

Global Studies Newsletter

Scholarship with a deeper sense of purpose



Spring 2015 Newsletter

A word from our director

As another academic year comes to a close, we pause briefly to review some of the highlights that make Global Studies such a compelling program. Currently, between first and second majors, we have close to 100 students actively involved in Global Studies. Our alumni list continues to grow and as is evident from this newsletter, there is much of which to be proud. Opportunities in graduate school, Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, non-profit organizations characterize our alums' achievements, ambitions, and overall commitment to issues relevant to social justice.

Of course, our current students continue to impress with their experiences in study abroad programs, community service, and internships. Kudos to Paige Scrivener who has just received a Boren Scholarship to spend up to one year in China; Ben Mallicoat has been accepted into Medical School, but first will do a Masters in Public Health at York University in the UK. As for our faculty, their professional accomplishments as teachers, scholars, and community leaders are too numerous to list in this brief message, but they are indeed a source of pride for the Global Studies community and the university at large.

In the five years that I have served as the director of Global Studies, and after many hours advising majors, minors, and students interested in Global Studies, I never cease to be amazed at just how vibrant, productive, and creative our students are. More and more are applying for Fulbrights, Borens, and Critical Language Scholarships; better than 75% of our students either study abroad or do community service before graduation. So, enjoy the Newsletter! Although brief, it speaks volumes of what Global Studies is all about.

Saludos, Michael Handelsman, Director

(A special thanks to Colleen Ryan, our student assistant, who has taken the lead in preparing this Newsletter.)

We have a Facebook page now!

Check UTK Global Studies Program out at <https://www.facebook.com/utkglobalstudies> to stay up to date with the latest news and event announcements from the program!



It's not calculus.

A global studies alum continues the Volunteer tradition in Togo

Ironically enough, one of the first PCV Togo volunteers I met in country was a UTK graduate that was finishing out his 2-year commitment. It's serendipitous and just plain cool to think that I am picking up where another Vol has left off. He would describe to me in the limited time we had together the emotional, physical, and intercultural challenges one has throughout service. At times, you'll feel uncertain and timid, isolated and out of place. But, once you learn to navigate the established system of a culture, you naturally feel comfortable and confident. Cultural integration is difficult, however and takes a determined long-term effort. Like, if one told me to pick the easier choice between a mind-bending integration problem in calculus and integration in an African community with no modern amenities for an extended period of time, I'd opt for the former. (And I'm a liberal arts guy.) But it is imperative to gain trust of your coworkers and show how much you care about your community. Once established, you'll find you succeed in all your endeavors like Harry when he took Felix Felicis.

Nothing is personally more rewarding than seeing the relationships you've created and the genuine friends you've made over the course of time. As a Peace Corps Volunteer, you have the singular opportunity to embrace and adopt a new culture as your own. You have the choice to live among and as a local in an exotic land. And you have the tools to introduce new ideas, techniques, and prospects to people who will appreciate and remember your work for the rest of their lives. I know I am a volunteer who hasn't even completed one full year of service yet, but I can tell how impactful and eye-opening others see my work... even if I don't see it myself.

With a streamlined application process that now allows one to choose where and in what domain they'd like to serve (one can still choose to have these chosen for them), Peace Corps allows you more autonomy in shaping your service than ever. Many of the world's countries see service and sacrifice as a national obligation that forms more worldly citizens. When you're young and capable, a formative experience like this is nothing short of a rite of passage into adulthood. Learn another language (or two). Gain actual experience on how to organize, monitor, and evaluate projects. Discover how to eat, dress, and navigate the world differently. Take a leap of faith. For the less fortunate. For President Kennedy's call to action spoken over 50 years ago. For the endless smiles you'll bring to children's faces. For the memories to be made and the odysseys to be had. Don't do it for you; do it for the person you will become.

Ben Todd is a 2013 graduate of the Global Studies Program. He is a 2014-2016 PCV in Togo working as an English and Gender Education Teacher. You can follow his adventures at <https://thepowerfulplaygoesonandyoumaycontributeaverse.wordpress.com/2015/03/03/upcoming-projects/>.



