Russian and East European Institute
at
INDIANA UNIVERSITY
Celebrating 50 Years 1958–2008
Dear Alumni, Faculty, Students, and Friends of the Russian and East European Institute,

We are pleased to offer you our anniversary magazine. We call this our 50th because the institute under its current name was established in 1958-59. But, as you will see from the short history that follows, our language program started as early as 1942, and an East European Institute (that later morphed into the Russian and East European Institute) was founded in 1951. We could just as well be celebrating our 66th or 57th anniversaries.

The historical narrative is merely a sketch. I composed it with assistance from Andrew Burton, our academic advisor, and Joe Crescente, a graduate assistant, using a set of interviews that REEI students conducted in the late 1980s with faculty members, plus letters and other scraps of information that had been preserved at the office and in the university archives. The archives staff was especially helpful in furnishing photographs of members of the faculty from the early years of the institute. Our records contain a large number of additional stories that would enliven the narrative. I know that alumni could supply their own entertaining and instructive accounts (a few of which are included briefly in sidebars to this magazine). But our space was limited.

The short history quotes the institute’s original mission as “the development of a broad interdisciplinary curriculum offering the best possible language and area training relating to the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe.” Thanks to the talents and energy of our founders, that basic mission was accomplished in the first decades. Our current mission statement affirms the strength of the original program and reflects our expanded responsibilities. “Our mission is to train future generations of scholars and professionals in Russian and East European studies with advanced competency in less commonly taught languages; to support activities of IU faculty and students engaged in study of the region; and to deliver outreach programming for K-12 teachers, postsecondary faculty, government, media, business, and the general public.”

While we are proud of receiving government and private foundation grants for our work, what is not emphasized enough is the much larger contribution Indiana University makes. The financing of faculty positions, staff, tuition and fee scholarships, library and media comes primarily from the university itself. It is decisions by our president, provost, and deans in cooperation with department chairs and faculty members that provide at least 90 percent of the support for our programs. External grants fund some operations in our office, plus outreach, conferences, fellowships, travel and research for students and faculty. Although the grants provide a most welcome additional resource and affirm our national standing, they furnish only a small portion of the entire effort.

Another crucial element in our success is the loyalty and support of our alumni and friends, who now number about 1,600. We maintain contact with them through the popular REELification quarterly newsletter, our alumni reception each fall at the national convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, our jobseekers email list, and in a spring alumni letter asking for updates of addresses and employment. Alumni and friends respond by sending information about professional openings and by helping to place our students in internships and jobs. They also serve as specialists for outreach programs and contribute financially to our fund drives for fellowships and general support.

In sum, the institute and its associated programs have enjoyed throughout our history assistance and encouragement from university administrators, faculty, alumni, and friends. It is this broad base of support that has enabled us to sustain one of the nation’s top programs for more than a half century. I want to express our gratitude for this assistance and our pledge to continue efforts to maintain the excellence of our programs.

With sincere thanks,

David L. Ransel, Director
Although the Russian and East European Institute was founded in 1958, studies of the region began at Indiana University much earlier. If we set aside a short-lived Russian language program in the late nineteenth century, the start of East European studies can be dated to 1942 when university President Herman B Wells launched the teaching of the Russian, Polish, Czech, Hungarian, Serbo-Croatian and Finnish languages to satisfy the needs of the Army during wartime. This initial effort, called the Army Special Training Program, involved approximately 1000 students and 100 teachers during the war years.

Wells has rightly been credited with creating and expanding international studies at IU, including the programs of the Russian and East European Institute (REEI) and its antecedent institutions in Slavic and Uralic languages. Though born and reared in a small Indiana town, Wells was no isolationist and understood the key role that knowledge of foreign countries would play in America’s future. He himself worked in international affairs, first in World War II as special advisor on liberated areas for the U.S. Department of State, and later as a minister of the Allied missions, U.S. delegate to the 12th General Assembly of the United Nations, member of the President’s Committee on U.S.-Soviet Trade Relations, and in other advisory roles. Professor William B. Edgerton, two-time chair of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, spoke of Wells as the catalyst for the founding of the Russian and East European Institute, saying that “the commitment of Indiana University and the person who had the vision to create the program was the great President Herman Wells.”

