



GLOBAL LEADERS OF PENN STATE

Global and International Studies
Monthly Email Newsletter



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WELCOME

by **Cristina Cebotaru, Managing Editor**

Hello! Welcome to the second issue of *Global Leaders of Penn State*, the Global and International Studies (GLIS) program newsletter. To start, thank you so much for reading. In this issue, we will be meeting more fellow students, faculty, and alumni. For our student spotlight, we will meet Meggie Roberts '21 who will tell us about her study abroad experience and how it has shaped her Penn State journey. Then, our first faculty spotlight features Dr. Yuliya V. Ladygina, assistant professor of Russian and global studies. Dr. Ladygina will share more about her research, specializations, and recent work, as well as what she hopes students will take away from a GLIS education. Next, we will meet Ana Y. Ayala de Barbosa '07, a Penn State alumna who currently works for the U.S. Department of State. She will share how her GLIS degree has shaped her and her career. We conclude this issue with a new section called "Why GLIS?" where students Srishti Ponnala '21, Jennifer McConnell '22, and Lucy Paules '22 share what GLIS means to them. If you have any feedback or would like to submit a story, please email glis@psu.edu. We look forward to hearing from you and can't wait to show you all the opportunities GLIS has to offer.



PennState
College of the Liberal Arts

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

by Gianna Pinto, Undergraduate Student Relations



Meggie Roberts '21 in Senamiestis, Lithuania

"My study abroad experience was truly amazing because I was learning about all this rich history that even tied into my ancestral history and was finally able to step foot there as well. I also think it is dramatically different seeing and being somewhere in person, as opposed to in a class or over Zoom."

Meggie Roberts

Class of '21

Hometown: New Hope, Pennsylvania

Meggie Roberts is a senior majoring in Political Science and Global and International Studies with a focus in the Human Rights pathway. During her time at Penn State, Meggie studied abroad in Poland and Lithuania as a part of an integrated course (JST 426) in spring 2019. In addition, Meggie has also participated in several internships, including two internships with The Beasley Firm, LLC (summers 2018 and 2019), as well as an internship with the Chester County District Attorney's Office (summer 2020). Although not directly related to GLIS, Meggie felt that her internship with The Beasley Firm, LLC adequately informed her about medical malpractice (an issue she feels is closely related to human rights) and provided her with the experiences needed to attend law school in the future. Likewise, while working with the Chester County District Attorney's Office, Meggie spent time translating Spanish to English, a much-needed tool for her future in GLIS, Political Science, and beyond. Through her internships and study abroad experiences, Meggie exemplifies a broad understanding of what it means to be a global leader of Penn State.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

by Kelly Zahour, Alumni Relations

Yuliya V. Ladygina, Ph.D. **Assistant Professor of Russian** **and Global Studies**

Yuliya V. Ladygina is assistant professor of Russian and global studies at Penn State. She is originally from Ukraine and received her education from the Taras Shevchenko National University in Kyiv, Ukraine, and UC San Diego. Before joining Penn State in 2019, Dr. Ladygina was a research Fellow at the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute and a visiting assistant professor of Russian and humanities at Williams College and the University of the South (Sewanee), where she taught courses on Russian and comparative literature, film, rhetorical writing, Russian language, and nineteenth- and twentieth-century European and Russian intellectual history. At Sewanee, she also served as a director of the Sewanee Summer in Russia program.



