



# UNIVERSITY CONSORTIUM

Russian and Eurasian Studies Centre  
St Antony's College  
University of Oxford  
Oxford OX2 6JF



TELEPHONE +44 (0)1865 284787  
EMAIL [julie.newton@sant.ox.ac.uk](mailto:julie.newton@sant.ox.ac.uk)  
[www.university-consortium.org](http://www.university-consortium.org)

We are pleased to announce that applications are now open to represent the Institute for East European Studies / Center for Global Politics at Freie Universität Berlin at our first **University Consortium Annual Conference, 29 September – 1 October 2016**. Higher School of Economics (HSE) in Moscow will be our hosts. Students are invited to participate in an expanded UC Student Webinar, collaborating with their peers from among our six member institutions.

**“Conceptual Conversations”: Exploring Russian, European and American understandings of core concepts that underpin relations between Russia and the West’**

**The goal is to deepen our knowledge about the differences in regional understandings of core concepts underpinning and informing Russia-West relations. Greater insight into differences – and how such differences can affect policy outcome—will enhance students’ grasp of the sources of deep divisions between Russia and the Western community of states, as well as those inside the West. Also, this work will enrich student research into more specific topics, including their Master’s or Doctoral theses.**

The Student Webinar will feature three, inter-university teams of four students, working together and presenting their conclusions at our Annual Conference in Moscow. The three teams will connect two students from each of the following paired institutions: Davis Center at Harvard and Harriman Institute at Columbia; St Antony’s College, Oxford and Freie Universität Berlin; MGIMO and HSE in Moscow.

Students will analyse not only HOW each of our three regions / countries (US; Europe; Russia) understands their chosen concept, but also seek to explore WHY it sees it that way (i.e. historical, cultural and intellectual underpinnings). They will assess debate within each country / region over these concepts, where this is identifiable, rather than just focus on the official views or interpretations.

Each team will select one option from the list of core concepts and principles of international relations provided below, or will put forward their own choice. They will then be responsible for coordinating the research of their chosen core concept via online discussion, collaborative research and the development of a joint presentation. UC Faculty members from each institution will oversee this work and provide guidance.

Core Concepts and Principles (suggestions only):

1. State Sovereignty;
2. Spheres of Influence; Zones of Responsibility
3. International Society and International Norms;
4. International Human Rights / International Justice;
5. R2P and Humanitarian Intervention;

6. 'Great Powers' and the attributes of great power;
7. International Status / Prestige / Respect;
8. National Interests;
9. Terrorism and Counter-terrorism;

Students should be prepared to gather research materials from primary sources, including official speeches and documents, interviews and memoir evidence, and secondary sources, including newspapers and other media output, journals and output of academic, government and NGO think-tanks. The exploration of these concepts should trace their historical use and contemporary understandings over time (and any changes that may have taken place over time), drawing on concrete cases of their deployment during the interactions between our three regions and other international actors. Where applicable, students should draw from their thesis research.

In order to track the ongoing progress of each team, students are expected to provide regular updates on their research via the UC Forum ([forum.university-consortium.org](http://forum.university-consortium.org)), a private space for members to share their work and develop collaborative links across our six institutions. As a final product, each team will produce a 7-10 page paper, which they will present at the Webinar and post on the UC Forum.

Final selection will be based on your ability to demonstrate a keen and well-developed interest in Russia-West relations, and a willingness to engage in the wider programme of the University Consortium, linking your research to the Consortium's annual theme: 'Unpacking competing narratives' about the last 26 years of Euro-Atlantic relations. Applicants should appreciate the commitment involved and the expectation that they will both share their research via our live-streamed Student Webinar and contribute to the development of content for the UC website. Students should be good communicators, given the importance the Webinar holds for the University Consortium.

Travel and accommodation is provided in full as part of the programme. If an offer is made, participation will depend on the agreement of your advisors/supervisors and the completion of any necessary entry-visa requirements, which will be organised with the assistance of our host institution.

If you would like to be considered for this exciting opportunity, please provide the following documents to your UC Principal or representative at your university (Cosima Glahn, [cosima.glahn@fu-berlin.de](mailto:cosima.glahn@fu-berlin.de) ) until **June, 1st**: a short biography of no more than 250 words, outlining your current research interests and how you think they relate to one or more of the core concepts outlined above; a short academic CV detailing your educational history, research to date and other relevant experience (no more than two pages) should also be included.

More information about the University Consortium and its work can be found via our website ([www.university-consortium.org](http://www.university-consortium.org)) or by following us on Twitter (@UCMembers).