so it is important to have a roster of visiting professors and co-professors in place at least 3-4 months before the beginning of the next ISUM. ATA should continue to bear responsibility for recruiting the visiting professors, and efforts should be made to increase the number of visiting professors from European Union countries, especially the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, France, Germany, and Italy. ATA may consider identifying 3-4 partner universities in EU countries from which visiting professors and students can be regularly recruited. In addition, ATA should consider placing advertisements in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* in the USA.

Visiting professors and co-professors agreed that they all benefited from the team teaching of the courses. The relationship between the visiting professors and co-professors became more comfortable during the course of the ISUM, and many of the visiting professors and co-professors envisage staying in contact in the future and embarking on future collaborations. The few problems that emerged probably had much to do with the limited time between the receipt of the funding for the ISUM and the beginning of the courses. The visiting professors and co-professors often met for the first time only the night before the courses began. In the future, the visits of the co-professors to the institutions of the visiting professors should be a great help in improving the quality of the courses and in allowing for the co-professors to play a much more active role in the actual teaching of the courses. However, if such visits are not possible in 2006 or 2007, then the professors and co-professors should arrive at the ISUM at

least 2 days before the students, and ATA should organize an orientation for them. This orientation could include presentations of previous ISUM alumni about their experiences, some general discussions about the students and the teaching equipment, and then time for the visiting professors and co-professors to meet individually to make final preparations for the courses.

The visiting professors were mostly satisfied with their co-professors. However, the co-professors ranged in their qualifications from some post-graduate students in the initial stages of their studies to full professors or heads of University departments. There were fewer senior co-professors at the ISUM as compared to the IWUM, but efforts should be made for future incarnations of ISUM to have more junior faculty (on the level of “assistant professor”) from Skopje University and Bitola University. In addition, the minimum degree requirement for co-professors should be the Master’s degree. The highest degree of two co-professors in the ISUM 2005 was a B.A. degree. These large discrepancies in the qualifications of the co-professors probably can explain why one visiting professor did not find a co-professor adequately prepared, and another visiting professor felt that a co-professor’s English proficiency was insufficient to allow for the co-professor’s active participation in the teaching. AATA should insist on further strengthening the role of the ATA Coordinating Committee in hiring co-professors, and should impress upon the Faculties to play only a secondary role in choosing co-professors. The ATA Coordination Committee should ask each Faculty to nominate 3 or 4 co-professors, and more rigorous procedures should be put in place at the Coordination Committee for screening the applicants, including an interview process for all potential co-professors.

Debates and Public Forums:

Dr. Greenberg observed two of the debates: “Many Cooks Spice up the Broth: The Challenges of Multiculturalism” on July 12 and “Is it a man’s world? Gender equality in transitional societies” on July 14. The two debates observed were well attended, and the students became engaged and eager to express their opinions. However, the English proficiency of some of the speakers was poor, and in general the moderator and the speakers took up too much of the time, taking away some valuable time from discussion. Responsibility for organizing the debates should be given to the co-professors, and this kind of responsibility would enhance cooperation among co-professors of different backgrounds and from diverse academic institutions. In this scheme, two co-professors would be responsible for organizing and moderating each debate. The role of the co-professors should be to select individuals with potentially opposing points of view, and to strictly limit their remarks to a maximum of 15 minutes. In addition, the two co-professors should be co-moderators of the debate, and should limit their own remarks only to a 5-minute introduction and to the introducing of the panelists. The presentations should take a maximum of 45-50 minutes, and the remaining hour or so should be devoted to interactions among students, panelists, and co-professors. The co-professors would have the responsibility of stimulating/provoking the students and contributing to the lively discussion. Each co-professor should also consult with their visiting professor partners on how best to stimulate productive and meaningful interactions.

The organizers of the debates should also consider adopting the recommendation of the IWUM external evaluators to place the debates in an informal lounge setting. The addition of coffee and sweet rolls may also help to attract more students, and the caffeine may be an added stimulant for would-be debaters.

The Recreational Program:

The student and visiting professor evaluations indicated that participants enjoyed the social and recreational programs. They praised the special evening gathering for the opening, and enjoyed the informal social atmosphere at the ISUM. The relaxed atmosphere was palpable in the interviews with the students, in the coffee breaks between classes, in the relationship among students, visiting professors, co-professors, logistics officers, and ATA staff. The visiting professors and co-professors very much enjoyed the dinner at a restaurant held during the first week, and seemed to interact well with each other.