Global Studies: Going Places

Creativity. Engagement. Social responsibility. A sense of purpose. These are the qualities that are exemplified in the Global Studies community. Our students, alumni, and faculty are doing big things—on campus and across the world.



Student News

Victoria Delaney was offered a position as a corp member for Teach for America.

Paige Scrivener was named a 2015-2016 Boren Scholar, which will allow her to continue her language and culture studies in China for up to a year.

Jake Schindler is interning with Congressman Chuck Fleischmann in his Washington office in summer 2015.

Ben Mallicoat will be completing a Master's in Public Health at York University before attending medical school.

Valerie King was named a 2015 Torchbearer. She will be attending the University of Oxford for her MSc before pursuing her PhD in Criminology, Law and Society at the University of California, Irvine to continue her research interests in international law, criminology, migration and human rights.

Faculty News

Dr. Michael Handelsman (MFL)

was awarded the L.R. Hesler Award for exceptional teaching and service.

Dr. Ron Kalafsky (Geography) has been named a 2015 Faculty Fellow for the UT Office of National Scholarships and Fellowships.

Dr. Bertin Louis (Anthropology) published *“My Soul is in Haiti: Protestantism in the Haitian Diaspora of the Bahamas”* in 2014. He also was named an alternate for a Fulbright Flex Grant, received a UTK Professional Development Award, and was named a UTK Quest Scholar.

Dr. Jon Shefner (Sociology) continues to conduct research on austerity and its impact on the global economy. In addition, he has a new project on the local Green Economy with support from the Office of Research and Engagement. Shefner recently was re-appointed to serve another term as Head of the Department of Sociology. He also was recently recognized by the Southern Sociological Society as their Distinguished Lecturer for 2015-16.

Dr. Les Essif (MFL) published “Norodom Sihanouk: The ‘Unfinished’ Story of American Global Totalitarianism by Hélène Cixous and the Théâtre du Soleil.” *Text and Presentation*, 2014, Spring 2015. 151-64. He also presented “*From Vinaver to Pommerat: The De-idealization of Capital and ‘Work as Business’ in Contemporary French Theatre*,” at the Thirty-Ninth Annual Comparative Drama Conference, Baltimore, March 26-29, 2015

Dr. Rosalind Hackett (Religious Studies) spent the 2014-2015 academic year at Harvard Divinity School as a Visiting Professor in Women’s Studies and Religion and a Research Associate in the Women’s Studies in Religion Program.

Dr. Paul Gellert (Sociology) embarked on research on coal extraction in the US Appalachian region in comparison to Indonesia, where most of his research has been conducted, with support from the Jefferson Award. He has published two articles: “Optimism and Education: The New Ideology of

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Development in Indonesia” in the *Journal of Contemporary Asia* and “The Quest for Legal Certainty and the Reorganization of Power: Struggles over Forest Law, Permits and Rights in Indonesia,” in the *Journal of Asian Studies*. He also served on both the UT review group for Fulbright applicants and the Fulbright National Screening Committee for applicants to Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore.

Alumni News

Ediobong Ebiefung ('14) was awarded a Diplomacy and Diversity Fellowship from Humanity in Action.

Kate Mattingly is in the European Master in Global Studies program in Leipzig, Germany. She was granted a place in the program as well as awarded a partial scholarship and will spend her first year at the University of Leipzig and the second year in Vienna.

After working one year in

AmeriCorps and serving as a grant writer for community organizations in the state of Washington, **Elisabeth Tilstra** was accepted into the University of Victoria's Child and Youth Care Master's program in Canada and selected as one of 38 recipients of the prestigious SSHRC national scholarship.

