

## 2008 Annual Report of the Subcommittee on ABSEES

### Summary of the ABSEES Progress Report

The ABSEES progress report was submitted to the committee on October 15, 2008 by Irene Kolchinsky, Managing Editor of ABSEES. According to the report, ABSEES staff has made significant progress in adding recommended content to the database and eliminating backlogs of titles on the core list of journals. They have also kept up with indexing on long-standing core journals for ABSEES.

In 2008 the committee conducted a comparison of coverage among three databases: ABSEES, MLA-International Bibliography (MLA), and Academic Search Premier (ASP). A comparative analysis of the three databases was conducted by Irene Kolchinsky and members of the committee. The analysis includes a general comparison of the databases (attached below) as well as a comparison of coverage on a title-by-title basis (see attached MS Excel file “absees\_vs\_asp.jst.mla.xls”). All titles indexed in ABSEES were compared with coverage for the same titles included in MLA and ASP. JSTOR was also included in the title-by-title coverage analysis.

**Recommendation:** The present committee recommends that next year’s committee follow up with Irene Kolchinsky and Ebsco in order to ensure a timely inclusion of back-file records into the database. This is the main priority beyond continued indexing of current issues, as access to articles in ABSEES goes back only to 1989 (approximately).

**Staffing:** Three AAASS members volunteered to serve on ABSEES. The committee made recommendations to B&D in October 2008 to fill the two upcoming open slots. No consensus was reached as to a recommendation for a new committee chair for 2009.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Giullian, Co-chair  
Angela Cannon, Co-chair

### ABSEES Progress Report (November 2007– November 2008)

#### ABSEES Team

ABSEES staff currently consists of the Managing Editor (Irene Kolchinsky) and 4 paid indexers, mainly graduate students affiliated with UIUC. All of them are part time employees. Several faculty members from institutions across the country support the work of ABSEES by submitting records on a volunteer basis.

Paid indexers and volunteers provide most of the records. The Managing Editor performs editing of all submitted records, ensures productivity and quality control, keeps statistics, hires and trains new employees, revises the ABSEES Core Journals and Titles Indexed lists, updates the

ABSEES website, cleans up the Online Subject Thesaurus, and maintains contacts with the ABSEES volunteers and the ABSEES Advisory Committee. Besides managerial duties, the Managing Editor submits records whenever possible.

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

### **Submissions**

The ABSEES staff and volunteers produce and send to EBSCO 500-550 new records on a monthly basis. 7,000 new records have been added to the database since November 2007, for a total of more than 87,000. Next year, 6,000-6,500 new records are expected. On its own part, EBSCO uploads the ABSEES submissions with proper speed and regularity, normally in 10-12 business days.

### **Core Journals List**

The ABSEES Core Journals and Titles Indexed lists has been revised and updated. Six new titles have been added to the Core Journals List after November 2007. These titles are: *Pushkin Review*, *Dostoevsky Studies*, *Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, *East-West Church & Ministry Report*, *ArtMargins*, *Journal of Eurasian Law (JEL)*, formerly *Journal of East European Law* (added in November 2008).

*Journal of Central Asian Studies* had been ordered by the UIUC Slavic library more than a year ago, but no issues have arrived yet. The Slavic library will investigate the problem.

One title, *Political History and Culture of Russia*, has been dropped from the list.

### **Titles Indexed Lists**

Titles Indexed lists have been revised and updated. More than thirty titles, which did not contain sufficient amount of the ABSEES related materials (less than one in two years), have been removed from the List.

### **Backlogs**

The backlogs associated with the titles added to the ABSEES Core List of Journals in 2007 and 2008 have been almost eliminated. The absolute majority of these titles (14 out of 18) have been completely covered. In particular, Carl Beck Papers has been indexed from its first volume (1982) till present.

Four titles still have gaps: *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* (backlog from 2002 to 1990); *Russian Politics and Law* (backlog from 2002 to 1990); *Russian Studies in History* (backlog from 1995 to 1990); *Eastern European Economics* (backlog from 2001 to 1990).

The backlogs associated with the decision to cover book reviews in a number of journals (*Russian Review*, *Slavic and East European Journal*, and *Slavic Review*) have been eliminated.

The backlogs associated with the recent decision to cover materials in languages other than English, namely in Russian, French and German, have been significantly reduced.

The backlogs associated with the Titles Indexed List have been reduced.

### **ABSEES Online Subject Thesaurus Project**

The ABSEES Online Subject Thesaurus needs an extensive cleanup. The first part of the project, which included research and compiling the list of incorrect and superficial subject headings, has been finished. The second part of the project, which consists of removing incorrect and superficial subject headings, has been started. Due to the very laborious nature of this process, the project may take about three months or even longer.