Wells understood that training in international affairs required not just the language training with which IU had started but a fully interdisciplinary program of study. Robert F. Byrnes, the first director of the REEI, said of Wells that “his experiences...convinced him that you couldn’t teach just the languages—you had to teach something about these countries, too.”
Although the Army Special Training Program ended at the close of the war, President Wells asked the scholars teaching in it to stay on as IU faculty members. The foundations of our larger program were then laid in 1947 when Wells hired Michael Ginsburg, a Russian émigré scholar, to teach the Russian language. It was characteristic of the weak development of Slavic studies at the time that Ginsburg had to be hired as a member of the French Department. His field was not yet represented at IU. But this deficiency was soon remedied when two years later Wells created the Department of Slavic Languages (later the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures) and appointed Ginsburg its chair. This was followed by the establishment of an East European Institute in 1951. Wells tapped James Clarke to lead this institute. He was a former foreign service officer who had grown up in Bulgaria and received his degree at Roberts College in Istanbul. A committee was set up to work with Clarke in developing the program of East European studies. The membership included Leonard Lundin, a historian and authority on Finland; Thomas Sebeok, a native Hungarian in the department of Linguistics; Vaclav Benes, a Czech in the department of Government; Michael Ginsburg in Slavic Languages; Dinko Tomasic, a Croatian native in Sociology; and Norman J.G. Pounds, a historian and geographer working on Poland. As this personnel and the name of the institute signaled, its work focused more on the countries of Eastern Europe than on Russia and the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, personal conflicts soon arose between Clarke and other committee members, and Clarke’s appointment was not renewed. Pounds replaced him as head of the program in 1953. The following year further expertise was added when a Romanian-born scholar, Nicolas Spulber, joined the Department of

**Timeline:**

- **1951:** First Summer Workshop in Slavic and East European Languages (SWSEEL) originally known as the Summer Slavic Workshop
- **1951:** The East European Institute established
- **1956:** Robert F. Byrnes hired to chair the Department of History

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Michael Ginsburg
First chair of the Slavic Department

Thomas Sebeok
Linguistics Department

Norman J. G. Pounds
Historian & geographer
Economics and taught courses on the economies of the countries of Eastern Europe, and a specialist on Polish history, Piotr Wandycz, accepted an appointment in the Department of History.

Thanks to the pioneering efforts of Wells, Indiana University was well staffed with East European specialists long before other Midwestern universities. But IU’s impressive faculty was not finding enough students to keep a purely East European program viable, and IU administrators soon recognized that Russia had to be part of the program if it was going to succeed. In 1956 Wells hired Robert F. Byrnes, a historian of Russia, to chair the Department of History and the following year funded a plan to add six faculty members, primarily in the Russian field, and to commit annually $25,000 (easily over $100,000 in 2008 dollars) for library development. As a result, Indiana was ahead of the curve when government and foundation money started flowing toward Russian and East European area studies in the late 1950s.

Byrnes proved to be a tireless crusader for interdisciplinary studies in the Russian and East European field. He had personally experienced the frustration of not being able to train in this field because of the neglect of Slavic studies in American universities before World War II. Byrnes had gone to Harvard for graduate study with hopes of working in the Russian field and found that the university offered only one course on Russian history, and that at the undergraduate level. His dissertation adviser convinced him to write on a French topic with relevance for Russia. After the war Byrnes was able to retool in Russian studies during two years at Columbia University’s newly formed Russian Institute. He stated that the Columbia experience changed his life and convinced him to leave the East Coast for the Midwest where he could build a new program in Russian and East European studies. Byrnes found that Indiana University and President Wells offered the opportunity he sought.

Wells’s commitment to expand the faculty and library provided the impetus for founding the Russian and East European Institute in

In honor of his contributions to Indiana University, Robert F. Byrnes’s name is currently attached to a professorship in the Department of History and to graduate fellowships in REEI. A chair in the Assembly Hall basketball stadium also bears his name. Dedicated by famed Indiana coach Bob Knight, a plaque on the chair reads, “From 1971 to 1997, this seat was occupied by Robert F. Byrnes, an extraordinary teacher, patriot, and friend of the coach.”