Through connections with the UTK Russian Department and other friends in Knoxville, **Will Thatcher** taught the past school year at Penza State University in Russia. Will wrote to say that on his first day, after finishing the 12-hour train ride from Moscow, “I gave an impromptu presentation on current American linguistic trends to the Foreign Languages Department, and it's been a wild Russian ride from there. I'm teaching 2 classes right now, and there will probably be a few more piled on later. I take a Russian language class every morning from 8:30 to 11 and then I'm a teacher the rest of the day. There are enough people here who

speak English that I'm not lost all the time, and it seems everyone is available to help me with my Russian.”

Shannon Mullane reports, ““For my summer, I'll be volunteering at an urban agriculture organization that is working to bring food infrastructure and education to a food desert in Colorado. I'll also be continuing my work with refugees in Denver. As for the rest of the year, I am currently pursuing internship opportunities in Colombia, Peru, and Nepal. I'm still deciding between pursuing graduate degrees in international development or journalism, so hopefully these internships will help me figure it out.”

Shivam Zaveri is learning in a jewelry manufacturing company in India. He reports, “It is currently 1 AM in India. I have been doing great. India has been a great journey! I am enjoying every minute of it here!”

The Global Studies Experience- Valerie King

The Global Studies Program is undoubtedly characterized by diversity. There certainly exists no 'typical' global studies student, and for all intents and purposes, the major lacks uniformity. This diversity is precisely why students choose to pursue their course of study in the global studies program. Students, myself included, are able to craft the major to their liking. Many harness the interdisciplinary options, enrolling in courses from Sociology and Film Studies, to Business, Political Science, and Art History, often choosing to rely on a particular discipline or a particular thematic research focus. In this way, the global studies major enables students to design a unique program and also to lay claim to their own education. Interests in international law and sociological theory guided my studies, while I have colleagues who direct their efforts towards conflict and peace, languages and culture, or Russian politics. Within the global studies program resides a community of diverse scholars and carefully crafted curriculums.

Likewise, students are encouraged to participate in a variety of activities that enhance their capacities for global engagement, including programs at the International House, student organizations, and community involvement. The program's consistency, then, lies in its ability to prepare students to be critically engaged global citizens, aware of the intricacies that constitute globalization, as well as perceptive to the nuances of global issues and conscious of possibilities and potentialities for transformation. The global studies program trains students for an equally diverse and intentional future. Transferrable skills



Exciting Opportunities from ONSF

The Office of National Scholarships and Fellowships has launched many exciting new opportunities for students this academic year.

The 4th Meal Discussion series was launched to facilitate critical interdisciplinary conversations around important issues of our time. In the 2014-2015 academic year, 4th Meal topics included nuclear energy, mobile security in the age of technology, ISIS and its roots, and food security, among others.

ONSF has selected its first cohort of Exploration Grant Scholars, an opportunity that Global Studies co-sponsors to allow students the opportunity for short-term travel abroad aimed at establishing future connections.

ONSF has also begun a partnership with the School for International Training to provide up to \$5000 to students participating in one of SIT's research and experiential learning-based global issues study abroad programs.

New for the 2015-2016 year will be the ONSF Undergraduate Society of Fellows, an initiative designed to facilitate humanistic inquiry and self-discovery through discussions and debates of key issues.

include global consciousness, multicultural sensitivities, and language acquisition, to name a few.

Perhaps more importantly, though, is the reflexivity procured by global studies students who make deliberate efforts to engage in meaningful scholarship and service. These students succeed in securing prestigious national scholarships, doctoral fellowships, and appointments in the public and non-profit sectors, and many undertake careers abroad, in local organizations, and everywhere in between. The global studies program distinguishably positions students to provide meaningful contributions within the global community.

Valerie King is a graduating senior in global studies and sociology. She founded the Oxfam America Club at UTK and wrote her thesis on Emergent Border Criminologies: Frames of Crimmigration and Securitization in the United States and the European Union, and she plans to pursue an MSc at the University of Oxford and a PhD in Criminology, Law and Society at the University of California, Irvine.

