From the Director

I am honored to have been selected to direct the WMU Global and International Studies program. Global studies is my life-long passion. I was born in the U.S., of immigrant parents, raised in Asia and Latin America, and earned a Ph.D. in International Economics. I have taken students on study abroad, been a Fulbright scholar in Uruguay and completed research leaves at the University of Oxford and the University of Salamanca.

I hope that you enjoy the fall newsletter. Catch up on the activities you missed, learn about our super alumni, find out about activities that students participate in, and read about our new GIST instructors.

Please keep in touch with us by liking us on Facebook, connecting with us on LinkedIn, and visiting us at www.wmich.edu/globalstudies

From L-R: Dr. Susan Pozo, Dean Carla Koretsky, Clifford Pulley

Alumni Spotlight: Clifford Pulley

This year a Global and International Studies alumnus, Clifford Pulley, received the College of Arts and Sciences Alumni Achievement Award. Pulley, class of ’12, spent the last two and half years at Whirlpool’s corporate office in Hefei, China and is now the Indirect Procurement Sales and Marketing Specialist. On the occasion of the WMU award ceremony in October, our staff writer got the opportunity to talk to him about life after graduation. The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

OKOLI: Is your current position your first position after graduation? If so how was that first job experience?

PULLEY: No, I actually applied for a different position at Whirlpool, one that was located in the United States, and in a much bigger city. But then I got interviewed for the position in Hefei because they wanted me to do something different from what I originally applied for. They wanted me to live and work for their subsidiary in China. It took a full year to get everything solidified, so during that period I filled in my time with a position at Target. What I’ve learned from my experience is that the corporate world is different. You have to be very flexible, you may have to leave at a moment’s notice.

O: How has your Global and International Studies degree and experience prepared you for your duties at Whirlpool.

P: My degree helped me in terms of being culturally open-minded. In Global and International Studies, you have your concentrations. My concentration was in Economics and Asian Studies. In Economics you have to understand the business behind things. I did a study abroad with Dr. Susan Pozo for one of my economics classes and we went to the central bank in Uruguay. There I understood what the currency conversion rates were, how the U.S. dollar increased or decreased in value depending on the day and the how and why the Uruguayan government buys U.S. currency. It’s experiences like these that help tie everything together. Now when I am at work I am looking at currency conversion rates, and I understand how important it is to lock things in. I understand the cultural aspect of what’s important and what’s not and my Global and International Studies degree helped me with that.

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What’s going on with DACA?

This September, the Global and International Studies program with the co-sponsorship of the Lewis Walker Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnic Relations, hosted a panel on the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. In a room full of WMU students, faculty and general members of the public, the panelists: John Clark, Professor and Chair of Political Science; Susan Pozo, Director of the Global and International Studies program and Professor of Economics; Tim Ready, Director of the Lewis Walker Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnic Relations and Associate Professor of Sociology; and Devin Schindler, Professor and Auxiliary Dean of WMU Cooley Law School, weighed in and addressed a number of questions concerning the DACA program. DACA was implemented by executive action by President Barack Obama in 2012. The program permitted certain unauthorized immigrants, brought to the U.S. as children, work authorization and protections from deportation. After months of anticipation about its fate, on September 5, 2017, the opening day of classes for the WMU fall semester, President Donald Trump ordered the termination of DACA. Each panelist presented views about DACA from the perspective of their discipline. Schindler spoke on the constitutionality of the DACA program and how its shaky foundation has lead to its current status, while Clark spoke about the politicization of the DACA program and the use of this politicization to influence the outcome of the program. Ready provided evidence concerning the number of DACA recipients and their schooling and work behavior. Pozo offered commentary on economic and non-economic explanations for the different participation rates of DACA-eligible individuals by nationality. All agreed that the rollback was making an already difficult situation untenable for these young immigrants. For more information on the rollback of DACA see the article http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/trump-administration-rescinds-daca-fueling-renewed-push-congress-and-courts-protect-dreamers, or visit migrationpolicy.org to keep up to date with news on U.S. immigration policy.

Career Spotlight: Foreign Service

Finding a rewarding and fulfilling career after graduation is the goal of students. But the prospects of a good career often depends on the type of degree sought. The interdisciplinary nature and the strong language focus of the Global and International Studies program gives it a unique perspective that is applicable to a wide range of careers. One such career is that of a Foreign Service Officer (FSO). A Foreign Service officer is a United States diplomat tasked with communicating U.S. foreign policy to host country governments. One of our staff writers had the chance to speak with Western Michigan University alumnus and current Deputy Counselor for political and economic affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Montevideo, Uruguay, Michael Schreuder, about what it takes to become a Foreign Service Officer. The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

OKOLI: Was your first job after graduation with the Foreign Service?

SCHREUDER: Yes, it was. During one of my classes with Dr. Jim Butterfield and Dr. Gunther Hega, they mentioned the foreign service exam, so once I graduated from Western I was scheduled to take that foreign service exam and I took it when I was traveling. I actually signed up to take it in the U.S. Embassy in San Jose, Costa Rica. It was just a couple of months after my graduation from WMU.

