

International Studies

NEWSLETTER

2022 SPRING SEMESTER

BY CYREELLE "CECE" CRUZ

Features:

•National Model United Nations Conference and the Head Delegates

•Sigma Iota Rho Ceremony, Senior Awards, and Commencement

•Ukraine talk with Dr. James Heinzen

•Interview with Miriam Kontoh, International Studies Alumnae

•Climate talk with Somini Sengupta

•New International Studies concentrations

•Leadership change with words from Dr. Kelly Duke-Bryant

This year, Rowan University's National Model United Nations has won the Distinguished Delegate Award in the first in-person conference since the pandemic. Under the guidance of Maryella Hannum, Sarah McClure (Head Delegate), and Anushree Chauhan (Chair for the International Organization for Migration), our delegation learned a lot and represented Rowan well. Together, the class of thirteen researched and represented the Republic of Armenia. For their final project, the class constructed a booklet of their experiences in the class and the conference. To see small vlogs of their experience, check out [@rowanmun22](#) on instagram!

Call for applications for 2023 UN course are in early fall

Committee Assignments: The Republic of Armenia
Head Delegates
Sarah McClure
Anushree Chauhan

Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)
Erin Moore
Allison Coeby

Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
Ryan Brubeck

General Assembly First Committee (GA1)
Cyreelle Cruz

General Assembly Second Committee (GA2)
Jacob Tiver

General Assembly Third Committee (GA3)
Alexandria DeRusso

Human Rights Council (HRC)
Malana Homan-Hepner
Klaudia Czaicka

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
Jonathan Phan

Chair, International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Anushree Chauhan

United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA)
Jenna Grace

EDITOR'S TAKE

For anyone who has the chance to take the National Model United Nations, I suggest you take it. This was my first and last experience of this amazing opportunity and it was very bittersweet on my last day. The week of conference feels like a long rush, but you will definitely feel a large sense of accomplishment afterwards. I met so many amazing people around the world, and delegating in a scenario like this is something you will never get to experience again. It's very professional and impersonates a workplace environment. But warning to those wanting to take it, it is a very fast paced course. There were a lot of confusing moments, but I fortunately had a great team to rely on. Eventually you get the hang of the situation even if it can get confusing or frustrating. My advice to those next year: do a lot of research, practice speeches, don't be afraid to speak, and have fun!



Intro: Sarah McClure is an honors senior majoring in International Studies and Political Sciences with a minor in German Studies. Sarah participates in many extracurricular activities like, Executive Vice President of the Student Government Association, the President of the Honors Student Organization, Events Chair of the Spiritualistic Study Club, Leader of the Honors Intro to Dungeons & Dragons Group, and Admissions Ambassador. Last year, she took Model United Nations for the first time as a Delegate of the Republic of Portugal in the General Third Committee online. This year was her first year as a head delegate and in person conference - she is very excited to tell other students about her experiences with the class.

First, how was your overall experience?

- My overall experience was awesome. I was so impressed with the team this year. Everyone was very dedicated and I enjoyed seeing the ways my peers approached their committee's issues in their own unique ways. It was amazing being able to go to the in person conference this year. The experience online was great, but being able to connect with people from all over the world for the in person conference was even better. I was really proud of how all of the delegates performed at the conference, and I know that they all took a lot away from the experience.

How would you compare your experience from last year to this year?

- The in person conference was the biggest difference. I was a little nervous going into it because it was such a huge event and it was in NYC, but once we got there it really exceeded my expectations. We had a bigger team this year and a whole different set of country policies to research. Researching a European country versus a former Soviet state bordering the Middle East is completely different. It's hard to compare the experiences since they were so different and I loved both teams and experiences, but this one definitely ranks a little higher because of the in-person trip.

This was your first year as a Head Delegate, how would you compare that experience to a regular delegate? How did you get this position? What does this position entail?