Going Global- Will Clifft

There comes a time in every Global Studies major's career when the inevitable beckons; like migratory animals, we all – one way or another – end up with an intense yearning to go abroad and actually see the places we've been studying about. As students, that means many trips to the Programs Abroad Office and much perusing of UT's online international catalogue. Finally, when the stars align and that one blessed scholarship finally comes through, off we shoot into the wide world to seek out the 'global' part of our college education.

Around this time last year I'd just received my own confirmation letter admitting me to a year-long exchange program at the University of Manchester, England. I was ecstatic! I was thrilled! I was suddenly full of the realizations that I'd be going to Manchester completely alone, that I'd never been abroad for longer than 2 weeks, and that I'd never been to the UK before! "No worries though," I thought. "Manchester's in England, and England's probably similar enough to the U.S. that I'll be totally fine for the year I'm going for." (This assumption was, of course, based entirely off of watching a few James Bond flicks and the BBC's *Sherlock* series.)

In hindsight this assumption was, as most assumptions are, entirely and stupendously flat-out wrong.

In the months since I arrived I've become intimately acquainted with: vicious exchange rates, incomprehensible social norms, unending language barriers, and the vague social isolation a foreigner who's surrounded by the perpetually unfamiliar. In a city the size of Manchester (population: +500K), it's easy to meet people but impossibly difficult to keep up with them. The city is huge yet compact (read: cramped) and there are only two major supermarkets. Perhaps worst of all, there's only so much a born and bred Southerner can take of a climate where 68 degrees Fahrenheit is considered "obscenely hot" and a cloudless day is essentially unheard of.

So why then when I Skype my friends and family back home do I tell them that I'm having the time of my life? Why wouldn't I trade this past year for all the sunny weather in the world? Am I pathological liar? Has all of the delightfully cheap

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and accessible alcohol (shout out to the UK's low drinking age) permanently affected my brain? To be fair it's probably a mixture of both, but there's a touch of something else too. And it'd be downright negligent of me not to try and describe it.

For one, my level of self-confidence has absolutely sky-rocketed. Yeah, I know an increased level of confidence is a benefit of traveling so often cited that it's basically become a trope, but I really can't avoid it. There's only so many times you can screw up a conversation with an awkward misunderstanding, or wear something so out of style that a bouncer won't let you into a pub (note: baseball caps are not acceptable pub-wear) before you stop caring about fitting in. It's like getting so horrifyingly embarrassed on a daily basis that you actually transcend self-consciousness and start doing your own thing because, hey, if you're going to do something wrong you may as well enjoy yourself while doing it.

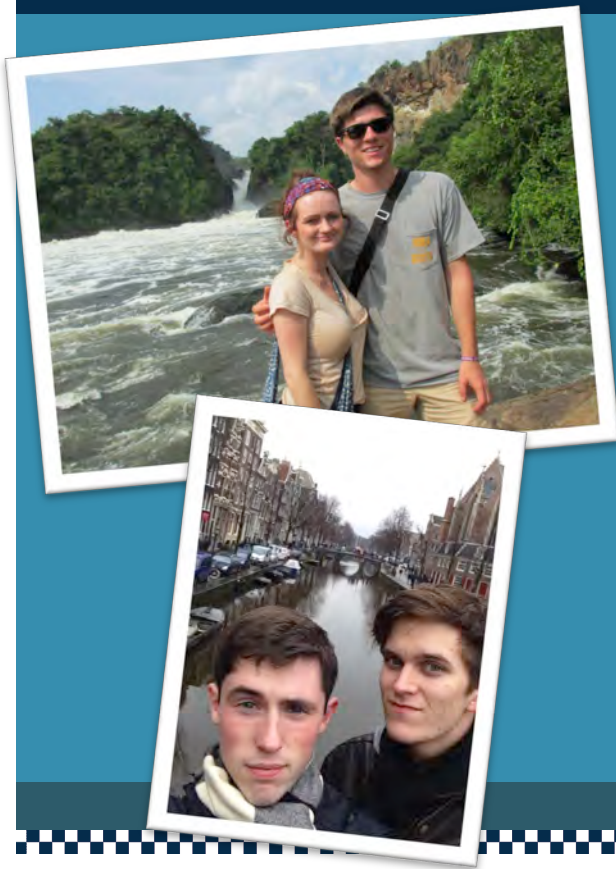
Second, and perhaps more pertinent, I've become a lot more aware of how inter-connected the world really is. Despite America's label as a "cultural melting pot," the U.S. is surprisingly homogenous compared to many other countries. For example, England – thanks to its colonial past – is the focal point of multiple transnational networks which have facilitated the immigration of Asians, Africans, Europeans, and everything in between to the kingdom over the past century. In Manchester alone I've encountered people whose parents moved here due to events ranging from the Cultural Revolution in China, to the Sri Lankan Civil War, to the 1979 Iranian Revolution, to the de-colonization of Uganda. And none of these people ended up here by whimsical choice – they all had preexisting ties that drew them specifically to Manchester, and this is where they continue to interact with and influence not only each other but long-established Mancunians as well. Pop into any coffee shop or classroom around Manchester's main campus and you'll find people of multiple nationalities, ethnicities, linguistic backgrounds, religions, and political beliefs thriving alongside each other. And they're all here because of those obscure wars, treatises, and international policies that you've done so much assigned reading and essay writing about.

