



GLOBAL LEADERS OF PENN STATE

Global and International Studies
Monthly Email Newsletter



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WELCOME

by **Cristina Cebotaru, Managing Editor**

Hello! Welcome to the third issue of *Global Leaders of Penn State*, the Global and International Studies (GLIS) program newsletter. To start, thank you so much for reading. This issue is a celebration of YOU—the students! To those graduating, congratulations on all of your achievements! To everyone else, congratulations on finishing another semester! First, we will start with congratulatory remarks from our GLIS co-directors and faculty. Then, we will move into a letter to the graduating class from Cristina, the editor, who is also a class of 2021 graduate. From there, our student spotlight will be on Abigail Slate '21, a Fulbright finalist, who will tell us about her incredible study abroad experiences that she's had through the GLIS program. This will be followed by our Why GLIS section where students share their reasons for majoring in GLIS. We will wrap our final edition of the semester with a celebration of our graduates. If you have any feedback or would like to submit a story feel free to email glis@psu.edu. We look forward to hearing from you and cannot wait to show you all the opportunities that GLIS has to offer.



PennState
College of the Liberal Arts

CONGRATULATIONS FROM GLIS CO-DIRECTORS

by Dr. Jonathan Abel and Dr. Joseph Wright

Congratulations, GLIS graduates—what a year! We can only imagine how difficult it has been for you to finish up your Penn State careers on Zoom, with many of you away from your classmates and community and with plans for internships, jobs, and study abroad experiences either put on hold or canceled. You have shown remarkable resilience and perseverance in adjusting to online classes and completing your degrees. In the face of a global crisis that has affected all of us as individuals and as a community, you have confronted these challenges and risen above them. GLIS majors understand the interconnectedness of human problems and the global scale of their complexities—knowledge that will help you navigate through this crisis and the ones to come.

While many farewell remarks for graduates come with admonitions to "follow your passions," GLIS students, especially in the past year, have learned the importance of building strong communities and developing meaningful relationships. As you pursue your passions in the next stage of life, we encourage you to develop deep connections with others—connections that hold you up in times of challenge and push you toward the common good. To paraphrase many wise people, we encourage you to commit to challenges that you cannot necessarily complete in a single lifetime or advance without the help of others—challenges such as confronting racism, addressing climate change and global inequality, and upholding human dignity. Embrace our right and responsibility to participate, stand with those who are marginalized, bridge divisions, and nurture our earth.

As you begin the next phase of your life, we hope you will fondly look back on your time at Penn State as an eye-opening period of exploration and discovery that can continue into the future. Please stay in touch; we wish you all the best!



Dr. Jonathan Abel
Associate Professor of
Comparative Literature
and Japanese



Dr. Joseph Wright
Professor of Political Science

CONGRATULATIONS FROM GLIS FACULTY

Cyanne Loyle, Ph.D.

**Associate Professor of Political Science
and International Affairs**

It has been a pleasure to teach and learn from our GLIS students this year. While the last year has been tough for all of us, GLIS students are well-prepared to meet the challenges that the global pandemic has levied on the global economy, health care infrastructure, environment, and beyond. Congratulations, GLIS Class of 2021! The challenges that we will face in the next decades will be serious, but I am confident knowing our excellent Penn State alumni are prepared to tackle them!



Yuliya V. Ladygina, Ph.D.

**Assistant Professor of Russian
and Global Studies**

Congratulations on achieving your bachelor's degree! This is a tremendous accomplishment, and I commend your perseverance and dedication. You made it despite the extraordinary challenges you had to face in your last year of college. A job well done! I am infinitely grateful that I had a chance to work with some of you this semester—you are such a creative, smart, and, most importantly, kind and inclusive bunch. With the GLIS degree in hand, I am confident that you have the expertise, knowledge, and compassion to lead us through COVID-19 and many other global crises that the world is facing today. Go out, set the world on its ear, and make the GLIS program proud; all my very best!



