ACHIM HURRELMANN, Associate Professor of Political Science, Carleton University

Opening Keynote Lecture: “Has the Eurozone Crisis Undermined the Legitimacy of the European Union?”

The Eurozone financial crisis was widely seen as a legitimacy challenge for the European Union (EU), raising concerns about its economic effectiveness, democratic quality, and respect for legal provisions. This presentation discusses how the legitimacy dimension of the crisis was reflected in public discourse. Based on research using methods of political claims analysis, it examines media debates about the crisis in four Eurozone states (Germany, Austria, Spain, and Ireland) between 2009 and 2014. It asks whether the crisis led to increased legitimation debates and/or to a gradual decline of legitimacy, and how the EU’s supranational and intergovernmental elites responded to the crisis. The analysis shows that media debates treated the crisis primarily as a public policy problem and largely ignored its legitimacy dimension. This means that no legitimacy crisis developed in the media arena, but it also implies that the legitimacy concerns raised by the crisis remained unaddressed.

ZAIHRIN HAZNINA QALB, Graduate Student in Finance, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

“The Puzzling Sluggish GIIPS Growth, What is the Problem?”

GIIPS refers to members of European Union (EU) which were struck the hardest by the recession, named Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, and Spain. EU has main purpose to promote greater social, political and economic harmony among its members, so as GIIPS should have competitive advantages in the recovery process relatively to non-EU member. Yet post-crisis they never even reached their initial growth level, which was already not appealing from the beginning. This paper aims to assess what major factors that contribute to this sluggish economic growth of GIIPS. We measure economic growth by GDP Growth, with independent variables utilized in the model were as follows: Foreign Direct Investment, Inflation, Domestic Savings, Net Export, Labor Force, Human Capital, Private Debt and Public Debt. Besides, we use dummies also, representing country effect, and time trend. The observation covered pre- and post-financial crisis, from 2002 to 2013. Under Multiple Linear Regression Analysis, this paper found that among eight independent variables, Domestic Savings and Net Export were the ones seem to have significant impacts on growth. Domestic Savings is found to have positive impact, while Net Export is surprisingly the other way around. This negative effect is arguably coming from the negative value of Net Export itself that is driven by low domestic output. Another surprising finding is the negative Human Capital’s coefficient, even if this is not proven to be statistically significant. These findings have some important policy implications in regards to the attempt to promote PIIGS’ economic growth.

HANNAH M. ALARIAN, Diversity Post-Doctoral Fellow, Woodrow Wilson Department of Politics, University of Virginia

“Naturalization in the aftermath of the Eurozone crisis: Evidence from the EU-15”

The Eurozone crisis created monumental shifts across Europe’s political and economic landscape. As uncertainty and threats of EU-exits grow in this era, citizenship may be viewed as stabilizing force, driving up rates of acquisition. Yet while research concludes the Eurozone crisis failed to restructure intra-EU migrant citizenship incentives, few studies to date consider the crisis’ effect on acquisitions of third-country nationals. I address this gap in assessing the role the 2009
Eurozone crisis played in the citizenship acquisition of inter-EU migrants using bilateral data to 15 receiving states in Europe between 2007 and 2013. I conclude with a discussion of the interactive role of destination and origin contexts for naturalization and a discussion of the implications for Europe in the aftermath of the crisis.

SORIN NASTASIA, Associate Professor, Applied Communication Studies and International Studies Program, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

“A Communication Management Approach to the Refugee Resettlement Crisis in the European Union”

In 2015 and 2016, as millions of refugees poured into Europe to escape the horrors of war in Syria and ongoing violence and poverty in such countries as Iraq and Afghanistan, a division occurred in the European Union in regards to how to deal with resetting people. Responses within the European Union, among EU officials as well as at the levels of the country-based governments and among the general population, ranged from calls for a humanitarian approach to the situation of the refugees to reactions based on fear, intolerance, and xenophobia. Through an analysis of media discourses as well as policy documents within the European Union, and by taking a communication management approach, this study examines the tensions within the EU, the solutions proposed to the crisis, and the possibilities of addressing the division within the EU.

NEIL VANDER MOST, Visiting Academic Programs Coordinator, European Union Center, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

“First Impressions Matter: Early Integration Strategies in Belgium and the Netherlands”

In the aftermath of the migrant crisis, European governments and residents are having increasingly difficult discussions about how to foster social cohesion in the face of increasing societal heterogeneity. Exploring how integration functions, recent papers question the value of formalized integration policies, pointing instead to the importance of informal boundary drawing motivated by history and decentralized individual interactions (Simonsen 2016, Reeskens and Wright 2014). I add to this literature by exploring the usefulness of government policies in the specific realm of early integration, especially integration exams taken abroad and first contact informational materials. Through conducting textual analyses on immigrant "welcome packets", I identify differences in emphasis and message between (and among) the Belgian regions and the Netherlands. I then compare these "official" narratives with immigrant responses to questions found in the European Social Survey and European Values Survey on what is seen as important for membership into the national majority. This research highlights which elements of the governments messages are being effectively communicated and proposes policy solutions to address the areas which are lagging behind.

