Director’s Message

This issue focuses on opportunities for undergraduates, which is central to the mission of the European Studies Center. In the feature article, Transatlantic Studies Certificate student Marie Manske chronicles her experiences doing undergraduate research in Berlin and in Argentina. In the student spotlight, senior Samuel Blair reflects on the opportunities to study the EU here at Pitt. These are just two students who have taken advantage of funding opportunities, ESC-sponsored programs, and the different certificate programs we offer to personalize their undergraduate course of study. This month alone, the Center also sponsored its annual undergraduate Model EU, which brought teams from different colleges and universities in the region together to address issues impacting Europe today, while simulating the work of the European Council. We worked with faculty to create new study abroad programs in Europe, offered scholarships to undergraduates planning to study abroad this summer, and prepared for both the Undergraduate Research Symposium (co-sponsored by REES) and our second annual EuroFest, which was moved from May to April to allow more students to participate in this day-long celebration of European arts, food, and resources. Undergraduate students provide vibrancy and energy to Center programming. We are pleased to be able to offer them some tangible benefits in return and look forward to expanding those offerings in the coming years. For more information about ESC undergraduate opportunities, please contact our advisor, Zach Kimes.
COMING UP
Faculty Research Workshop
March 30 - April 1
Marriage Equality in Advanced Industrialized Democracies
This international conference will last two days and examine marriage equality in industrialized democracies. For more information, contact: adelnore@pitt.edu.

Undergraduate Research Symposium
April 7, All Day
The European and Eurasian Undergraduate Research Symposium will give undergraduate student the opportunity to present research on Europe and Eurasia. http://www.ucis.pitt.edu/ursymposium/

Eurofest
April 8, 11 - 5, Posvar Hall
Join us for our second annual Eurofest! Artisans, food vendors, live music and dance performances, children’s activities, and a chance to win two free, round-trip airline tickets from WOW airlines. Don’t miss it!

Conversations on Europe
April 11, Noon, 4217 Posvar Hall
Portuguese Identity: Iberia, Europe, and the World. (This conversation will be held in Portuguese.)

From Berlin to Buenos Aires
by Marie Manske

There are a lot of misconceptions about undergraduate research. The “aha” moment supposedly arrives early on, and the student approaches their research following a set of ordered steps to clarify their argument and relevant findings. My research has been anything but cut and dry, and it led me down paths I hadn’t expected.

It began when I decided to spend a year abroad in Berlin researching the propagandistic techniques used by the National Socialist (Nazi) Party preceding the party’s rise to dominance in the German Parliament. As a student of art history, it is incredibly important that we observe visual trends, and how these trends arise within other temporal and spatial contexts. Upon my return to the University of Pittsburgh, I realized that there was more to the story than just what was going on within the political boundaries of Germany. I learned that Argentina, specifically Buenos Aires, had become a hotbed for the dissemination of Nazi and fascist ideology. This is not to say that the entire population subscribed to fascist ideas, however, Germans and Austrians made up a majority of the immigrant population of Buenos Aires after WWII.

Reaffirming the political influence of Germany in Argentina, previous scholars identified that the largest Nazi rally outside of Germany occurred in Buenos Aires on March 5, 1938, at Estadio Luna Park. Unfortunately, very little information is available about the specific venue where this rally occurred. As in the case of the Nuremberg Nazi Party Rally Grounds, location offers insight into the larger political intentions and implications of the events that go on there.

Thanks to a scholarship from the ESC, I was able to travel to Buenos Aires in December 2016 to investigate Estadio Luna Park as a venue for the dissemination of political ideologies. Functionally analogous to the infamous Berlin Sportpalast, Estadio Luna Park is located just a few short blocks from the governmental epicenter of Buenos Aires, giving us insight into why this venue may have been chosen for the rally. The photographic evidence of the rally, combined with my firsthand experience, has been incredibly illuminating to the larger social implications of visual culture research, as well as the importance of archival resources.

Unfamiliar to me previously were the difficulties of primary source research, especially in the case of photographs as primary documents. Photographs as primary documents have the tendency to raise more questions than provide answers. I say this because, like a painter, architect, or sculptor, a photographer is highly interested in aesthetic motifs and accurate representations of their subjects. There are distinct aesthetic differences between photographs captured for a commission and those taken informally for personal use or memory. Pro-
fessional and personal photographers differ greatly in their emphasis on and representations of their subjects. What is most curious about the photographic evidence of the rally at Estadio Luna Park is that it belongs to the latter designation, and whatever professional photographs were taken are inaccessible online.

Uncomfortable as it may be for observers, in Buenos Aires, Estadio Luna Park is still held in high esteem. The surviving photographs of the rally serve to ignite conversations and hold vigil for a history, in order to understand that Nazi fascism was and is anything but an isolated ideology.

Marie Mankse is a senior studying Art History, with minors in Museum Studies, and German Language and Culture. She will be the first student to graduate with a Certificate in Transatlantic Studies from the ESC.

