Eurasia Strategic Plan Recommendations
FY2013 - 2017

INTRODUCTION
From individual faculty research to institutional connections, George Mason University (Mason) has an extensive history of collaboration with Russian and Eurasian higher education institutions. Mason houses a world-class faculty engaged in groundbreaking interdisciplinary study of the Eurasian region covering East Central Europe, Russia, Central Asia, and the Caucasus. Mason has long had a highly-regarded interdisciplinary bachelor’s program in Russian and Eurasian Studies. Building on its extensive history of engagement in Eurasia, Mason has recognized the importance of the Eurasian region as indicated by the creation of a Eurasia Coordinator position within the Office of Global & International Strategies (Global Office), the formation of an Eurasia Advisory Committee, and the establishment of a Center for Eurasian Studies within the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. With some alterations, most importantly the consolidation and realignment of its Eurasian resources within a staffed and centrally rather than college-housed Center for Eurasian Studies, study of and engagement with the Eurasian region stands to be one of Mason’s pillars of excellence.

MASON VISION
Through the recent Vision process, Mason has defined itself as a “university for the world”, committed to creating a more just, free, and prosperous world. As a result of this process the university has identified several commitments that will drive our attention, innovation and investments over the next decade. The Eurasia plan flows from the following five commitments:

- **Engage the World:** We will prepare our students to thrive in a global context by infusing global awareness, citizenship values, and learning opportunities across all fields; and we will partner with other organizations in solving global problems where our impact will be highest.

- **Innovative Learning:** We will apply new and emerging learning technologies, environments, and methods to improve learning effectiveness and student completion, and to better serve the evolving needs of students, working professionals, and public, private and nonprofit organizations.

- **Research of Consequence:** We will expand research as a central element of our mission; we will work to translate our discoveries into interventions and applications with social, cultural, and economic impact.

- **Economic and Cultural Engine:** We will act as a catalyst for the economic and cultural vibrancy of our region, as a growing source of talent in high-demand disciplines, as an incubator of business and social enterprises, as a hub of life-long learning, arts and athletics, and as a research and learning partner for public, private and nonprofit organizations.

- **Foundation for the Future:** We will aggressively seek additional sources of funding through higher levels of philanthropy, expanded online certificate and executive programs, research grants, and the commercialization of intellectual property. We will also increase our engagement with our alumni, strengthen the Mason brand nationally and internationally, and effectively communicate Mason’s value to stakeholders throughout Virginia and the National Capital Region.
**EURASIA VISION**

Embracing Mason’s vision as a “university for the world” and building on its strengths and long history of Russian and Eurasian interdisciplinary research and cross-border collaboration, the Eurasia strategy aims to position Mason in Russia and Eurasia, as well as in the USA as a Eurasia-engaged and internationally recognized, innovative, entrepreneurial university. Most importantly, Mason seeks to consolidate and realign its widely-dispersed resources and strengths in Eurasian engagement within a centrally-housed Center for Eurasian Studies.

**IMPORTANCE OF ENGAGEMENT WITH EURASIA**

The Eurasian region continues to be important in the foreign policy of the United States, in the functioning of the increasingly global world economic system, and in the production of culture for the world. With appropriate investment, administrative reorganization, and leadership, Mason has the potential of becoming a major hub for a variety of Eurasia-oriented programs ranging from cultural and historical to business and policy-making. Mason will expand and take advantage of its Washington, DC metropolitan area location to provide faculty expertise to private and governmental entities conducting business and diplomacy throughout this region. Through research, academic and policy publications, and Congressional testimony, Mason faculty will continue to contribute to the U.S. government policy making process. With enhanced abilities for faculty to combine efforts and to draw in international partners in research, the profile of the faculty in these areas will increase.

In addition to the significant numbers of students and alumni who engaged in academic study of the Eurasian region through a variety of Mason degree programs, the Washington, DC region is home to a sizeable number of first and second-generation immigrants from the Eurasian region. These populations maintain economic and cultural ties to their former homes and will be supporters and consumers of Mason’s work in Eurasia. Mason will support, facilitate and enhance current and future collaborative programming with higher education institutions, agencies and organizations in the Eurasian region.

**GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE**

For the purposes of Mason’s engagement in the region, the committee defines Eurasia as Eastern & Central Europe, Russia, Central Asia, and the Caucasus. In addition, Turkey and some countries of a broader Central Asia may be included, i.e. Iran, Pakistan. This broad conceptualization of Eurasia will facilitate multidimensional cooperation.

**COMMITMENTS AND GOALS FOR ENGAGEMENT WITH EURASIA**

The following outlines the relevant commitments from the Mason Vision process and the related goals for the Eurasia Strategy.

**Commitment 1: Engage with the World in Eurasia**

**Goal 1. Support and facilitate interdisciplinary engagement in Eurasia**

1.1 Increase the capacity of the Center for Eurasian Studies (CES), which will facilitate all subsequent goals in this document.

- Currently the Center for Eurasian Studies is housed by and receives its sole budgetary support from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, while affiliated faculty represent numerous Mason colleges and schools. As such, the Center should be realigned within Mason’s
organizational structure by housing it centrally to promote interdisciplinary research and broad-based resource allocation.

- Dedicate staffing and office space for the center.

1.2 Raise the visibility of Eurasian activities at Mason
  - Promote the success of Mason faculty research on Eurasia
  - Support the development of interdisciplinary applications of Mason’s research on Eurasia

1.3 Build on the strength of faculty expertise on and connections in Eurasia

1.4 Include students of Eurasian descent in CES programs, and tap into this resource for future development of Eurasian engagement

1.5 Serve as a global convener, taking advantage of Mason’s location, its expertise, and abundant international expertise in the area.

1.6 Provide expertise for bilateral working groups with Russia and the European Union in the areas of Mason’s strengths

1.7 Develop plans for diplomatic, government, national, and international outreach

1.8 Develop plans for sponsored student recruitment

Goal 2. Assess and develop strategic partnerships to support the university’s global goals

2.1 Continue to utilize the Eurasia Coordinator to serve as a relationship broker

2.2 Integrate the capacity building and economic development goals of the Eurasian country governments and institutions into our engagement strategy

2.3 Ensure partnerships are mutually beneficial and include bi-directional activities to ensure project impact in multiple areas

2.4 Identify key strategic partners in select Eurasian countries

2.5 Explore engagement with the philanthropic sector through Mason’s connections in the region (i.e. Russian Donor’s Forum)

2.6 Foster communication across the university regarding Eurasia

Goal 3. Foster global citizenship

3.1 Promote the study of less commonly taught languages and culture by connecting a foreign/world language requirement to the Vision of a Mason graduate engaged with the world

3.2 Explore the creation of an interdisciplinary M.A. or certificate program in Russian and Eurasian Studies

3.3 Utilize faculty expertise in Eurasia to create study abroad programs and student and/or faculty exchanges

3.4 Utilize study abroad programs offered by partner institutions

3.5 Create intensive summer language and culture programs to attract students interested in the study of the region; and/or professional development programs for teachers in the region

3.6 Summer Schools, exchange programs and alternative breaks

3.7 Remove organizational barriers that prevent equitable exchanges

Commitment 2: Innovative Learning

Goal 4: Enrich existing and new initiatives with new and emerging learning technologies, environments, and methods to create and sustain programs to improve learning effectiveness and student completion, and to better serve the evolving needs of students, faculty, working professionals, and public, private and nonprofit organizations.

4.1 Global Problem Solving Consortium
4.2 Globally-networked courses
4.3 Professional development programs
4.4 Educational modules integrated with digital archives
4.5 Engage students from Eurasia in online education

**Commitment 3: Research of Consequence**

**Goal 5. Invest in global problem-solving where our likelihood of impact is highest**

5.1 Conflict resolution
5.2 Environmental contamination
5.3 Eurasian history and legacy
5.4 Health policy
5.5 Environmental change
5.6 Teacher education and professional development
5.7 Translational research
5.8 University-based economic development
5.9 Personalized medicine
5.10 Terrorism, transnational crime and corruption including human trafficking
5.11 International Affairs