HUNGDAH SU, Jean Monnet Chair Professor at National Taiwan University; Director General of the European Union Centre in Taiwan; President of European Union Study Association Asia-Pacific 2017-2018

Lunch Keynote Lecture: “Development of the EU Studies in Asia-Pacific and Its Prospects”

The EU or European integration study did not exist in Asia-Pacific countries until early 1980s when the Europe-Asia trade volume was fast rising up and the European leaders were resolved to relaunch the European integration. Now the EU or European integration study has constituted a solid sub-discipline in international relations study and the most attractive area study other than Asian study in Asia-Pacific. In this speech, I will try to give a general review of the development of EU and European integration study in Asia-Pacific, point out the evolving trends, its characteristics and those key factors shaping them and indicate some prospects of EU study in Asia-Pacific in the future.

GAZMEND QORRAJ, Professor of Economics, University of Prishtina

“EU Crises and its impact on EU studies in the Western Balkans”

This article will analyse whether the EU challenges such as: Brexit, economic crises and other issues in the European Union affected the perception about the EU Studies in the Western
Balkans. Furthermore, will be discussed if, due to the EU challenges will be reduced the interest of students for the subject of the EU studies. One of the questions to be addressed is if Universities are preparing the students and general public for the EU integration challenges as well as the opportunities. The paper is based on the survey conducted with 100 respondents - students in order to analyse their perception about EU studies. The main aim is to analyse their thoughts about EU studies taking into consideration the EU current challenges. According to the survey results, around 96% of the students would like that EU subject will be taught through calls, debates and other practical case studies, therefore 77% of the students would like that EU subject should be concentrated on EU Programmes. The main conclusion is that Universities in Western Balkans should inform students and upgrade curricula’s and next generations for the EU challenges and to inform them about EU programmes, Erasmus +, Horizon 2020 and other useful instruments.

JUDITH PINTAR, Visiting Assistant, Coordinator of BCS Program, Slavic Languages and Literatures, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

"Restaging the Classroom for War: Teaching nationalism through immersive play"

This paper addresses the challenges involved in teaching undergraduate students about violent nationalism and the historical and cultural dynamics that have led to war, without inadvertently creating prejudices towards groups involved in the conflicts. I teach a course that covers the nations of the former republics of Yugoslavia. Two are EU members (Slovenia and Croatia), three are EU candidates (Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia) and two are potential candidates (Bosnia and Kosovo). I have found that using role-playing games and other emergent learning techniques in the classroom can interrupt the traditional academic gaze which constructs the subject-as-other. It is easy to despise the perpetrators of violence and to pity victims from a safe emotional distance, believing that wars in distant places have nothing to do with us. A more immersive approach reinstates the moral complexities and encourages conversations about universal experiences, human failings, and collective responsibilities.

EDA DERHMEI, Teaching Assistant Professor, French & Italian, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

“Trials and ordeals with researching and teaching small languages of Europe”

This presentation examines the difficulties that the social scientist faces as a person and as a researcher, on one hand, and then as a teacher, while working with small languages of Europe. I am deliberately using the term “small languages”, because I intend to discuss the concept of “minority” or “minoritized” languages through a scale of distinct degrees of “minoritizing” features of small languages. Europe is not the richest of the continents in historic linguistic diversity, but the problems that the scientist encounters are as complex as in more diverse regions, and it also has a few specific features that add complexity to the study of its languages. Minority languages in Europe usually are governed by strong institutional regimes, and in spite of the country where they are spoken, they are connected in overt and covert ways with two influential political bodies: the EU and the Council of Europe. I will first discuss the main features of the minority languages of Europe, like size, subordination and endangerment, and the value of institutional intervention. Secondly, I will analyze some of the main problems the researcher encounters while doing field-work and explaining her intentions and framework to various groups of the linguistic community of practice. In this part I will use evidence provided by Dorian, Tsitsipi, Farfan, Magliveras and my own fieldwork. In the final section, I will focus on problems that arise in a classroom as minority languages of Europe are introduced. I will start with the discrepancies between EU discourses and actions with regard to linguistic situations, then the gaps and tensions between policies in state and EU levels, and finally theoretical problems in conceptualizing language, dialects and differences between minorities in a scale of power and control of rights and domains of use, as well as measuring their state of health and level of subordination. For this last part of the presentation I will use evidence from two courses that I teach: Languages and cultures of the Mediterranean (200) and Language and Minorities in Europe (418).
EU Studies Students Research Presentations:

ALBERTO M. BURGOS-RIVERA, Graduate Student, EU Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

“Elite Agreements and the Implementation of Independence Referendums: The Case of Scotland and Catalonia”

Scotland and Catalonia are two subnational regions, of the United Kingdom and Spain respectively, that have recently enacted independence referendums. In 2014, Scotland enacted an independence referendum with the approval of Westminster while the upcoming Catalan independence referendum has never gained the support and approval of Madrid. On the other hand, after the aftermath of the Brexit vote, the Scottish Government proposed another independence referendum that is yet to be approved by Westminster. This research project is mostly concerned about the role of political elites, at the national and sub-national level, in regards to the implementation of a binding independence referendum. Given that this research project in its early phase, it will be presented as a research proposal.

