

**American Bibliography of Slavic and East European Studies (ABSEES)  
Annual Report, FY 2015**

Irene Kolchinsky, Managing Editor, ABSEES

## I. Unit Narrative

### EBSCO Agreement

In the spring of 2004, the UIUC Library entered into an agreement with EBSCOhost<sup>®</sup> regarding licensed access to the American Bibliography of Slavic and East European Studies (ABSEES), which has been compiled at UIUC since 1989. The online ABSEES records (1989 to the present) were moved to the EBSCOhost<sup>®</sup> platform, and EBSCOhost<sup>®</sup> became the vendor for the database, providing all marketing and distribution of the content. As of today, there are 148 ABSEES subscribers (106 subscribers reside in the U.S. and 42 in various European countries).

The agreement with EBSCO is automatically renewed every two years unless terminated upon notice at least 18 months in advance. The current term ends in April 2017. If we do not hear from EBSCO by November 2015, this will mean that the agreement has been automatically renewed until April 2019.

The agreement allows the Library to focus on the content creation and management of the database records and also ensures better access for researchers. Users benefit from the easy access offered by the EBSCOhost interface as well as from the up-to-date technology that underlies all EBSCO products.

The UIUC Library provides technical support for the database with the help of a research programmer in the Library Systems office and management support from the AUL for Information Technology Planning and Policy.

### Staffing

ABSEES staff consists of the Managing Editor and four or five paid indexers, most of whom are current or former graduate students at UIUC. All of the staff members are employed as part time FTE: the Managing Editor works 25 h/week; indexers work 45-50 h/week (total).

Several Slavic scholars and library staff members from institutions across the U.S. and Canada support the work of ABSEES by submitting records on a volunteer basis.

Currently, ABSEES is listed as a separate library unit, but in the near future it will become a part of the International and Area Studies (IAS) Library. Currently, the Managing Editor reports directly to Beth Sandore, Associate Dean of Libraries and Associate University Librarian for Research. When the transition to the IAS Library is finalized, the ABSEES Managing Editor will report to Steven Witt, Head of the IAS Library.

### ABSEES Database Updates and Plans for the Next Year

#### Submissions

The ABSEES staff and volunteers produce and send to EBSCO approximately 500-550 new records on a monthly basis. 6,300 new records have been added to the database since July 2014 for a total of about 127,000. Next year, 6,000-6,500 new records are expected.

#### List of Journals

Currently, ABSEES covers 420 journals, most of which are published in the United States and Canada. Some of these journals, the so-called Core Journals, are indexed from cover to cover. The list of these journals can be found on the ABSEES website (<http://www.library.illinois.edu/absees/>). Other titles are screened from cover to cover in search of materials related to Slavic and East European Studies.

The list of journals indexed by ABSEES has been revised and updated. Titles that either ceased publication or did not contain a sufficient amount of ABSEES-related materials (no records in two years) have been removed from the list. 29 new titles have been added since July 2014<sup>1</sup>. Only 6

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<sup>1</sup> These titles are: "Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions, Transcultural Studies: A Series in Interdisciplinary Research," "Russian Linguistics," "Journal of International Criminal Justice," "Journal of Musicological Research," "Peacebuilding," "Journal of Peacebuilding and Development," "Journal for the Study of Peace and Conflict," "Journal of Traumatic Stress," "Nabokov Studies," "Political and Military Sociology: An Annual Review," "Review of History and Political Science," "History and Anthropology," "History and Memory," "Small Wars and Insurgencies," "The Sixties: A Journal of History, Politics and Culture," "Journal of Human Trafficking," "Cambridge Opera Journal," "Popular Music," "Twentieth Century Music," "European Journal of Cultural Studies," "Politics and Religion," "Theatre Research International," "Antiquity: A Quarterly Review of World Archaeology," "Central Asian Affairs," "Experiment: A Journal of Russian Culture," "Review of Central and East European Law," "Genocide Studies International," "Security and Human Rights."

out of 420 titles (less than 1.5%) have average backlogs of 5 years, associated mainly with the addition of new titles. These backlogs should be eliminated by the end of the next FY year. The backlogs associated with the recent decision to cover materials in languages other than English (namely in Russian, Ukrainian, French, and German) have been significantly reduced.

### ABSEES Retrospective Content

The Agreement with EBSCO covered the potential for the UIUC Library to digitize the retrospective content from the printed volumes of ABSEES (1956-1988) and to make them available to EBSCO to add to the online database<sup>2</sup>. Several years ago, the library administration and the ABSEES management decided to start the back-file conversion project. The first stage of the project has been successfully completed: all 29 volumes of ABSEES have been scanned and OCRed. However, the variation in indexing practices over the years and numerous discrepancies between the format of the printed volumes and the current format of the database present significant challenges in developing a rich historical back-file. The editing of the OCRed files and subsequent parsing of the edited text required a substantial effort on the part of the UIUC Library.<sup>3</sup> In the near future, we intend to have a follow-up conversation with EBSCO representatives regarding the back-file conversion project. We plan to give them an update on the project and discuss the feasibility of making the back-file content available through their interface.

## II. Statistical Profile

### 1. Facilities

Currently, Irene Kolchinsky's office is located in 450u Library; on September 2, 2015 it will be relocated to 329 Library. The ABSEES indexers work from home, using the online workflow.

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<sup>2</sup> They include over 130,000 bibliographic records for books, book chapters, and articles.

<sup>3</sup> We estimated that it would take an experienced indexer between 40 and 60 hours to edit the text file of one volume; additionally, an accurate automated parser could not be used for many of the more complicated, manually formatted entries, which would require extensive manual corrections.

## 2. Personnel

Name	Title	Employment Dates
Irene Kolchinsky	Managing Editor Academic hourly; 25 h/w	April 2006 –
Anne Tempest	Lead Indexer Academic hourly; 15 h/w	September 2006 –
Emily Ewers	Indexer Graduate hourly; 5-10 h/w	June 2010 –
Rosa Kleinman	Indexer Academic hourly; 5-10 h/w	May 2012 –
Jennifer Bylsma	Indexer Academic hourly; 5-10 h/w	July 2013 –

The ABSEES Managing Editor supervises the staff, hires and trains indexers, determines the ABSEES editing production goals, determines coverage for the database indexing, updates the ABSEES website, cleans up the online subject thesaurus, works on the ABSEES back-file conversion project, corresponds with the AAASS ABSEES Editorial Committee (Slavic studies professional association), represents ABSEES at professional meetings, and interacts with professionals from other institutions.

The ABSEES indexers screen the journals assigned by the Managing Editor for articles related to Slavic and East European Studies, index articles using the ABSEES online workflow, write abstracts for those articles which do not have “Abstracts from Author,” submit records to the Managing Editor, submit bi-weekly reports indicating the titles of journals covered during this period of time and the number of records completed, ensure the assigned journals do not have

backlogs, and report if any of the assigned journals cease publication or undergo any other changes.

### 3. User Services

Irene Kolchinsky made a presentation on the current status of ABSEES to the ABSEES Advisory Committee at the American Association for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES) Annual Convention (November 2014).