- My position as head delegate was a lot different from being a delegate on a committee. The professor this year asked me to serve in this capacity this year since I was the only returning member of the team, and of course I said yes. I took on a more administrative role in the class to support the team as they researched and worked towards becoming successful delegates. I enjoyed spending time working on helping my classmates prepare, running activities to get them practice with speaking, writing resolutions, and more. At the conference, instead of serving on a committee I observed my team members as they worked, helping them stay confident and healthy for the duration of the event. I felt like a proud parent watching everyone speak and negotiate with other delegates during the conference. I was so excited when we won the Distinguished Delegation award; their hard work was the reason we won and I couldn't be more thrilled and thankful for such an amazing team. [continued on page 5]



Honor Society for
International Studies

SIGMA IOTA RHO INDUCTION AND SENIOR AWARDS CEREMONY

On Saturday, April 23, International Studies recognized some of our most outstanding students at a joint induction and awards ceremony that featured a keynote address by Dr. Debbie Sharnak (Rowan, History). Nine students were inducted into Rowan's Zeta Rho chapter of Sigma Iota Rho, the national honor society for International Studies, and two faculty members also became honorary members. To qualify for Sigma Iota Rho, students must earn a GPA of at least 3.3, they must have completed or be enrolled in 21 credits in International Studies courses, and they have to be juniors or seniors. Between them, our newest inductees have conducted research on pressing current issues, ranging from global public health and the pandemic response, to climate change and sustainability, to the role of water in international conflicts, to the approach to English language learning in Asian countries. Many of them studied abroad, and many hope to work abroad one day, pursuing careers in international business, international law, humanitarianism, and environmental change.

The Sigma Iota Rho inductees shared the spotlight with seven truly impressive graduating seniors, all International Studies majors, who received the inaugural senior awards for International Studies. Selected by a faculty panel for their academic excellence, drive, campus citizenship, dedication to the program's mission, and other qualities, these students make us particularly proud. We know they will go on to do great things.

Congratulations to the 2022 Sigma Iota Rho inductees and to the recipients of senior awards!

COMMENCEMENT

Tin Spring 2022, 14 International Studies majors and 36 minors graduated from Rowan University. Those who participated in commencement with the College of Humanities and Social Sciences were celebrated in a lovely ceremony on a beautiful spring day. In Fall 2021, International Studies graduated 3 majors and 6 minors, and 2 more majors along with 6 minors graduated in summer 2021. Congratulations to our newest alumni on all of their achievements. We wish them all the best as they move on to other things, and we hope that they—and all of our alumni—will stay in touch!

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES MAJORS WIN PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS

Two International Studies majors rose to the top in the application process for a highly competitive fellowship and teaching exchange program in spring 2022. Bryan Jennings, '23, a double major in International Studies and Modern Languages and Linguistics, received a David L. Boren Scholarship, an initiative of the Defense Language and National Security Education Office. The scholarship will fund Bryan's semester abroad in Jordan in fall 2022, where he will study local culture and Arabic language. Bryan, who studied abroad in Germany in spring 2022, eventually wants to work for the U.S. Foreign Service.

Gonzalo McGuckin, '22, also a double major in International Studies and Modern Languages and Linguistics, was selected as an Assistant Language Teacher for the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) program. Through JET, a program overseen by the Japanese government, Gonzalo will be placed in a Japanese school for about a year, where he will help teach English language and assist with language-related extracurricular activities. A gifted linguist, Gonzalo already knows five languages, and hopes one day to learn more.

Spring 2022 Sigma Iota
Rho Inductees:

Tiara Herpriyonggo
Sarah Hutchins

Cameron Pollard-Harris
Gonzalo McGuckin

Kathryn Seu

Samantha Gross

Joanna Alexander

Gregory Aquilino

Nathan Konchak

Professor Joshua
Martineau (faculty)

Professor Carla
Lewandowski (faculty)

Spring 2022 Senior
Award Recipients:

Senior of Distinction
Kiah Benson

Senior Award for
Excellence in
International Studies
Gonzalo McGuckin
Sarah McClure

International Studies
Citizenship Award
Klaudia Czaicka

International Studies
Achievement Award
Sean French

Faculty Award for
International Studies
Nathan Konchak
Kehinde Bolaji

RUSSIA'S INVASION OF UKRAINE

INTERVIEW WITH DR. JAMES HEINZEN



Dr. James Heinzen is a professor at Rowan University and specializes in the social, political, and cultural history of the Soviet Union, Stalinism, crime and corruption in Soviet history, everyday life, and the revolution. Dr. Heinzen is self-taught in the Russian language and currently teaches modern Russian and Soviet history, the Cold War, historical methods, the Holocaust, Western Civilization, and modern European history. Dr. Heinzen is the author of 'The Art of the Bribe: Corruption under Stalin, 1943-1953' (Yale University Press, 2016) and 'Inventing a Soviet Countryside: State Power and the Transformation of Rural Russia, 1917-1929' (2004), along with many scholarly articles. Currently, Dr. Heinzen is working on a social history of "underground entrepreneurs" and black markets in the Soviet 1950s-1980s.