Third, when you're studying abroad you can't help but become *infinitely* more appreciative of where you come from. Since this is another benefit of traveling that's been repeated ad nauseam, I won't harp about this one too much. But how long have you ever actually gone without a handful of Doritos or a plate of cheap, cheesy Mexican food? Personally, I won't be underestimating the pleasure of having affordable shaving razors, American-style french fries, or understandable cultural references any time soon.

Most importantly, studying abroad lets you learn things and see places you never thought you'd get to learn or see in this lifetime. In the past eight months I've explored every region in England, I've been trapped alone on a mountain in a thunderstorm (and survived), gotten lost in Venice, crossed both the Irish Sea and English Channel at midnight, eaten space cakes in Amsterdam, attended a massive pillow fight in London's Trafalgar Square, and watched the sun set over the Bosphorus Strait. I've learned dozens of words in Dutch and Turkish, been thoroughly educated on all five of the world's 'major religions,' participated in the English political system, interacted with multiple cultural diasporas, and I've seen first-hand the serious impacts and consequences that American cultural trends and politics have on the rest of the world – whether we notice or not.

If any of that interests you – and let's be honest, what part doesn't? – then please, swing through the Programs Abroad Office at the next chance you get. It's never a bad time to look into applying for a program, and if the scholarship gods look favorably upon you, then you too could be abroad as early as next semester! If/when you do venture out into the world, your experience will likely be completely different than mine; in fact, I'd be surprised if your experience is similar at all. It's a big world, and there's more than a few interesting people living in it. Regardless though I am absolutely positive that you'll be happy with how your adventures shape you as a person. Studying abroad gives the Global Studies major a tangible element, and I can personally testify that having that element creates a world of difference. There's a big, dynamic world outside of Tennessee; if at all possible, you should go and see it.

Will Clift is a sophomore in global studies and religious studies. He also intends to pursue a double-major in Religious Studies at some point if he can spare the time, and he helped to co-found the UTK Global Studies Club. His many hobbies and pursuits include - but are not limited - to photography, stray cat spotting, being a coffee snob, and budget traveling. He is participating in an ISEP-Exchange with the University of Manchester for the 2014-2015 academic year, and then will be hiking the Camino de Santiago over the summer.



We're looking to create a Global Studies community. Join the **Global Studies Club**.

We've been active in hosting events. We've worked with the Office of National Scholarships and Fellowships to co-host a 4th Meal discussion group. We've organized the Perspectives on Structural Violence event series, bringing in speakers from across campus and the country to talk about the issues that really matter. What are we missing?

That'd be you.

To learn more about how to get involved, contact Colleen Ryan at cryan16@utk.edu

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