

Recommendation for Discontinuance of an Active Academic Program

Name/Type of Program and Academic Plan Recommended for Discontinuance:

- Co-Major in Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies (REES)¹
- BA in Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies (REEST-BA)
- MA in Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies (REESGA-MA)
- Graduate Certificate in Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies REES-GC)

Department, School/College, and CIP Code:

- Center for Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
- CIP Code: 05.0110

Number of students currently enrolled (from Tableau Academic Plan Counts – Spring 2021):

Program	Spring 2021
Co-Major in REES	0
BA in REES	7
MA in REES	2
Graduate Certificate in REES	0

Number of students enrolled over the past five academic years (from Tableau Academic Plan Counts):

Program	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
Co-Major in REES	4	3	2		
BA in REES	1	6	8	10	7
MA in REES	10	4	1	2	2
Graduate Certificate in REES		1	1	0	0
Total	15	14	12	12	9

Number of program graduates over the past five years (from Tableau Degrees Awarded):

Program	AY 2016	AY 2017	AY 2018	AY 2019	AY 2020
Co-Major in REES	2	2	0	1	0
BA in REES		0	4	1	3
MA in REES	0	6	3	1	0
Graduate Certificate in REES	1	1	0	0	0
Total	3	9	7	3	3

¹ The co-major has a last admit term of Spring 2016 because the co-major transitioned to the BA degree.

REES student credit hours (from Tableau Course Enrollment Summaries):

	AY 2012	AY 2013	AY 2014	AY 2015	AY 2016	AY 2017	AY 2018	AY 2019	AY 2020	AY 2021
Total SCH	345	216	191	188	153	165	145	222	177	132

Rationale for recommendation:

The Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies Program has been an interdisciplinary academic program since 1959, and CREES was formally established as an interdisciplinary center in 1965. The beginnings of the Center go back to the Committee on Slavic and Soviet Area Studies (SSAS), founded in 1958. It originated in recognition of the challenges posed to the U.S. educational system by the Soviet Union’s launch of Sputnik and was instrumental in KU gaining national prominence as a leader in teaching and research about this area of the world. The program had its first director in 1960 and became a U.S. Department of Education Title VI Comprehensive National Resource Center (NRC) in 1965. The Center has won millions of dollars in Title VI funding since that time, and it most recently was awarded NRC funding from the Department of Education through 2022. It also draws significant funding from private foundations, including the US-Russia Foundation. Today, CREES continues to play a vital role in fostering research and training the next generation of specialists on the region, including those in the US military, foreign policy community, and private sector. CREES serves as one of eleven Title VI-designated National Resource Centers for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies in the nation and is the only such center in the Great Plains region.

While CREES is fortunate in having numerous KU faculty affiliated with its center, their primary teaching responsibilities are to their home units. In response to the Kansas Board of Regent’s desire for program efficiency, the Center for Russian, East European, & Eurasian Studies has proposed merging all of its degree programs with the Department of Slavic and Eurasian Languages and Literatures (SELL) to benefit both units. The BA, Minor, and MA in Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies will continue as concentrations in SELL. Housing these programs in SELL will not only help meet KBOR minima but will also benefit students by making them part of a larger cohort for undergraduate and graduate course offerings. The shift will also allow CREES to focus on its mission as an interdisciplinary center for research, global engagement, and community outreach.

In addition to moving these programs to SELL, CREES has proposed reforms to its BA, Minor, and MA concentrations that will offer additional flexibility and ensure continued interdisciplinary engagement, helping to draw new students and ensure these programs’ longer-term sustainability. These BA, Minor, and MA program changes are currently moving through the University’s approval process, with projected availability to students beginning in Spring or Summer of 2022, pending University approval.

It is proposed that the REES Co-Major and Graduate Certificate be discontinued entirely, since CREES determined that these programs have the potential to siphon students away from the main REES BA and MA programs.

Given that the Center is slated to no longer administer academic programs, the Director, in collaboration with the other Area Studies Directors, is in discussions about whether the Center remains in the College or moves under the Vice Chancellor for Research to boost CREES’s role in fostering interdisciplinary

research, engaging the broader community, and training specialists as a Title VI-designated National Resource Center.

Impact of discontinuance:

On students: Future students will not be able to enroll in REES degrees but will have other REES options through the College, thanks to the shift of these programs to SELL.

On faculty: None. The .5 faculty member assigned to the Center will continue as director.

On staff: None. CREES staff levels have already been adjusted to meet the financial cuts implemented by the College for FY2022. The CREES Assistant Director's FTE in CREES has been reduced from FTE 1.0 to FTE 0.7, and the position is now jointly shared with SELL.

On mission: None. The College and University will continue to offer options in Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies.

Director/CREES: Eric R Scott Date: August 25, 2021

Interim Dean/CLAS: John Columbus Date: 27 August 2021

Provost/EVC: Barbara A. Behlmeier Date: 30 August 2021

Center for Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies Program Review
Submitted to KBOR Feb 2021

CIP 05.0110

Master of Arts - Continue

Bachelor of Arts - merge as a concentration with Slavic and Eurasian Languages & Literatures

Program Support for University Mission.