First and foremost, what is your opinion about what is going on?

- It's a tragedy for Ukraine. It's a full fledged war without good reason. There are Tens and thousands of casualties. The Ukrainian Government has estimated that there are around 40,000 Ukrainian casualties. Around 7 million people have left the country. Half of the country's children have been relocated. It's a horror story - Ukrainian Democracy being attacked by the Russian dictatorship.

Can you provide a small breakdown / background on why Putin invaded Ukraine? Why now?

- Putin's intention is to destroy the Ukrainian state as an independent, democratic entity. It's [Ukraine] western leaning, and wants to be part of NATO and the European Union. Putin claims that Ukrainian sympathy toward Western Europe poses a security risk to Russia. Just before the invasion, Putin made two speeches claiming that Ukraine does not deserve TO BE or have the right to be an independent country, using false historical judgements. He also has claims that the Ukraine population wants to be part of Russia, wants to keep Ukraine from being an ally of the West

Are the Russian population believing Putin's propaganda?

- Putin is trying to sell the war to the Russian population. He compares the current situation to World War II when the Soviet Union was attacked by the Nazis in June 1941. The Nazis murdered 15 million civilians and it left scars for the Russian Population. These cynical claims get people emotionally involved in supporting the war. He falsely claims that Nazis have taken over Ukraine. Much of The Russian population believe and are behind Putin. Television is completely controlled by the government, there are no independent channels, newspapers, or radio stations. It's hard for ordinary people to distinguish between propaganda and reality. Most people support the government line. Many of the people who don't believe it have left the country.

Is there a chance of Putin invading neighboring countries like Poland or Georgia?

- Russia has invaded its neighbors in the recent past. Russia invaded Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014. There has been a pattern of intimidation and attack when things are not developing the way Putin wanted. Many other countries in Europe are very nervous. Finland and Sweden are trying to get into NATO. For more than 70 years, since the creation of NATO, they were okay being neutral. Now they're trying to get in. Things are different now.

Do you think Putin has any chance of winning the war?

- That depends on what we mean by 'win.' The Russian military has not performed well in this war. They have more manpower but their military is understaffed. It's poorly coordinated, and there's not enough people on the ground. They thought Ukraine was going to give up but they're wrong. The Russians overestimated their own capabilities.

How can Russia win and how important is this war for them?

- They can grind down Ukraine in the Eastern Provinces where they are getting the upper hand, but they don't have the manpower to take the whole country. The West is supplying advice and weaponry, and there's importance in unity. But Putin cannot admit defeat. Some parts of the Russian federation could try to break away. Some territories might take advantage and declare independence, and that would be bad for Putin. He would have to take resources away from Ukraine.

What are possible outcomes of this war?

- The war is concentrated in the eastern part of the country. Right now, Putin is close to taking over the two provinces in the East that were half occupied prior to the invasion. Putin could possibly sue for peace. But Ukraine is not willing to give up land now. It is possible that there will be stalemate, and that this would give rise to partisan movements in Ukraine and protests inside. Or Russia could try to take over the whole eastern part of the country.

How does the war directly affect the United States?

- Together with Ukraine, the US is coordinating the military effort against Russia with the European Union and NATO. You have to give credit to the Biden administration for uniting the EU. But it's all very expensive and politically difficult. Congress has been unified in supporting Ukraine militarily so far.

What are some things that Americans should definitely be aware of?

- The war has been going on since 2014, when Russia invaded before. Russia annexed Crimea illegally. Low grade military operations have been going outside the attention of most people since 2014. It was shocking when the full scale invasion happened in February, because Ukraine is a democracy in Europe.

