Director’s Message

Dear ESC colleagues, students, and friends,

After two years of “unprecedented times,” I think I can safely say that we have never seen anything like January 2022. In mid-December, we received two important updates: the deadline for submitting our major external grant proposal would be February 14th and our Director, Dr. Jae-Jae Spoon, was elected the Chair of the Political Science Department and would be stepping down as Director. After working so closely with Dr. Spoon for five years, I was sorry to see her go, but glad that she was not going far. And so, as a new Acting Director with the full support of our outgoing Director, incredible colleagues at UCIS, and our exceptional ESC staff, 2022 started off with a bang. Not only did we manage to work through another shelter in place order during the worst wave of COVID infections in our area to date, but we met our grant deadline and organized our first-ever EU Film Festival in partnership with Film Studies and the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust. You can read more about it and how we were able to make it a hybrid event thanks to other university partners on pg. 2.

With January behind us, the Spring Semester has seen a gradual reopening and what is starting to feel like a return to something resembling normal. While January and February visits had to be postponed, cancelled, or made virtual, starting in March we have begun to welcome in person visitors to campus again and to plan for summer study abroad and study tours in Europe (see pg. 11). We have seen an uptick in faculty and student proposals for travel grants. And we have responded to current events while advancing long-term initiatives. With colleagues in the Center for Russian East European, and Eurasian Studies leading the way, the ESC responded to the Russian invasion of Ukraine with a week of programming about the role of Europe in the war, including a Teach-In featuring faculty from Political Science and History. The mini-series of Conversations on Europe that focused on “Reckoning with the Past” were some of my favorite CoEs ever. You can find the videos on our website. With individual sessions on Decolonizing the Curriculum in Europe, Decolonizing European Museums, and Reparations, our panels of experts moved us forward in our thinking at Pitt about how to reimagine European studies and advance our goals for IDEAS (Inclusivity, Diversity, and Equity in Area Studies). These conversations and others related to the Critical Area Studies of Europe (CASE) initiative will continue as we shift into high gear in our Creating Europe Speaker Series with the Department of History to push the boundaries of what we mean by Europe and how those notions have changed over time. Be on the lookout for more related to CASE and IDEAS.

This is a busy but exciting time for the ESC and I encourage everyone to keep abreast of our events, conferences, and funding opportunities by bookmarking our website and subscribing to our weekly updates.

Allyson Delnore
Interim Director, European Studies Center
This February, the European Studies Center hosted the first annual Pittsburgh EU Film Festival, celebrating a wide range of directors and their films from or about the European Union. The festival took place in a hybrid format, with in-person films showing at The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust’s Harris Theater, Zoom Q&As with directors, and streaming films for those unable to attend in Pittsburgh. Films represented a variety of European Union, featuring films like *Hammamet* (2020), filmed in Italy and Tunisia, and *Corpus Christi* (2019) from Poland.

The festival was imagined as part of our Jean Monnet Center of Excellence Grant from the European Union (supported by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Commission). Additionally, the festival included a Short Film Competition and had hybrid capabilities thanks to a MEET EU initiative with Florida International University and UNC – Chapel Hill. The initiative, funded by a Getting to Know Europe grant from the EU Delegation to the U.S., brings EU-focused content to Florida, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania via the three university campuses. A range of activities facilitate greater understanding of the EU, including the competition. Finalists from the competition were screened at the festival’s kick-off event.

Also featured at the festival was the short film *A Swedish Defense*, directed by our MEET EU Emerging Filmmaker Simon Elvås. You can learn more about Elvås in our Fall 2021 newsletter. His film follows a Swedish weapons engineer, his anti-war activist daughter, and a protest that interrupts an international arms deal. Elvås also visited the three campuses over the course of late spring. Elvås is visiting the three campuses over the course of late Spring. During his recent visit to Pitt, he met with students and his film was screened at Global Hub with a Q&A afterwards. Students were able to ask him about the filmmaking process, Swedish weapons export, and Swedish identity. One student asked Elvås what it was like to watch his own film with others, and he replied that while you get used to it, what's most interesting is that "you feel what the audience feels." He also noted that different audiences react differently; moments can be very funny, or just read as an intense part of the scene.