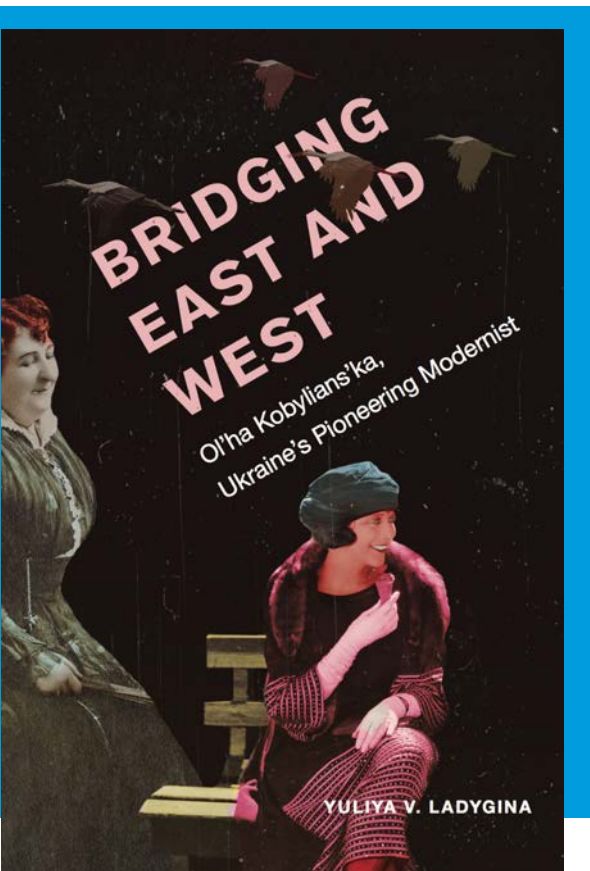
Dr. Yuliya V. Ladygina, Assistant Professor of Russian and Global Studies

Dr. Ladygina specializes in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Eastern European literatures and cultures, with research interests in nineteenth-century Russian and Ukrainian literature, nineteenth-century German and Russian intellectual history, nationalism in Eastern Europe, interwar literature, Soviet and post-Soviet cinema, and the state-sponsored informational warfare in contemporary Russia and Ukraine. Currently, Dr. Ladygina is working on a book project, *War on Reels: Cinematic Representations of the Ukraine Crisis*, which examines the legacy of Soviet and Hollywood war films, as well as the influence of contemporary media practices in (mis)representing war, terror, and terrorism, in cinematic depictions of the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian conflict. Her two articles related to this project, "Cyborgs vs. Vatniks: Hybridity, Weaponized Information, and Mediatized Reality in Recent Ukrainian War Films" and "The Past and Its Presence: A Study of Multidirectional Memory in Akhtem Seitablaiev's 87 Children," are forthcoming in 2021-22 with *East/West: Journal of Ukrainian Studies* and *East European Jewish Affairs* respectively.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

by Kelly Zahour, Alumni Relations

Dr. Ladygina's approach to teaching draws heavily on the interdisciplinary background she developed as a scholar of comparative literature. At Penn State, alongside courses on Russian language, she teaches multidisciplinary courses with a global perspective such as Putin's Russia and Its Protest Culture, The Other in Soviet and Contemporary Russian Cinema, and Multicultural Russia: Race, Ethnicity, and Narrative in Russian Literature. She also enjoys applying her training in comparative literature and the Western humanistic tradition in the GLIS program, where she is currently teaching one of the introductory courses, GLIS 102N Pathways to Global Studies.



In all her courses, Dr. Ladygina promotes the idea that life in the twenty-first century is a global experience and that it requires dexterity to navigate. She believes that the ability to learn, live, conduct business, and speak cross-culturally is nowadays an invaluable skill in every walk of life and is dedicated to fostering a sense of global identity in her students. Dr. Ladygina encourages students to engage with historical, social, and political issues through a variety of analytical approaches from the arts, humanities, and social sciences and provides them with multiple opportunities for active learning to not only help them approach course materials from multiple perspectives, but also enhance their understanding of distinct perspectives and their value. The main thing she wants her students to take away from the GLIS education is that global interconnectedness is real, that various local or national issues are greatly affected by what happens elsewhere in the world, and that, vice versa, it is possible to intervene on a local level to address global issues. Dr. Ladygina's nonacademic pursuits include CrossFit, surfing, and professional sand sculpting.

Her book, *Bridging East and West: Ol'ha Kobylans'ka, Ukraine's Pioneering Modernist*, stands out among many published articles, reviews, conference presentations, and translations of Ukrainian literature into English.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

by Kelly Zahour, Alumni Relations

Ana Y. Ayala de Barbosa '07
U.S. Department of State

"Having a degree in International Studies set me apart from other job applicants as I could point to the steady approach I took to gain experience, both academically and professionally."



