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Ukrainian Values in a Global World

Українські цінності у глобальному світі

Conference Story

Історія конференції

Second International Conference · October 3, 2025

Hosted by Thompson Rivers University, Kamloops, Canada, and online

Written by Oleksandr Kondrashov on behalf of the Organizing Committee

DROKACADEMY · Kamloops, British Columbia · 2026

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A Friday Morning That Bridged Continents: The Second Ukrainian Values Conference

As dawn broke over Kamloops on Friday, October 3rd, 2025, Thompson Rivers University became a hub connecting nine Ukrainian institutions with partners across Canada, Italy and the United States. The Second Ukrainian Values in a Global World Conference brought together 70+ educators, researchers, veterans, and students for three hours of presentations addressing Ukraine's wartime challenges and cultural preservation.

Student Voices at the Forefront

Three student presentations stood out for directly addressing critical wartime challenges:

Nina Brazhko, a Mitacs intern at Thompson Rivers University, co-presented the opening keynote "Healing with Honour" alongside Dr. Oleksandr Kondrashov. Their dual-track mental health guide titled "Standing with Strength, Healing with Honour" addresses a significant gap in support for Ukraine's active military personnel and veterans. The guide provides accessible resources that soldiers can use independently, without requiring professional intermediaries. Nina has developed a parallel Instagram account (@nina_thinks_) to explain complex psychological concepts in accessible language, extending the guide's reach beyond formal military settings. Participants discussed plans for future collaboration, including facilitating groups using the guide's methodologies and translating it into various languages to reach Ukrainian diaspora communities. Nina and Sasha will continue refining the guide based on feedback.

Mykhailo Zhurba, a student from Cherkasy State Technological University, presented research on psychological burnout and resilience among Ukrainian students in hybrid learning environments abroad. Working under Dr. Inna Belova's supervision, he examined theoretical foundations of burnout, the importance of resilience, and challenges Ukrainian students face adapting to new cultural environments. Mykhailo emphasized the role of social support, self-regulation skills, and institutional measures in preventing burnout and maintaining academic motivation. Sasha thanked Mykhailo for his presentation, emphasizing the importance of teaching resilience and preventing burnout in future generations.

Tetiana Taranukha, a master's student in Social Security at Cherkasy State Technological University (supervised by Dr. Svitlana Arkhypova), presented research on personalizing social services for internally displaced persons. She emphasized the need for a personalized approach to addressing diverse needs of IDPs, highlighting the importance of transitioning from passive aid to active participation in recovery, addressing economic integration, and overcoming systemic barriers. Her presentation concluded with recommendations for creating a flexible needs assessment system, developing a unified digital database, investing in training, and ensuring interagency coordination for sustainable integration of displaced persons into society.

Additional Presentations

The conference opened at 8:00 AM Pacific Time with Dr. Kondrashov's welcome. The second keynote featured Dr. Svitlana Arkhypova, Dr. Inna Belova, and Nelia Nagaichuk on institutional support for veterans at Cherkasy State Technological University's Center for Social Adaptation and Professional Development. The presentation focused on supporting veterans and wounded servicemembers, sharing the example of Mykola, a student who survived trauma and received assistance in several cities before being transported to Marseille for treatment. Dr. Belova described the center's work providing support through business planning and rehabilitation programs, including specialized equipment for prosthetics students and accessible equipment for wheelchair users. The discussion emphasized the importance of structural support and the role of the Ukrainian diaspora in providing assistance to servicemembers and their families. The center also offers psychological counseling, legal assistance, and educational programs for veterans, with emphasis on changing societal attitudes through schoolchildren education and providing free prosthetics through the Social Welfare Fund.

