



GLOBAL LEADERS OF PENN STATE

GLOBAL AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES PROGRAM

Monthly Email Newsletter



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WELCOME

by Lauren Forbes, Managing Editor

Welcome to the graduation issue! Over the 2024–25 academic year, we've enjoyed sharing stories from the GLIS community. At the end of every school year, we dedicate the last issue to the GLIS graduating class. In this issue, we have congratulations and warm wishes from the GLIS director, faculty, and academic adviser. We also have a letter from our graduating newsletter team member Lauren Forbes, information about the class of 2025, a spotlight on the GLIS Student Marshal, and graduates in their own words.

The GLIS newsletter team congratulates our graduating class on their success during their college experience and making the most of their time as Penn Staters. To the graduates, we wish you luck and to the rest of the GLIS community, have a great summer! We'll see you in the fall.



PennState
College of the Liberal Arts

CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE GLIS DIRECTOR

Jonathan E. Abel

**Professor of Comparative Literature and Asian Studies
Interim Director of the Global and International
Studies program**

I am in awe of your perseverance and resilience, as you are members of a generation that became adults in the waning years of the pandemic. Your enthusiasm for face-to-face education, extracurricular events, and community involvement makes your journey to this moment of your college experience truly special.

As GLIS students, you have embarked on a journey of self-discovery, exploring the subjects and areas that genuinely captivate your interests. This autonomy has opened doors to novel academic avenues, enabling you to acquire expertise in a broad spectrum of disciplines, from culture and identity to global conflicts, from health issues to energy consumption and wealth disparities. Guided by your genuine curiosity and a profound interest in the world, you have seized the flexibility of majoring in GLIS to its fullest potential.

Your fortitude through tough times has led you to value the Liberal Arts and Global and International Studies. The broad-based education that you have chosen will serve you well in the uncertain futures upon which you embark. Current politics aside, we know from historical studies that economies tend to ebb and flow, and that students with a Liberal Arts education tend to do better at retooling to reimagine themselves and their careers anew during times of economic downturn than those in other disciplines. The grit and creativity that a Liberal Arts education inculcates is strengthened by your global perspectives. By maintaining an eye towards the planetary scale of whatever problems you confront in the future, you stand a better chance of success in whatever comes your way. You will serve your communities well in comprehending and confronting the intricate challenges facing our world. I extend my sincere congratulations to each of you for embracing these global interests and perspectives and for delving into the diverse cultures, societies, and locations that comprise our global and local communities.

Numerous graduates have elevated GLIS by integrating their studies with complementary majors, minors, internships, or study abroad experiences. Whether interning for the U.S. Department of State, collaborating with local politicians, conducting research in myriad countries, or immersing themselves in language and culture around the world, you have explored the boundless possibilities of a global education.



Jon Abel



CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE GLIS DIRECTOR (continued)

Your unwavering commitment to community engagement, manifesting in classroom participation, involvement in campus organizations, local political endeavors, or global exchanges, is truly commendable. I urge you to continue to actively participate in your local and global communities, sharing the knowledge and insights you have acquired as GLIS students.

Throughout your time at Penn State, you have demonstrated remarkable achievements and significant accomplishments. As you embark on new endeavors and anticipate future challenges, I am confident that the invaluable skills, experiences, and relationships you have cultivated as GLIS students will be instrumental in your success. Your extensive knowledge and potential have the capacity to enrich the lives of your peers, family, colleagues, employers, and the broader community.

I eagerly await the unfolding of the exciting chapters that await you in your postgraduate pursuits. I extend my best wishes for your continued success, fulfillment, and well-being as you embark on this new phase of your life.

CONGRATULATIONS FROM GLIS FACULTY

Yuliya V. Ladygina
Associate Professor of Slavic and
Global and International Studies

Congratulations!
Today is your day.
You're off to great places!
You're off and away!

