

War in Ukraine Social Engagement Research Team Report

Submitted to the Gould Center for Humanistic Studies

By Prof. Gastón Espinosa

I want to thank Dr. Amy Kind and the Gould Center for Humanistic Studies for their generous support in funding the War in Ukraine Social Engagement Research Team for the Fall 2022.

The Ukraine Research Team carried out important work this Fall. The center piece of their work was the War in Ukraine Social Engagement Fair, which ran from October 7-8, 2022, at McKenna Auditorium. The Fair was a great success. It took an enormous amount of work to organize, run, and process in the wake of the events, speakers, and projects. I have attached a copy of the report for your review. Instead of breaking up the Fall activities into a War in Ukraine awareness event, a CMC-Ukraine student dialogue, and a War in Ukraine scholarly conference as originally proposed, we decided to wrap all of these activities into the War in Ukraine Social Engagement Fair. For a listing of these events, please review the War in Ukraine Social Engagement Fair schedule in the attached report. After the Fair was complete, we spent the next two weeks following up on events and speakers at the Fair – as there was still much to do. The rest of the semester was spent working on a number of research, transcription, media, and collaborative activities with U.S. and Ukrainian students and faculty, which are discussed below.

The War in Ukraine Social Engagement Fair's mission was to spark awareness about the Russian war against Ukraine, its devastating impact on millions of students, faculty and ordinary citizens, U.S. foreign policy on Ukraine, and to spotlight the various humanitarian relief efforts 7Cs students, faculty, and the general public can engage in to help ameliorate the suffering through four Ukrainian-based NGOs and fundraising activities carried out at the Fair (e.g., dinner, silent auction, donation station).

The Fair explored Ukrainian history, politics, religion, culture, art, literature, poetry, and international relations, through scholarly presentations, poetry readings, musical performances, art exhibits, movie screenings, and fundraising events. It was attended by people in the U.S. and Ukraine in person and via zoom from both Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv and I.I. Mechnikov National University of Odesa. Approximately 1,085 people from Claremont and Ukraine attended (in person or via zoom) twenty-five presentations, poetry readings, live concerts, in-person art exhibits, and two Ukrainian movies (with English subtitles) over the two-day event. Approximately 24 faculty from the Claremont Colleges (14) and Ukraine (10) attended the Fair in person and/or online. We raised \$2,250.00 that was distributed two four NGOs working on the ground in Ukraine, all of which made presentations on both days of the Fair.

After we wrapped up activities in the wake of the Fair by the third week in October, we shifted our focus to fostering interactive dialogue and social engagement cooperation between U.S. and Ukrainian faculty and students via seven zoom meetings, and additional separate breakout zoom meetings between students. In these meetings, we discussed various ways U.S. students could partner with Ukrainian students to raise awareness about the Russian invasion of Ukraine and its devastating impact across the country. Gould Center RAs carried about various activities from late October through the first week in December. These activities included (1) Transcribing the scholarly presentations at the Fair, (2) Creating a Politics in Ukraine Resource Bibliography, (3) Creating a Video Links Bibliography Page on Videos on the War in Ukraine, (4) Creating the first edition of Weekly Briefs on the War in Ukraine – which included summaries of recent events and links to key articles and videos on the topics, (5) Finding Information about and creating a list of various NGOs working in the Ukraine, (6) Various discussions about planned weekly student-led Podcasts, which spotlight one person each week where one student interviewed another student, refugee, student soldier, or IDP (internally displaced person), (7) Creating an Instagram page on the War in Ukraine, (8) Creating a Slack Page on the War in Ukraine, (9) Creating a WhatsApp Group Chat, and (10) Holding planning discussions about a Claremont Colleges – Ukrainian University PenPal/Language Club group. All of these activities and others related to them, kept our research team very busy all semester and funding permitting we hope to continue this work in the Spring 2023.

We would like to continue to build on the excellent foundation we laid this Fall by continuing the War in Ukraine Social Engagement Research Team this Spring 2023 if there is funding available from the Gould Center. There are nine CMC students that would like to continue their work and two other students that would like to join the team – including Ivan Dudiak – who is a Ukrainian student studying at Harvey Mudd. He volunteer an enormous amount of time (as much as any RA) during the War in Ukraine Social Engagement Fair and has been active ever since without pay. Marina Shishkin – who is a Ukrainian student from Scripps College, also volunteered an enormous amount of time and may be interested in serving on the team if this was possible, though I pointed out to both of them that the team is limited to CMC students. The students that would like to continue work this Spring 2023 include Ellie Lerner, Leo (Ruihan) Yu, Luc Fabing, Vito Molina, Sasha Shunko, Diana Simonds, Tara Dawood, and Kirby Kimball. Miranda Chen is also interested in continuing service on the War in Ukraine Team even though she is studying abroad. She would like to know if this is possible. Since much of our Ukraine work is online, this would be perfectly acceptable with me if it is acceptable to the Gould Center. I am happy to supervise all of these students. If approved, we will work primarily on the U.S.-Ukrainian jointly-sponsored Instagram Page, Monthly Reports, PenPal/Language Club group, a weekly Pod-cast Interview, and ongoing research on the War in Ukraine and its impact across the country and overseas. We will also host other college-wide student and faculty forums and dialogues throughout the Spring. Thank you again for your wonderful support!

Gould Center War in Ukraine Social Engagement Fair Team

(Including 3 Ukrainian Student Volunteers Pictured Below)



Top left to right: Ellie Lerner, Gwen Robinson, Dr. Gastón Espinosa, Leo (Ruihan) Yu, Luc Fabing, Ivan Dudiak (Ukrainian student volunteer from Mudd), Vito Molina, Jason Dedman, Alexej Latimer (Ukrainian student volunteer from Pomona), Rowan Gray

Lower left to right: Sasha Shunko, Marina Shishkin (Ukrainian student volunteer from Scripps), Tara Dawood, Miranda Chen, Diana Simonds, Olivia Wee, Kirby Kimball

Not pictured: Alina Saratova (Ukrainian student volunteer from Mudd), Alex Horbin (Ukrainian student volunteer from CMC), Linda Chavez, RS Department Administrative Assistant for the Fair

- Students underlined would like to serve as Gould Center War in Ukraine RAs for Spring 2023.