LETTER TO THE GRADUATING CLASS

by Cristina Cebotaru, Managing Editor

Hello, Class of 2021! I want to start off by saying congratulations on all that we have accomplished here at Penn State. It's been a true honor and privilege being your classmate as we learned, discussed, and grew up together. As we wrap up our time at Penn State, I hope we can all take a moment to reflect on the impacts all of us have made on this campus and the wonderful leaders we have all become. Further, for many of us, GLIS's flexibility has provided us the opportunity to combine our interests and forge our own paths. As a result, GLIS has created a unique group of students from many different backgrounds and fields who have exchanged ideas and taught each other. This has led to many great conversations with one another. However, at this stage, we have taught each other everything we know and now need to take our next steps into the world so that we may continue to learn and grow. While that may look different for each of us, it's important to remember that we are all GLIS students using our international perspectives and skills to tackle global issues. At the end of the day, GLIS would not be what it is without its students. Despite graduating during a pandemic, this group of students has demonstrated incredible resilience and strength, and we should all be very proud of ourselves. As we near the end of this pandemic, I hope we remember the lessons we learned from this experience and continue to advocate for making the world better. I know we are all bound for great things, and I cannot wait to see what we all accomplish. Just remember, this is not the end but rather just the beginning.



Cristina Cebotaru

Cristina Cebotaru is a senior majoring in Global and International Studies with a focus in the Global Conflict pathway and a minor in Psychology (concentration in Neuroscience). During her time at Penn State, Cristina has been involved with the University Park Undergraduate Association (UPUA), first serving on freshmen council and later on the executive board as the director of records. This experience allowed Cristina to directly meet and hear the stories of many Penn State students. It gave Cristina the opportunity to work alongside many wonderful student leaders who have made incredible contributions to the University. After graduation, Cristina plans to attend graduate school at New York University.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

by Cristina Cebotaru



Abigail Slate

"GLIS to me represents the opportunity to curate my studies in a way that makes sense to me. It also represents a strong interdisciplinary foundation for whatever comes next in my academic or career path."

Abigail Slate

Class of 2021

Fulbright Finalist

Abigail is a senior majoring in Global and International Studies, Linguistics, German, and French. During her time at Penn State, she has engaged with many of the global programs offered by the University. In spring 2019, Abigail studied abroad in Senegal with the University of Minnesota in International Development Program. Through this program, she not only took classes but also participated in an internship where she spent time teaching English at a middle school in a rural village. Following this experience, she spent the 2019-20 academic year studying at the University of Freiburg in Germany through a direct enrollment program. Abigail was fortunate enough to be able to stay there through the pandemic as she had family and friends who lived outside of Freiburg. These experiences led her to apply for a Fulbright ETA award in Nepal, which she feels would be a great opportunity to explore her academic interests and gain some professional experiences to determine whether she wants to pursue graduate school or start her career. Currently, Abigail is considering linguistics research, education, and international development.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

by Cristina Cebotaru, Managing Editor

Abigail chose GLIS in part because of how flexible the major is, which allowed her to tailor her studies to her own interests and experiences. A lot of other academic tracks follow a really strict schedule of prescribed courses that have to be taken at Penn State, so she really appreciated that the GLIS program worked with her to make sure that the courses she took while abroad would fit into her plan. She also really appreciated the fact that the GLIS major emphasized the importance of taking courses that focus on a diversity of countries and cultures, not just on one region or issue in particular, as this allows students to develop a well-rounded global perspective.

Because the GLIS major is so flexible, Abigail had a lot of say in what she wanted to focus on and learn about. Not only did this allow her to think critically about what aspects of GLIS were important to her, the education itself has also prepared her for any number of internationally-oriented academic programs or career paths.

Abigail is a finalist for the Fulbright English Teaching Assistant award. If chosen, she will be placed in a classroom to provide assistance to local English teachers in Nepal.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

by Gianna Pinto, Undergraduate Student Relations



Lindsey Toomer '21 in Paris, France

"Taking classes abroad for GLIS was the most valuable experience I've had at Penn State."