ESC NEWSLETTER
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ESC Spotlight: Samuel Blair

Interview by Avery Keatley

Samuel Blair is a senior majoring in Economics and Political Science, with a certificate in EU Studies. Originally from Dayton, Ohio, he became interested in EU studies after taking a trip to Ireland with his family, and decided to pursue his interest in at Pitt. Samuel received a scholarship from the ESC to help fund his study abroad term at the University of Birmingham. He also recently attended the European Student Conference at Yale University, where he collaborated with a group from across the country to write, revise, present, and publish a policy proposal.

Q: What made you want to study the EU? Did something strike you in Ireland?

A: I was at a beach with my family, and it was a really beautiful beach. And there was a sign there, that it was an EU Blue Flag Beach, that the EU had done some work just cleaning up the area, making it suitable for tourism. So I just got interested in the EU’s role in Ireland. I knew that it was probably a big part, and I just wanted to learn more.

Q: How does an EU Studies Certificate fit in with your major in Poli Sci?

A: I’m concentrating my political science degree in international relations. So, I took that in a way that made it Transatlantic in terms of international relations. [I] ended up taking a political science class, Transatlantic Policy and Communication Analysis, that really set the ground and helped me for the conference that I went to.

Q: What was the conference like?

A: I met a lot of really interesting, determined individuals. There were a lot of interesting guest speakers: Nobel Laureates, the French ambassador to the US. We got to work in workshops with our policy groups, and we finally got to present [our policy proposals] to industry experts, get feedback, and revise them again. They’ll be published actually in The Review of European and Transatlantic Affairs. So, it was a really exciting and satisfactory conference.

Q: Was the conference focused around one issue?

A: Each workshop that students participate in has a different theme. One was identity, one was migration, mine was the European foreign and security policy. I was part of a team [focused on] new counterterrorism strategy. I wrote the proposals section, and my teammates wrote the challenges and analysis sections. So we all worked together.

Q: So, you’d been working on these policies leading up to the conference. How long had you been working toward this?

A: I applied in October, and then the conference was in February. So they gave us some stuff to read before we started writing our policy papers. So then, really in the beginning of January, we started having weekly video chats. We submitted rough and final drafts and feedback. It was a lot of revision before the conference.

Q: What would you say for students interested? What should they do to get there?

A: I would just say, it’s really good as an educational experience and [for] making connections with like-minded people. To get there, the Transatlantic Policy and Communication Analysis class was helpful in learning the policy-writing skill that was necessary for successful policy writing at the conference.

Q: Anything else you’d like to share about the European Student Conference?

A: We got to listen to an artist speak on Friday night. She was from Greece, and her art…was more political in nature, about refugees. It was cool to hear from speakers who weren’t from academic or policy backgrounds. She won a grant to help her bring to life a virtual reality simulation of the path that refugees take. So, a lot of good ideas coming out of the conference that aren’t just policy proposals.
In Review

In February and March, the ESC hosted two successful roundtables as part of our ongoing series, *Conversations on Europe*. We focused on the timely topics of transgender Europe, and the results of the March 15 Dutch elections, widely seen as a bellwether for upcoming elections in France. In our conversation on transgender Europe, experts spoke about the cultural and institutional and obstacles and policies that trans people face in Europe today. The Dutch Bellwether gave insight into the question of whether or not The Netherlands will remain in the EU following Brexit, and if that could give rise to ‘Frexit’ as well, should a far-right candidate win the French presidency. We also hosted Netherlands General Consul, Dolph Hogewoning, and Economics Minister, Remco Zeeuw, from the Embassy of the Royal Netherlands, who gave a talk and held a Q&A on the topic, “The Netherlands, The EU and the US: In Uncertain Times.”

The ESC also held an exhibit for 10 days in February, provided by the Belgian Embassy: “The Great War in Broad Outlines.” In a series of posters with detailed dates, maps, pictures, cartoons, propaganda, and other primary sources, the Belgian experience of World War I was made emotionally resonant. The exhibit was displayed in Posvar Hall, and Dr. Bernard Hagerty of the Department of History gave a talk, “The Great War and Belgium: How a Small Country Helped Save Europe.”

Additionally, the ESC hosted an undergraduate Model EU. This annual event gives students a chance to learn about the workings of the European Union through preparation for, and participation in, a hands-on two day simulation. Model EU enhances students’ understanding of issues and challenges facing the 28 member nations of the EU. This year’s event was hosted by Duquesne University on February 24-25, and the agenda items included Brexit and the EU’s foreign policy with Russia. The ESC would especially like to thank Marco Centurione, a Visiting Faculty member at Duquesne University, and Carla Lucente, Co-Director of Duquesne’s Center for International Relations, for being such wonderful hosts of this year’s event.

*Clockwise from top: Students stand outside the “Great War” talk by Dr. Hagerty. The “Great War in Broad Outlines” exhibit stretches the length of one floor of Posvar. Undergraduate students participate in the Model EU, hosted by Duquesne University.*