The University of Central Asia (UCA) and the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga signed a memorandum of understanding on February 14th 2018 in Riga, Latvia. The intended areas of cooperation include development of curriculum for UCA’s undergraduate programme in Economics, faculty and student exchanges as well as research cooperation. Read more in English and Russian.

UCA and Stockholm School of Economics in Riga Sign Agreement of Cooperation

The Stockholm School of Economics in Riga is one of seven curriculum development partnerships for UCA’s undergraduate programme. ►
On February 13th, UCA hosted a roundtable for local entrepreneurs and families running businesses at UCA’s SPCE in Tekeli. Representatives from the Family Business Association from Almaty also attended, with the objective of starting a project with UCA aimed at promoting family values and family business in the Tekeli and Almaty regions. Participants shared their readiness to cooperate and promised to send their ideas on the special capacity building campaign as well as proposals on how to host a Family Festival planned in Tekeli next summer.

Myrza Karimov (bottom left), Head of the Cooperative Education Programme at UCA and Dr Salim Sumar (bottom right), Head of the Central Asian Faculty Development Programme at UCA participated in a panel discussion on Forming Partnerships at the UK-Kyrgyzstan Universities Forum: Internationalising Higher Education in Kyrgyzstan on February 2nd.

On February 11th, UCA's open house on Grade 11 students, parents and high school administrators from At-Bashy, Chok-Tal, Balykchy, Karakol, Naryn and Bishkek in Kyrgyzstan attended UCA's open house on February 11th. They met undergraduate students and faculty, toured the campus facilities and learnt about UCA's programmes, co-operative education, and residential life.

"I was very impressed with UCA’s open house. Everyone was sincere and the day was very eventful. Will I apply for admission? I can tell you that UCA is now among my top universities where I would like to study," said Meerim from Chok-Tal Lyceum.

"The two things I like the most about UCA are the atmosphere and the constant communication between the students and the teachers," noted Adelina from Bishkek.
Nearly 100 experts convened in Bishkek at a roundtable organised by the UCA’s Mountain Societies Research Institute (MSRI) on February 15th, and presented research on *Promoting Social Cohesion and Conflict Mitigation along the Kyrgyz-Tajik Border* which was conducted by UCA in the Batken and Leilek districts of Kyrgyzstan.

The discussions concluded that there is a need to better coordinate project interventions, conduct research with a focus on traditional peacebuilding and mediation practices, and look at climate change and the outflow of population into labor migration, to observe important patterns that could determine the conflict dynamics for the future. Read more.

**PUBLIC LECTURE**

**Fiscal Policy for Development in Central Asia**

Dr Roman Mogilevskii, Associate Director and Senior Research Fellow at UCA’s Institute of Public Policy and Administration delivered a public lecture on February 15th in Bishkek on Fiscal Policy for Technological Development in Central Asia. The lecture presented the results of an analysis of fiscal policy in Central Asian countries. This research was conducted in the framework of the “Strengthening Mathematics, Science and Economic Policy Capacity in Afghanistan and Central Asia” project funded by the International Development Research Center (IDRC) and the Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC).
UCA News ▪ February 2018 www.universityofcentralasia.org

CULTURE

Books on the Oral Tradition of the Pamiri-Kyrgyz Published

UCA's Cultural Heritage and Humanities Unit (CHHU) launched two new books in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on February 22nd, on the oral traditions of the Pamiri-Kyrgyz living in Turkey, authored by renowned folklorist and ethnographer Dr Sulaiman Kaiypov. This is the first time that original texts of historical songs, proverbs, sayings, and funeral laments have been published in such detail. Read more (English, Russian).

Dr Shamsh Kassim-Lakha (centre), Chairman of UCA's Board of Trustees of UCA, presenting a set of books published by UCA to Dr Sulaiman Kaiypov (R), renowned Kyrgyz folklorist and ethnographer. Also on stage is Dr Elmira Köchümkulova (L), Head of CHHU at UCA, who was one of the editors of the books.

RECRUITMENT

Education Fair

UCA's student recruitment team participated in an education fair organised by Begin Group in Aktau (pictured) and Atyrau, Kazakhstan on February 15th and 16th.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Debate Training in Tajikistan

UCA’s Aga Khan Humanities Project (AKHP) conducted a debate training on February 17th and 18th for 28 students in Khorog, including from the Aga Khan Lyceum and Khorog State University. The training covered the Cross-Debate and British Parliamentary debate formats and was designed for students participating in the AKHP Debate Format for the first time. AKHP also led trainings in Khujand for 25 students from the Shakespeare Center, American Corner and Khujand State University.
UCA's IPPA conducted the workshop on Economic Policy for Technological Development in Central Asia in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on February 20th. The workshop presented the analysis of policies in the areas of climate change adaptation, small-medium enterprise development, and labour markets in Central Asia. These studies have been implemented in the framework of the Pathways to Innovations. Strengthening Economic Policy Capacity in Afghanistan and Central Asia project supported by IDRC and AKFC. Academics, researchers, representatives of governmental organisations, international agencies and independent experts of Tajikistan participated in the workshop.

