Long-standing assumptions about how the world works are under pressure. One-off transactions undercut established institutions. Centers of power are shifting. Cross-border crises have intensified and are remaking the nature of international cooperation.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution is sparking innovation and disrupting the ways societies interact. Technology is altering the way truths and falsehoods are disseminated.

Training in international affairs and policy builds a critical expertise to recognize the cultural, economic, social, and political forces at work in a new world order. It challenges students to develop communications, leadership, and teamwork skills. An interdisciplinary curriculum and a rich community of people integrate differing ideas. Graduates distinguish themselves by their flexibility and adaptability. They can separate facts from opinions.

As you begin your search for a master’s program, consider how schools examine the traditional and fluctuating rules of the game. Look at how the school provides a solid foundation and offers insight into emerging issues. Consider how you can gain the skills to lead on the global, national, and local levels. Ask how the school anticipates and works to understand changes to the way people work and live.

International affairs graduates master underlying principles of an ever-changing world to prepare for the future—whatever it holds.

By Carmen Iezzi Mezzera
Executive Director
Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs (@apsiainfo)

ForeignAffairs.com/GraduateSchoolForum
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Notre Dame’s New Keough School of Global Affairs Focuses on Integration and Partnership

How does the Keough School meet the new challenges in international affairs?

Today, in the era of artificial intelligence and the internet of things, power—the ability to envision constructive change and leverage resources to foster it—must come from below and from across. On a given day, a young thirty-something innovator—or hacker—may wield more power than a head of state, and the architects of new technology think and act beyond territorial and political boundaries. How can this emerging dynamism be directed to serve the common good?

At the Keough School, our focus is forging effective partnerships with various state and non-state actors—including NGOs, private organizations, and local communities—to respond to cross-border crises and threats to human flourishing.

While mastery of new technologies is critical, it must be matched by appreciation of the diverse global communities bearing the brunt of rapid and often chaotic change; these peoples, the vulnerable of the world, are our stakeholders.

That is why we study cultures, history, and religions as well as treaties; social values as well as demographics; effective development practices and policies as well as geopolitics. Our mission is to advance integral human development: the flourishing of whole communities and the whole person.

How does the structure of the new school reflect the new international order?

Contemporary challenges to human development are interrelated: climate change may lead to food shortages, trigger mass migration, and incite resource wars. Health crises follow all of these traumas. Governments fail to deliver essential services.

In this environment, no single discipline acts in isolation. Accordingly, the Keough School is structured to encourage integration of multiple disciplines and practices, with nine multi- and interdisciplinary institutes, each focusing on several dimensions of a problem and in conversation with the other units.

Tell us about the Keough School community.

Our second graduating Master of Global Affairs (MGA) cohort includes thirty-four students from eighteen different countries. Similarly, our faculty come from a diverse range of backgrounds and disciplines. This rich array of voices animates everything we do at the Keough School.

How does the MGA program prepare graduates to lead?

We combine rigorous coursework with hands-on projects and immersive field experiences that provide on-the-job training. All students in the MGA program participate in global fieldwork, research, and development practice as part of our curriculum.

Students interact with prominent campus visitors, such as CEOs of nonprofits, diplomats, and world leaders. They also take full advantage of the Keough School’s center in Washington, DC, where they work with policymakers, government officials, and international organizations.

What does the future look like for graduates?

Graduates are prepared to compete for positions of influence, having held prestigious placements with the United Nations, U.S. Department of State, Brookings Institution, and Oxfam. Notre Dame’s impressive alumni network, which extends across eleven international centers and over two hundred and seventy alumni clubs worldwide, helps graduates succeed.

The Keough School is committed to ensuring that our students are not burdened by student debt following graduation. Generous funding packages and fellowships are available to all accepted into the MGA program.
The Relevance of Gender Studies in International Affairs

How does the study of gender come into the study of international affairs?