MARSHALL JANEVICIUS, Graduate Student, EU Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

“Effectiveness of Integration in Wallonia and Quebec: how far-right parties influence integration”

This working paper seeks to compare the effectiveness of integration between Wallonia and Quebec. An analysis will be made on the impacts that far-right parties have on these two French-speaking regions. The research will look at different factors that may impact the effectiveness that far-right parties have on integration.

KATIE BROWN, Graduate Student, EU Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

“Theoretical Explanations for the Minsk II’s Creation & Failure of Implementation”

The second agreement to stop fighting in Eastern Ukraine, the Minsk II has become a stagnated agreement – if not a dead agreement outright. Current literature fails to identify the reasons the Minsk II looks the way it does, and why it has failed to be implemented. By analyzing public statements from the actors included (and excluded) from the agreement and utilizing constructivist, balance of power, and liberalist theories, I theorize that while actors, one of which was the European Union, may have preferred a cease-fire, preferences regarding ending the conflict did not align. Domestic politics could also be constraining and be an explanatory factor in the Minsk II’s lack of implementation. Questions regarding the Minsk II’s failures are critical in order to create a working and lasting solution to the crisis in Ukraine.

LINDSAY OZBURN, Graduate Student, EU Studies, Library and Information Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

“Inequalities in the Common European Asylum System: The Impact of Policy Shortcomings on Greek Libraries in the Midst of an Immigration Crisis”

EU-wide immigration policies historically have been unable to address the variety of needs of all member states. In 2015, Greece burst at the seams from asylum seekers arriving on their shores. EU policy so far has failed Greece, who was unprepared in infrastructure and procedure. As Europe continues to share the ‘refugee burden’, stymieing migrant flows by any means, the competence and impact of EU-wide asylum policies must be examined. This two-part working thesis examines both the development and attempted implementation of the Common European Asylum System and the regional impact of its shortcomings. Collectively, these shortcomings have created a void that has left more than 60,000 refugees in Greece, alone, without basic reception conditions or reliable means to apply for asylum. Across Europe, this void is being filled by a variety of non-governmental and public services organizations such as libraries, providing information services when able. As a primary reception country, Greece and it’s publically library system is examined as a regional case study, to determine what, if anything, can assist refugees with the asylum process in a timely and effective manner.
RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ, Graduate Student, EU Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
“Looking for trends on transatlantic movement of higher-education-degree seekers from South America to Europe”
This research involves discovering and analyzing the trends of the selection process that future master and PhD students from Latin America (specifically from 5 countries yet to be determined) use to decide which universities to attend in Europe. The internationalization of Higher Education has provided the path for governments in Latin America to create alternatives for higher-education-degree seekers to achieve their educational goals while also creating opportunities to increase internationally qualified professionals to their own national job markets. This research will be the result of the analysis of the statistics related with the number of students beneficiated in each country and their destinations in Europe during the last 2 decades. The anticipated outcome of this research is the different cultural, political, and historical elements that undermine the selection process of future students, which in turn, will allow Higher Education Institutions in Europe to determine how to approach different markets in Latin America.

KATRINA KEEGAN & SAMUEL LEITER, Undergraduate Students, European Horizons at the University of Chicago
“The Hunt for Red Election”
In a year when the US elections were fraught with claims of Russian interference, the international community was concerned that France could be next. Therefore, during the lead up to the 2017 French elections we examined the way in which primarily state-owned Russian media outlets covered candidates to analyze first the Russian government’s preferences, and second whether the media coverage itself could constitute interference. In answer to the first question, as expected, we found that the media covered candidates more positively who were more favorable to Russian interests. However, we also discovered that the media did not refrain from some negative coverage about these candidates as well. For the second question, we found that if the goal of the Russian media was to increase votes for its favored candidates, this may have backfired, but it was likely that the coverage was not intended for this purpose. Rather, it seemed to be intended to prepare a Russian audience for any outcome of the election.

KYLE SHISHKIN, Undergraduate Students, European Horizons at the University of Chicago
“The Economic Aftermath of Brexit”
Since its creation in 1993, the United Kingdom has been a central — although distant — member of the European Union. However, after experiencing an engulfing trend of domestic eurosceptic criticism, with a margin of 2% the British voted to leave the Union on the 23rd of June 2016, causing widespread concern across Europe and the world. Through interviews with experts in the field, as well as a review of the current literature, this research analyzes the economic consequence of the momentous “Brexit” decision. Primarily, the paper questions the British potential for economic recovery and stability following a turbulent divorce. It proves Britain’s inability to maintain its pre-Brexit economic stature through an investigation of declining economic indicators of FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) and currency valuation, as well as an analysis of the difficulty of potential trade agreements and economic bloc ascensions. Ultimately, the study encourages a further exploration of Britain’s ongoing transition towards complete economic agency.