Western Worldwide
Your Gateway to Global Engagement

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Newsletter of the Global and International Studies Program
Western Michigan University — Spring/Summer 2019

Introducing the Global Data Center

What are the costs of sending remittances from Brazil to Bolivia? In what ways has China given financial aid to Nigeria over the past several years? How many refugees from South Africa and Sierra Leone were resettled in the United States during the 1990s? Which countries in Southeast Asia yield and produce the most rice? Answering these questions requires obtaining data from sources that may not be easy to navigate or even locate. Luckily, GIST has a solution.

The Global Data Center is now available on our website at wmich.edu/globalstudies/global-data-center. Listing data sources by focus field, topic, and alphabetically, it is a resource for all that has made a once daunting task more accessible to students and others less familiar with finding quality data sources.

The Global Data Center links to a broad array of online data resources. When the data are available in PDF or in Excel-type formats, an example with detailed instructions for how to access and download the information is provided. When the data are only available via other software-specific formats (e.g. R, SPSS, SAS, Stata) the website provides a summary of the data and the link to the website hosting the data.

The Global Data Center will continue to expand in response to user requests and as more world data appears online. We are happy to provide this resource for the broader research community. Check it out!

In answer to our opening question – it costs 8 U.S. dollars (14.80 Brazilian real) to send 200 U.S. dollars from Brazil to Bolivia. Many thanks to Jesse Nelson for her hard work and creating this resource.

FROM THE DIRECTOR:

Dear GIST Friends,

More than ever, we need individuals who can make sense of the geopolitical complications playing out in the world today. GIST is proud to be contributing by preparing graduates with the culture, language, data, research and knowledge skills to make this world safer and better. Our majors come to the table with passion for solving conflicts and misunderstandings. They will make a difference in this world.

Enjoy this issue of Western Worldwide featuring recaps of some of our activities from this semester, the accolades of our students, and their contributions in research and creative activities. Congratulations, graduates!

Yours truly,
Susan Pozo
Boosting your resume: how to effectively market study abroad experience

Most GIST majors study abroad at some point during their time at WMU. Whether students go for a year, a semester, or a short-term trip, their international experience becomes an integral part of their academic career. However, students often neglect to mention in their credentials how their experience abroad has benefited them professionally. Now, more than ever, globalization is affecting facets of all industries, and employers like to see candidates with international experience. Talking with Graduate Assistant Zahra Renani from the Office of Career and Student Employment Services, our staff writer gathered some insight on resume advice for students who have studied abroad.

Where should it go? Study abroad experience should be listed under the “Education” section of your resume, below your most recent college degree. For example, if your most recent degree is an MA but you completed study abroad for your BA, list your MA at the top, followed by your BA, and then your study abroad. If you have more than two study abroad experiences, it would be beneficial to include a separate section on your resume that lists them all. In this case, insert the “Study Abroad Experience” section below “Education” and before “Work Experience.”

How much should I include? When relevant to an application or when lacking other experience, accompany your listed study abroad experience(s) with two to four “accomplishment statements,” detailing the skills you gained from your time abroad. Otherwise, simply list your study abroad experience.

What should it look like? The format of including study abroad on your resume, in the “Education” section or in a separate “Study Abroad” section, should look similar to the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program of study when abroad</th>
<th>Dates attended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[Name of study abroad]</td>
<td>[Dates attended]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For completing a short-term study abroad program where you did not attend a university, replace the name of the university with the type of study abroad program. For example, the last line would be “Short-Term Faculty-Led Program.” When appropriate, an example of an accomplishment statement for a short-term study abroad to the Dominican Republic could be the following:

- “Analyzed engines of economic growth for the Dominican economy while exploring Santo Domingo, the northwestern border, and eastern coastal regions over eight days.”

Students readily see the personal and academic benefits to studying abroad but professional development is another by-product of studying abroad. Showcasing any and all experiences can give a huge boost to your resume and set you apart from many other candidates in a large applicant pool. For more information on career development, contact the Office of Career and Student Employment Services.

Another round of Research Briefs

This spring marked the third semester of “Research Briefs in Global Studies,” a series that invites inter- and multi-disciplinary discussion of ongoing research around campus. Two individuals per “Brief” are paired from different departments to share their research, providing the audience an opportunity to ask questions and make topical connections. This semester we hosted two Research Briefs:

“A Woman’s Development”: Professor Mariam Konaté (Gender and Women’s Studies; African American and African Studies; top, left) discussed the continued lower status and power of women in Burkina Faso, including the government’s initiatives towards empowering women. Professor Irma López (Spanish; Intercultural and Anthropological Studies; top, right) discussed the writing and personal development of Mexican writer María Luisa Puga (1944-2004) as seen through the writer’s 327 detailed journals.

