

24th UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE ON THE EUROPEAN UNION

April 9-10, 2026
Claremont, California

HOSTED BY



The European Union Center of California
at Scripps College

SPONSORED BY



Co-funded by
the European Union

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

Thursday, April 9, 2026		
3:00-5:00 PM	Hotel Check-In	DoubleTree Hotel
5:00-5:30 PM	Conference Registration	Hampton Room
5:30-6:00 PM	Welcome and Dinner	Hampton Room
6:00-7:00 PM	Thursday Keynote	Hampton Room
7:30-9:00 PM	CONFERENCE SESSION A Panel 1: <i>Transatlantic Relations & Security</i> Panel 2: <i>Gender Equality</i>	Humanities Building Room 201 Room 202
Friday, April 10, 2026		
6:00-8:00 AM	Breakfast at DoubleTree Hotel	DoubleTree Hotel
8:30-09:45 AM	CONFERENCE SESSION B Panel 3: <i>Far-Right Ideology</i>	Humanities Building Room 201
8:30-10:00 AM	Panel 4: <i>Normative Successes & Failures</i>	Room 202
10:00-10:15 AM	Break	Humanities Museum
10:15-11:45 AM	CONFERENCE SESSION C Panel 5: <i>Immigration & Welfare Policies</i> Panel 6: <i>Central & Eastern Europe</i>	Humanities Building Room 201 Room 202
11:45-12:30 PM	Lunch	Hampton Room
12:30-1:30 PM	Friday Keynote	Hampton Room
1:30-2:00 PM	Break	Humanities Museum
2:00-3:30 PM	CONFERENCE SESSION D Panel 7: <i>European Integration</i> Panel 8: <i>Colonial Legacies</i>	Humanities Building Room 201 Room 202
3:30-5:00 PM	Break	
5:00-6:00 PM	Dinner & Awards Ceremony	Hampton Room
Saturday, April 11, 2026		
6:00-9:30 AM	Breakfast	DoubleTree Hotel
11:00 AM	Hotel Check-Out	DoubleTree Hotel

Please be advised that the Humanities Museum (2nd floor of the Humanities Building) will serve as a break room throughout the day on Friday, April 10. Refreshments will be provided.

Thursday Night Keynote EU Democracy and Security Lecture

April 9, 2026, 6:00-7:00pm
Hampton Room, Scripps College

"EURO-ATLANTIC VALUES" AND THE FUTURE OF TRANSATLANTIC SECURITY

Robin S. Brooks, Visiting Fellow in Global Policy and Governance at Pomona College

Since Russia's 2014 invasion of Crimea, NATO Allies on both sides of the Atlantic have raised concerns about the future of the rules-based international order, and about the effectiveness of burden sharing within the Alliance itself. Hybrid threats and disinformation have complicated transatlantic coordination on efforts to reset the international system or to define shared "Euro-Atlantic values" in a broadly appealing way. If the 2026 Munich Security Conference seemed to leave open some possibility of continued Transatlantic security cooperation on the basis of shared democratic values, the U.S. bombing of Iran in March 2026 seems to challenge that hope. Pomona College Visiting Fellow in Global Policy and Governance Robin Brooks will discuss the possibilities for the future of Transatlantic security in the wake of these events.



About the Speaker:

Robin S. Brooks, Ph.D. is Visiting Fellow in Global Policy and Governance at Pomona College. She was Special Advisor to Vice President Kamala Harris on Europe and Eurasia and, before that, Director for Central Europe and the Balkans at the U.S. National Security Council. She spent 21 years as a Foreign Service Officer at the State Department, including overseas assignments at U.S. Embassies in Moscow, Belgrade, Sofia, and Ankara, and senior Washington positions working on Afghanistan and the United Nations.

W CENTER FOR WEST EUROPEAN STUDIES | EU CENTER
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
The Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies



Co-funded by
the European Union

This lecture is sponsored by the University of Washington's European Union Center, a Jean Monnet Center of Excellence. Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Friday Noon Keynote

April 10, 2026, 12:30-1:30pm
Hampton Room, Scripps College

THE BLUNT AND THE SHARP: AIRPOWER IN THE UKRAINE WAR

Adam Derek Zientek, UC Davis

From its origins in the First World War, airpower theory has been vexed by a central question: should its aim be military or political? Is airpower's purpose to degrade the enemy's fighting power to allow for a decisive victory on the battlefield? Or is its purpose to degrade the enemy society's morale so that its civilians demand an end to the war? The way politicians, commanders, and strategists have answered these questions have varied from conflict to conflict, with some focusing on military targets and others on inflicting pain on civilians. This is particularly clear in the contrast between the Russian and Ukrainian use of airpower during the current war, with the Russians using airpower as a tool of strategic terror (e.g., the "blunt" approach) and the Ukrainians using it tactically and operationally (e.g. the "sharp" approach). This talk will investigate the history of airpower in the Ukraine War and argue that the belligerents have chosen their respective approaches for not only logistical or material reasons, but also for ideological ones.



About the Speaker:

Adam D. Zientek is Associate Professor of History at the University of California Davis, where he teaches European history, military history, and the history of human rights and international law. His recent book, *A Thirst for Wine and War: The Intoxication of French Soldiers on the Western Front* (2024), was awarded the Norman B. Tomlinson prize from the World War I Historical Association for best book of the year. His current project, *Bombing Utopia*, is a history of airpower theory and practice from World War I to the present.

