The Weiser Center for Europe and Eurasia (WCEE) and its affiliated centers—the Center for European Studies (CES); the Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies (CREES); and the Copernicus Center for Polish Studies (CCPS)—had a very stimulating year. In spite of event and program cancellations due to the global pandemic, 2019-20 was filled with rich programming, new initiatives, and expanding partnerships.

In addition to featuring cutting-edge new research, we organized lectures and roundtables on the yellow vest protests in France, Brexit, Polish parliamentary elections, and censorship in the Russian media. We also collaborated to offer a lecture series on the environment. Speakers and events in that series focused on changing patterns of consumption and the increasing production of waste in post-communist Eastern Europe, the politics of ecological disasters, and the effects of climate change on indigenous populations of Northern Europe. Finally, our centers curated an exhibit of collages by Polish-Lithuanian artist Stayas and co-sponsored an exhibit on Migration in Europe, both held in our International Institute Gallery.

Democracy Training Workshop
We continue to work closely with the U-M William Davidson Institute and the Warsaw-based Education for Democracy Foundation to organize our NGO Leadership Workshops. Given the importance of this program for the mission of WCEE and WCED, and given the high demand for them, for the second year in a row we organized two workshops. The first was held in October in Bratislava for 25 participants from the Visegrád countries (Czechia, Slovakia, Poland, and Hungary). The second workshop was to take place in Warsaw in May, with 25 participants from nine East European and Eurasian countries, but was postponed until the global health crisis abates.

In addition to the NGO Leadership Workshops, we developed a new initiative with GLOBSEC, a global think tank based in Bratislava. We facilitated the attendance of nine alumni from past NGO Leadership Workshops, as well as one U-M graduate student to attend the 2020 GLOBSEC Forum in May. While this opportunity was also cancelled, we plan on developing our partnership with GLOBSEC in the future.

WCEE is also the proud sponsor of the Bratislava-based “Boundless” leadership workshop for young Slovak women. We provided a $5,000 grant to support one U.S.-based trainer to teach in the program in November 2020.

Weiser Professional Development Fellowship
The Weiser Professional Development Fellowship continues to be a signature WCEE program. Eight fellows from Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, North Macedonia, Serbia, Slovak Republic, and Uzbekistan joined us in 2019-20. They worked on research projects with faculty from LSA, the Ford School of Public Policy, and the Ross School of Business. Spring Fellows’ projects were disrupted by COVID-19 and they remained in Ann Arbor well beyond their planned stay. We kept them engaged as fully as was possible.

Because of travel restrictions, we are suspending the program in 2021. Weiser Professional Development Fellows who were awarded fellowships last Fall will visit in Fall 2021 instead. We will not hold another competition until the global pandemic is behind us.

WCEE Distinguished Fellow
In 2018, we established the WCEE Distinguished Fellow position. The opportunity is designed to host a prominent scholar, public figure, or activist at U-M for 4-6 weeks during the academic year. In 2019-20, we collaborated with the International Institute to fund a full-year fellowship. We had the privilege of hosting Dr. Yevgenia Albats, a Harvard-trained political scientist who directs the only independent media outlet in Russia. In addition to teaching two courses (“Russian Politics: The Rise of the Secret Police State” and “Political Transition in Russia and Eastern Europe”), Dr. Albats gave lectures at WCEE and the Ford School, delivered the II commencement address, and participated in many WCEE activities. Highlights from her fellowship year include her weekly radio show, broadcast in Russia from U-M and engaging student interns; and a webcasted conversation between herself, our students, and Alexei Navalny, Russia’s main opposition leader. Dr. Albats’ visit was incredibly fruitful and we hope to be able to host fellows for a full year in the future.

Student Fellowships and Internships
Summer funding from WCEE and its affiliated centers was awarded to 12 graduate students, for a total of $31,500. Because of current travel restrictions, we extended the time to project completion until September 30, 2021.