**Commitment 4: Economic and Cultural Engine**

**Goal 6. Promote cooperation in research commercialization and university driven economic development**

6.1 Establish a comprehensive program of Mason-Russia cooperation on translational research and regional economic development
6.2 Integrate US-Russia collaboration in translational biomedical research into regional economic development
6.3 Accelerate translational research adoption by industry and government by utilizing three interactive models: solve existing industry problems, enable industry’s adoption of university’s innovations, and incubate future innovations of significant interest to funding agencies and major industries
6.4 Develop executive and professional development programs for higher education leaders and regional administrators with the focus on science-to-business capacity building
6.5 Engage with Eurasian state and academic institutions to develop the Mason-based digital archive program
6.6 Utilize the Mason Korea campus for future research and research commercialization activities in the region
6.7 Maintain and enhance Eurasian connections of individual faculty

**Commitment 5: Foundation for the Future**

**Goal 7. Organizationally and structurally support engagement in Eurasia**

7.1 Explore the University of Illinois’ (Urbana-Champaign) organizational structure for regional engagement and create a similar framework for the university’s centers of regional engagement.
7.2 Dedicate staffing – possibly through the above re-aligning – by a center’s manager and 2-3 graduate research assistants
7.3 Assess impact and move towards sustainability through pursuit of external funding
7.4. Support language and culture programs by addressing organizational challenges such as lack of language requirement for admission to the university, limited number of degree programs requiring language study or proficiency, and the current budget model which is enrollment (FTE) driven

**Goal 8. Aggressively seek additional sources of funding**

8.1 Identify and partner with philanthropic groups in Eurasia and the U.S.A
8.2 Through inter-unit and cross-border collaboration with key partner universities, collaboratively pursue research grants.
8.3 Expand the number of online certificate programs (professional, non-credit, and executive)
8.4 Expand a number of short-term undergraduate and graduate international, non-credit, programs (summer, winter schools)
8.5 Create collaborative programs with partners in Eurasia and Virginia aimed at the commercialization of intellectual property and establishment of revenue generating joint ventures.
8.6 Assess and develop a strategy for becoming a destination for Eurasian governments’ sponsored graduate studies (Russia (graduate, research and professional development) Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and other)
8.7 Assess the EU mobility, research, and other programs, in which Mason can participate in a consulting role.
8.8 Explore new opportunities and develop executive programs.

**Goal 9. Strengthen the Mason brand in Eurasia**

9.1 Effectively communicate Mason’s Eurasia-related value to stakeholders throughout Virginia and the National Capital Region.
9.2 Work with international rankings.
9.3 Increase international recruitment from Eurasia
9.4 Increase visibility through bilateral commission, Mason training centers in Russia, Promote Mason as a desired destination for Russian and Eurasian programs in research and research commercialization professional development, aggressive recruitment of sponsored graduate and research students, and short term programs, speaking engagements in partner organized conferences and science fairs.
Background:

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS
In fall 2012, the Global Office convened the Eurasia Strategic Planning Committee. The Provost nominated faculty members representing each academic unit, approved by the Deans, as well as staff members representing the Office of Research and Economic Development. The committee met twice in Fall 2012 to define the geographic boundaries of Eurasia to be utilized, and outline the strategic planning process. In addition, the committee discussed the key issues to be addressed in order for Mason to capitalize on its long history of Russian and Eurasian degree program, research, area studies, academic partnerships and research collaborations with Russia and Eurasia enabling the committee to raise the university’s prominence both nationally and internationally. In the winter of 2012-2013, the Eurasia Programs Coordinator met individually with committee members to capture information about current and future engagement in Eurasia. The Admissions Office was consulted regarding the vision and strategy for student recruitment in the region (particularly, graduate sponsored students). The Office of Research Commercialization and Mason Enterprise Center also advised on the potential for regional engagement. In spring 2013, committee members submitted their unit’s plans for engagement with Eurasia to facilitate the development of a Eurasia strategic plan. The Eurasia Strategic Planning Committee’s co-chairs assembled the draft strategy for Mason’s engagement with Eurasia. The draft was reviewed and revised by the committee members during and following the April 2013 committee meeting.