Gender is increasingly recognized as a critical concept in fully understanding processes of globalization, international development, humanitarian crises, violent extremism, war, and peace-building. Gender is central to how societies are structured and the roles and responsibilities of women and men, as well as the valuing of girls and boys and how they are positioned within the family, community, and broader society. These demarcations of power lead to the creation of social and gender norms, such as the expectations that women will become mothers, caretakers, and peacemakers and that boys will become fathers, leaders, and soldiers. Worldwide, efforts by armed groups to undermine women’s rights, including the sexual enslavement of women and girls, is a common thread running throughout global conflicts and terrorism. Other global issues include the persistent gender gap in girls’ completion of education; the acute impact of climate change on female smallholder farmers; and the need for women’s equal participation in peace processes. To understand issues of conflict and peace, we need to analyze them from a gender perspective as well as through an intersectionality lens. We need all genders in this conversation to shift our understandings to create just and peaceful societies.

Do you see some big inflection points in the study of gender and security policy issues in the near future?

Since the adoption of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000 and its eight sister resolutions making up the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda, there has been a rapidly growing interest in the transformative potential of viewing security policy issues through a gender lens. While initially the focus of the agenda was on women and girls, there is now a growing interest in men and boys. The #MeToo movement has opened up space for new discourses on eliminating gender-based violence and has encouraged more men to become vocal and visible in their support for gender equality issues. In response to this growing area of interest, we will be launching a new course on masculinities and international affairs soon.

What are some of the most topical gender related issues you or your students are doing research on?

The subject of gender in international affairs and its intersections with race, religion, age, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, and class is a highly complex and sensitive topic. Elliott School graduate students specializing in gender are typically majoring in one of three programs: International Development Studies, Masters in International Affairs, or Masters in Policy and Practice. Students researching a global gender policy capstone cover a wide variety of topics revealing discriminatory gender norms and hierarchical orders of masculinities, femininities, and sexualities. Students are given free rein to follow their specific areas of interest, which are wide ranging. Their research is key to supporting the development of new policies aimed at transforming the gender inequalities that are an integral driver of violence and conflict. Countries that have higher levels of gender equality are more stable, secure, and prosperous. The greater the equality between women and men in a country or region, the less war prone it is.
Seeing the World Through a Multipolar Lens at Seton Hall’s School of Diplomacy and International Relations

You were recently named a Fulbright Scholar and will be looking into the impact of domestic politics and Sino-U.S. rivalry on the strategic behavior of Southeast Asian states. What are ways that today’s students prepare to contribute in a volatile global arena?

Having a voice on pivotal issues, such as how Asian states are navigating the changing balance of power and the trade war between the United States and China, requires a keen understanding of the sociopolitical systems of other countries. Analysts need a firm grasp of the underlying theories and concepts that enable them to address important questions that move beyond the simplistic labels we may see in the press and on social media. There is also a tendency for students to view global issues solely through the prism of U.S. interests. At the School of Diplomacy, we explore the world through a multipolar lens and help our students develop the skills and background knowledge needed to move global politics forward.

As a foreign policy analyst, how has your focus in the classroom shifted to reflect emerging issues?

The only thing certain in international relations (IR) is change. We adapt by expanding our knowledge of emerging issues and their potential impact on traditional national interests, such as security and economic prosperity. Today, foreign policy also encompasses transnational challenges, such as climate change, migration, global health, and food and water security. Our graduate programs provide opportunities in and outside of the classroom for students to wrestle with these issues, and engage in the conversations that are shaping the field.

How are student assignments addressing critical skills needed for tomorrow’s international affairs professional?

Our classrooms emphasize strong critical thinking skills that enable students to analyze foreign policy issues, compare cases, and draw lessons from them are crucial. After studying the Iranian nuclear deal or the sanctions against Russia, my students were asked what recommendations they would make as an advisor to the president. They needed to marshal evidence to support one position—such as whether U.S. withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action was in the country’s interest—and lay out the alternative argument and rebut it. This is precisely the type of analysis and writing required for students wishing to enter policy debates—as a State Department, Department of Defense, or congressional analyst.