We were fortunate to be able to screen Director Radu Jude's *Bad Luck Banging or Loony Porn* (2021), a Romanian film that has turned heads. *Bad Luck Banging* follows a schoolteacher who must face the parents after her personal sex tape is uploaded to the internet. It was premiered at the 71st Berlin International Film Festival, where it won the Golden Bear – the highest prize awarded to the best film at the festival. Jude's film is particularly interesting for its decision to incorporate the pandemic,
masks and all. *Bad Luck Banging* was shown one night only at Harris Theater, and over 50 people attended!

Ali Patterson, instructor of the course Disability in Film and Television, had her students participate by watching *My Brother Chases Dinosaurs* (2019), which was virtually streamed during the festival. Patterson noted that the coming-of-age story, which centers on a teen whose brother has Down Syndrome, the film had productive intersections with her course. Patterson's students "were surprised by the candor in some moments, and noted that such representations of siblings of people with disabilities are uncommon in American children's and teen media." Patterson also said that the ability to include a European film early on led her class into a dialogue about international and transnational films throughout the course, including European television shows like *The Wire*, which, she said, allows them to "continue to draw on their experience with the festival."

In addition to the Pitt and Pittsburgh community, Florida International University and UNC – Chapel Hill were able to take part in the virtual festival. *My Brother Chases Dinosaurs* was only available via stream and *Bad Luck Banging* was only available in-person, most of the films had hybrid availability and anyone across the country was able to “attend.”

We are excited to be hosting another Film Festival next year and look forward to seeing you there!

### Summer Institute for Global Educators

Looking for creative and innovative strategies to incorporate a global perspective across disciplines in your classroom curriculum? With presentations from Pitt faculty, UCIS staff, and other experts across a number of disciplines and including themes and topics such as language acquisition, sustainability, architecture, migration, math, culture, geography, and history, the virtual Summer Institute for Global Educators (SIGE) 2022 will enhance your teaching and your students' learning! Sessions will include the use of film and media, simulations, games, and technology to enhance global learning and teaching. Synchronous and asynchronous daily sessions will be offered with time built in for participating educators of similar disciplines to collaborate and develop activities and lesson plans from the institute's offerings.

The deadline is April 22. Find more details and apply on our [website](#).
Welcome to our New Student Ambassadors!

Joseph Montrey is a Junior from Washington DC majoring in Political Science and International and Area Studies and minoring in French. At Pitt, Joseph is a French Club enthusiast, works in the Ford Institute of Human Security in a research group on Human Rights in the Central Mediterranean, and is a Student Ambassador to the European Studies Center. At the ESC, Joseph does research into foreign universities with course offerings aligned with ESC certificates for potential exchange programs. Joseph has special interests in human rights, social integration, and public policy, hoping to pursue a Master’s in Public Policy after graduation.

Ryleigh Lord is a first-year Political Science & History major with an Irish minor and a certificate in Western European Studies. She is pursuing her Bachelor of Philosophy on female paramilitaries in the Irish Republican Army. Ryleigh is interested in the impacts that paramilitary membership has on families and society at large. In general, she loves learning about people and telling their stories to audiences that otherwise would not be privy to the information. As an ESC ambassador, Ryleigh has been aiding the cultivation of the Irish Studies course catalog, working on video editing for the monthly Conversations on Europe, and visiting classes to promote the many opportunities that the ESC offers to students!

We're Hiring!

The European Studies Center is seeking applications for three graduate student openings in the coming academic year. Descriptions of the three positions are available, and more information can be found at https://www.ucis.pitt.edu/esc/about/positions. Stipend is based upon standard University rates which have not yet been announced; current years’ rates can be found here. To apply, please send a letter of interest, a resume or CV, and contact information for two references to europeanstudies@pitt.edu. Please clearly indicate in the subject line to which position you are applying.