You have brains in your head.
You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself
*In any direction you choose.**



Congratulations on achieving your bachelor's degrees, GLIS Class of 2025! This is a tremendous accomplishment and an important milestone in your academic careers. I admire your perseverance and dedication and am grateful for the honor and the pleasure of working with some of you over the past couple of years—you are such a creative, smart, kind, and, most importantly, empathetic bunch! I look forward to meeting the rest of you as you return to campus in the years to come. With the GLIS degree in hand, I am confident that you have the expertise, knowledge, and compassion to guide us into the future through many global crises that the world is facing today—from climate change and ever-growing socio-economic inequality to rapid political polarization and escalating global conflicts. Yet, no matter how challenging the world might look today, remember that you have the education and the skills to address them head-on and. Your day is TODAY, so get on your way, set the world on its ear, and make the Penn State GLIS program proud! All my very best!

*Excerpt from *Oh, the Places You'll Go* by Dr. Seuss

CONGRATULATIONS FROM GLIS FACULTY



Cyanne Loyle, Ph.D.

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

Congratulations on reaching this incredible milestone! Your academic journey through the GLIS program at Penn State has equipped you with a profound understanding of the complexities and nuances that shape our world. As you step into the next chapter of your lives, your knowledge and skills are more important than ever. In a world that is constantly evolving, your ability to analyze, understand, and influence the global political landscape will be invaluable. Wherever your career takes you, your contributions will help shape a better, more connected world.

Stay curious, stay informed, and never stop questioning. The challenges ahead are significant, but so are the opportunities. Use your voice to advocate for the values you believe in. Your education has given you the tools to make a difference—now it's up to you to use them.

Congratulations once again to the GLIS Class of 2025!

CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE GLIS ADVISER

Tom Spencer, Ph.D. **Academic Adviser**

Congratulations, graduating students! It is a privilege and honor to see you achieve your goals and complete your studies. Some of you have really “grabbed the reins,” during your time at Penn State, studying abroad in places like Germany, Italy, and Estonia; serve in leadership roles in different campus organizations; and be recognized as All-American athletes. Bringing together these experiences and what you have learned in the Global and International Studies major some of you are continuing to graduate school. I know one of you is going to business school and another is beginning law school. Regardless of where you go after graduation, the GLIS major should serve you well, helping you (a) see global, cultural, societal interdependencies and the inequities among these interdependencies, (b) analyze international transformations, and (c) construct your own arguments and interpretations of global events grounded in a critical, analytic frame. I wish you all the best in your respective futures!



Tom Spencer

LETTER TO THE GRADUATING CLASS

by Lauren Forbes

Dear GLIS 2025 Graduates,

Wow! I cannot believe this day is finally here! All the late nights studying, the ups and downs of our emotions, and the unique challenges we faced in our GLIS classes have led us to this moment! I am so thankful for the incredible four years that Penn State has given me. This is a bittersweet time, with lots of goodbyes but also plenty of new beginnings. As we close this chapter, looking forward to the next one is exciting! As GLIS graduates, we have had many different college experiences: different classes, different pathways, and double majors. We also have many different outcomes for our next chapter: graduate school, different industries, and living abroad. But, with that, we all have one thing in common: the core foundation that GLIS has given us.

As you walk across that stage, feel proud of yourself! We have had such a unique opportunity to major in something as flexible as GLIS, and it has undoubtedly given everyone a unique skill set. However, we were all given the opportunity to learn foundational skills that can be applied to any future career. We navigated diverse cultures and identities, explored different global conflicts, discussed human rights, navigated wealth and inequality, and traversed health and environment. That is an education and experience that has transformed us in ways that no other major could. We also have to thank our dedicated faculty who helped us achieve this goal! Without them, we would not be here today.



Laren Forbes

We are all embarking in different directions but will forever carry the foundational GLIS values. I am grateful for the support and camaraderie we shared during our time at Penn State. You should be extremely proud of the hard work you put in and be grateful for the opportunity to have an experience as transformative as this one. As GLIS majors, you know better than anyone that our world's interconnectedness is so special, and we are never truly apart! Best of luck in the future and I am so proud of all of you!