Cities and other subnational areas are having a greater influence on international issues. What opportunities do graduates in IR have to lead on the local, national, and global levels?

As globalization connects us all, hard distinctions between the international, domestic, and local areas are eroding. Leaders interested in promoting economic prosperity in states and cities will increasingly solicit investment from foreign companies and promote local products abroad, creating opportunities for IR graduates to work in trade and investment offices. At the same time, combating global problems, such as climate change and transnational terrorism, requires local solutions, opening doors for School of Diplomacy alumni to apply their knowledge and address critical issues in local communities.
Prioritizing Global Studies

The Hamilton Lugar School ranks first in the nation in the number of languages taught—more than eighty. You are doing this when some universities are moving in the other direction, shrinking or eliminating global and language programs, and at time of growing appeals to turn inward. What do you make of this moment from your viewpoint as a university that looks outwards?

The Hamilton Lugar School is built on a longstanding commitment to global studies, whatever the political mood. During the McCarthy period, for example, the university resisted political pressure on its Russian and East European Institute and, in later years, we prioritized Russian studies, even when attention turned to other subjects. Today, we have a new Russian Studies Workshop, supported by the Carnegie Corporation, a language flagship in Russian, and new faculty in the social sciences and humanities. This same commitment applies to the study of all critical areas and subjects, from East Asia to the Middle East, Eurasia, and the Americas. Our commitment was recognized last year, when eleven of our area studies and language centers were awarded funding under the prestigious Title VI program—the best in Indiana University history and the most in the nation.

When considering graduate programs, many prospective students know what they want to study but aren’t sure how to pay for it. What funding opportunities are available for Hamilton Lugar School students?

We never want cost to be the reason students don’t pursue their dreams. Most Hamilton Lugar School graduate students receive support from the school. For example, our school is the largest recipient of Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships, prestigious Department of Education awards that cover tuition and provide a stipend to our graduate students and some undergrads. We award more than one hundred FLAS fellowships annually to our students. These awards and the many other fellowships available help to ensure our students can focus on scholarship and classroom experience instead of the anxiety of accumulating debt.

You’ve been both a teacher and a practitioner of foreign policy, including as a diplomat. What trends do you see defining the tenure of tomorrow’s diplomats and students of foreign affairs?

The ethos of the Hamilton Lugar School is to “change the world, first seek to understand it.” At the nuts-and-bolts level, what that means is we seek to leverage our area studies strength and combine it with multidisciplinary offerings in international studies. Supporting that goal, we have added more than twenty tenure-track faculty in the past four years. In bringing area and international studies into conversation, we believe we are helping to plug an important gap in academia and, we hope, helping to bridge the worlds of scholarship and policy. Organizations are becoming flatter and challenged to think more broadly—even the famously compartmentalized State Department. We have designed our programs to help ensure our students graduate with global perspectives and regional specializations.
Stanford Teaches Students How to Be Changemakers, Not Just Policy Analysts

As the new director for the Ford Dorsey Master’s in International Policy (MIP), what is your vision for public policy education? How does the program embody this vision?

Many American public policy schools have focused on teaching students a set of quantitative skills that allow them to become policy analysts, which means you are the person writing the policy memo telling your boss what should be done. These skills are important, particularly in an age when evidence-based policy has come under attack from certain quarters.

But actually accomplishing policy change in the real world requires a broader set of skills having to do with the ability to implement policies in the face of political constraints. This requires the ability to manage stakeholder coalitions, neutralize opponents, communicate policies, and generate resources. Moreover, it often turns out that your boss wants you to analyze a precooked solution that solves the wrong problem, without ever being able to ask if you were asking the right question in the first place.