Sophia Isajiw, Assistant Director of Education at the Holodomor Research and Education Consortium (HREC), presented on teaching the Holodomor in Canadian schools. HREC, established in 2013, works to integrate the Holodomor into Canadian curricula through resource development, educator training, and public presentations. They have successfully implemented Holodomor education in 8 of 10 Canadian provinces and developed a wide range of teaching materials, including lesson plans and digital resources. HREC also collaborates with Ukraine's Ministry of Education on programs like the Verba Magistri Methodology Lab and the Maniaka Kovalenko

International Competition. Their goal is to teach Holodomor history while empowering students to build a more informed, just, and globally aware world. Sasha noted that HREC focuses on North American educators and has awards for students and teachers in both North America and Ukraine, while mentioning their research side that has contributed to Holodomor studies development. Sophia will complete work with the Critical Thinking Consortium on two online lessons for grades 6-9 and 10-12 by the end of the year or early next year.

Darlene Kalynka presented artwork honoring her Ukrainian-Canadian heritage, including re-photographed images of her Ukrainian relatives and their farm in Canada, as well as drawings inspired by her travels to Ukraine. She discussed her artistic work with agricultural implements, particularly scythes, as a tribute to the strength and resilience of her Ukrainian ancestors, including her maternal and paternal grandmothers and mother. She described how these tools symbolized physical labor and perseverance of her family members, particularly noting that her grandmother Sophia used a scythe and her mother's advocacy helped secure medical care for her daughter. Sasha concluded the discussion expressing gratitude for the connection between Ukraine and its diaspora, emphasizing Ukrainian people's resilience in both historical and contemporary wartime contexts.

Yuliia Clark from S.U.C.C.E.S.S. discussed financial literacy and support for Ukrainian migrants and internally displaced persons. Clark emphasized the importance of financial management and cost dynamics, while Sasha stressed the need for a healthy attitude toward finances rather than just literacy. They mentioned a course in Canada that taught students with significant debt how to manage their finances. The discussion also addressed free or charitable resources available for financial consulting and psychological support.

Dr. Olha Buchel discussed a digital project for preserving and visualizing Ukrainian cultural artifacts and history, focusing on objects scattered in museums worldwide due to war and diaspora. She explained how a map-based interface can help connect dispersed artifacts and provide context about their origins, with the project currently containing 110,000 metadata records from Russian museums. Dr. Buchel expressed gratitude for the project and emphasized its importance for preserving Ukrainian cultural heritage, including architectural and artistic elements from regions like Donetsk

and Mariupol. Olha will continue developing the digital mapping system and seeking funding for marketing and community engagement.

Next Steps and Future Plans

The conference concluded with discussions about Ukrainian values, history, and the importance of preserving memory and understanding. Participants expressed gratitude for the opportunity to communicate with others despite geographic constraints and the ongoing war in Ukraine. Plans were outlined for upcoming conferences: Ukrainian language teaching (October 4th), the Roots Challenge presentation (February 2026), a first responders conference (February 2026), and a social work conference (June 2026). Organizers plan to hold the next Ukrainian Values conference in October next year, combining the February and October conferences into one event. The need for multilingual support in the context of supporting Ukraine was also discussed.

This story was first published on krasun.ca on October 4, 2025, and is reproduced here with the conference proceedings.

Ukrainian Values in a Global World

The story of the conference, told by the people who were in the room: what was shared, what moved us, and what we carry forward together. Free and open to all.

Inside this story

- A Friday morning that bridged continents
- Student voices at the forefront
- What we carry into the work ahead

Read the full proceedings

The program and every abstract from this conference are in the second conference's Final Program and Proceedings, free to read at https://doi.org/10.66989/eft.uv2.2025.

Read it your way

Large clear type, bookmarks and headings that screen readers can follow. For large print, plain text or another format, write to educatingfortomorrowconference@gmail.com.

About the Author



Dr. Oleksandr Kondrashov is Associate Professor of Social Work (tenured) at Thompson Rivers University and founder of DROKACADEMY, a healing and writing space. Born in Lviv, Ukraine, he has taught over 7,000 students across five Canadian universities. Accessibility is the through-line of his scholarship.

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