ABOUT THE CLASS OF 2025

Sommer Mitchell

Director of Undergraduate Studies for GLIS and Associate Teaching Professor of Global and International Studies and Political Science

The GLIS Class of 2025 represents a dynamic and accomplished group of students, united by a passion for understanding the world through a global lens. This semester, nineteen undergraduates are earning their degrees—eleven with a bachelor of arts and eight with a bachelor of science. Among these graduates are three Paterno Fellows, three Schreyer Honors Scholars, and two students graduating with cum laude distinction - Carson Dyck with a GPA of 3.88 and Katie Mussett with a GPA of 3.92.



Sommer Mitchell

We are proud to recognize Lauren Forbes as this year's GLIS Student Marshal. In addition, Carson Dyck, Kaite Mussett, and Jordyn Thomas have been honored with the GLIS Top Academic Graduating Student award. Zion Sykes received the GLIS Civic Engagement Award, Jade Palmer was awarded the GLIS Thesis Prize, and Andriel Tabolo was recognized with the Spirit of GLIS Award for exemplifying the values of the program. Many of these graduates have gone above and beyond, pursuing double majors with multiple minors while also studying abroad, completing internships, and engaging in undergraduate research. Their achievements reflect not only academic excellence but also the curiosity, commitment, and global awareness that define the GLIS community.

Congratulations, GLIS graduates! Earning your degree is a testament to your determination, resilience, and commitment. Through your focus on the Liberal Arts and Global and International Studies, you've cultivated the skills to adapt, lead, and thrive in an ever-changing world. Your time at Penn State has been filled with challenges, growth, and discovery. The experiences you've embraced—both the triumphs and the setbacks—have shaped you and prepared you for the journey ahead. As you take your next steps, remember there's no single path forward, and that's both the beauty and the challenge of this moment. Whatever direction you choose, know that the GLIS program stands behind you, cheering you on.

Carry the spirit of Penn State with you, always—and keep looking ahead with curiosity, courage, and purpose. We are... proud of you!

GLIS CLASS OF 2025 STUDENT MARSHAL

Lauren Forbes '25

Global and International Studies major

Political Science and World Literatures minors



When asked why she chose GLIS, class of 2025 Student Lauren Forbes said she chose the GLIS major because it was an intersection of all her career interests: international security, global affairs, and political science. She felt that GLIS gave a foundation for all those interests— but also for any other career as well. “I think that GLIS was the perfect major for me to choose because I had such a wide variety of interests, and I did not want to pigeonhole myself into just one of them. The amazing thing about GLIS is how diverse the education is and how it can be applicable for any career path I choose; whether that be my initial interests or something completely different.” For example, Lauren was able to take history, political science, comparative literature, math, and art classes that all tied together to contribute to her specific pathway, global conflict.

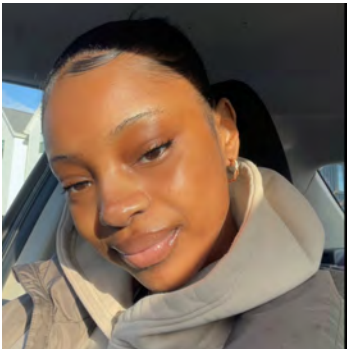
This opportunity to try multiple different types of courses allowed her to explore other passions and add on two minors: political science and comparative literature. “If it weren’t for GLIS courses, I would have never taken a comparative literature class and figured out that that was something I was passionate about.”

One of Lauren's favorite GLIS memories was studying abroad in Lisbon, Portugal with her GLIS 400Y class. “It has allowed me to step outside of the classroom and really participate and get a hands-on feel of the material we were learning. The opportunity to study abroad has been one of my favorite memories in the entirety of my time at Penn State.”

Lauren is involved in the GLIS major in a variety of different ways: she is the Editor for the *Global Leaders at Penn State* newsletter, and she has been an intern at the Center for Global Studies since 2023. “I have loved my time at CGS because it has really shown me how working with a great team makes it seem like you are not working at all!” Outside of GLIS, Lauren is a member of Zeta Tau Alpha sorority. She also was able to participate in the Student Internship Program in the U.S. Department of State. “As someone who is interested in foreign policy, my internship at the State Department was fundamental for my career. It was so incredible being able to be a part of such an important institution, and I made memories to last a lifetime.”