On February 22nd, UCA’s Civil Society Initiative conducted a Seminar on Kadam 40. Kadam 40 is an initiative by Sapar Isakov, Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic, promoting government transparency through forty steps addressing areas such as education, economics, industry, tourism, social development and health care. The seminar was led by facilitator Gulnur Toralieva, Advisor to the Prime Minister. Representatives from non-governmental organisations, donor agencies and ministries who are responsible for Kadam 40 participated in the seminar.

HAPPENING AT UCA

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Dr Roman Mogilevskii, Associate Director of UCA’s IPPA, delivered a presentation on the findings and recommendations of the study Gender Equality in Agricultural Policy in the Kyrgyz Republic using the GAPo tool. The presentation was made at the Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development Working Group on February 28th.

Dr Kemel Toktomushev, Research Fellow at UCA’s IPPA, participated in a seminar on EU-Central Asia Relations: Perspectives from Kyrgyzstan as a panelist during the Potentials and Perspectives of the Regional Cooperation in Central Asia session on February 20 in Bishkek. The panel discussions covered how regional cooperation can promote Central Asian development as well as Kyrgyzstan’s issues and priorities on this topic.
Science Training Programme

The Science Faculty members at UCA’s Khorog Campus conducted a 5-day training programme for 15 science teachers from the Khorog Presidential School and Aga Khan Lyceee, Khorog, as part of a community service initiative. The training programme aims to upgrade the teaching skills of teachers, and covered specific tenets of science teaching, learning and practice. It also served as a platform for collaboration and exchange among the science teachers.

Faculty Research Lecture Series

Dr Murodbek Laldjebaev, Assistant Professor of Earth and Environmental Sciences delivered a lecture at the Khorog Campus on Rethinking Energy Security and Services in Practice: National Vulnerability and Three Energy Pathways in Tajikistan as part of the Faculty Research Lecture series in Khorog, Tajikistan on February 9th.

Undergraduate Students Launch New Volunteer Initiative in Naryn

Undergraduate students at UCA’s Naryn Campus in Kyrgyzstan launched a new student volunteering initiative called ‘Razakar’. Razakar is a Persian word consisting of ‘Riza’ (free) and ‘Kar’ (work/deeds), together meaning ‘volunteer’. The initiative provides students a platform to apply their skills and serve the community around them in areas of academics, life skills (leadership skills, stress management) and environment. The ‘Razakar’ student initiative organised an English Speaking Club and workshop for Naryn youth at UCA’s School of Professional and Continuing Education on February 17th. Undergraduate students led English speaking games, discussions and presented on topics including the importance of English and college interview tactics.
Model UN Conference

From L to R: Aigul Kantoro kyzy, Student Life Advisor at UCA and Aqila Hassanzada (Pakistan), Sear Ahmad (Afghanistan), and Zarrina Gafurova (Tajikistan), undergraduate students at UCA, participated in an International University Ala-Too Model UN Conference for the first time in Bishkek on February 17th. Among 185 participants, Aqila received the “Best Speaker” award and Zarrina received the “Best Position Paper” award. Congratulations and great job to the UCA team.

Faculty Research Lecture Series

UCA’s second year undergraduate students will begin their first Co-operative Education job placement this May. In preparation, UCA organised a mini-conference on professionalism to help students refine their skills in promoting themselves through their resumes, cover letters, interviews, and networking skills. Students had the opportunity to be interviewed by a professional and receive personal feedback on their employment readiness skills. They also had an opportunity to get professional quality head shots for their Linked-In profiles and to listen to a panel discussion where the interviewers shared their insights and top tips for being a great employee.

Women’s Wellness Workshop

Robin Higgins, University Counsellor at UCA, held a Women’s Wellness Workshop for students as well as for family members of the faculty in Khorog. Participants did yoga, meditated, created art about well being, and talked about women’s health issues.
**Spelling Bees**

UCA organised a Spelling Bee on February 8th at the Khorog Campus in Tajikistan. Among the participants were students from UCA and Khorog State University (KSU). UCA student Saif-Ur Rehman won first place, followed by Ramziya Mirbozkhonova (2nd), also from UCA, while Didor Marodaseynov from KSU won third position. Congratulations! ►

Roza Amanova (second from right) and Nurlan Nogoibaev (far right), undergraduate students at the University of Central Asia, were placed second and third in the National Spelling Bee competition in Kyrgyzstan in February. They will represent Kyrgyzstan and compete in the Central Asia Spelling Bee in Kazakhstan. Good luck!