Ana Y. Ayala de Barbosa '07

Ana Y. Ayala de Barbosa graduated from Penn State in 2007 with bachelor of art degrees in Japanese, East Asian Studies, and Global and International Studies, along with minors in Latin American studies and History. After completing these degrees in Tokyo, Ana looked for more experience in international and governmental relations, which led her to work for the House of Representatives in Washington, D.C., as a field organizer for a presidential campaign in Miami, Florida, and then taught English in Santiago, Chile.

All of these experiences led Ana to pursue her master's degree in international peace and conflict resolution from American University, and she took on a full-time position in the U.S. Department of State during her first year in 2010 and has continued to work there ever since.

Ana explained that having a degree in Global and International Studies set her apart from other job applicants because she could point to the steady approach, which she took to gain experience both academically and professionally.

WHY GLIS?

by Cristina Cebotaru, Managing Editor



Srishti Ponnala '21

Srishti Ponnala '21
Schreyer Scholar, Paterno Fellow

"I chose GLIS because it is inherently multi-disciplinary and gave me the freedom to develop an individualized approach to achieve a deeper understanding about the world—its past, present, and future."

Srishti Ponnala '21 is majoring in GLIS with a concentration in the Human Rights pathway and minoring in Business, Ethics, and Sociology. As she was transitioning from high school to college, she was faced with the most basic existential dilemma of who is she? and what should she do? She is a child of first-generation Indian immigrants, having lived half of her life in India under the influence of a multi-generational family, which gave her the opportunity to travel fourteen countries by the time she headed off to college.

These experiences shaped her understanding of how we are all connected, inspiring her to seek similarities and accept our differences. She set out to explore the concept of inter-connectedness from multiple perspectives and the interactions between individuals from family to global community. But, far beyond that and completely unexpectedly, she discovered the inter-connectedness between the events and choices she has made and the path it has led her on toward her future in the field of law.

Being able to choose courses from different pathways, as well as many disciplines across campus, helped her identify new areas of interest and learning opportunities that she had not set out to discover. Taking a required course in one pathway turned into an apprenticeship and acquiring new skills of facilitation. Her passion for travel led to a study abroad opportunity in the Netherlands and that experience ignited a new passion for human rights, which eventually became the focus of her honors thesis and field of law that she plans to pursue.

WHY GLIS?

by Cristina Cebotaru, Managing Editor

Jennifer McConnell '22

When Jennifer McConnell '22 came to Penn State, she was originally planning to major in Advertising. However, she made it through her freshman year and realized that advertising wasn't what she really wanted to do. So, she made the decision to switch to GLIS. She knew that she enjoyed learning about other cultures and found that the Culture and Identity pathway perfectly aligned with her interests. Plus, she had already taken GLIS 101 and really enjoyed the course. After graduation, she plans to join the Peace Corps and work internationally.



Jennifer McConnell '22

"To me, GLIS is not only something that I am interested in, but something I feel is becoming more and more necessary."



Lucy Paules '22

"To me, GLIS means options. It means that I can create my own path for what I would like to do in life."

Lucy Paules '22

Lucy decided to major in GLIS because of the many options that it offered. In particular, she loved how she was able to pick interesting classes related to her chosen pathway, Human Rights. Originally, she was a Political Science major but after taking a few International Relations courses she realized how much she enjoyed learning about other states and how they interact with one another. The best part is that she was able to choose classes that fit her specific areas of interest. From her perspective, majoring in GLIS will allow her to meet her future goals because it provides her with a well-rounded education. Through GLIS, she has been able to explore so many different topics that have expanded her knowledge. While she doesn't yet know exactly what she wants to do post-graduation, she knows that the GLIS major will provide her with options in whatever career path she ultimately pursues.



Cristina Cebotaru
 Managing Editor
 GLIS major
 Global Conflict pathway
 Psychology minor
 Senior



Gianna Pinto
 Undergraduate Student Relations
 GLIS and Spanish majors
 Culture and Identity pathway
 Junior



Kelly Zahour
 Alumni Relations
 GLIS major
 Human Rights pathway
 Psychology and
 Political Science minors
 Junior

Global Leaders of Penn State is looking to expand our team! If you are interested in contributing or submitting a story, please email us at glis@psu.edu.



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