1956
- Wells hired Robert F. Byrnes to chair the Department of History

1957
- Plan approved to add six faculty members to the Russian and East European field and to allocate $25,000 annually for the library collection

1958
- National Defense Education act (NDEA) signed; began administering the National Resource Centers Program under Title VI
1958. As Byrnes stated at the time in a memo circulated to several deans and arguing for the creation of the REEI,

Indiana is already the leading Mid-Western institution specializing upon Russia and Eastern Europe. Our goal now should be the establishment of an institution and program with the national and international reputations now held by Harvard and Columbia. The foundations have been created; we should complete the structure and collect upon the investments made.

The decision was timely. Area studies began to flourish in the United States after the passage in that very same year of the National Defense Education Act. Title VI of this legislation provided funds for National Resource Centers to study foreign areas critical to our country’s security. IU’s newly founded Russian and East European Institute successfully applied for Title VI funding in its first year of operation. At about the same time, Byrnes, who had been a consultant to the Ford Foundation in the recent past, helped IU to win a major Ford grant to fund new hires and fellowships. The project was off to a good start.

Among the faculty members recruited at this time were William Edgerton, who was lured away from a tenured position in Russian literature at an Ivy League school; John Thompson, a historian of Russia who received his PhD at Columbia; the geographer Robert Taaffe; the former U. S. diplomat Robert C. Tucker; and the much beloved language instructor Galina McLaws. The institute’s primary objective, according to a mission statement of that time, was “the development of a broad interdisciplinary curriculum offering the best possible language and area training relating to the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe.”
Despite success in grant competitions, the task of building an area studies program into the established curriculum proved contentious. The REEI was primarily a grant-seeking and coordinating office. It did not have its own faculty, and the directors had to persuade disciplinary departments to recruit specialists in our area. In some cases, they were challenged by powerful traditionalists who believed that the curriculum should concentrate on Western Civilization and American studies and not be diluted with programs focusing on “less worthy” peoples. Even some of IU’s pioneering East Europeanists opposed linking their field with Russia. They did not know the Russian language and considered Eastern Europe a region worthy of study on its own. But Byrnes was eventually able to win the day. Against the traditionalists he argued that American students deserved to know about the rest of the world and that Indiana University was in a position to become a national leader.

Russian and East European studies [in the United States] rest upon a narrow and fragile foundation. Indiana therefore has a fine opportunity, one for which it is particularly well-fitted. This university can contribute to increasing the fund of data and the number of trained specialists. It can also concentrate upon overcoming the neglect of Russian and East European studies in those academic institutions unaffected by the great changes and unable or unwilling to revise their curricula and to introduce this “new” knowledge into their students’ lives. Finally, it can become the mid-Western center for the study of Russia and East Europe.

Wells agreed and later eulogized Byrnes as “one of the men who made IU great.” As for the opposition of the East Europeanists, they had to accept the reality that American funding agencies viewed the Communist bloc countries as a unity.

Professor Charles Jelavich, who with his wife Barbara joined the Department of History in 1961 as specialists on East Central Europe, Russia, and the Balkans, summed up the situation when he pointed out that because of the political concern with the Communist bloc, “we would have never gotten one penny from the United States government if we had tried to separate Russia and Eastern Europe.”

William Edgerton, Chair of Slavic Languages and Literatures, leads the first Russian Language Study Tour for undergraduate students to the USSR

Indiana University chosen to administer university exchange programs between the US and Communist bloc countries for a period of five years
The Russian and East European Institute was the first fully worked out area studies program at Indiana University and, as Byrnes had envisioned, one of the first such centers in the Midwest. In contrast to its predecessor, the REEI placed emphasis on Russia and the Soviet Union as much as on Eastern Europe, and students had to learn about both regions. As already mentioned, some people regarded this linkage of Russia and Eastern Europe as artificial and held that it did not represent a natural or analytical unity. It would, however, have been equally artificial to divide the two regions. Russia and Eastern Europe share much history and culture, and many of the peoples there speak related languages. These common bonds provided intellectual as well as political grounds for treating the larger region as a whole for some analytical purposes.