Looking forward, Lauren is planning on working in the same field as her internship, foreign policy. Lauren’s advice for other GLIS students: “Say yes to everything! I can’t tell you how many cool experiences I got out of attending virtual workshops or guest speakers. There are so many opportunities to get involved on campus and I would advise them to take advantage of them!”

GRADUATES IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Hawa Baro

Global and International Studies major

“Throughout my time in GLIS I’ve met not only wonderful colleagues, but also incredible professors. I have learned so much about international relations and global affairs and which has truly inspired me to pursue a graduate education in international development. GLIS has provided me a great foundation for grad school and real-world experience.

The major is incredibly versatile, and I do encourage anyone who has any interest in international affairs or global development to venture off into the GLIS major. I truly enjoyed my time here and couldn't be happier with my major.”

Global and International Studies and Economics majors

“Growing up in New York, I was aware of the stark contrasts in wealth and opportunity that shaped the city around me. The GLIS program has given me the tools to analyze these disparities on a global scale and understand their impacts on communities worldwide. Over the past three years, I have had the pleasure of exploring the intersections of economics, policy, and social justice. The interdisciplinary nature of GLIS has not only broadened my perspective but has also reinforced my commitment to advocating for equitable economic solutions through legal and policy work.”



Eryn-Madison Bell



Mackenzie Brendle

Global and International Studies major
German minor

“My time as a GLIS major has provided me several opportunities to expand my education through study abroad to gain insights on global affairs and strengthen my ability to analyze world events. I am incredibly grateful for the unforgettable experiences the major has provided me with. I am appreciative of the chance to be able to look back at these experiences and all the friends and skills I have acquired through the program.”

GRADUATES IN THEIR OWN WORDS



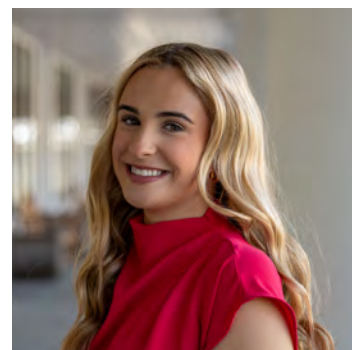
Shane Conrad

Global and International Studies major
History, Political Science, and Military Studies minors

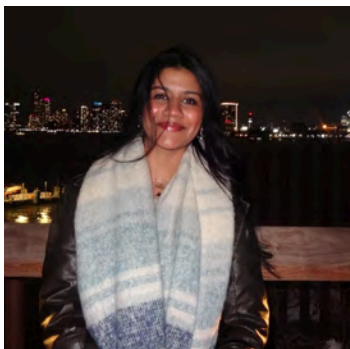
“Being a GLIS major has changed how I understand the world and its complexities. From exploring global systems and governance to engaging in thoughtful conversations about cultural and political dynamics, the major challenged me to think critically and globally. Joining the GLIS program was one of the best decisions I made in college. I look forward to utilizing what I learned to help me in my future military career and other endeavors.”

Global and International Studies major
Political Science and World Literature minors

“Being a GLIS major really shaped my college education and experience! I am so thankful to have had such a diverse education.”



Lauren Forbes



Kareena Kamdar

Global and International Studies major
Smeal College Business Fundamentals certificate

“My time as a GLIS major has been incredibly rewarding, and I’m so grateful for everything I’ve learned throughout this journey. From engaging classes to thought-provoking discussions and the support of amazing professors, GLIS has shaped the way I understand the world. I’m excited to take all these experiences with me as I step into the next chapter and continue learning and growing beyond Penn State.”

GRADUATES IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Kaleb Leidy

Global and International Studies major
Political Science minor

“Being a GLIS major was a rewarding experience. Every day I was challenged. I always had to heavily prepare for the intense group discussions that are present in GLIS classes. As such this allowed to me to understand a variety of different perspectives of many different worldly topics, while also challenging those perspectives and defending my own. This is a skill that will serve me well for the rest of my life. Simply put, I will forever be thankful for the knowledge, challenges, and relationships I have developed as a GLIS major.”