**Relay Race Competition**

UCA preparatory programme and undergraduate students competed in a relay race competition at the sports dome on campus in Khorog, Tajikistan.

**UCA Triumphs in Close Football Match in Naryn**

UCA and the Naryn Kyrgyz-Turkish school competed in a friendly football tournament at the UCA sports bubble in Naryn on February 17th. In a tied final match, UCA scored 6 against 5 during penalty kicks against the Turkish school, and won the competition. Congratulations to all players.
UCA won the first game against the College of Naryn State University earlier this month in an ice sports contest. The competition was organised by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Naryn Town Mayor’s Office, and Naryn TV, at the Sports Complex in Naryn. Nine teams representing the Naryn Town state and international organisations are participating in the contest which will continue until mid-March.

Sports Festival in Naryn

UCA’s SPCE in Naryn organised a sports festival and Olympic-themed games for SPCE staff and the Naryn Sport School on February 17th. The event was dedicated to Men’s and Women’s Days and was organised in cooperation with the local Sports and Youth Department in Naryn.

Public Speaking Workshop

UCA’s School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPCE) organised a public speaking workshop for Academic Achievement Programme students in Bishkek. Students received tips on how to deliver effective speeches and communicate with the audience. The session was led by Joseph P. Zampetti, an American professor from Illinois State University on February 15th. He teaches courses in communications, classical rhetoric and political communication and is an experienced debate specialist for over 30 years.

First Aid Training

UCA’s SPCE organised first aid training for Naryn staff covering artificial respiration and how to do CPR on children and adults on February 22nd.

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH EXAMINER TRAINING

Six full-time and part-time SPCE English instructors participated in a three-day Cambridge Speaking Examiner training in February. The Instructors were trained to become a certified Speaking Examiner for additional levels including KET, PET, FCE, CAE and CPE in Central Asia. The training was conducted by Mark Kelleher, Central Asian Team Leader, and the Cambridge English Assessment.
Learning about Wildlife Conservation

Suraiya Luecke (L) from California, USA delivered a presentation on wildlife conservation in Kyrgyzstan to Grade 9 Academic Achievement Programme students at UCA’s SPCE in Bishkek on February 26th. It was a wonderful opportunity for students to practice speaking English.

On February 1st, UCA’s SPCE-Badakhshan University Continuing Education Unit in Faizabad, Afghanistan opened the Gardeshgar’s Books Cabinet, a public library aimed at promoting reading and providing public access to additional resources.

Seventeen participants attended an English club led by Instructor Azizullah Azizi at SPCE in Shugnan, Afghanistan on February 22nd.

SPCE Naryn held a Spelling Bee competition for Grade 7 Academic Achievement Programme students in February. Akylai Syrymbetova, Asel Baiseitova, and Jasmin Sharshenbekova won first, second and third place respectively. Congratulations!

Instructor Qabilshah Arez led a debate discussion class on Living in the City versus the suburbs for 22 students at SPCE in Shugnan, Afghanistan on February 14th.
Dr Stefanos Xenarios, Senior Research Scientist at UCA’s MSRI contributed a chapter to the *Global Water Security* publication by the World Water Council and the Ministry of Water Resources of China. The chapter, *Current and Future Challenges of Water Security in Central Asia*, addresses how the notion of water security in Central Asia has evolved throughout the years in an attempt to control an extensive transboundary river network which divides the region between Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan.

Read pages 117-142 online. ([https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-981-10-7913-9_5](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-981-10-7913-9_5))

▲ UCA’s flag atop Mount Korjenovskaya, Gorno-Badakhshan, Tajikistan, 7105 metres
Video: University of Central Asia - A Development University

UCA’s mission is to promote the social and economic development of Central Asia, particularly its mountain communities, by offering an internationally recognised standard of higher education, and enabling the peoples of the region to preserve their rich cultural heritage as assets for the future. Watch UCA’s latest video to learn more: http://bit.ly/UCA-DevUniversity (Russian: http://bit.ly/UCA-DevUniversity-ru)

UCA Summer Upgrading Camp 2018

UCA is holding its forth Summer Upgrading Camp at the Naryn Campus in Kyrgyzstan from July 2nd to 16th 2018. Applications are now open for the two-week residential academic enrichment camp. The upgrading camp is open to all current Grade 10 students (2019 graduates) living in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. It offers great opportunities to improve English and math skills and receive critical support to enter the university they want. The deadline to apply is April 30th 2018 at 11:59pm (GMT+6). Learn more. (http://bit.ly/UCAsummercamp2018)