Unfortunately, our popular summer internship program was also affected by the pandemic. We had placed 25 students in 17 organizations in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, France, Germany, Hungary, Kosovo, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, and Ukraine. We managed to shift a small number of these internships online, and we offered to postpone the internship opportunities for eligible students to next year. So far a third have confirmed their participation in summer 2021.

New Initiatives
CREES has received a grant from the United States-Russia Foundation for a joint project with the Ford School for Public Policy’s International Policy Center and Weiser Diplomacy Center, entitled “Developing Future Leaders in U.S.-Russia Relations.” The two-year pilot program funds student-driven professional development opportunities that will prepare them for careers in U.S.-Russia relations.

WCEE partnered with the University of Regensburg (Germany) in their application for a Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies grant on “Europe and America in the Modern World: Transformation and Frictions of Globality.” The proposal was fully funded, and three U-M faculty will visit Regensburg for short research stays over the next three years.

Weiser will host one visiting scholar from Regensburg for 4-6 weeks as soon as travel to Ann Arbor is possible.

We are grateful to our multiple partners and collaborators across the university and around the world. Thanks to the flexibility and dedication of the WCEE staff, in spite of the current challenges, we’re excited about our offerings in fall 2020: these include virtual roundtables on the impact of COVID-19 in Europe and Eurasia, and on the extension of the Black Lives Matter Movement to the region.

While I’m on sabbatical in 2020-21, Professor Johannes von Molke will be acting director of WCEE, CES, and CREES. Professors Benjamin Paloff and Piotr Michalowski will replace me at the helm of CCPS for the fall and winter semesters, respectively. I look forward to returning as WCEE director in July 2021.

Geneviève Zubrzycki
WCEE Director
WCEE Distinguished Fellow

WCEE hosts a prominent scholar, public figure, or activist at U-M during the academic year. The fellow may give a public lecture, teach a course, or otherwise participate in scholarship on campus.


Weiser Professional Development Program Fellows

Grants awarded to faculty and artists at institutions of higher education in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kaliningrad (Russia), Kazakhstan, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Turkmenistan, and Ukraine for short visits to Ann Arbor to promote research collaboration with U-M faculty.


Summer Grants for Research and Internships in Europe & Eurasia

Awarded to students for summer research or internships across the region of Europe and Eurasia. Because of current travel restrictions, awards were limited to graduate students who can apply the funding to research through summer 2021.

Leah Bernardo-Ciddio, PhD Classical Art & Archaeology, “The Brač Island Project” (Croatia). Jeffrey Bilik, PhD Sociology, “Dormitory, Apartment, Market: Citizenship and Social Rights in Russia” (Russia). Genta Nishku, PhD Comparative Literature, “Literary Inquiries into Croatian Memory Politics and Historical Revisionism” (Croatia). Iride Tomazic, PhD Anthropology, “Crafting the Metallurgists’” (Serbia).

Student Internships

Internship placements in Europe & Eurasia coordinated by WCEE. Because of current travel restrictions, only select virtual internships were possible in summer 2020.


NGO Leadership Workshop

The NGO Leadership Workshop is an innovative program designed to strengthen civil society in new democracies by providing management training to non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The workshop is offered in partnership by WCEE and the William Davidson Institute at U-M.

WCEE Faculty News

Books

The following books by faculty affiliated with WCEE were published in 2019-20.


Grants, Awards, & Promotions

The following are significant accomplishments in 2019-20 reported by faculty affiliated with WCEE.

CENTER FOR RUSSIAN, EAST EUROPEAN, & EURASIAN STUDIES

CRES Celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2019-20. To mark the occasion, we organized a year-long series of signature events featuring various sub-regions of our rich and diverse territory: author and foreign policy columnist Anne Applebaum discussed her book on the famine in Ukraine; author Ruta Sepetys reflected on the role of her historical fiction on Lithuania and Soviet Europe as an opportunity for global dialogue; and Dr. Yevgeniya Albats shared her experiences working in Russian media during the communist period and the 30 years that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall. It was with deep regret that we had to cancel distinguished lectures scheduled in April, as well as our much-awaited celebratory anniversary banquet. We plan on rescheduling those events and shining a light on our achievements at a later date.