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O: Do you have any tips for our current students on how to make the most out of their degree?
P: I would say, first speak a foreign language, second do study abroad, and third, take some business classes because at the end of the day a lot of the things you will do will be related to business at some point in time. I credit a lot to my academic advisor. She said, “Cliff no matter what you do at least have some type of understanding of business...”. Also try to become an intern. If you have some time during the summer do an internship.

O: How would you say students should make themselves more marketable after graduation?
P: I would say be encouraged. As millennials we have some gaps, if you can avoid gaps, meaning if you can work to make ends meet while completing your degree do that. But also, what have you done in your career while you are attending Western is important in making you more marketable. I encourage people to do study abroad because these are going to be conversation pieces that employers will want to talk about. Also when you are about to interview for a position, I would say be ready with the “STAR” method (Situation, Task, Action, Result). That is: 1) Have some stories that highlight a situation or challenge you experienced; 2) Be sure to describe the tasks or goals you had to accomplish; 3) describe the actions you took; and 4) describe the results of your action. It is also important to understand that you are going to go through unfamiliar situations after you graduate so it is important to have a mentor if possible.

O: How was your experience working in a foreign country for the first time?
P: I would say it’s the most rewarding experience that I have ever had in my life. Knowing the language was very helpful. I was proficient. When I went there I improved my language skills and got to know more about the culture, and understand things that go into the decision making process within a corporate setting. In the Chinese culture, activities and people are very intertwined. When you work with someone it’s like they become your family. Their acceptance helped me learn and grow from a career standpoint. The experience of two and half years living and working in China was one of the best experiences in my life.

O: How has your college degree and experience prepared you for your duties as an FSO?
S: My undergraduate degree from Western put me in a good position to be able to succeed not only on the exam, but also in my career. It gave me a broad knowledge of what’s going on in the world, and I think that the awareness of current events really helped, as did an appreciation for history, especially U.S. history and European history.

O: From the FSO website, there are different types of FSOS so what do you typically do as a Deputy Counselor for political and economic affairs?
S: I track political and economic issues inside Uruguay and other regions in South America. We advise the ambassador on those issues and inform policy makers in Washington on what’s going on. We have two functions, an action officer function, which is to support the ambassador’s staff, go out and talk with key people in economic or political affairs in the country, try to create new partnerships where appropriate, try to find individuals who are interested in participating in U.S. government programs and try to bolster the bilateral relationships. Our second function is to find out what’s going on and let U.S. policy makers in Washington know about trends so that they can make the best policy choices.

O: What was your first post and how was that experience?
S: My first post was in Bogotá, Colombia, and I worked in the consular section. We adjudicated visas and helped American citizens. One interesting part of my first post involved my duties as an American Citizen Services Officer. This involved visiting American citizens in prison. Often times we would travel throughout the country to visit American citizens in Colombian prisons making sure that they were getting a just trial, and that their health and wellbeing were okay. Sometimes we would bring them little things like books and soap to help make them feel a little better. This role provided me with insights into the tough conditions inside those prisons and the inner workings of the Colombian judicial system. Since then I have been posted in Tunis, Tunisia, Jerusalem, Jedd, Saudi Arabia, and now Montevideo, Uruguay.
Student Perspectives: Internship Abroad
Mary Schuck, Global and International Studies & Political Science major.
This summer, I worked for a non-profit organization in the Ukraine as an interpreter for six Americans. While there I volunteered at a children’s camp as well as camps for people with disabilities. I’ve known the pastor, Maksim Dzhum, who runs these camps, for 6 years. He works towards developing a respite care facility for families with dependents that have disabilities in the Ukraine. These camps were large and served over 500 people. In addition to my interpreter duties, I also aided with setting up games, kitchen work and helping people with disabilities get dressed or go down to the seaside. The hardships that I saw during my time there also helped me grow spiritually. Being exposed to so much of the Russian language I’ve learned that it is easier to learn a language when it’s in context and among natural speakers. I would say that volunteering as an interpreter helped me gain the advanced vocabulary that is necessary for one to achieve real proficiency in a language.

Student Reflections
Gina Siefert
I really like how you can customize the degree to your own specific needs and wants and I was able to complement mine with a study abroad in Spain. After graduation I am looking forward to getting into journalism, and eventually work for the government.

The Origins of Coffee
This September the GIST program hosted its fall “meet and greet” in the format of an Ethiopian coffee ceremony. Coffee is one of the most popular drinks in the world, and there are many places that claim its origin. One such country is Ethiopia. Students and faculty in attendance not only learned about the origins of the coffee ceremony, they also had the chance to participate. Our very own academic advisor, Kala Willette, who spent time in Ethiopia with the Peace Corps, educated and shared with attendees her own experience with the Ethiopian coffee ceremony.