Lindsey Toomer

Class of 2021

GLIS Major Student Marshal

Lindsey Toomer is the GLIS major student marshal for the graduating spring class of 2021 and is a native to Milford, Pennsylvania. In addition to GLIS with a focus on the Culture and Identity pathway, Lindsey is also a double major in Digital and Print Journalism with a minor in French. During her time at Penn State, Lindsey has studied abroad in Paris, France, where she was able to witness the Notre-Dame Cathedral fire in spring 2019. In summer 2019, Lindsey interned at the Bethel Woods Center for the Arts (where the original Woodstock Festival took place fifty years prior). At the moment, Lindsey is interning at the Colorado Press Association. Lindsey has thoroughly enjoyed her time here at Penn State. Post-graduation, Lindsey will be covering local government, education, and environment as a reporter for *Summit County News* in Frisco, Colorado.

WHY GLIS?

by Christina Fomunyoh, Student Outreach

Grace DePaull '22

Grace DePaull '22 chose to major in Global and International Studies, because the major served as an excellent way for her to explore her interests in learning about many cultures, engaging with individuals of different backgrounds, and feeding her curiosity for the world. Grace feels that GLIS has given her the opportunity and flexibility of studying abroad, as well as accepting an internship with an international organization. Majoring in GLIS has helped Grace recognize the diverse world that we live in and has given her the tools to be culturally competent, understanding, and critically engaged in the world around her. As someone who wishes to work internationally in a creative industry, GLIS has offered Grace a greater understanding of who she may be working with, where she may reside, and how she can contribute in a positive way.



Grace DePaull

"GLIS has allowed me to immerse myself in many cultures without necessarily having to travel beyond the classroom, due to the variety of coursework offered."



Oliviah Gearhart

Oliviah Gearhart '23

Coming into college, Oliviah Gearhart '23, wasn't sure exactly what she wanted to do other than something internationally focused. Not knowing much about it, she decided to apply to Penn State as a GLIS major and figure out the rest later. Two years later, Oliviah is still a GLIS major and is incredibly happy with her choice. Being able to pick a pathway and take a variety of classes from multiple disciplines to fulfill the major requirements has been rewarding to her. As a GLIS major in the Global Conflict pathway, she has taken courses in political science, security and risk analysis, environment, and others. Knowing how diverse the curriculum is and how willing professors are to help you study what you want to study with an international focus made GLIS the perfect choice for Oliviah.

"GLIS has helped show me where my true interests lie."

WHY GLIS?

by Christina Fomunyoh, Student Outreach

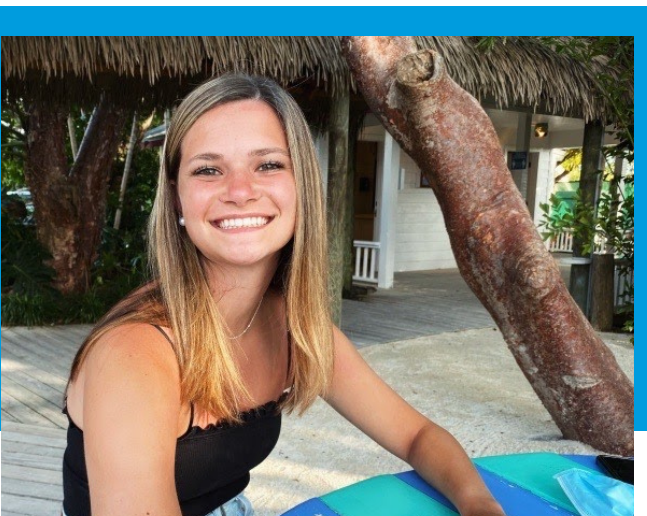
Gianna Pinto '22

Growing up, Gianna Pinto '22 always found herself interested in cultures different than her own. She loved the idea of learning new traditions, languages and history. Gianna knew that she wanted her future job to include a culture-based approach in the workplace. When she applied to Penn State, Gianna noticed that their GLIS program was far more developed than other schools. She knew that GLIS would give her the opportunity to uncover the knowledge she wanted to, while also giving her a hands-on and in-depth teaching process. For Gianna, GLIS provides the bridge to other cultures and languages, and allows her a certain amount of creative freedom in her academic plan at Penn State.