The emphasis on languages in Indiana University’s Russian and East European programs was and remains strong. Students were expected to demonstrate proficiency in an area language and to spend each summer engaged in some form of intensive language study. Accordingly, an important element of institute programs was and continues to be the Summer Workshop in Slavic and East European Languages (SWSEEL). The Language Workshop began in 1951, the same year as the East European Institute. Although the REEI supports the Summer Workshop administratively and financially, the Workshop has always been a teaching program managed by the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. The first session, when the program was called the Summer Slavic Workshop, brought thirty students to Bloomington for a five-week Russian-language course. Many of these first students were from the military. By 1958, the Summer Workshop offered the equivalent of a full year of Russian language study in an eight-week intensive course. In the 1960s

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<th>Year</th>
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<td>1961</td>
<td>Outreach program to high school teachers of Russian begins</td>
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<td>1967</td>
<td>IU begins an exchange program with the institute of history at the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences that lasts until 1970</td>
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<td>1974</td>
<td>Undergraduate program inaugurated</td>
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East European languages were added. Over the years the Workshop grew in size and complexity, as the large menu of Russian and East European offerings was supplemented by courses of intensive study in languages of Central Asia and the Caucasus. Our most recent Summer Workshop, the 58th, hosted more than 200 students and offered nineteen languages.

The 1960s witnessed a major expansion of the Russian and East European faculty. In addition to the Jelaviches who were hired in 1961, the university recruited Ante Kadić for south Slavic literature, Maurice Friedberg for Russian and Polish literature, Cornelis Hendrik van Schooneveld in linguistics, Robert Campbell in economics, Darrell Hammer in political science, Malcolm Brown in musicology, Dennis Sinor, Loren Graham, George Soulis, Herbert Kaplan, Barisa Krekic, and Alexander Rabinowitch for history, and Paul Marer in business. Howard Mehlinger was also part of this group, having arrived in 1965. Trained as a historian, he taught in the School of Education and completed his career there as dean. Along with Alexander Rabinowitch came his wife Janet, a history PhD, who worked as acquisitions editor at Indiana University Press and eventually advanced to director of the press, a position she still holds. Two Slavic librarians came to IU in the 1960s, Fritz Epstein in 1963 and Andrew Turchyn in 1969.

This was the time when a number of exchanges were instituted with universities in the region. Of greatest note was the Soviet-American exchange of scholars (later known as the International Research and Exchanges Board or IREX), which though not an Indiana University effort alone, was administered in its early years by Robert Byrnes and had its offices here. It carried the odd name of the “Inter-University Committee on Travel Grants.” The McCarthy era of American politics lay in the recent past, and no one wanted to receive letters from an organization going by the name, say, of the Soviet-American Exchange Committee. Byrnes had worked in the Office of Strategic Services during the war and done stints with the Central Intelligence Agency afterward. His peers recognized that he had the experience and tough-minded approach needed in dealings with Soviet educational bureaucrats and police.

“The REEI program was a great learning experience that broadened my perspectives and thinking on the history, culture, and key security issues in Eurasia. The skills and knowledge acquired at Indiana helped me successfully tackle the many tough challenges of my assignments in Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Afghanistan.”

Colonel Todd Brown
REEI MA, 1998
In these early years of exchanges with countries of the Soviet bloc matters did not always go smoothly. A particularly amusing example occurred in 1962 when a delegation from Tashkent University was traveling to Indiana University. The Uzbeks deplaned in Chicago and ordered a taxicab to Bloomington. Everyone involved lost sleep when the hapless Uzbeks turned up soon after in Bloomington, Illinois! Fortunately, most other such efforts were comparatively trouble free and brought our faculty and students into increasing contact with scholars and citizens of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. For example, William Edgerton began as early as 1959 to lead a three-week study tour to the Soviet Union. In the 1980s a more enduring six-week program in Leningrad (and later St. Petersburg) took students at the beginning of the Summer Workshop to Russia for intensive study in Russian. This program was supervised by an alumna, Christine Rydel at Grand Valley State University, and Laurence Richter, who had joined our Department of Slavic Languages as a specialist in phonetics in 1974.

The 1960s also saw the beginnings of the REEI’s outreach to high schools in Indiana and surrounding states. Outreach includes support for the teaching of Russian language in secondary schools and programs for teacher institutes on the politics, society, and cultures of the people we study. These efforts have continued under the stewardship of a series of talented and hardworking REEI assistant director/outreach coordinators, including since the 1980s Richard Sutton, Karen Niggle, Ellie Valentine, Denise Gardiner, and currently Mark Trotter. Outreach programs are also organized for colleges, business, government, and the public.