International Studies



Miriam Kontoh was a Rowan graduate in one of the first cohorts to graduate with an International Studies degree in 2017. During her time as an undergraduate, Miriam dedicated a lot of her time with Sigma Iota Rho – even serving as president in her senior year – and she published a research paper as an article in the SIR journal. As a child of immigrant parents from Ghana, Miriam wanted to pursue a career as an immigration lawyer. She currently is a law student at Cornell University.

Since you were one of the first students to graduate with the new International Studies major, did you initially find it more challenging as it was relatively new? Perhaps with not finding senior students to ask advice from, or maybe not enough established resources?

- When I initially enrolled at Rowan, I was unaware that the IS Major was brand new. I had so much support from the faculty and staff at Rowan that I didn't really notice that the major was so new. I have to give particular thanks to faculty and staff who have transitioned to other roles or who are no longer at the university for all of their support during my time at Rowan. They met with me consistently to outline my goals and ensure that I had a straightforward path towards those goals.

Do you have any advice you would like to give to current International Studies majors?

- My current advice to students would be to take full advantage of the faculty and staff at Rowan. Whatever your goals are, they can help you come up with a plan to achieve them. I remember distinctly, I walked into Dr. [Corinne] Blake's office and I told her that I wanted to graduate in two years and go to law school. She thought I was insane for wanting to finish undergrad so fast, but she sat down and helped me figure out all of the classes I would have to take, and when I would have to take them in order to make my dream a reality. [Dr. Blake, Senior Associate Dean for CHSS, was International Studies coordinator at the time.]

How did you decide to go on a law track with International Studies?

- I always knew that I wanted to be an attorney, so I wanted to pursue a degree that would enable me to see the "big picture" when analyzing modern legal issues. I knew that a degree in international studies would be invaluable in helping me do this. So far this has really panned out! Sometimes analyzing legal issues in a global comparative context provides plausible solutions for domestic issues.

How did your time at Rowan help prepare you?

- Two things I learned outside of the classroom at Rowan was how to manage my time and how to strike a good work life balance. Both of these skills are things that I am still improving on, but that Rowan helped lay the foundation for.

What internships did you have, or what did you do as an undergrad to help boost your law school application?

- As an undergrad, I worked as a research assistant for the Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Dr. Nawal Ammar. Working with Dr. Ammar provided me with a lot of experience reading, writing, and conducting original research. All of these skills have been crucial to my success as a law student. Research, writing, and reading comprehension/critical analysis skills are very important in law school and my early exposure to these skills at Rowan and subsequent development of them through the research assistant position prepared me to use these skills in law school.

How has your time with Sigma Iota Rho been beneficial to you? Any advice with the current club members today?

- Being a member of Sigma Iota Rho taught me teamwork, leadership, and communication skills. I have used these skills over and over again in law school. Working on a case is definitely a team sport and it requires good teamwork and communication skills to get the job done.
- SIR is a great organization that attracts students with various backgrounds. Take the opportunity to talk and learn from some of the other students in the group.

What resources at Rowan University do you think we should take advantage of?

- The people! There are many amazing people on campus who are ready and willing to help you outline a path to achieve your goals. Take advantage of the alumni network; look for individuals in fields that you are interested in and reach out to them for advice. People are a great resource and Rowan's campus is filled with many great people.

Any advice for future law students?

- If you know you want to go to law school, start preparing for that today. Take classes where you learn to do original research and write research papers; that will help build your reading comprehension, research, and writing skills all of which are crucial for success in law school. Lastly, don't be scared to reach out to alumni or faculty members for advice on your law school journey. Oftentimes they have tips, tricks, and advice that can help guide you on this journey.

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES WELCOMES NEW YORK TIMES CLIMATE REPORTER

This Spring semester, Rowan University had the fortunate opportunity to feature Somini Sengupta, who gave a talk entitled "Inequity at Boiling Point: What I've Learned as a Journalist Covering the Human Toll of Global Warming." Somini Sengupta is currently the international climate correspondent for The New York Times. She has covered 10 conflicts, won a George Polk award for foreign correspondence, and is the author of *The End of Karma: Hope and Fury Among India's Young*, published by W.W. Norton in 2016. In this talk, she discusses the impact of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on the environment by encouraging us to stay off gas or fossil fuels. However, non-Russian oil companies may take advantage of the bigger demand by expanding or investing in new projects. Sengupta states that it's the large corporations that contribute to most of the problem, while the least responsible, the poor, have to suffer the consequences by lack of access or back-breaking labor outdoors. They are the ones who have to gather the food that 1/3 of is wasted in the United States. She warns that the world can increase to 1.05 degrees by 2040 if we don't change our actions. She advises that we stop wasting food, rely heavily on renewable energy, and to constantly educate ourselves on the topic. Though we can't reverse climate change, we can at least adapt to reduce it.