The following faculty and staff members took part in the work of the Eurasia Strategic Planning Committee:

- Dr. Ancha Baranova, College of Science
- Dr. Steven Barnes, Center for Eurasian Studies and College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Kerry Bolognese, Office of Research and Economic Development (Dr. Ken Gabriel and Mr. Keith Segerson were also consulted in the process).
- Dr. Julie Christensen & Dr. Eric McGlinchey, College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Dr. Rebecca Fox, College of Education and Human Development
- Dr. Karina Korostelina & Dr. Susan Allen Nan, School of Conflict Analysis and Resolution
- Dr. Louise Shelley & Mr. Stu Mackenzie, School of Public Policy and the Terrorism Transnational Crime & Corruption Center
- Svetlana Filiatreau, Eurasia Programs Coordinator, , Co-Chair, Office of Global and International Strategies
- Susan Graziano, Co-Chair, Office of Global and International Strategies

The College of Health and Human Services & School of Engineering have not assigned a representative due to administrative transitions at the time the committee was being formed.

CURRENT ENGAGEMENT WITH EURASIA
This strategic plan is built on the foundation of Mason’s current engagement with Eurasia. What follows is only a partial list of schools, centers, departments, faculty, and interdisciplinary projects that provide some reflection of the broad array of Eurasia-related research at Mason:

**Center for the Study of Chronic Metabolic Diseases**, College of Science — Dr. Ancha Baranova, focuses on the development of biomarkers for personalized medicine. Dr. Baranova has long-standing collaborations with Novosibirsk State, Southern Federal, Kazan Federal, Moscow State Universities, and other educational and research institutes of Russia as well as technology developing bioclusters.
Center for Eurasian Studies (CES), College of Humanities and Social Sciences, seeks the advancement of research, education, international collaboration and local outreach in support of current and future scholars and students of the areas stretching from East Central Europe to Russia, Central Asia and the Caucasus (the Eurasian Region) in a variety of disciplines. Dr. Steven Barnes, Director Center for Eurasian Studies, College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS), is a specialist in the history of the former Soviet Union. With a core faculty built upon world leaders in the study of the Eurasian region, the Center takes advantage of its location on the dynamic and innovative campuses of George Mason University in Northern Virginia’s Washington, D.C. region to provide expertise in support of policymakers, business leaders, scholars, teachers, students and the general public.

Eurasia Past and Present is a multidisciplinary interdepartmental program aimed at creating an innovative approach to Eurasian legacy that is relevant to current political, economic, and social issues. An interdisciplinary team led by Dr. Vadim Staklo, (History and Art History) formerly of Yale University Press, and including Dr. Steven Barnes (History & Art History), Dr. Karina Korostelina (S-CAR), Dr. Eric McGlinchey, (Public and International Affairs), Dr. Sharon Leon (History and Art History and the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media), and other faculty members. The program includes: (1) creation of open-access digital archives of historical documents from the Eurasian region on a variety of significant issues; (2) academic research, conferences and publications based on the archival data; (3) engagement with the policy-oriented community and generation of policy-relevant reports, presentations, and consultations; and (4) development and dissemination of curriculum materials and methodological recommendations for face-to-face and online education. Currently funded projects include:

- **Russian Soviet Perspectives on Islam** – This initial Eurasia Past and Present project is supported by the Henry Luce Foundation and in collaboration with central state and former Communist Party archives in Moscow, Russia, will further scholarly and public understanding of Islam and its impact on state and society by identifying, digitizing, translating and annotating a large set of materials.

Proposed projects with collaboration agreements from Eurasian archives and currently in the fundraising stage include:

- **COMECON** – an interdisciplinary project dedicated to creating a digital archive of documents on the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance – the primary international economic organization of the Cold War era socialist economies under the direction of the Soviet Union from 1941-1991.
- **Civilian Devastation during World War II** – a project to create a digital archive and the first comprehensive analysis of all human and material losses on the territory of former Soviet Union during the war.
- **Famine as State-Sponsored Violence** – a project to create a digital archive and a study to further scholarly and public understanding of famines in Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan, and their impact on society.