“Religious Education in Eurasia”: Professor Steve Covell (Comparative Religion; bottom, right) discussed the teachings of Temple Buddhism in modern-day Japan’s kindergartens and universities. Professor Elena Lisovskaya (Sociology; bottom, left) discussed the role of ideologies presented in religious culture textbooks in Russia in relation to building Russia’s national identity.
Assigned to complete a creative project for the Senior Capstone Seminar (GIST 4900), Cory Matkovich examined different sentiments made about refugees from politicians and others around the world. Matkovich entitled his project “No Refuge(es) Here: Narratives From In and Around the Tent,” and it can be seen above. The words are arranged to form an image of a tent. The words in black, making up the night sky, are some of the negative words often used to describe refugees, while the words in white, making up the tent itself, are some of the positive words. To accompany his project, Matkovich included an insightful statement, reproduced to the right of the image.

“In discourse relating to refugees, the humanity piece can sometimes be forgotten. Undue pressures can be added to already vulnerable populations when we forget to listen to the compelling voices of those affected. UNCHR suggests that refugees are not the crisis – instead, it’s the narratives we tell about them.”

At the end of this semester, Katelyn Drummond, double major in Global and International Studies and Tourism and Travel, will have completed her honors thesis as a member of the Lee Honors College. Drummond explores the ongoing drought in Cape Town, South Africa and hypothesizes that it would impact its tourism industry negatively. Her motivation came from her own study abroad experience in Cape Town during her spring 2018 semester, which coincided with a worsening drought. With the desire to go into tour coordination after graduation this spring, she believes the process of completing her honors thesis has helped her understand the complexity of the tourism industry.

The image to the right is a word cloud created from the more than 100 headlines in the United States and United Kingdom that Drummond used in her analysis, with the size of the word corresponding to how often that word was used throughout the headlines.
HIGHLIGHTS

Allied Faculty Spotlight: Alisa Perkins

Assistant Professor Alisa Perkins of the Department of Comparative Religion is this year’s recipient of the 2019 Gender Scholar Award from the College of Arts and Sciences. Perkins’ (Ph.D, University of Texas at Austin) research focuses on the civic engagement of Muslims in America, and this semester she gave a presentation titled “Muslim Women in Metro Detroit: Religious Geographies and Minority Incorporation.” This presentation stemmed from her book project forthcoming from NYU Press, entitled “Muslims in Metro Detroit: Gender and Religious Boundaries in Urban America,” for which she received supporting grants from the National Science Foundation and the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. Among numerous other grants and awards, her accolades include various peer-reviewed journal publications including “Muslim Sound, Public Space, and Citizenship Agendas in an American City,” and “Negotiating Alliances: Muslims, Gay Rights, and the Christian Right in a Polish American City.” Aside from her work at WMU, Dr. Perkins is a Scholar with the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, a Washington-based collective geared toward producing accurate information about American Muslims.

GIST 1100 special topics in global studies courses

The course offerings this coming fall will include three GIST 1100 special topics in global studies courses, with each course being equivalent to one credit. The three courses are Arctic Security taught by Anna Kietzerow (Philosophy; far left), Language and Globalization taught by Dr. Jeffrey Angles (World Language and Literatures; center), and War and Propaganda (online course) taught by Dr. Joyce Busch (GIST; far right). These courses are a great opportunity for students to expand their knowledge on global topics without having the full semester course load of a three- or four-credit class. Visit wmich.edu/globalstudies/advising/courses for more information.

Congratulations to our recent graduates!

Spring 2019 Majors

Zhanessa Byron  
Language: Korean

Katelyn Drummond  
Language: Spanish

Yurisvel Estrada  
Language: Spanish

Aaron Heynig  
Language: Japanese

Caroline Huffman  
Language: Spanish

Emily Leshman  
Language: French

Connor Lomas  
Language: German

Michelle Moore  
Language: Japanese

Sabrina Pletner  
Language: Russian

Syrí Runyan-Abanilla  
Language: Spanish

Madison Sides  
Language: Spanish

Charles Smith  
Language: Japanese

Sierra Young  
Language: Spanish

Nicholas Baldini  
Language: Spanish

William Belser  
Language: Vietnamese

Madison Jackson  
Language: Japanese

Alexis Lenderman  
Language: Spanish

McKenzie Sietsema  
Language: Spanish

Caitlin Wiley

GIST Minors:

Jack Alli, Kylan Autman, Gabriel Balderramas, Erik Bergh, Jose Ignacio Celorio Escandon, Olivia Damon, Janiea Erquhart, Julio David Zuarth Gonzales, Alex Gualajara-Avila, Mara Minott, Katherine Ortiz, Marlon Tate, Jake Williams, Sarah Diana Zuber

Latin American Studies Minors:

Syri Runyan-Abanilla, Caitlin Wiley

Produced by: Jessalyn Nelson

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