In addition to these special events, speakers in our regular lecture series addressed the environment, literature, politics, economics, and the arts in Armenia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Ukraine, and Russia. We were especially grateful to have had Dr. Yevgeniya Albats enriching the daily life of the center, teaching two courses and mentoring several of our students. We also hosted Fulbright Visiting Scholar Oksana Chabanyuk, associate professor of architecture at Kharkiv National University of Civil Engineering and Architecture. Dr. Chabanyuk conducted research on Albert Khan’s work in Russia, and greatly benefited from access to the Khan collection at the Bentley Historical Library.

Beyond our public programming, CRES supports students through fellowships that enhance their study and deeper understanding of the region. Four students obtained their MA this year, and six matriculated for the upcoming academic year. Our exceptional faculty are the heart of the community of scholars that make U-M the best place to study Russia, Eastern Europe, and Eurasia.

CREES Graduates


Graduate Academic Year Foreign Language & Area Studies Fellowships

Awarded to U-M graduate and professional school students for study of modern languages and related area studies with support from the U.S. Department of Education and U-M.

Albert Cavallaro, PhD History (Russian); Elizabeth Compton, MA REES (Russian); Kaley Hanenkrat, MA REES/JD Law (Ukrainian); Amanda Hardy, MIRS-REES (Russian); Ryan Hoaglund, PhD Slavic (Russian); Emma Lerman, MIRS-REES (Russian); Arakel Minassian, MA REES (Russian); Alexandria Spotford, MIRS-REES (Russian).

Undergraduate Academic Year Foreign Language & Area Studies Fellowships

Awarded to U-M undergraduate students for study of modern languages and related area studies with support from the U.S. Department of Education.

Benjamin Bronkema-Bekker, BA Political Science (Russian); Madison Krumins, BA Linguistics (Russian); William Lee, IBA Business (Bosnian); Rachel Merritt, BA International Studies (Russian); Hannah Parton, BA Comparative Literature/Russian/Spanish (Russian).

Summer Foreign Language & Area Studies Fellowships

Awarded to U-M undergraduate students for intensive language study, or to students from other universities for summer language study at U-M with support from the U.S. Department of Education.

Asher Dvir-Djerassi, PhD Public Policy/Sociology (Bulgarian); Madylin Eberstein, BA Linguistics (Czech); Cassandra Euphrat Weston, PhD History (Yiddish); Kaylee Hukarevic,* BA Biology (Bosnian); Ashley McDermott,* PhD Anthropology (Kyrgyz).

*Award deferred to 2021.

Graduate Student Instructors, REEES 395 & 397

Awarded for teaching positions in REEES undergraduate courses: REEES 395, Russia and the Soviet Union: Reform, Revolution, and the Socialist Experiment (fall); REEES 397: Communism and Capitalism in Eastern Europe (winter).

Maja Babic, PhD Architecture, REEES 395 & 397; Adrian Deoanca, PhD Anthropology, REEES 397; Kaley Hanenkrat, MA REES/JD Law, REEES 395.

Alfred G. Meyer Prize

The Meyer Prize is awarded at the end of each academic year in recognition of distinguished undergraduate research and writing in Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies.

Alexandra Paradowski, BA History, “Commemorating Poland’s Monumental Past: Law and Justice’s Deployment of Polityka Historyczna through the Institute of National Remembrance.”

Czech Language Scholarships

Awarded to undergraduate students who successfully complete two semesters of Czech language courses at U-M with support from CRES and the Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures.

Madylin Eberstein, BA Communication & Media/Linguistics; Edie Lerner, BS Biopsychology, Cognition, and Neuroscience.
Ukrainian Language Scholarships
Awarded to undergraduate students who successfully complete two semesters of Ukrainian language courses at U-M with support from CREES and the Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures.

Adriana Archie, BS Neuroscience; Andrea Behrmann, BA LSA; Corinne Bitsko, BA LSA; Mary Sirois, BA LSA.