In the redesigned MIP program, we aim to teach both skill sets: to be a good policy analyst and to be a changemaker—a leader able to take policies and make them happen. We have developed a policy problem-solving framework that we think applies in many circumstances to help solve policy problems, whether in or outside government.

If you are interested in the background to this approach to public policy education, you can read more about it in my article “What’s Wrong with Public Policy Education.”

Disruptive technologies shift the way societies interact on a global level and have the potential to change the dimension in which conflicts occur. How does the MIP program equip students with the flexibility and adaptability to confront unfamiliar situations?

Our MIP program has a new track in cyber policy, build around the Freeman Spogli Institute’s (FSI) new Cyber Policy Center. Located in Silicon Valley, our program and Stanford have access to a wide range of expertise not just in technology but also in design thinking, cybersecurity, and issues concerning democracy and social media, as well as international relations specialists who have thought about issues such as hybrid warfare and other new forms of political competition.

The policy problem-solving framework I mentioned earlier can be applied to problems created by technology and as a general approach to dealing with new or unfamiliar situations. The interdisciplinary nature of FSI and the MIP program ensures that students will face problems with multiple sets of tools and can look at them from a variety of perspectives.

In an age defined by digital revolution, how does the program teach students to bridge the gap between policy leaders in areas that have access to technology and leaders in areas that may lack access?

The digital divide is not just a problem in the technological sphere. Technology and the globalization it has produced has created winners and losers along many different dimensions—technological, political, social, and cultural. I think our program is grounded in a set of political values that make students aware of the salience of these broad inequalities and hopefully will provide some methods that can help to overcome them. Further, the faculty include former and current practitioners who have direct experience dealing with these divides and the political wisdom to understand how they may be approached.
JOHN V. KANE
Clinical Assistant Professor
NYU School of Professional Studies
Center for Global Affairs

Data Analysis and Literacy for the Study of Global Issues

You teach graduate courses on data analysis and statistics and have done your own significant research on political psychology and behavior and on experimental research methodologies. How did you become engaged with these areas, and what is their importance to global affairs and security?

I myself completed the MS in Global Affairs at the NYU School of Professional Studies Center for Global Affairs (CGA) in 2009. The experience was transformative, and as a doctoral student in political science, I became fascinated with political behavior and political psychology. I realized that most theories of politics, and of global affairs more broadly, ultimately hinge upon how individuals think and behave. Understanding a country’s policies necessitates an understanding of its citizens—their beliefs, the types of information they are, and are not, receptive to, and how they make political decisions.

Similarly, when we discuss security threats, such as terrorism, sectarian violence, cybercrime, and environmental destruction, we need to understand why individuals are deciding to engage in constructive or destructive activities. Once we possess this knowledge, we can determine how societies can change for the better.

I became convinced that gaining a basic literacy in statistics and data analysis was, above all, a means of self-empowerment in a world that increasingly relies upon data for communicating and making decisions. Graphs employed as “proof” that global temperatures are not rising, for example, can have the appearance of being scientific but often rely upon cherry-picked reference points, which are painfully obvious to those with some training in statistics.

Further, I became interested in the utilization of experiments because these often represent the most powerful means of identifying causal relationships between phenomena. A recent study in the Journal of Politics, for example, employed an experiment in Bosnia to understand how past violence there differentially affects men’s and women’s political engagement. Such studies reveal to students that, once equipped with some knowledge of research design and data analysis, so much more can be learned about global affairs.

How do you approach these topics in the classroom? How do your students use these analytic skills and methodologies in their own work as researchers and practitioners?

Returning to CGA in 2017 as a clinical assistant professor, it was an honor to develop CGA’s specialization in data analytics and to oversee courses that use specialized software to analyze real-world data. Having originally come from a qualitative background myself, I tell students that the content of my courses may be unfamiliar and, at times, intimidating—and that this is perfectly normal. With time and practice, however, students begin to see the logic, applicability, and incalculable value of these scarce skills.