Gianna Pinto

"GLIS has given me the opportunity to explore new cultures through study abroad and the wide array of classes offered"



Kelly Zahour

"GLIS has given me the opportunity to not only learn in the classroom, but to work with students from all over the world and learn from them as well."

Kelly Zahour '22

Coming into Penn State, Kelly Zahour '22, was extremely overwhelmed with the amount of options and different paths she could take for a major. After talking with her advisor about her interests, she was recommended to take a few GLIS classes to see if she liked them. After doing so, Kelly realized how interesting these classes could be. She felt that she could gain a deeper understanding of cultures and societies across the globe through the wide variety of classes GLIS has to offer. Being a GLIS major has taught Kelly why it is so important that we take the time to learn about other countries along with issues humans face around the world and has made her grateful for the opportunities and education she has.

WHY GLIS?

by Christina Fomunyoh, Student Outreach

Christina Fomunyoh '23

From an early age, Christina has always been fascinated by the world and the various cultures and identities that inhabit it. "I believe this is inspired by my families' history, as both of my parents are immigrants and I have been deeply immersed cross-culturally as a Cameroonian-American," she explained. GLIS was the best option for Christina, because it allowed her to explore various perspectives to understanding global issues and intercultural exchanges. Christina explains that she was raised with the philosophy of "being the change one wishes to see in the world," and Global and International Studies supports this ideology for her. Christina hopes to one day work for an international organization that supports peace and equality or for the Foreign Service. She believes GLIS provides a solid foundation for her professional goals.



Gianna Pinto

"As soon as I found out I was attending Penn State, I knew I wanted to find a major that strengthened my passion of connecting and learning about others all over the world."

ABOUT THE GLIS CLASS OF 2021

by Dr. Sommer Mitchell

The Global and International Studies Class of 2021 is a diverse group of undergraduates. There are thirty-one students graduating this semester with twenty earning a bachelor of arts degree and eleven earning a bachelor of science degree. There are eight Paterno Fellows, eight Schreyer Scholars, and eleven students who have earned a high enough grade-point average to graduate with distinction. Those include four graduating with a 3.79 or higher grade-point average and Cum Laude distinction, five with a 3.9 or higher grade-point average and Magna Cum Laude distinction, and two graduating with Summa Cum Laude distinction—Noelle Musolino with a 4.0 grade-point average and Allie Ryave with 3.99 grade-point average. Many graduates were double majors with one or more minors while also studying abroad, completing internships, and participating in undergraduate research.

Congratulations, GLIS graduates! The years you have spent working toward your degree have demonstrated your persistence and dedication. None more so than the last year, which proves you can embrace change, adapt when necessary, and flourish despite the odds. The experiences gained, lessons learned, and opportunities taken and lost during your time as Penn Staters has prepared you for what's next. As with your college experience, there is no one path or right way to move into the next phase of life. Wherever you are off to next, the GLIS program wishes you the best of luck! Never forget this time in your life and always look forward to what comes next.



Dr. Sommer Mitchell
Assistant Teaching Professor
of Global Studies and
Director of Undergraduate
Studies for GLIS

GRADUATES IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Quin Brannaka

"I am graduating with majors in GLIS and Comparative Literature, with minors in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) and Spanish. My GLIS major has allowed me to dive into the relationship between language and identity. It has highlighted to me the importance of reading and hearing other people's stories, and the impact that storytelling can have."



Lydia Carey

"The GLIS program and the Human Rights pathway was focused enough to provide me with a well-rounded understanding of human rights related conflicts in diverse contexts, but flexible enough for me to explore human rights in the realms of sustainability, development, aid, and even in the Penn State community itself. The GLIS community of students is unique because we all have a wide range of distinct career goals, but with a focus on the intersectionality and interrelatedness of our respective paths, a beneficially deeper understanding of the world and our careers in it is reached."