New Courses Offerings in Spring
This coming spring the GIST program will be adding four new courses that students can take towards their major or minor. GIST 3500 Ethics of War introduces students to the concept of the “just war” especially in the context of modern conflict. In addition, we are offering 3 different one credit A-S 3900 classes. These courses offer students the flexibility to top up their major while broadening their exposure to international issues. Global Perspectives on Leadership offers students the chance to examine the nature of leadership from a global perspective and students’ role as leaders in a global context. Global Perspectives on Terror examines why people commit acts of terror and what can be done about it. Humanitarian Intervention covers the issues surrounding various forms of intervention in conflict regions. Students can pick one of these options that satisfy their interest or specific needs.
Instructor Spotlight: Seth Allard

The Global and International Studies program welcomes its newest instructor, Seth Allard, to the program. Seth is a cultural anthropologist, Pipe Carrier and Ogichiidaa of the Bowheting Ojibwa, and a member of the Sault Saint Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. A former non-commissioned officer in the United States Marine Corps and a direct care supervisor, Seth enjoys working in public service. He has a master’s degree in anthropology from Western Michigan University, with a research focus on indigenous culture and history, and medical anthropology. His first book, Guided by the Spirits: The Meanings of Life, Death and Youth Suicide, published by Routledge and available for pre-order, is a case study of youth suicide in the Sault Sainte Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians based on his graduate research at Western Michigan University. Seth lives in the Kalamazoo area with wife Victoria, son Liam, and dog, Junior.

Allied Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Jim Butterfield

The Global and International Studies program is fortunate to have access to some of the university’s best and brightest faculty members. This fall we got to sit down with Dr. Jim Butterfield, Professor of Political Science, to discuss his current research and future work. The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

OKOLI: What is your research focus/expertise?
BUTTERFIELD: My research and teaching both focus on Soviet politics—Post-Soviet politics in the Post-Communist era and transitions from non-democracy to democracy or other forms of non-democracy. Within this area I focus more on political sociology, politics from below, and society’s participation in politics. The Soviet Union collapsed a few years after I arrived at Western, so since then I have been looking at societies in transitions in the former Soviet space. I have also spent some time in South Africa, and of course I was just in Vietnam last year on a teaching Fulbright program.

O: Tell us more about the teaching Fulbright program in Vietnam.
B: I was teaching at the Ho Chi Minh City University of Social Sciences and Humanities. There I taught courses on international organizations, and American foreign policy to third and fourth year students in the International Relations program. Vietnam was interesting to me because it is another semi post-communist country that has chosen to follow the Chinese model, a communist political system but with a heavy capitalist economic system. The government maintains some of the old state enterprises, but the retail sector and the services sector, are privately owned. This has lead to high economic growth rates.

O: You recently conducted some public lectures in China, what were they about?
B: I went to several universities in Wuhan, which is in the south-central part of China. They invited me there to give lectures on Russia and Central Asia. China has instituted a new policy called One Belt, One Road. This is an attempt to reconstitute the old Silk Road which runs through what is now Central Asia, and parts of Southern Russia. They are trying to integrate those economies more tightly with the Chinese economy. This is in addition to a maritime route which goes through Southeast Asia, South Asia, and right into East Africa. The idea is to integrate these economies within the Chinese sphere of influence, more so than ever before.

O: Since you’ve been back what are you currently working on?
B: I just started teaching a new course on terrorism. The course mainly focuses on terrorism and counter-terrorism policy. It asks how well are we fighting terrorism? Can we fight terrorism? What causes terrorism? What are our options? In the last fifteen years since 9/11 we’ve learned a lot, but there is still so much more we don’t know.
Instructor Spotlight: Nancy Bjorklund

The Global and International Studies program would like to welcome a new instructor to the program Nancy Bjorklund. Bjorklund teaches our GIST 2000 course, and comes to us from the University of Montana, where she was the Co-Chair of the Internationalization Laboratory Task force, and Program Integration Manager at the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences. Prior to this Bjorklund worked on campus internationalization efforts for eighteen years as the Associate Director for Comprehensive Internationalization at the University of Montana, and has served as the State Chair for American Council of Education (ACE) Women's Leadership Forum. She has taught MA and PhD level courses in the EDLD program for the College of Education and Human Sciences at the University of Montana and is currently working on her dissertation at the University of Southern California. Her dissertation focuses on Standardization Models for Comprehensive Internationalization. She is a great addition to the GIST program. Feel free to drop by the department to welcome our instructors.

Coming This Spring---Research Briefs in Global Studies.

Each brief will pair two researchers working independently, but on parallel topics. The attendees will be introduced to cutting edge research taking place around the university and discover research connections across disciplines.

Congratulations to Our Recent Graduates!

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Alumni Needed: We are looking for Global and International studies alumni to speak to current students about how to transition from student to professional. If you are interested in sharing your journey, please contact us at coas-global-intl-info@wmich.edu

Edited by Chikezie Okoli

Earlier issues of the Western Worldwide Newsletter are available on our website at wmich.edu/globalstudies/about/newsletter.