Additionally, we invite applications for a one-year (with the possibility of renewal), full-time, twelve-month, appointment-stream (non-tenure-stream) postdoctoral associate for the European Studies Center beginning August 2022. The successful applicant will have an opportunity to contribute to the reconceptualization of European/area studies at the University of Pittsburgh, while also gaining valuable experience in higher education administration as an alternative academic (“Alt-Ac”) career.

Find more information and apply here. Questions can be directed to Allyson Delnore, Ph.D., Interim Director.
As a media anthropologist, I study the intersection of gender and labor in media production in Japan and media activism in Hungary. My first two books investigated the labor women contributed to reinventing Japan's commercial television industry in the 1990s and to building the country's digital economy in the 2000s. In Hungary, my current book project examines gendered patterns of exclusion in antigovernment activism in the context of authoritarian populism. With a generous travel grant provided by the European Studies Center, I was able to conduct research for this project during the summer.

Entitled From Counterpublics to Commons: Media Activism in Populist Hungary, my manuscript conceptualizes populism as an aesthetic style and an aestheticized style of politics that is wedded to the melodramatic form, kitsch, and the spectacle. I demonstrate that media technologies play a pivotal role both in building authoritarian populist regimes and in mounting an opposition to these regimes. In Hungary, the Fidesz-KDNP government harnessed analog media to consolidate its power: it retrofitted billboards, utilized postal-mailed surveys, censored commercial broadcasters, and defunded areas of media production that it found too unwieldy to control. My manuscript examines critical responses to these media strategies by investigating five sites of media activism women and sexual minorities were instrumental to developing: counter-billboard campaigns provoked by the government's anti-immigration billboard campaigns; street art inspired by the billboard war between the government and media activists; Internet memes that document and expand the reach of analog media activism; independent theater that reclaims the categories of the “popular” and the “national” from a populist and ethno-nationalist government; and political vlogging that challenges authoritarian populism by forging new collectivities founded on the principle of inclusivity. I propose that these forms of media activism are experimental projects to develop new spatial, political, and cultural commons in Hungary.

In the summer of 2021, I spent five weeks in Budapest to conduct follow-up interviews with activists of the Two-Tailed Dog Party (MKKP), which organized the largest counter-billboard campaign in 2016 and developed a new style of street art that has become very popular in Hungary. Additionally, I also joined street art projects such as painting cracks on the sidewalk and restoring dilapidated benches. My summer research was one of the most enjoyable fieldwork projects I have completed. Creating street art with activists during the pandemic was not only immensely enjoyable, but also recuperative.

The essay I wrote based on my summer fieldwork is titled Street Art: The Reparative Labor of Commoning in Hungary. It argues that MKKP's street art projects transformed street art into a practice of spatial commoning and a mode of critique that calls out the government for not maintaining the commons for the benefit of all. I conceptualize the labor activists invest in restoring the commons as reparative labor and propose that this continues on pg. 6
**Street Art cont.**

form of labor is harnessed to rebuild community by reorganizing the relations of production based on the principle of collectivism. However, as reparative labor is continuous with feminized affective labor, it is not inherently conducive to enabling activists to develop careers in politics. The essay explores how activists use satire to recode the gendering of reparative labor with the hope of fostering a more inclusive political environment. I am grateful for the generous support from the European Studies Center, which enabled me to complete research for this chapter of my manuscript.

*Gabriella Lukacs is a Professor in the Department of Anthropology, where she teaches courses on contemporary theory, media, labor, and gender.*

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**Citizens in Hard Times: JMEUCE Distinguished Lecture**

This Spring, the European Studies Center welcomed Sara Wallace Goodman to give the Jean Monnet European Union Center of Excellence Distinguished Lecture. Goodman is chair of EUSA, the European Union Studies Association, and Associate Professor at the University of California, Irvine Department of Political Science.