My ultimate goal for students is that they apply these technical skills to the global issues they care about. I have had the distinct pleasure of seeing students produce amazing course papers and thesis projects, enter doctoral programs, and find jobs that prominently feature a data-analytic component. In this way, I believe my courses have helped to further CGA’s mission of growing more knowledgeable, and more capable, global citizens.
At the Intersection of Global Business, Public Policy, and Law: ASU in DC

Midcareer professionals seeking a global focus for their résumés now have three Arizona State University (ASU) master’s degree programs to choose from that are entirely based in Washington, DC. By combining the elite faculty and expertise of ASU’s Thunderbird School of Global Management, Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law, Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions, and the McCain Institute for International Leadership, ASU is able to offer students a curriculum uniquely suited for a new generation of leaders—those who can and must face today’s most pressing global challenges.

What graduate degree programs does ASU have in Washington, DC?

The university is now accepting students into its first graduate degree programs based entirely at ASU’s Ambassador Barbara Barrett and Justice Sandra Day O’Connor Washington Center, located just two blocks from the White House.

Starting in January 2020, the Thunderbird School of Global Management will offer an Executive Master of Arts degree in Global Affairs and Management. Washington-area professionals will be able to boost their marketability by choosing from three pathways: global business, taught by Thunderbird faculty; international law, taught by faculty from the Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law, and global policy, taught in collaboration with Watts College faculty.

For more than seventy years, Thunderbird has been the vanguard of global management and leadership education. Home to the world’s No. 1-ranked master’s degree in global management, according to the Wall Street Journal in 2019, Thunderbird produces unique leaders capable of tackling the world’s greatest challenges.

Ranked nationally in the top 5 percent by U.S. News & World Report, the ASU School of Public Affairs, which is part of Watts College, now offers an Executive Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree created for public sector and public policy managers. The nineteen-month program, offered in collaboration with the McCain Institute, combines an online curriculum with three-day executive sessions in Washington, DC, designed to expand the breadth and depth of students’ professional networks. Executive MPA students are selected based on their ability to demonstrate the value they would add to the learning experience of the entire class.

Finally, the Master of Arts in International Affairs and Leadership degree, offered by the ASU School of Politics and Global Studies and the McCain Institute, prepares students for international leadership roles in a dynamic active learning environment led by senior international affairs professionals from the public and private sectors. Drawing on the legacy of the values-driven leadership embodied by Senator John McCain, the McCain Institute’s access and connectivity in the international community, and ASU’s extensive academic capacity, students will acquire a distinctive edge to succeed in the full spectrum of international affairs professions.

What’s the ASU-in-DC difference?

Many universities have a presence in Washington, DC, either through a lobbyist, an internship coordinator, or a few folks who hand out swag and try to wrangle money out of federal agencies.

But Arizona State University is a presence in Washington, DC, a place where top researchers share their insights with leaders who create policy and serve as catalysts for tangible change in an environment that is often synonymous with partisan dysfunction.
Preparing Leaders for a Transforming World

The next generation of public policy leaders and social entrepreneurs needs to understand current problems while equipping themselves with new and evolving skills to manage tumultuous environments. There is no better place to acquire and hone these skills than at Carnegie Mellon University’s Heinz College, giving graduates a competitive edge in the job market.

The University at the Forefront of Innovation

Carnegie Mellon University is a recognized world leader in technology and innovation in areas such as artificial intelligence, data analytics, autonomous vehicles, human-computer interaction, and cybersecurity. Innovation happens on our campus every day, and we are thrilled as new ideas meant to solve society’s problems become reality.

Heinz College at the Intersection of People, Policy, and Technology

We are intentional about understanding how these innovations affect people and policy. Students have myriad opportunities to engage these issues through coursework, capstone projects, and research opportunities. At Heinz College, we study, educate, and inform through leading research and action hubs, such as the Block Center and the Metro 21—Smart Cities Institute. We bring together innovators, academics, policymakers, and practitioners to study the impact of technology on society: how tech can disrupt in negative ways as well as how it can be used to improve equity and make our communities more prosperous and peaceful.