In the 1970s a new generation of scholars and teachers came to IU. In addition to Laurence Richter mentioned earlier, the Slavic department added Daniel Armstrong, Dodona Kiziria, Andrew Durkin, Ronald Feldstein, and Vadim Liapunov. Jack Bielasiak, a specialist on East European politics, was hired in political science, Ben Eklof in history, and Janet Kennedy in art history. It was in this decade, too, that Inta Gale Carpenter joined the Folklore Institute as a research scholar and specialist on Latvia.
Unfortunately, the institute and the Slavic Department suffered a painful loss of one of these new recruits in 1979 when the young scholar and administrator Daniel Armstrong died of cancer just as his career as a Slavic linguist was taking off. Armstrong had studied at IU and then assumed departmental administrative and teaching duties in 1973. He was a kind and generous colleague, and his death touched everyone deeply. The Slavic Department rededicated its library as the Daniel Armstrong Room, and the institute started an annual essay contest in his name. An endowment for the essay prize was established in 1996 and funded by contributions from the Armstrong family and friends. It now provides a substantial cash award to the essay prize winners each year in three categories: the best master’s thesis, the best graduate seminar paper, and the best undergraduate essay. More recently, the Armstrong family has begun another endowment to fund scholarships for entering IU freshmen committed to pursuing Russian or East European language study. We are now in our third year of awarding the Armstrong scholarships.

Major grants from national foundations such as Ford and Rockefeller began to dwindle in the 1970s. Although the REEI won a grant from the Ford Foundation in 1977 for a series of seminars on Eastern Europe and the West, it was clear that area programs needed to find new sources of funding. At the end of the decade the diplomat and historian George Kennan called leaders of the profession to the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study to work on a plan to win government support. This effort resulted in the establishment of Title VIII funding for our field, an important resource that supports the Kennan Institute, IREX, the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research, the American Council of Learned Societies, and other agencies on which our students and faculty draw for research and travel funds.

The university also helped to build our programs by financing exchange agreements with institutions in Eastern Europe. One of the first was an exchange with Warsaw University, launched in 1976. Later a similar exchange was opened with Jagiellonian University in Cracow.

“As an MA candidate during the drama of the collapse of the former Soviet Union (1990-1), I was deeply impressed by the faculty and student body’s long-term focus on key events, not allowing us to get overly focused on the headlines. Mr. Campbell was a particularly memorable gentleman-scholar, so often taking the time to help MA candidates understand the key points of his lectures. Larry Richter imbued us with enthusiasm for the Russian language, and his exhaustive focus on proper grammar and pronunciation gave me the tools to open many closed doors during my diplomatic assignments in Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan.”

Michael Lally
REEI MA, 1991
More controversial was the establishment of the Hungarian Chair program in 1979. Indiana University and the Hungarian Academy shared the expense of an annual Hungarian Chair professor from Hungary, a language teacher, an exchange with Debrecen University, and a conference. The effort was resisted by some IU professors because it entailed a simultaneous faculty appointment here and at Karl Marx University in Budapest. The project weathered the storm and still exists today under the name the György Ránki Chair (Ránki was an economic historian who occupied the Chair for a number of years). This politically inspired conflict was typical of the era. Many of the institutions that studied the region suffered from what Alexander Rabinowitch, director of the institute from 1975 to 1984, called “a strong Cold War/know your enemy bias.” Rabinowitch, an authority on the Russian Revolution of 1917, sought to moderate during his tenure as director what he regarded as a political bias in the study of Soviet institutions.

The decade of the 1980s brought a new contingent of specialists in Russian and East European affairs to Indiana University and to the REEI. Murlin Croucher came on board as Slavic bibliographer and served us until his retirement in 2005, when he was replaced by the current bibliographer, Wook-Jin Cheun. In the fields of linguistics, language and literature we added Michael Holquist, Henry Cooper, Bronislava Volkova, Howard Keller, Steven Franks, Nina Perlina, Jerzy Kolodziej, and Mihály Szegedy-Maszák. New faculty in the social sciences included Jean Robinson, Dina Spechler, and Jeffrey Isaac in political science, Roy Gardner in economics, Nazif Shahrani in anthropology, and a historian of Europe, Owen Johnson, in journalism. David Ransel, a historian of Russian society and family, joined the Department of History, and Devin DeWeese, a specialist in the history of Islam, was added to the Department of Central Eurasian Studies.

