

Soviet tour planned during spring break

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Capital Times Staff

While most students plan spring break vacations to sun-drenched beaches, Penn State Harrisburg students can spend their break becoming culturally enriched.

Penn State Harrisburg is offering an opportunity for students to visit the Soviet Union from March 6-19, 1992.

Led by Carol Nechemias, associate professor of public policy, the program will feature visits to the Soviet cities of St. Petersburg, Yaroslavl and Moscow.

"Scheduled in the tour are a number of meetings that are not typical tourist events," Nechemias said. "There is a diversity of different things to do."

Highlights of the tour include discussions with educators, politicians, journalists, health professionals, students and businesspersons.

The four-day program in St. Petersburg will feature a comprehensive city tour, visits to the Hermitage Museum, Russian Museum, an excursion to the town of Puskin and a concert performance.

An overnight train trip from St. Petersburg to Yaroslavl has been arranged on the evening of March 11. In Yaroslavl the group will visit a wedding palace, health clinic and a monastery.

While in the city, the group will be hosted by members of the Yaroslavl

Friendship Society. The group strives to promote better understanding between Americans and local citizens.

"This is a new element in our program," Nechemias said. "The homestay allows each individual to live with a family for three or four nights."

A four-day tour of Moscow will end the program. Scheduled events include visits to the Kremlin, Armoury, Red Square, Novodevichy Convent and Cemetery, and the Museum of Applied and Folk Art.

In association with the tour of the Soviet Union, Nechemias will be teaching a course to familiarize its participants with the society and culture of the country.

"It will give an organized approach," Nechemias said. "I want them to learn something about the cities, architecture and life."

The program has been coordinated by the Citizen Exchange Council, a leader in U.S.-Soviet exchanges. An experienced, Russian-speaking representative from CEC will accompany the group to translate and facilitate personal contacts.

The estimated cost of this all-expense-paid trip from New York is \$1975 per person. The program is open to all students and members of the community. There is no application process or language requirement.



Photo by Mike Starkey



Jack Benford, an employee at Penn State Harrisburg and veteran of World War II and Korea, receives colors from a member of the honor guard from VFW Post 8638. The presentation was part of Penn State Harrisburg's Veterans Day ceremony on Nov. 8 in the Vartan Plaza. A P.O.W. flag was presented to Gentle Floyd of the XGI's.

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Funds, from page 1

are being reviewed.

"Pennsylvania ranks 47th in state funding per student," Mahon said during a phone interview last week. He said Penn State receives only 19 percent funding (about \$258 million) from public monies now, and formerly got as much as 34 percent.

"What's wrong with this picture," Mahon asked while referring to the state's low ranking in providing funding for education. He questioned why greater accountability is being called for in the wake of reduced appropriations.

Mahon concluded by saying Hafer's call for legislative action means "eventually some form of accountability will be in effect." He said Pitt is a good school, but Penn State shouldn't be held accountable because of problems there.

During her testimony before the Senate Education Committee, Hafer said: "As the state's chief auditing officer, I heartily endorse efforts to make all entities which receive state funding more open and accountable to the public...Don't the citizens of Pennsylvania expect you to establish criteria for the expenditures of public funds? Don't they expect schools receiving taxpayer money to be accessible and affordable? With rising tuition and abuses in spending, their expectations are not met."

Hafer continued by saying public universities "should no longer expect state money to be appropriated with no analysis of need, no guidelines for spending, and no accountability." She said "the role of the Auditor General should be expanded to include a compliance audit" at public

schools like Pitt, Penn State, Temple and Lincoln Universities.

Harry Hostetter, an accounting senior at Penn State Harrisburg, said he agrees with the university's position. "Why should they reveal how funding is being used when it's only 19 percent of the budget?" he asked. Agreeing that professors salaries are a private matter, he said he could also see Hafer's point of view. "I admire her; she's really on the ball," he said.

Norma Frame, a senior majoring in business, said "Penn State should account for the public money it receives. People have a right to know how these funds are being spent." She said professors' salaries should remain a private matter.

Melvin Blumberg, management professor, said he agrees with Penn State President Joab Thomas' position. "If he thought it would help the budget situation, he'd open the books," Blumberg said. He agreed the issue of salary is personal, but said, "If it would do any good, I wouldn't mind professors' salaries being made public." Blumberg added he wasn't certain what the benefits of such a measure would be.

Legislators in the House of Representatives have already passed the bill to amend the state's open records law, and the measure is currently pending in the Senate.

Edwina Crawford, a behavioral science junior, said she'd like to see Penn State's books opened for public review.

"I spend my money here; I'd like to see where it's going," she said. "But it's tough, I understand both points of view."