Her talk was based on her recent publication *Citizenship in Hard Times: How Ordinary People Respond to Democratic Threat* and was timely in its concurrence with the Russian invasion of Ukraine. She found herself interested in thinking about this topic due to interviews from her previous research, when she started thinking that "policymakers have a really clear idea of what citizenship means; I wonder how much the ordinary person holds these views, or commits to these expectations and practices, because we certainly set the bar high for immigrants." This, set in the backdrop of democratic threats like the January 6th Capitol riot, led her to ask questions about what makes a "good citizen" in hard times, what aspects of citizenship are affected by democratic threat, and whether a citizens' civic obligations are conditioned or threatened by partisan identity.

In her lecture, Goodman first discussed citizenship norms, including the 3Bs: behavior, (democratic) beliefs, and (national) belonging. She notes that in hard times, "we can't take for granted how much ordinary citizens hold liberal democratic values or not. We need to understand how much obligation they find in maintaining the values that move beyond behavior, that go beyond joining associations.

She also highlighted several patterns within different partisanship norms and, perhaps more importantly, what the overlapping "minimum" democratic norms are. Goodman finds the US and UK to have similar patterns, but with the UK, these differences are "deeper." In the UK, liberal democratic beliefs are very drawn apart, with a liberal democratic core of tolerance but a stronger conservative emphasis on national belonging.

Goodman shared that there are more overlaps than differences, and that it is critical "not just because it confers national unity and democratic legitimacy, but it enables citizens to respond potentially to crises." She ultimately found, however, that not all citizens respond to threats at all, and that "threat" is political, meaning that citizen response is determined by "sidesim," which can undermine citizenship as a whole.
Danielle Obisie-Orlu has been a European Studies Center Student Ambassador for 2 years, and is completing an ESC Transatlantic Studies certificate. Danielle was so kind as to sit down with our Newsletter Editor (NE) to discuss her work and passions.

NE: Hi Danielle, it's so great to chat with you! Could you let our readers know briefly who you are and what you do here at the center?

DCO: Hi everyone! I am a junior pursuing a Bachelor of Philosophy in International & Area Studies, a second major in Political Science, and double minors in French and Sociology. I am also the President of the Resident Student Association and Global Ties Mentor. Off campus, I piloted a public speaking and advocacy workshop with the Alliance for Refugee Youth Support and Education (ARYSE) and I work as an intern at 1Hood Media, an arts and advocacy based organization that seeks to uplift and empower Black and Brown communities in Pittsburgh. Finally, I am the 2021-2022 Youth Poet Laureate of Allegheny County.

As one of the Ambassadors at the ESC I help students better understand the Center and what we have to offer. I do that by visiting classes and talking about the Center, helping students build online portfolios of their work over the years, and getting students in contact with Stephen Lund, ESC Assistant Director, who helps answer their questions and advises on themes for their portfolio and coursework.

NE: You could be described as many things, and most prominently, I think, as a poet and future politician! Could you speak a little as to how you see your many ‘hats,’ or these multiple facets of your identity, working together?

DCO: I have always loved words and being able to connect with people. I started writing poetry and short stories at a young age to channel my thoughts, and sometimes the world just made more sense when I was able to describe it in my own words. Writing about myself, my thoughts on what was going on around me, and the things that I would like to do in the future made me feel like I had agency over my life. Once I felt in control of my story through words, I wanted to advance that through speech and performance because I believe that your voice is one of the most powerful tools you have when it comes to advocating for and connecting with others and yourself. I am a big believer in community and the celebration of multiple identities as a tool to build that. One of the main things that drew me towards diplomacy, social policy, and humanitarian work is that there is nothing more important than utilizing and advancing the current systems that we have to better see people who are vulnerable and have been marginalized as actual people, rather than statistics, numbers, and pawns. The reasons I write poetry, I serve, I study international relations and ways to combat xenophobia, all stem from the same place: I want people to see themselves reflected in the stories and voices of others, and hope that inspires them to feel powerful in their own stories and voices. I think a way to sum up the last several years of me trying to find my voice, and these thoughts, is a poem that I wrote last year, commissioned by the Human Impacts Institute, called “What Will We Tell Them.”