Cristina Cebotaru

"The GLIS program has provided me with a flexible well-rounded education, which has allowed me to explore many areas of interest. As a result, I have been able to take courses across many different subject areas ranging from political science to neuroscience. Therefore, it has been such a joy being in a major that has only allowed me to truly further my interests and expand my knowledge."

GRADUATES IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Christopher Egg-Krings

"I switched into Global and International Studies during my sophomore year, and what an amazing decision that was! I have really appreciated my professors, the class discussions, and the GLIS community."



Norma Garcia

"Throughout my time as a GLIS major, the best experience has been the opportunity to learn from the most kind and talented faculty. I have an endless gratitude to both Joseph Wright and Cyanne Loyle not only for enriching my education as professors, but also taking the time to support me and offer insight to my future endeavors past graduation."



Faith Gongaware

"I was sure I wanted to be a GLIS major because of my passion for intercultural connections, which I discovered the first time I went abroad. GLIS has allowed me to integrate this passion into my career path by developing my skills of communication, critical thinking, and cultural sensitivity. I'm so grateful for the opportunities to explore the world that GLIS has given me and the ways in which it will enable me to continue doing so throughout my career."

GRADUATES IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Ashley Hade

"Majoring in GLIS is one of the best decisions of my life. At Penn State, I've been able to explore my favorite topic—culture. I've learned so much from my courses and am excited to apply that knowledge in my career and daily life!"



Kay Hawkins

"I strongly recommend the GLIS program at Penn State. This program is very flexible, so it allows for you to take the classes that you really want to take. I was able to not only grow intellectually but also as a person thanks to GLIS!"



MJ Jonsson

"GLIS has allowed me to pursue an education that I wanted; it allowed me to take courses that I am truly interested in. GLIS has taught me so much about the world we live in and how countries are operating in a more globalized world today. I am excited to apply the ideas I have learned during my time in GLIS in my future endeavors at law school and beyond in my career. Choosing GLIS as a major was easily one of the best decisions I made in my time at Penn State."

GRADUATES IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Caroline McDonald

"Joining the GLIS program was one of the best decisions I made freshman year. Given the ability to take classes on a variety of different topics like women's studies, history, and political science, I was able to combine all my interests into one major. Not only did GLIS provide me the opportunity to study abroad, but strongly recommended it and provided funding to help me pay for it. The most outstanding part of this program however, is how it encouraged us to be open-minded about the world around us and embrace any differences we may encounter."



Kaitlyn Merrill

"My time at Penn State caused me to experience new and exciting opportunities to learn. The Global and International Studies major has broadened my thinking and understanding of the world. In particular, the GLIS 400 class introduced many new concepts to me, and I will continue to use them throughout my life."



Noelle Musolino

"I am so glad I chose to major in Global and International Studies in the Human Rights pathway. My GLIS education truly helped form the way I view the world and care about world issues."

GRADUATES IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Srishti Ponnala

"Through GLIS, I discovered the interconnectedness between the events and choices I have made and the path it has led me on toward my future in the field of law. Being able to choose courses from different pathways, as well as many disciplines across campus, helped me identify new areas of interest and learning opportunities that I had not set out to seek. Taking a required course in one pathway turned into an apprenticeship at World in Conversation and acquiring new skills of facilitation. My passion for travel led to studying abroad in the Netherlands and that experience ignited a new passion for human rights, which eventually became the focus of my honors thesis and field of law I want to pursue."



Augusta Rentenbach

"Going into my first year of college, I knew I wanted to help people. I just wasn't sure how to do it. I stumbled upon my major (GLIS) and fell in love with it. I have always been an advocate for both civil rights and human rights and my major included everything I wanted to study. I see the importance of this work and field every day where my peers and I are all working together to create a better globalized world."