From Global to Local with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Carnegie Mellon University and Heinz College tackle issues that are both global and local. We are especially excited about opportunities to advance the SDGs that includes work with cities and next generation leaders in collaboration with a number of partners, including the International Youth Foundation and the City of Pittsburgh. Heinz students are on the leading edge of this work, with opportunities to create new initiatives on campus, including helping organizations that want to take action on the SDGs.

The Option to Launch Public Policy Careers in Washington, DC

Washington, DC offers students unique opportunities for professional work, engagement with leaders, building networks, and applying skills to current, critical policy problems. Our master’s Washington DC track provides a pathway to all that Washington has to offer. Students spend the first year of their program in Pittsburgh, completing our highly sought-after core curriculum and engaging experts there. In the second year, students move to Washington, DC, where they work in the federal government, for nonprofits, or for international organizations on Mondays through Thursdays as Heinz Policy Fellows, taking classes in the evenings and on Fridays.

This combination of classroom and experiential learning, with direct application centered on innovation and transformation, is what sets us apart. We encourage you to explore our program and hope you will join us.
Creating New Value in a Rapidly Changing World

The Asia-Pacific has grown into a driver of the world economy, and its economic influence, in turn, has profoundly reshaped the world’s geopolitical landscape. The region plays a critical part in the major trends challenging the traditional international order. Studying global affairs from an Asian-Pacific vantage point will allow young leaders to fully grasp the nature of the new global landscape, which is no longer shaped solely by major Western nation-states, and effectively address the challenges facing the world today. Located in the heart of Tokyo, a global city, Waseda University prides itself on being one of the region’s leading private universities with its global network of alumni. The Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies (GSAPS) offers MA and PhD programs, training students to address a wide range of regional and global issues within a highly international and diverse learning environment.

How does GSAPS prepare students to navigate today’s shifting global landscape?

The complexities of today’s global affairs seem to reaffirm our program’s philosophy, which emphasizes a comprehensive and interdisciplinary analytic approach as well as the willingness and ability to embrace diversity. From its founding, GSAPS has endeavored to build a curriculum to help students address a host of complex and often interconnected issues in the Asia-Pacific and elsewhere, including income and gender disparities, environmental issues, poverty, territorial disputes, national security, human rights and security, aging populations and falling birth rates, and impacts of technology, in an interdisciplinary framework. The centerpiece of the MA program is a faculty-led project research seminar, where students develop analytical and research skills necessary for thesis research with peers from all over the world. Our faculty—all leaders in their respective academic fields—work with students to develop a process for identifying their academic interests and crystallizing these into research results. In doing so, we aim to help students make an intellectual contribution to the creation of new value useful for shaping a better world, rather than merely adapt to emerging global realities.

The makeup of our student body, roughly 80 percent of which hail from outside Japan, ensures students learn in a highly international environment while embracing both the challenges and opportunities of diversity. The geographical scope of our curriculum and research extends beyond the Asia-Pacific. Students can take advantage of our international exchange programs to expand their horizon beyond Japan. In addition to providing opportunities to study in our partner graduate schools around the world, we have been focusing on developing programs with one of our partner schools in Europe, which allow students to study international relations and regionalism more intensively from comparative and inter-regional perspectives.

How do GSAPS students perform professionally after graduation?

Our broad multidisciplinary training helps our students find job opportunities and build successful careers in international organizations, governments, NGOs, research institutes, universities and private companies. We expect our graduates to go on to serve and lead society in various capacities in the Asia-Pacific and around the world. Furthermore, we expect them to lead collective global efforts to build a better future, as seen in the sustainable development goals of the United Nations, by bringing various local, national, and international stakeholders together.
Preparing Tomorrow’s Leaders to Solve the World’s Toughest Challenges

As a senior advisor at the White House, you were a major player in negotiating the U.S.–China climate accord, paving the way for the Paris Agreement in 2016. What skills did you draw on that are taught at The Fletcher School?