The two excursions on the weekend were wonderful additional opportunities for students and professors to interact and get to know each other better. The trip to Krushevo was less successful than the one to Ohrid, partly because of the long bus ride and the late arrival of the buses to Krushevo. The visit would also have gone more smoothly if a professional guide had been available to explain the geography and history of the Krushevo area. In addition, a hike in the hills or in nature should be offered in the future. Such an activity would contribute greatly to group cohesion and breaking down of boundaries.

The trip to Ohrid had many more participants than the trip to Krushevo. While Mr. Schramke spent most of the day with the group, Dr. Greenberg observed that the visit to the St. Sophia Church was not particularly successful again because there was no professional guide who had experience and could provide the necessary explanations. In addition, the ATA staff had been unaware of the admission fee to the church, and in fact very few members of the group actually entered the church. Given that there were two relatively long trips on two consecutive days to Western Macedonia, it would have been more logical to minimize the travel by buses and for the group to sleep over in either Ohrid or Krushevo. Such an overnight stay would have allowed for more relaxed trips, and would have eliminated the need to travel back to Skopje late in the evening from Krushevo.

In the future, additional trips should be made to the other partnering universities and faculties. In particular, a visit to Tetovo should be planned, in which participants could tour SEE University and Tetovo State University, and an excursion could be organized to a site of interest to the ethnic Albanian community. In the 2005 ISUM, the weekend excursions focused on two spots primarily of interest to the ethnic Macedonian community. While Krushevo is a beautiful place, it is also a symbol of Macedonian identity and is of great importance in the Macedonian statehood narrative. It is possible that many ethnic Albanian students decided to forego that trip precisely for that reason.

Workshops and the Bologna Process:

An important aspect of the ISUM includes the various workshops organized throughout the academic year. Earlier workshops were evaluated in the IWUM report. However, due to a variety of circumstances, neither of the current external evaluators attended any of the workshops on the Bologna Process or had the opportunity to observe the Conference of Macedonian Student Unions.

Concluding Remarks:

Overall, the ISUM was a successful event, and clearly the costs for such a program are justified. Some of the ISUM students expressed the belief at the first debate on July 12 that many NGOs have failed to make an impact despite large investments in Macedonia. In the case of the ISUM, the funds have brought together not merely students and co-professors of the country's two main rival communities, but has made an important contribution to breaking down the barriers among Macedonia's universities, and between Macedonian institutions of higher learning and those in Europe and North America. These processes are particularly important for the state-funded universities in Skopje, Bitola and Tetovo, where reforms are long overdue. In addition, the ISUM is contributing to student mobility and transfers within Macedonia, and potentially for student transfers to other universities in Europe. ATA should continue to support and encourage the Inter-University Conference (IUC) to implement the Bologna action lines. Students from the state-funded universities should view the ISUM as an integral part of their undergraduate education, and the credits earned should become applicable to their academic transcripts and count as credits towards graduation.

The task of depoliticizing Macedonia's higher education system will not be easy. ATA's efforts are very important in promoting this process, and it should continue to vigorously pursue this goal throughout the year so that the momentum is not lost.

Appendix: Short CV of External Evaluator, Dr. Robert Greenberg

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Education:

Yale University: Ph.D., 1991, Slavic Languages and Literatures; M.A. , 1985, Russian Literature

Sarah Lawrence College: B.A., 1983, Russian Language and Literature

Employment History:

Faculty Positions

Yale University: Professor (adjunct), 2005-present; Associate Professor (adjunct), 2003-2005; Lecturer, 1991-1992; Teaching Fellow, 1986-1989. Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures.

The University of New Haven: Professor of Modern Languages, 2003-present.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: Adjunct Associate professor, 2004-present; Associate Professor 1999-2003; Assistant Professor, 1994-1999, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures

Georgetown University: Visiting Assistant Professor, 1992-1994, Russian Department

University Administration:

The University of New Haven: Associate Dean, 2003-present, College of Arts and Sciences

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: Director, 2000-2003, Office of Distinguished Scholarships and Intellectual Life

Recent Publications:

Books

- *The Balkan Slavic Appellative*, second edition, 2005. Munich: Lincom Europa.
- *Language and Identity in the Balkans*, Croatian translation, 2005, Zagreb: Srednja Europa.
- *Language and identity in the Balkans*, 2004, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Dr. Greenberg is also the author of approximately 18 articles in refereed journals, several book chapters, numerous policy briefs, book reviews, and encyclopedia entries