Megan Roberts

"My time with GLIS has been more enriching than I even thought it could have been. I came into college not knowing what was fully included in Global and International Studies, but because I loved learning about history and global news, I decided to take a chance on it. I have learned so much and even became fluent in two other languages because of it, which is so amazing to be able to say!"

GRADUATES IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Abigail Slate

"The flexibility and interdisciplinary nature of the GLIS major afforded me the opportunity to curate my studies to my passions and interests. I studied abroad for three semesters in two different countries, and the experiences I had in Senegal and in Germany allowed me to develop a well-rounded global perspective. The interdisciplinary, international foundation that I established as a GLIS major will prepare me for whatever experiences come next in my academic or career path."



Lindsey Toomer

"Being in the GLIS major has allowed to learn more about the topics I'm most passionate about reporting on, which will only put me further ahead in the journalism industry. Taking classes abroad for the major was definitely the most valuable experience I've had, and I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to do so."

Graduates Not Pictured

Amir Abdelnaby

Mia Bollmann

Margaret Cochran

Cydney Edwards

Erika Grunwald

Sohrab Hoghooghi

Hope Keilman

Brandon Klyce

Claudia Knapp

Emily Mansfield

Aiden Neigh

Bethany Rutledge

Allie Ryave

Anna Zuckerman

CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!

Ashley Hade
Culture and Identity pathway
Spanish minor
Greencastle, Pennsylvania

Kay Hawkins
Culture and identity pathway
Korean language major
Fairfax, Virginia

Mats Jonsson
Culture and Identity pathway
Scranton, Pennsylvania

Brandon Klyce
Wealth and Inequality pathway
Economics major
Business and the Liberal Arts (BUSLA) minor
Collegeville, Pennsylvania

Claudia Knapp
Wealth and Inequality pathway
Economics and Italian majors
West Chester, Pennsylvania

Caroline McDonald
Human Rights pathway
Philosophy minor
Poughkeepsie, New York

Noelle Musolino
Human Rights pathway
Political Science major and Anthropology minor
Waynesboro, Pennsylvania

Augusta Rentenbach
Human Rights pathway
History major and French minor
Knoxville, Tennessee

Meggie Roberts
Human Rights pathway
Political Science minor
Holocaust and Genocide Studies certificate
New Hope, Pennsylvania

Quin Brannaka
Culture and Identity pathway
Comparative Literature major
Spanish/TESOL minors
State College, Pennsylvania

Chris Egg-Krings
Wealth and Inequality pathway
Radnor, Pennsylvania

Faith Gongaware
Health and Environment pathway
Supply Chain Economics major
International Business minor
Export, Pennsylvania

Lydia Carey
Human Rights pathway
Community, Environment, and Development major
Spanish minor
Centreville, Virginia

Srishti Ponnala
Human Rights pathway
Business, Ethics, and Sociology minors
Allentown, Pennsylvania

Lindsey Toomer
Culture and Identity pathway
Digital and Print Journalism major
French minor
Milford, Pennsylvania

Anna Zuckerman
Culture and Religion (specialized pathway)
History major
Religious Studies minor
Morrisville, Pennsylvania

Amir Abdelnaby
Mia Bollmann
Margaret Cochran
Cydney Edwards
Erika Grunwald
Sohrab Hoghooghi

Hope Keilman
Emily Mansfield
Aidan Neigh
Bethany Rutledge
Allie Ryave
Anna Zuckerman



Cristina Cebotaru
Managing Editor

GLIS major

Global Conflict pathway

Psychology minor

Senior



Christina Fomunyoh
Student Outreach

GLIS major

Wealth and Inequality pathway

Spanish minor

Sophomore



Gianna Pinto
Undergraduate Student Relations

GLIS and Spanish majors

Culture and Identity pathway

Junior



Kelly Zahour
Alumni Relations

GLIS major

Human Rights pathway

Psychology and

Political Science minors

Junior

***Global Leaders of Penn State is looking
to expand our team! If you are interested
in contributing or submitting a story,
please email us at glis@psu.edu.***



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