The Mellon Foundation in the 1980s made up in some measure for the diminishing support for our field by the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations. Indiana University received two major grants from Mellon, first in 1983, when we won a $500,000 grant for faculty...
research, visiting faculty appointments, library acquisitions, and IU Press publications. At the end of the decade Mellon offered an inducement to create an endowment for Russian and East European studies if we could come up with a matching sum. Owing largely to the talents of Dean Morton Lowengrub of the College of Arts and Sciences we were able to find a large portion of the required match, and the university established an endowment that currently yields approximately $55,000 annually in support for faculty and student research and travel.

During the institute’s first 22 years, it did not act as a degree-granting program. We conferred certificates on students in disciplinary departments, affirming their knowledge of the language, history, politics, economies, and cultures of the region. Although the certificates were sought primarily by students in graduate programs, the institute began to offer a similar opportunity for undergraduates to pursue a specialization in the area as part of their curriculum as early as 1974. In the late 1990s we changed this to a choice of an undergraduate minor with or without language certification, the latter requiring a minimum of two years of language study, and we now recruit from 50 to 100 students each year into this minor. In 1986, while continuing to award certificates to doctoral students, the institute launched its own master’s degree program. The aim was to give students more flexibility to prepare for non-academic careers as area specialists. The degree provided a broad-based interdisciplinary program to those interested in careers in government, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations, where a general knowledge was preferred over narrow specialization. Although the graduate certificate was not abandoned with the advent of the master’s degree, students in doctoral programs have usually chosen Russian and East European studies as an outside minor rather than a certificate program.

After 1995, the REEI master’s degree program was expanded to include the option of dual degrees with a number of IU professional schools. For more than a decade we have offered fully articulated dual degrees with the Schools of Public and Environmental Affairs, Ukrainian Parliamentary Project administered by SPEA

1994

Soviet undergraduates come to IU for an exchange program; four Hungarian students come on a George Soros financed exchange

“...and figured that it would be an interesting field of study. After discovering the multi-disciplinary options that the minor offered, I was hooked. I was able to take a history class covering the fascinating collapse of the Soviet Union, write a political science seminar paper on the role the media played in the 2004 Russian presidential elections, learn about the democratic transformation of Eastern Europe from a professor who lived through it in Poland, and even learn a little Russian in an honors class based on translating Pushkin’s The Bronze Horseman. The REEI minor greatly broadened my educational experience at IU and I would recommend it to anyone.”

Colin Connor
REEI undergraduate minor, 2005
Library and Information Science, and the Kelley School of Business. In addition, a number of our master’s students enroll in individually negotiated dual degree programs with the Schools of Law and of Education. The REEI master’s degree program proved to be very popular. From 40-50 students are regularly enrolled, making it one of the largest programs of its kind in the nation. The graduates find work in government, private foundations and business, education, and non-governmental international organizations, and they often land jobs before turning in their final course and thesis projects.

In this connection, we should mention an initiative that has proved very popular with our students and alumni: the jobseekers email list begun in 1998 to mobilize on a weekly basis all available information to assist in the search for jobs, grants and internships. In addition, the institute and the Slavic Department annually host a Slavic and East European Career night at which alumni speak to students about their career experiences.

The past two decades brought many new faculty members to the program. In the fields of language and literature we added George Fowler (now also the director of Slavica Publishers), Paul Foster, and Frances Trix in linguistics, Bill Johnston in applied linguistics and Polish translation, Dov-Ber Kerler in Yiddish, Aaron Beaver in Russian literature, Justyna Beinek in Polish literature, and Christina Zarifpol-Illias in Romanian language and literature. New language instructors included Jeffrey Holdeman for Russian and Czech and Olena Chernishenko for Russian and Ukrainian. The field of history gained eight new specialists: Hiroaki Kuromiya for the Soviet era, Toivo Raun for the Baltic region, Maria Bucur and Padraic Kenney for Eastern Europe, Jeffrey Veidlinger and Matthias Lehmann for Jewish history, and Edward Lazzerini and Ron Sela in the history of Muslim peoples. In the social sciences new arrivals included Michael Kaganovich and Michael Alexeev in economics, William Fierman, Aurelian Craiutu, Beate Sissenich, and Regina Smyth in political science, Roman Zlotin in geography, Sarah Phillips in anthropology, and William Pridemore in criminal justice. In other fields we added
Steven Raymer in journalism, Matthew Auer and Vicki Meretsky in public administration, Halina Goldberg in musicology, Lynn Hooker in musicology/ethnomusicology, Joshua Malitsky in communications and culture, and Timothy Waters in law.