Conference Session A

THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2026 • 7:30pm-9:00pm

Panel 1: TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS & SECURITY

Discussant: Robin Brooks, Pomona College
Humanities Building, Room 201

Unpredictable US vs. Sclerotic EU: How is Latvia Navigating Its Present and Future Security?

Anaïs Morath, University of Washington

Eyes in the Sky: European Responses to Russian Drone Incursions

Katrina Morgan, Gonzaga University

Institutionalizing Resilience: A Transatlantic Strategy for Hybrid Threats

Andrew Romanchik & Andrea Rivera, University of Pittsburgh

Panel 2: GENDER EQUALITY

Discussant: Lisa Cody, Claremont McKenna College
Humanities Building, Room 202

Paternity Leave and Gender Equality: Lessons from Italy and Spain

Ricardo Camacho, Pomona College

From Parliament to Preschool: The Political Origins of Childcare Policy Divergence in Spain and Ireland, 1990-1994

Lexi Duffy, Pomona College

Differing Levels of Gender Equality: Policies, Institutions, and Representation in Romania and Sweden

Katie Kehner, Lafayette College

Women in Power: Cultural and Structural Barriers in Politics and Diplomacy - A Comparative Study of the United States, the Czech Republic, and France

Alzbeta Svobodova, University of Colorado Boulder

Conference Session B

FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 2026 • 8:30am- 10:00am

Panel 3: FAR-RIGHT IDEOLOGY

*Discussant: Erica Dobbs, Pomona College
Humanities Building, Room 201*

God, Homeland, and Family: Fascist Legacies and the EU Rule of Law in Spain and Italy's Far-Right Politics

Grace Gutiérrez, University of California, San Diego

Caring for the Nation: The Effects of Solidarity, the Family, and Ideology on Long-Term Care Practices in Meloni's Italy

Giuliana "Tullia" Giannone-Dillingham, Scripps College

The Rise of Right-Wing Extremism Among Eastern Germany's Youth

Tim Luebbert, University of Washington

Populist Opposition and Immigration Policy in Switzerland: A Longitudinal Analysis

Nathan Michels, Pomona College

Panel 4: NORMATIVE SUCCESSES & FAILURES

*Discussant: Mietek Boduszynski, Pomona College
Humanities Building, Room 202*

Dividing to Unite? International Intervention and the Dayton Peace Agreement, 1992-1995

Arusa Malik, John Hopkins University

America First and Europe's Periphery: U.S. Influence on EU-Turkey Rapprochement Amid Structural Disputes

Aras Karlidağ, Georgetown University

Economic Development and Air Quality: Evidence from the European Union and Global Comparisons

Samuel Ross, Christopher Newport University

Conference Session C

FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 2026 • 10:15am - 11:45am

Panel 5: IMMIGRATION & WELFARE POLICIES

*Discussant: Yasemin Irepoglu Carreras, University of California, Riverside
Humanities Building, Room 201*

Differences in Housing Policy for Ukrainian Refugees in Czechia and Slovakia

Emery Fischer-Schmidt, Pomona College

Explaining Divergent Healthcare Entitlements for Undocumented Migrants: A Comparative Analysis of Spain and Denmark

Jimin Jeong, Pomona College

Immigration and Higher Education Policy Shifts in the 21st Century: A Comparative Look at Sweden and Denmark

Weineshet Lindholm, Pitzer College

Integrating Immigration: Analysis and Implications of Contemporary French Language Policy Accessibility

Emma Wei, Scripps College

Panel 6: CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPE

*Discussant: Jeff Pennington, University of California, Berkeley
Humanities Building, Room 202*

Converging, But Not Together: The Limits of Regional Cohesion after EU Enlargement

Armine Kardashyan, Claremont McKenna College

Accession-Based Incentives: The ENP as a Roadblock to Democratization in its Neighborhoods

Jacob Smith, Baylor University

The Rise of European Illiberal Democracies: What Can the EU Do About It? A Case Study of Hungary and Poland

Lucas Schultze, University of Washington

Conference Session D

FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 2026 • 2:00pm - 3:30pm

Panel 7: EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

*Discussant: Miguel Roncero Martin, EU Fellow, University of Washington
Humanities Building, Room 201*

Best for Denmark: Monetary Sovereignty and Nationhood in Denmark's Campaign for Euro Membership, 1999-2000

Maria Cheng, Harvard University

The Collapse of the Spitzenkandidaten Process and the EU's Democratic Deficit

Noah Damski, University of Florida

Norms on Trial: Hungary, Sovereignty, and the Political Limits of the EU

Lauren Hedtke, University of California, San Diego

Monnet and Maastricht: How Influential Was Jean Monnet's Vision of a United Europe in the Final Treaty of Maastricht?

Mai Hoglund, Pomona College

Panel 8: COLONIAL LEGACIES

*Discussant: Adam Zientek, University of California, Davis
Humanities Building, Room 202*

Towards Partition Reparations: A Case for the UK Compensating Survivors and Descendants of Kashmiri Conflict

Jaya Field, University of Washington

Restitution Without Obligation: Colonial Cultural Property and the Limits of European Law

Fatou Gassama, SciencePo

The French Perpetration of Slow Violence in French Polynesia

Gillian Maynard, Scripps College

Energy, Migration, and Power: Reassessing Italy's Mattei Plan in Africa

Lizet Gonzalez, Scripps College