CREES Visiting Scholar
CREES regularly collaborates with U-M units and external sponsors to host visiting scholars from Russia, Eastern Europe, and Eurasia.

Oksana Chabanyuk, associate professor of architecture at Kharkiv National University of Civil Engineering and Architecture, Ukraine; Fulbright Visiting Scholar, CREES. 2019-20.

CREES Alumni
Graduates from CREES and other U-M academic programs have gone on to distinguished careers—here are some updates from the past year. Alumni are encouraged to send news of their achievements to crees@umich.edu.

Kathryn Graber (MA REES ’08, PhD Anthropology ’12) received the Outstanding Junior Faculty Award from Indiana University Bloomington, 2020; and published Storytelling as Narrative Practice: Ethnographic Approaches to the Tales We Tell, co-ed. w/ E. Falconi (Brill, 2019).

Emanuela Grama (PhD Anthropology ’01) published Socialist Heritage: The Politics of Past and Place in Romania (Indiana UP, 2019).

Edward H. Judge (PhD History ’75) retired from Le Moyne College where he taught history from 1978-2018. Since retiring, he has worked part-time as a lecturer and resident historian on Viking Ocean Cruises.

Jamal Khan (MA REES ’19) is the South Asia Country Director, Strategic Planning and Policy Directorate, Headquarters United States Indo Pacific Command, Camp H.M. Smith, Hawaii.

David Kostelancik (MA REES ’88) completed three years as Deputy Chief of Mission to Hungary, two of which were spent as Charge d’affaires (acting ambassador). In August 2019, he became director for the Balkans at the Department of State, responsible for U.S. policy toward South Central Europe.

Jonathan Larson (PhD Anthropology ’07) is associate director of the European Union Center at the University of Illinois, one of three centers in the country to hold both Title VI NRC and Jean Monnet Center of Excellence multi-year grants.

Erica Lehrer (PhD Anthropology ’04) was awarded the Beethoven Classic 3 Research Grant, co-sponsored by the Polish National Science Center and German National Research Foundation, for the project “Polish Folk Art and the Holocaust: Perpetrator-Victim-Bystander Memory Transactions in the Polish-German Context.”

Lara Peterson (MA REES/MS Natural Resources Management ’04) is assistant director for Russia, Europe and Eurasia, International Programs, U.S. Forest Service.

Maria Pérez (BA REES/Economics ’97, PhD Anthropology ’12) is assistant professor of geography at West Virginia University.

Eoin Power (MA REES ’16) is starting a PhD in political science in at the University of Texas at Austin.

Colonel Daniel Soller (MA REES ’02) retired after more than 31 years in the U.S. Army, most recently as the GEOINT Mission Manager for Space, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency.
The recently upgraded Copernicus Center for Polish Studies was launched in fall 2019, and we celebrated this achievement with two Copernicus Lectures. The 2019 Copernicus Lecture was delivered by internationally-renowned visual artist and political commentator Artur Żmijewski. The event was co-sponsored by the Stamps Lecture series. In the winter semester, award-winning author Dorota Masłowska delivered the 2020 Copernicus Lecture.

CCPS renewed its Memorandum of Understanding with the Polin Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw, and hosted Dariusz Stola, Director of the Polin Museum, who lectured on the political appropriation of the museum by the current right-wing government. In as years past, we had planned exciting summer internships for our students at the museum, which were cancelled because of the global pandemic. A major conference at the Polin Museum, which we helped to organize for October 2020, has been rescheduled for the following fall.

In addition to lectures and films, we curated an exhibit of collages by the Polish-Lithuanian artist Stasys Eidrigevičius in our gallery. As always, we support the student community by awarding numerous fellowships to study the Polish language or conduct research in/on Poland.

Finally, we’re happy to report that Dr. Mackenzie Pierce, a specialist on Polish contemporary music, has been appointed assistant professor at the School of Music, Theatre & Dance and will join us as a CCPS faculty associate this fall.

### Excellence in Polish Language Award

Awarded to the top undergraduate student studying Polish in the Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures.