In the past decade, REEI has fostered new academic partnerships, hosted conferences, and created fellowships, all of which affirm the institute’s position as a leading area studies center at a time of stable or shrinking resources in the field nationally. New forms of fund raising have become important. In addition to the Daniel Armstrong Essay Prize Endowment and Armstrong Scholarships mentioned earlier, this period saw the campaign for the Robert F. Byrnes Fellowship Endowment. This fund, which is still growing, now supports a two-year fellowship for an entering REEI master’s degree student each year. Another fellowship funds a student in Romanian studies. Thanks to the vigorous efforts of Christina Zarifopol-Illias, the institute won financial support from the Romanian government for this graduate-student stipend, initially for a six-year period. This is the first such collaborative effort with Romania in the United States. A third initiative was the McCloskey Fellow Program, established in 2006 to honor the memory of IU alumnus Francis (Frank) McCloskey, former mayor of Bloomington and six-term Congressman, to support his goal of building peace and democracy in the Balkans. After retiring from government, McCloskey decided to pursue a master’s degree at the REEI while also working for the National Democratic Institute. Sadly, he died of cancer soon after starting these projects. His wife and fellow peace advocate Roberta helped to start the endowment before she, too, died prematurely. The fellowship brings young civic activists from the Balkans to Bloomington and Washington, D.C. for three months for the study of democratic institutions and IU students to the Balkans for study of civic life there.

Pledges have been received for two further fellowships to be administered by the REEI, one for the study of Serbia and the Balkans, and another for a master’s student in any area of our program.

Among new initiatives in recent years have been projects to foster oral history study in Russia and Eastern Europe. David Ransel
and Maria Bucur were able to obtain funding from the Anderson and Aspera Foundations for promoting work of this type in our region of study. The first effort began in 1997 when an IU team of oral historians conducted a lengthy workshop at Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, in connection with the establishment of an Oral History Center there. The same team moved to St. Petersburg a few years later and ran a series of workshops to inaugurate an oral history program at the European University in St. Petersburg, one of the first centers of its kind in Russia.

In 2000 we launched our series of Round Tables on Post-Communism, which each spring brings to campus leading political thinkers from Russia, Eastern Europe and the Far East to discuss the evolution of political, social and economic life since “the fall of the wall.” These popular public presentations, based on the responses of the visiting speakers to a “provocation” statement by the REEI organizers, followed by wide-open participation from the floor, have won the attention of a broad spectrum of the university community and sparked instructive analyses of current issues. Among the topics featured for the Round Tables have been the “Changing Shape of Europe,” “Memory and Restitution,” “Religious Extremism and Islam,” and “Public Health and the Environment.” The topic for 2009 takes advantage of this anniversary year to assess the “Quality of Citizenship Twenty Years after the Fall of Communism.”

At the fifty-year mark (or fifty-seventh if we count from the founding of the East European Institute) the Russian and East European Institute continues to thrive. It is one of the few area studies centers in the country that has continually received major funding under the U.S. Government’s Title VI program since its inception (first in the National Defense Education Act and from 1980 in the Higher Education Act), winning grants in each successive three- or four-year national competition. Indiana’s success probably owes much to its choice to invest its resources heavily in people. While other similar programs often have only one or two scholars in each major discipline, IU supports several and also keeps area specialists in
smaller departments such as Anthropology, Communications and Culture, Criminal Justice, and Folklore. David Ransel pointed out in an interview soon after he arrived in Bloomington that “Indiana put its money into people – into building a good faculty – and that has turned out to be a good policy.” Nicolas Spulber seconded that notion, remarking that “Indiana got off to a good start because a great deal was invested in an excellent faculty and an outstanding library.” Indiana also kept up with the changing times and encouraged growth of area knowledge in the professional schools. Nearly thirty years ago, Alexander Rabinowitch argued for broadening the program to encompass “not only the College of Arts and Sciences, but the professional schools as well. It is important, for instance, to have business people with a global perspective. The same is true in law, journalism and the fine arts.” He could well have added public administration, for as it turned out, our dual master’s degree with the School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA) has been our students’ most popular option.