SARAH MCCLURE CONT.

Do you have any advice for those who would like to attend the class next year?

- Model UN was my favorite class I took at Rowan. If you're passionate about the international world, regardless of major, I encourage you to apply! The diversity of majors and perspectives really helped our team succeed this year.
- My other advice would be to really get into your assigned country—look into their policies and stances on your topic, see what they've done well that you could advocate for at the conference, tune into the news daily to see what's happening. When you're in a committee, you come up with a resolution collaboratively. It's essentially a set of recommendations that Member States of the UN should take to address your assigned issue. Know what your country has done and what programs have worked or produced a positive change in the international community so you can advocate for their usage in your resolution.

NEW I.S. CONCENTRATIONS

The new Global Security concentration explores security threats such as, issues of health, environment, crime, migration, poverty, and many more to increase international peace and security. Students will be given the opportunity to expand their knowledge by facing unprecedented challenges in order to promote international safety in the globalized community.

The new Global Health concentration focuses on global and local forces (and is sociocultural, political-economic, biological, and environmental), and is designed for students to study the effect of health and disease throughout the world.

UKRAINE TALKS

This Spring Semester, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences represented three discussions concerning Russia and the War in Ukraine. The first discussion occurred a week after Russia's attack and featured Dr. Lawrence Markowitz and Dr. James Heinzen. Dr. Markowitz is a Professor of Political Science specializing in modern Russia and Central Asia. His research interests include the study of state building, authoritarianism, and political violence, with a regional focus on post-Soviet Eurasia and Dr. Heinzen is a Professor of History specializing in modern Russia. His research interests include the social, political, and cultural history of the Soviet Union, Stalinism, crime and corruption in Soviet history, everyday life, and revolution. Their discussion explored the causes of the invasion of Ukraine, including the breakup of the Soviet Union, NATO expansion, political turmoil within Ukraine, and the great power struggle over the country's future.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bq2dlwoa-GM>

The second discussion was set a month after Russia's attack on Ukraine and it featured prominent author of *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, Timothy Snyder. Dr. Snyder is the Levin Professor of History at Yale University and a specialist in history of Eastern Europe, Ukraine, and the Holocaust. Here he talked about his decades of research on state violence and authoritarianism.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9mrWrIGuwck>

The last discussion occurred two months after the initial attack and featured Dr. Debbie Sharnak, Dr. Mikkel Dack, Dr. Kelebogile Zvobgo, Dr. Lawrence Markowitz, and Dr. James Heinzen. This was an open panel discussion concerning the major actions and consequences of Russia's War on Ukraine. They covered various topics: Displacement and Occupation; Parallels to WWII; Propaganda; International Justice and Accountability; Condemnation and Negotiation; Sports and Activism; as well as International Implications and Human Rights.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XXEj_sGqgLQ

LEADERSHIP CHANGE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Effective September 1, 2022, Dr. Kelly Duke Bryant will step down from her role as coordinator of International Studies at Rowan, a position she has held since 2017. Dr. Bryant is looking forward to continuing to teach in the History Department, and to taking on a new role as a Universal Design for Learning Fellow in Rowan's College of Humanities and Social Sciences. She leaves the International Studies program in the very capable hands of Dr. Carla Lewandowski, Associate Professor of Law and Justice Studies. Dr. Lewandowski's research and teaching have focused on security and terrorism, and she has led short-term study abroad trips to Ireland several times. She is an experienced and committed member of the Rowan campus community, and she will do a great job leading International Studies. You can find her office on the fifth floor of Campbell Library, and you can reach her at lewandowskic@rowan.edu or 856-256-4500; ext. 53738.