KU's Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies Program has been an interdisciplinary academic program since 1959 and became a Center in 1965. The beginnings of the Center go back to the Committee on Slavic and Soviet Area Studies (SSAS), founded in 1958. It originated in recognition of the challenges posed to the U.S. educational system by the Soviet Union's launch of Sputnik and was instrumental in KU gaining national prominence as a leader in teaching and research about this area of the world. The program had its first director in 1960 and became a U.S. Department of Education Title VI Comprehensive National Resource Center (NRC) in 1965 and received Title VI funding through 2014. The center was again awarded NRC funding from the Department of Education, 2020-22.

The mission of the Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies (CREES), both as a resource center and as an academic program, is to meet the national need for Russian, East European & Eurasian specialists in all sectors by producing students with superior training in language and area studies and to be a resource locally, regionally, and nationally. The CREES mission aligns with the international dimension of KU's overall mission as well as its teaching, research, and service components.

The quality of the program as assessed by the strengths, productivity, and qualifications of the faculty.

CREES programs have no faculty dedicated solely to them; the programs are fundamentally interdisciplinary and the center views its role as a catalyst for ensuring a vigorous presence of teaching, research, and community outreach related to Russia, Eastern Europe, and Eurasia. All CREES degrees require students to take courses across a number of humanities and social sciences programs. Because of the interdisciplinary nature, programs draw on more than 45 faculty members and courses from 14 different KU departments and schools. Core language classes for the degree are provided through the Department of Slavic and Eurasian Languages & Literatures; other core courses are taught by a CREES staff member. Electives are fulfilled by taking courses from one of the affiliate departments and those courses taught by faculty in those departments.

Program Productivity Beyond Number of Majors. Since 1995, CREES has run an intensive summer Ukrainian language program in Lviv, Ukraine, which is the only in-house Ukrainian language study abroad program operated by a U.S. university and thus has unique value for the entire U.S. university system. The role of outreach in area studies centers serves the critical functions of (a) educating the public, (b) integrating faculty and building professional community, (c) recruiting future students, (d) garnering prestige in the academic, government, business, and public arenas, and (e) enhancing institutional and individual funding opportunities. CREES has done a tremendous job in fulfilling these functions despite very limited resources. KU is the only university between the Mississippi and Pacific coast, with the exception of UT-Austin, with a REES center doing public outreach.

There is currently only one high school in the state of Kansas teaching Russian language. In conjunction with the Slavic and Eurasian Languages & Literatures Department (SELL), CREES was recently awarded a \$120,000 institutional grant from the U.S.-Russia Foundation to work in partnership with Kansas high schools and the Kansas Department of Education to articulate the professional advantages of a critical language like Russian. As part of this grant-funded effort, KU will offer one year of elementary Russian online at no cost to high school students in Kansas.

Many CREES-affiliated faculty do exemplary individual public work with op-eds, translations, lectures at military bases, contributing content to the internet, organization of panels. CREES's outreach events are many and well attended. Over 10,000 people were impacted by CREES outreach programming from 2014-2018, many of whom viewed videos, instructional materials, and other resources on CREES's website or its YouTube channel. Some CREES videos on YouTube have had as many as 1.5 thousand viewers. CREES also hosts the WWI Commemoration website, which 90,000 viewers have visited. CREES's outreach data for Fall 2018–Fall 2019 documents 106 events at which an estimated 855 people attended, along with weekly brownbag series.

Cost Effectiveness and Employment Demand. In a 2017 comprehensive survey of alumni over the last 50 years, results indicated a history of consistently high-quality training for area specialists in successful careers with 54% still using skills they learned in the program. As indicated by job placement data, CREES graduates have gone on to become specialists and leaders in a wide range of fields, from government and higher education to NGOs and the private sector. *Degreestats* indicates 64% of program graduates at the undergraduate level are employed in the region and have median earnings of \$49,010 five years after graduation. AY 20 direct instructional expenditures for the unit were \$289,046 representing .0004 of KU's operating budget.

The cost-effectiveness of CREES has been positively impacted by the reduction of 2.0 FTE program staff since the last program review. However, the remaining 2.5 FTE staff handled roughly the same amount of work. This review will result in the Center reducing the number of events, creating more collaborative opportunities with other departments, and to strive for greater impact per event to reduce staff workload. In addition, Title VI funding will allow for the hiring of a half-time office manager.

Program Strengths and Weaknesses. While CREES is fortunate in having numerous KU faculty affiliated with its center, their primary teaching responsibilities are to their home units. Not having a full-time in-house teaching faculty member and relying on part-time lecturers and teaching by staff for core courses has significantly hindered the Center and enrollment in degree programs. The unit has a number of curricular changes planned, including the development of an undergraduate online certificate primarily for active-duty military. With CREES being awarded Title VI funding again, they will be able to hire a visiting faculty member for two years with the grant funding which could result in additional content courses relevant to the region as well additional enrollments and graduates for the MA program which are below KBOR minima.

Recommendation: KU has recommended merging the undergraduate REES major with the Department of Slavic and Eurasian Languages & Literatures (SELL) and offering it as a

concentration within the SELL degree where it would offer students of language, literature, and culture more interdisciplinary study options in history, geography, political science, and the professional schools. CREES works very closely with the SELL, by providing an interdisciplinary approach to their work on language, literature, and culture. The MA program is recommended to continue.