It is worth mentioning, too, that the resource base created in the programs of the Russian and East European Institute and its sister department of Central Eurasian Studies has facilitated important development initiatives in the IU professional schools, including major U.S. government grants in SPEA for Ukraine parliamentary services and Russian schools of public administration, in the School of Education for programs of global studies in Russia, university development in Central Asia, and teacher internships in Tomsk, and for the creation of programs in economics education and business management in Hungary, Ukraine, and Central Asia.

What is the future of Russian and East European studies at Indiana University? In view of the strong commitment of the university administrators since the 1940s to the development of our area and of area studies more broadly, we are confident about the future. IU scholars have not only pioneered the field, built excellent programs and turned out many hundreds of graduates who now work in all areas of education, government, media, international organizations, and other fields. The future is bright and our university will continue to lead in this important area of study.

Alumni James Niessen and Jeffrey Pennington

“Dr. Paul Marer gave me the best advice in 1986-87… He said that international business persons need to be cultured in many things such as history, literature, languages…. None of [my professional accomplishments] could have been possible without a combination of deep cultural and linguistic understanding. Today, it is not enough to speak a foreign language; as a competitive advantage one must be able to understand, predict behavior and motivate people in the foreign culture in which one works.”

Tiffany Fragman
REEI bachelor’s certificate, 1987

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<td>Romanian Studies Graduate Fellowship inaugurated</td>
<td>REEI and West European Studies cooperate to win 3 year grant from the European Union to establish a European Union Center of Excellence</td>
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and business, but our faculty have also published innovative scholarship that adds to area and disciplinary knowledge. As a consequence, Russian and East European studies are of enduring importance to the national and international reputation of Indiana University.

The scope of the REEI’s responsibilities may nevertheless change, become broader or narrower over time. The world is changing, and the boundaries of particular areas of study need to be continually reassessed for their cultural, political, and analytical coherence. As noted earlier, some scholars long ago considered the formation of the REEI to be an artifact of the Cold War. Others, however, contended that too sharp a line between Russia and Eastern Europe or, for that matter between Russia and Central Asia and the Caucasus, would also be artificial. A certain amount of overlap is necessary for historical and comparative analysis no matter how the areas of Eurasia are eventually shaped for administrative and instructional purposes. In any case, whether studied separately or together, the fields of Russian, East European, and Central Asian studies are likely to remain strong at Indiana University. The world is manifestly smaller than it was 50 years ago. The battles against parochialism fought by Herman Wells and the early leaders of the Russian and East European programs are distant memories. Indiana University administrators and faculty are firmly committed to international studies, and students, faculty, and alumni of our Russian and East European studies form one of the university’s most powerful assets and constitute a solid foundation for continued excellence in training and research.

“If area studies are to remain relevant in the new marketplace, they must respond to the needs of today’s increasingly technical issues and professional specialists. The area studies program for the future will succeed to the extent it can help those starting with a professional skill, such as management, accounting, or engineering, to develop the talents necessary to use this skill in Russia. This includes studying the language, history, and social and business culture of a foreign country.”

James Collins
former U.S. Ambassador to Russia, REEI alumnus

Herman B Wells, a visionary leader and supporter of internationalism in education, converses with Mikhail Gorbachev during the former’s visit to IU in 1997.

2005
Frank McCloskey Fellowship Program established;
First Visiting Fellow arrives in Bloomington

2007
Slavic Department wins a $400,000 public health grant from the U.S. Department of Education United States-Russia Program that creates a partnership with the Southern Federal University in Rostov-on-Don
Distinguished Alumni Awards
1988 Alexander Rabinowitch
1988 Charles Gati
1995 Gale Stokes
2000 Helena Gosciło
2002 Howard Aronson
2002 William Hopkins

Distinguished Service Awards
1988 Theofanis Stavrou
1988 Robert F. Byrnes
1989 Karen Niggle
1996 Robert W. Campbell
1988 Theofanis Stavrou
1997 Charles Jelavich
1997 Janet Rabinowitch
2000 William B. Edgerton
2007 Denise Gardiner

REEI Directors 1958-2008

Robert F. Byrnes

Robert Campbell
1963-67, 1984-1986

Maurice Friedberg
1967-1971

Alexander Rabinowitch
1975-1984

Henry Cooper
1986-1991

Owen Johnson
1991-1995

David Ransel
1995-present