



Good for UArctic, Good for Friendship

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Kathleen Osgood and Claudia Federova have been friends since they first met at a meeting of the University of the Arctic in Luleå, Sweden in 2001.

Although Kati is from [The Center for Circumpolar Studies](#) in the northeastern United States and Claudia is from [North Eastern Federal University](#) in the Russian Far East, both were already committed to the new circumpolar university and its potential for their students. Both have since delighted at the possibility for collegial friendship spanning most of the globe.



Most recently, their collaboration has involved multiple players and pieces around the circumpolar world. Kati has been developing a series of BOREALIS courses focusing on the humanities in the circumpolar world, while Claudia Ivanovna has been leading the internationalization of NEFU, particularly in terms of circumpolar development with UArctic.

Together this spring, Kati and Claudia planned two shared courses for students in Yakutsk. Their collaboration was facilitated by the brand-new Virtual Learning Tool (vlt.is) established as UArctic's online portal for learning housed at the University of Akureyri in Iceland. Using Moodle-based courseware, the Virtual Learning Tool made it possible for Kati to build the courses online in advance of her March visit to Yakutsk and to work with students from afar after the one-week intensive classroom experience.

Getting from the northeastern United States to the Russian Far East would not be an easy affair, if it were not for the Arctic Research Consortium of the United States. The Arctic Visiting Scholars Program at ARCUS helps support sharing knowledge about the Arctic, and stepped in to subsidize Kati's travel.

Once Kati arrived in Yakutsk March 10th, there were nearly 100 more students involved in this project. While nearly two dozen third year students of English participated in all aspects of the courses, they were joined by a number of junior faculty, and second-year students. In addition, a video lecture about Stories and Storytelling in the North was staged with more than 40 students in Mirny, located 510 miles west of Yakutsk.