Kami Ziolkowski, BS Data Science.

### Copernicus Polish Language Scholarships

Awarded to undergraduate students who successfully complete two semesters of Polish language courses at the University of Michigan.

Lydia Amosky, BA LSA; Margaret Dominic, BA LSA; Anna Fifeleski, BA LSA; Alexander Glidea, BA History; Julia Janeski, BA LSA; Michelle Ptak, BA LSA; Jonah Sobczak, BA Film, Television, & Media; Madeline Topor, BA Anthropology/Classical Archaeology; Emily Webber, BS Movement Science; Kami Ziolkowski, BS Data Science.
NOVEMBER
Nov 5 Conversations on Europe. “Brexit Roundtable.” Scott Greer, Kyle Handley, Kali Israel, U-M. Sponsor: CES.

Nov 6 Lecture. “Toward An Alternative Hispanism: Translation and the Werlding of Hispanifilipino Literature.” Marion James Sales, U-M. Sponsors: RLL, Department of Comparative Literature, CES.


Nov 8 Lecture. ‘Building the European Law State’. R. Daniel Keleman, Rutgers University. Sponsors: School of Public Health, CES.


Nov 13 Thomas N. Tentler Collegiate Professor of History Inaugural Lecture. “Why Witchcraft & Magical Spells Give Us All the Answers to Early Modern Russian History.” Valerie Kivelson, U-M. Sponsors: College of Literature, Science, & the Arts; CREES; HIST.

Nov 14 Film and discussion. The Silence of Others. Almudena Carracedo and Robert Bahar, directors (96 min., 2018). Scott Boehm, Michigan State University; Almudena Carracedo, filmmaker; Jon Cox, University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Sebastian Faber, Oberlin College. Sponsors: RLL, CES; Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies; Department of Film, Television, and Media.


DECEMBER
Dec 3 Conversations on Europe. “What’s Left of the Yellow Vest Movement.” Anne-Claire Defossez, Didier Fassin, Institute for Advanced Study. Sponsor: CES.

Dec 4 CREEES Noon Lecture. “Stalin’s Master Narrative: The General Secretary’s Rewriting of Party History in the 1938 Short Course.” David Brandenberger, University of Richmond. Sponsors: CREEES, HIST.

JANUARY


Jan 27 WCEE Distinguished Fellow Lecture. “The Russian Media: 30 Years After the Fall of the Berlin Wall.” Yevgenia Albats, II/WCEE Distinguished Fellow, U-M. Sponsors: WCEE, CREEES, II.

FEBRUARY


MARCH


Mar 24 WCED Book Discussion. “Putin vs. the People: The Perilous Politics of a Divided Russia.” Authors: Samuel A. Greene, King’s College London; Graeme B. Robertson, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Discussants: Natalia Forrat, WCED Postdoctoral Fellow; U-M; Ronald G. Suny, U-M. Sponsors: WCED, CREES.


APRIL

Apr 1-3 CREES Pop-up Exhibit. Brodsky on the Horizon. Gluklya, artist. Sponsor: CREES.


Acronym Key:
CCPS - Copernicus Center for Polish Studies; CES - Center for European Studies; CID - Center for Inequality Dynamics; CREES - Center for Russian, East European, & Eurasian Studies; FCJS - Frankel Center for Judaic Studies; HIST - Department of History; II - International Institute; IPC - International Policy Center; RLL - Department of Romance Languages & Literatures; SLL - Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures; STAMPS - Stamps School of Art & Design; WCED - Weiser Center for Emerging Democracies; WCEE - Weiser Center for Europe & Eurasia
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We gratefully acknowledge the following individuals for their generous contributions in 2019.

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Kabcenell New Europe Initiative Fund
Gift of $4,000
Nicholas J. Kabcenell & Orsolya Gudor

Albanian Community Summer Fellowship Initiative
Gifts from $1-250
Klementina Sula & Elvis Cami (In honor of Frances M. Piccirilli)

Babo Albanian Summer Fellowship Fund
Gift of $5,000
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