NE: Tell us more about this poem. It has some adjacency to the 2021 COP26 event, I believe, and seems to really succinctly depict the various aspects of your identity coming together, and I wonder if, in addition to specifically discussing What Will We Tell Them, you could also talk a little about your process in writing your poems. Where do you take inspiration from, and which themes do you see yourself continually returning to in your writing?

DCO: Absolutely! What Will We Tell Them was constructed from a series of questions that were on my mind as I was thinking about climate action and justice, migration, equitable sustainability, and the gap between what our world leaders say and the steps that are taken to fulfill the promises of such words. While this poem is addressed to our current world leaders, it is also a sobering reminder and reflection that we could fall into the trap of mounting visions and words that come to no real action if we are not careful. When it comes to writing poems, I always like to start with a statement that I believe to be true, or a word, or a question. I find myself
writing about joy, identity and belonging, pain, passion, the things I believe to be true. I take inspiration from everything around me, whether it's something my friend said or something that I saw and an article, journal, paper, movie, etc. The world has provided me with so much material to write things that I think could be impactful so I'm never at a loss for ideas. However, sometimes the words are difficult to get to and that is when I need to just go into a quiet space and really reorganize my thoughts and find my voice again.

NE: You were featured recently in a Pittwire Ones to Watch where you laid out your 30 year plan. I wonder if you could speak a little about how your involvement with ESC as an Ambassador and your ESC certificate has played a role in working toward your goals.

DCO: For as long as I could remember I always knew that I wanted to go into diplomacy and working with the United Nations. I also knew that I really wanted to understand people's stories, specifically those of migrants and refugees, and place humanity at the forefront of issues surrounding migration, belonging, and our changing world as we become more globalized and interconnected. The ESC has been an amazing resource in terms of connecting me with the international community and helping me understand the dynamics of diplomacy, migration and belonging. Through my coursework and interactions with faculty, staff, and programs such as Model European Union, I have been able to better understand the institutional structures of the EU and how they have changed over time to serve and address the world as it becomes more and more connected. I am pursuing a Transatlantic Studies certificate which allows me to do interdisciplinary study around the topics of migrations and xenophobia and belonging. So I get to take these really interesting history, communications, economics, sociology, political science, and French courses (just to name a few). I think this interdisciplinary background will give me an advantage in terms of joining the UN one day because I will be able to understand policy through different lenses that have been afforded to me by the multiplicity of courses that I've been able to take through the certificate program. The ESC has also been amazing in terms of getting us connected with those who already exist as powerhouses within their respective fields and it has been a wonderful opportunity to speak to delegates, researchers, diplomats, journalists, and many others as the next generation of leaders.

NE: Can you share your short-term plan - do you have anything in the works right now that you can share with us?

DCO: Right now I am focused on conducting the field work portion of my research, and I am excited to speak to migrants and understand their experiences with xenophobia and what exclusion, or unbelonging as I call it, looks like in their respective areas and with their respective identities. Before that I have a couple performances coming up. One that I'm very excited about is a TED Talk that I will be conducting through Pitt on April 17th in the William Pitt Union. At the Greater Pittsburgh Book Festival on May 14th I will be in conversation with Toi Derricott and Celeste Gainey. During the summer I'm excited to continue to support ARYSE and the amazing work they do as well as the wonderful work that wanted media does while preparing to apply to graduate school to pursue a JD-PhD.

NE: Thank you, Danielle! The European Studies Center is so incredibly lucky to have wonderful students like you in our program.