Regional Languages and Studies – CHSS offers a well-regarded B.A. program in Russian and Eurasian Studies with concentrations in Russian Language and Culture, Russian Area Studies, and Eurasian Studies. In addition, the Modern and Classical Languages department offers Turkish language courses along with course and a minor in Russian language.

Center for the Study of International Medical Policies and Practices (CSIMPP), School of Public Policy, provides a medical policy focus for the School of Public Policy (SPP) and facilitates interdisciplinary and international research and training activities within and outside George Mason University. CSIMPP studies the
evidence based global medical and public health policies. In Eurasia, the center has working relationships with the Russian Federation and the Academy of Sciences Institute of Biomedical Problems, Moscow, Russia.

**Center for International Education (CIE),** College of Education and Human Development is committed to developing international partnerships, delivering high quality academic programs and building capacity of domestic and international institutions to better serve children, family, community and educators. Dr. Rebecca Fox and Dr. Wendy Frazier worked with Russian secondary school teachers targeting language, technology, mathematics, and science teachers, and continue research in the region. CIE is actively involved in the Near East South Asia Council for Overseas Schools as well as the Central European Council for Overseas Schools which support international schools and conferences in the region. CIE faculty are actively engaged in presentations and support for international teachers at conferences and through our academic programs. Furthermore, Dr. Eirini Gouleta hosted fifteen higher education faculty from NUST Institute of Leadership in Education, Islamabad, Pakistan for a three week seminar on pedagogy, teaching and learning in higher education. Dr. Rebecca Fox hosted seven higher education faculty of English as a Foreign/World Language from Beijing Normal University in the summer 2013 for a three week seminar on interactive, proficiency-oriented and world languages standards-based teaching and learning in higher education.

Collaborative dialog with the Higher School of Economics and, in particular, its new Graduate School of Education have resulted in the submission of a grant proposal in August 2013 by Drs. Fox and Frazier to foster curriculum development, research, international mindedness, and intercultural competence; there is also currently an evolving collaboration with Moscow State Pedagogical University. In addition, Dean Mark Ginsberg has had continuing involvement in the leadership of the International Step by Step Association (ISSA) with respect to early childhood education and youth development in many countries within the region.

**The School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (S-CAR)** is committed to the development of theory, research, and practice that interrupt cycles of violence. S-CAR is a Commonwealth Center for Excellence, recognized for its leadership in the field and its world-renowned faculty.

It aims at increasing Eurasian knowledge and capacity in constructive engagement with conflicts and preventing different types of violence through seminars, workshops, creation of dual programs and establishment of regional centers for conflict resolution. S-CAR’s Dr. Susan Allan Nan and the Center for Peacemaking Practice convene an ongoing process of Georgian – South Ossetian dialogues that help bridge the Georgian-South Ossetian divide. Dr. Karina Korostelina, S-CAR focuses on the study of social identity, nation building and conflict, multicultural communities, contested histories, reconciliation and peacebuilding with a particular focus on the areas of the former Soviet Union.

**Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center (TraCCC),** in the School of Public Policy, is the first center in the U.S. devoted to understanding the links among terrorism, transnational crime and corruption, and to teach, research, train and help formulate policy on these issues. TraCCC has undertaken much of its research, training and policy-building projects in the Soviet successor states and Turkey. It has over fifteen years of experience in collaborative projects on human trafficking, organized crime and corruption with colleagues in Russia, Ukraine, the Caucasus and Central Asia and has hosted many visitors through the Open World program. This work has resulted in dozens of books and hundreds of research publications.

**Translational Research Program** addresses technology transfer barriers encountered in universities in the U.S. and internationally. Mason links commercialization experts with university researchers to turn complex research results into commercially viable and valuable products and services.
University-based economic development – the Mason Enterprise Center is a university-based economic development enterprise that focuses the energy, skills and intellectual capital of George Mason University on enterprise creation and expansion.

Mason is collaborating with national research universities on developing a model for both translational research and university-based economic development.