Global and International Studies and Political Science majors
Spanish, Arabic, and Philosophy minors
Master's of International Affairs

“GLIS is truly a special program. Throughout my time in the major, I’ve met so many incredible people, both faculty and students, and have had amazing opportunities to not only learn about the world but experience it myself. GLIS has allowed me to make the most out of my education at Penn State through the IUG Program, and I am excited to also be graduating with my Master’s in International Affairs with a concentration in Human Rights and Humanitarian Response. I am especially thankful for my professors, who have always gone above and beyond to make this program a meaningful and inclusive space.”



Katie Mussett

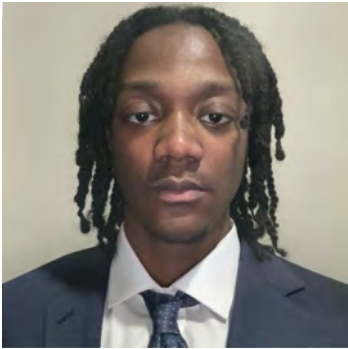


Yamel Padilla Crisostomo

Global and International Studies and Education Policy majors

“My experience with GLIS has exposed me to the world of human rights. My passion for the major has allowed me to travel abroad to Germany and expose myself to the European Union and community.”

GRADUATES IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Kamar Andreas Skeete

Global and International Studies, Economics, and
Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies majors
Biblical Studies Certificate

“My name is Kamar Andreas Skeete, I am a member of the Penn State Fencing Team. My experience with GLIS has been nothing short of amazing. The entire department is filled with people who love to teach and share their knowledge. My experience has been unforgettable, and I've learned so much about the world we live in and its various institutions.”

Global and International Studies and Political Science majors
Chinese and Spanish minors

“My experience with GLIS has been one of discovery. Through pursuing a major in GLIS, I had the opportunity to learn so much about fields of study that with a non-interdisciplinary major, I would have never had the chance to experience. It is because of GLIS that I've had the chance to explore the world, and I'm so grateful.”



Zion Sykes



Andriel Tabolo

Global and International Studies major

“Being a GLIS major showed me how connected global issues really are and how injustice moves across borders. Taking the Human Rights pathway course helped me realize that this is the kind of work I want to do long-term. It sparked something in me, and now I know I want to build a career around advocating for others and challenging systems that cause harm.”

GRADUATES IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Michael Telesca

Global and International Studies major

“I am super happy and grateful for GLIS. Coming into Penn state as undecided was scary, but I'm really satisfied with the major I ended up choosing. I am very excited to apply the knowledge I've learned throughout the major to the real world and hopefully make a change.”

Global and International Studies major

“My experience as a Global and International Studies (GLIS) major has profoundly shaped and broadened my worldview. This program introduced me to concepts and perspectives I might never have encountered otherwise. The impact of my early days in GLIS was so significant that it inspired me to spend a semester abroad in Germany, where I had the opportunity to study the European Union firsthand. I am deeply grateful to the entire GLIS program for their guidance and support throughout these transformative four years.”



Jordyn Thomas

Graduates Not Pictured

Carson Dyck

Justin Magnus

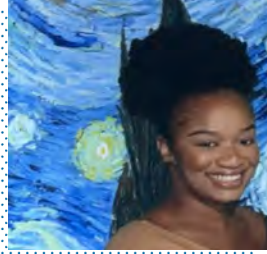
Berenice Nunez

Jade Palmer

Aarushi Thakur



Lauren Forbes
Managing Editor
GLIS major
Global Conflict pathway
Political Science and
World Literature minors
Fourth-Year



Marcayla Connell
Content Writer
GLIS major
Culture and Identity pathway
Fourth-Year



Megg Reddy
Content Writer
GLIS major
Culture and Identity pathway
Fourth-Year



Faith Turnbull
Content Writer
Public Relations major
GLIS, German, and DMTA minors
Third-Year



Cynthia Wang
Content Writer
GLIS major
Culture and Identity pathway
Teaching English to Speakers of Other
Languages and Political Science minors
Third-Year

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If you are interested in joining the team, please email us at glis@psu.edu.



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