What Will We Tell Them

an excerpt

what will we tell them when they ask of how many were lost,
of the secret bones that lie in both the desert and sea,
of the trust broken because neither of us could agree.
Of which lives were worth more than their countries of origin
How we racialized the face of climate
and decided that they were distanced enough for us to keep on living as we were
Enraged in the face of climate crises
And complacent at proposal of change

Listen to the full poem [here](#).
Receiving the Klinzing Dissertation Grant in summer 2021 enabled me to conduct a major part of my dissertation fieldwork in Athens, Greece. My dissertation research examines how the governance of migration intersects with lived experiences of displacement, racism, and numerous forms of labor in the formation of gender subjectivities among Iranian and Sierra Leonian people in Athens, Greece. Many of my interviewees—mainly males with same-sex desire—seek asylum in Europe on the basis of their sexual orientation. I investigate how these people talk about and understand their sexuality, sexual practices, romantic relationships, desires, and gender identities and how their sexual subjectivities and identities change over their life course and migration experiences.

In Greece, the complex legal status and the precarious conditions that Iranian and Sierra Leonian people live in criminalizes them and makes them exploitable, especially in the job market. Some of my interviewees work in temporary jobs, under extremely difficult conditions and with particularly low pay. In our discussions, they often reported racist and discriminatory behaviors both from the Greek employers and veteran migrant co-workers. Furthermore, during participant observation in public and other settings, I often recorded racist and discriminatory behaviors towards displaced people from civil servants and locals. Unemployment, precarious employment and legal status are some of the main factors that create anxiety about the present, constant thinking and depression to some of my interlocutors.

I also participate as a volunteer with a grassroots organization dedicated to the needs of LGBTQ refugees. I have also been participating in activities at another non-governmental organization that supports LGBTQ asylum seekers and refugees. These organizations organize educational workshops, distribute food, and provide provisional shelter as well as psychosocial and legal assistance.

Support can take many different forms in the discourse of my interlocutors. They actively visit many different organizations to find support to their asylum process requesting legal assistance, but also certificates that verify their LGBTQ status. The complex Greek bureaucratic system, the racist attitudes of many civil servants and the fragmented character of aid from the state and NGOs lead asylum seekers and refugees to the offices of private lawyers and accountants in order to receive help to their asylum case, and issue tax and social security numbers, which are crucial for accessing the job market, health care services and apply for allowances. All these services add an economic burden to those who can afford to pay. Only a very limited number of recognized refugees benefit from integration programs, such as Helios that offer integration courses, housing and employability support. Boyfriends are another form of support in the discourse of some interlocutors. A number of them met their boyfriends while participating in sex work, especially during the first period of their arrival in Greece.

I am thankful that due to receiving the generous ESC Dissertation Grant, I was able to complete an important part of my dissertation fieldwork. Being in Greece facilitated my ethnographic access in various field sites which would be impossible to access through online methodological means, such as zoom. Moreover, it enabled me to connect with interlocutors who I may otherwise never have met and research sensitive areas that require relationships of trust.

Anna Mousouli is a Ph.D. candidate in Anthropology/MPH in Behavioral & Community Health Sciences.
3x the Brussels: K-16 Educators Set to Visit EU Headquarters

This summer, three waves of K-16 cohorts will be headed to Brussels, Belgium as part of our Brussels Study Tour, generously funded by a Getting to Know Europe grant and a Title VI National Resource Center grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Pitt conducts a national search of K-12 and post-secondary educators from community colleges and minority-serving four-year institutions to participate in a week-long study tour. Due to COVID postponements in 2020 and 2021, three waves of tours will take place this summer.

Congratulations, educators!

Educator Cohorts

Catherine Gomez
Jesse Gomez
Linda Grosvenor
Jeffrey Huber
Mariana Jimenez
Taylor Moore
Jeanette Price
Kevin Priest
Rajgopal Sashti
Christopher Skelskey
Lashonda Slaughter-Wilson
Katie Soltys
Dean Wheeler
Emily Willkomm
Renee Worst

Michael Bichko
Jermaine Ellerbe
Deanna Jones
Amber Moore
Emily Schuckman Matthews
Amy Venhaus
Donna Wood

Donald Benson
Patrick Danley
Jennifer Dawson
Abby Dupke
Elizabeth González
Emily Griggs
Glen Gurner
Ken Hung
Victoria Obenchain
Heidi Pasternak
Greg Rabb
Ciminy St. Clair
Larissa Sturm
Emily Watson