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April 9, 2008

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Marina Balina to Address Honor's Convocation

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Isaac Funk Professor of Russian Studies Marina Balina will receive the 2008 Pantagraph Award for Teaching Excellence and present the principle speech at the Illinois Wesleyan University Honor's Convocation at 11 a.m. Wednesday, April 16, in Westbrook Auditorium of Presser Hall (1210 Park St., Bloomington). The event, honoring the academic achievement of students, is free and open to the public.

The 2008 Pantagraph Award for Teaching Excellence is Illinois Wesleyan's top teaching honor. The honoree is selected by the University's Promotion and Tenure Committee based on nominations received from members of the faculty. The award recognizes teaching, scholarship and service. The 2009 winner will be announced during the convocation.

As an internationally recognized scholar, Balina is spearheading the rediscovery of children's literature written during the time of Soviet Russia. Sharing her scholarship with the world, she recently addressed conferences and seminars in Germany, Sweden, Russia, and Italy.

Balina earned her doctorate at Leningrad State University (now St. Petersburg), and joined Illinois Wesleyan's faculty in 1989 as a member of the University's Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures. A former chair for the department, Balina teaches the Russian language and has helped shape the department's curriculum. A prolific author and editor, Balina has published more than 30 articles and has edited five books in three languages—Russian, German and English, including 2007's *Russian Children's Literature and Culture*. Her work has been translated in French and Italian.

Balina has been the recipient of several grants from the National Endowment of Humanities, as well as grants from the U.S. Department of Education, the Austrian Ministry of Culture, the American Association of Learned Societies and the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies of the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars.

-30-