

Department of European Studies
European Studies | French | German | Italian | Russian

Fall 2022 Newsletter

Message from the Chair



Ciao,

After two years of virtual graduations, this spring we were finally able to celebrate our talented graduates in person, to everybody's delight. Despite the uncertainties of COVID-19, in 2021-22, we returned to campus, nurturing those human connections that are central to our mission.

This past year we also continued to strengthen our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in our teaching, research, and service. We launched a new speaker series called "Imagine Black Europe" and hosted thought-provoking lectures about race, gender, and sexuality. Our department was heartbroken by news of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and organized lectures and teach-ins to help understand the history and cultures of this region. During a demanding academic year, our faculty remained exceptionally productive in research and publications.

We are a resilient and caring community of students, scholars, and staff, and we look forward to a new year of collegial collaborations.

Clarissa Clò, Chair, Department of European Studies

News & Events



Graduation 2022

Russian Program Director and Lecturer Daria Shembel was awarded Most Influential Faculty Member by our department's Outstanding Graduating Senior, Zachary Woodall.

Diva Zeckua Barajas, spring 2022 graduate with a biology major/Italian minor, was [interviewed](#)



for the [Scripps National News](#) channel and the [College of Arts and Letters](#) about the importance of the study of languages.

In spring 2022, the Théâtre Français de SDSU presented "Fort Gambo" by Marie Redonnet. All student actors performed the play entirely in French and it was a great success!



European Studies Director and Associate Professor Emily Schuckman Matthews participated in the [Brussels-Lux Study Tour in June 2022](#). The program was a week-long study tour for educators to learn about the European Union.

In the 2021-2022 academic year, Susanne Forrayi, Clarissa Clò and Veronica Gonzalez interviewed Russian Professor Veronica Shapovalov, German Professor and LARC Director Mathias Schulze, and Circolo Italiano Club President and Italian minor Diva Zeckua Barajas. [Visit our website to listen!](#)



Russian Professor Veronica Shapovalov and French Professor Mary Ann Lyman Hager retired from our department this past academic year. Veronica Shapovalov began at SDSU in 1988, in the German and Russian

Department. Mary Ann joined the then French and Italian Department in 1997 when she arrived to direct LARC. We appreciate their many years of service and contributions!

The departmental diversity plan, headed by Professor Anne Donadey, was approved by Chief Diversity Officer J. Luke Wood. The action portion of [our departmental diversity plan](#) is now on our website. The department's diversity committee as well as the department as a whole came together to contribute and collaborate on a plan we are all proud of and look forward to implementing.

Grants & Awards



German Director and Associate Professor Kristin Rebien has been working on a manuscript titled "Narratives of Unity: Europe in the German Literary Imagination since 1945." With the help of a CAL microgrant, she traveled to the German National Library in Leipzig to finish research on one of the remaining chapters.

Department Chair and Italian Professor Clarissa Clò received a grant from Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation for the translation of Italian-Egyptian rapper Amir Issaa's autobiography "Vivo per questo" which will be published as "This Is What I Live For: An

Afro-Italian Hip-Hop Memoir" by SDSU Press. The project also received a CAL microgrant and enlisted the help of students and former students from our department, including Victoria Cataloni and Jorge Hernandez.

Italian lecturers Silvia Kading and Sonia Brighenti were awarded a mini grant from the Center for Inclusive Excellence in 2021. Their focus was on [innovation in accessibility and principles of Universal Design](#), implemented in two Italian online asynchronous courses, ITAL 100A and ITAL100B, to better serve the learning needs of SDSU's diverse community of students.

German Lecturer Felicitas Jaima and European Studies Associate Professor Emily Schuckman Matthews each received a CIE grant to add more diverse courses to the German and European Studies curriculum. This fall, the department will be offering a course entitled Race and Identity in Europe for the first time.



Kristin Rebien and French Assistant Professor Kylie Sago each received a Faculty Book Manuscript Development Workshop from DRI (Division of Research and Innovation), to take place in fall 2022 and spring 2023, respectively. Sago is working on a book manuscript, tentatively titled "Revising Race: Literary Adaptations and French Colonialism."

Publications, Contracts, and Manuscripts in Progress



In fall 2020, Professor Anne Donadey published a single-authored scholarly book, "The Algerian War in Film Fifty Years Later, 2004–2012" (Lexington Books), examining the cultural, political, and aesthetic significance of twenty narrative films that contributed to the difficult remembering concerning the war.

Professor Mathias Schulze was project lead and lead editor of "Germans of Waterloo Region," based on many interviews of the surrounding immigrant German-Canadian community, which is now in production with Petra Books. [Learn more about the project.](#)

Professor Clarissa Clò co-authored a chapter with Enrico Zammarchi entitled "'Stran(i)ero nella mia nazione': Hip-Hop from Southern Alienation to Afro-Italian Nation-Hood," published in the anthology ["Contemporary Italian Diversity in Critical and Fictional Narratives."](#)

Emily Schuckman Matthews received a publishing contract from Lexington Books for her manuscript "The Prostitute as Everywoman: Representations of Sex Work in Contemporary Russia."

She submitted the final draft of her book in June 2022. The book explores the ways in which the prostitute character in 20th and 21st century Russian literature, film and culture is used as a symbolic site to explore discourses on political upheaval, changing roles for women and national identity.

Professor Schuckman Matthews has also written a forthcoming journal

article: "The future is (still) bleak: The lives of youth on Russia's margins in Vasili Pichul's 'Little Vera' and Natalia Meshchaninova's 'The Hope Factory'", to be published in "Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema."

Kristin Rebien submitted the manuscript for a collection she co-edited with Maria Mayr (Memorial University of Newfoundland) and Michel Mallet (Université de Moncton). The volume entitled "Unrealized Futures in Postsocialist Memory and Culture" is currently under review at de Gruyter. It explores how contemporary German-language literature, theater, film, and visual art represent unrealized, alternative futures embedded in the socialist past and relates them to contemporary issues of community, equity and equality, late-stage capitalism, and European unity.

Daria Shembel is working on a book chapter for a collection by Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming fall 2022, titled "Contemporary Russian Documentary: Negotiating the Personal and the Political." Her study discusses how contemporary Russian documentaries offer different pathways for the recontextualization of found footage and focus on three films – Vitaly Mansky's "Private Chronicles. A Monologue" (1999), Dmitry Avrorin's "HardDrive" (2019) and "Stasia is Me" by Stasia Grankovskaia (2020).