Over the years, I often found myself referring to concepts that we teach at The Fletcher School, such as pursuit of mutual gain and identifying the zone of possible agreement. Originally, as a graduate student, and now, as a professor, over the years I have built up expertise about China’s economic development and global climate change policy. My interdisciplinary background was immensely useful in both the White House and the State Department.

At Fletcher, we endeavor to prepare the next generation of leaders to address the world’s most complex challenges. As a professor, I focus on incorporating experiential learning into our students’ curricula by focusing on real-world problems in our everyday studies. Additionally, each year I lead a delegation of students to the international climate negotiations, where they observe and participate in the global negotiations firsthand.

What keeps you coming back to the table?

One of the most rewarding aspects of teaching Fletcher students is seeing them apply what they learn in the classroom to the challenging situations they face in the world. Each year, I am a little prouder because I can see how our growing network of alumni is doing so much good in the world.

I’m also excited that The Fletcher School will be welcoming our new dean on October 1st. Rachel Kyte will be Fletcher’s first female dean, and she comes to us with a wealth of experience, most recently as the CEO and special representative of the UN Secretary General for Sustainable Energy for All. There, she led UN efforts toward greater access to clean, affordable energy as part of its action on climate change and sustainable development. We’re also very proud that our new dean is a graduate of The Fletcher School’s Global Master of Arts Program.

The fact that Fletcher has one of the oldest centers focusing on climate, energy, and the environment shows that the school recognized their importance long before they became the hot-button issues they are today. The work we do here is crucial because the world hasn’t yet figured out how to reconcile economic growth and development with environmental protection. The fate of the planet is at stake.

Thanks to Fletcher’s flexible curriculum, students can approach these challenges from different perspectives to develop an interdisciplinary, bespoke expertise. Whether via a national security lens, with a legal eye, or from a business or human security angle, we’re preparing students to tackle issues from a variety of perspectives. When graduates leave Fletcher, they go into the private sector, government roles, the World Bank, consulting firms, the United Nations, politics, NGOs—you name it—and they take their highly customized knowledge and capabilities with them.

You’re the co-director of Fletcher’s Center for International Environment and Resource Policy and the director of the Climate Policy Lab. Climate change is considered one of the “toughest global challenges”; how does Fletcher prepare students to tackle these issues?

The fact that Fletcher has one of the oldest centers focusing on climate, energy, and the environment shows...
Promoting Research and Learning on Global Issues in a Changing World

As one of the country’s top ten professional public policy and planning schools, the Humphrey School of Public Affairs prepares students to lead in communities worldwide. Our school community is shaped by the legacy of Minnesotans who have exercised leadership on global issues ranging from Arvonne and Don Fraser’s pioneering efforts to advance women’s rights and human rights to Harold Stassen’s role in creating the United Nations and leading the first nuclear arms control talks. And with increasing consensus in foreign policy circles that addressing gender inequalities is key to long-term peace and security, the Humphrey School is one of the only public policy schools to offer a concentration in gender and public policy.

How is the Humphrey School making a global impact?

As global institutions and democracies are challenged by climate change, conflict, and rising nationalism, the Humphrey School leads in cutting-edge interdisciplinary research and teaching that seeks solutions to global problems. After a twenty-five year career with the Department of State as a foreign service officer, I know the importance of ensuring students graduate with a deep knowledge about global institutions and issues, the analytical skills to think creatively about new challenges to international systems, and a network of relationships with organizations and individuals working to address those problems.

Professor Greta Friedemann-Sánchez researches the linkage between domestic violence and conflict in Colombia, this year presenting her research at the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva to persuade its members to put pressure on Colombia to address intimate partner violence. Professor Ragul Assaad is an expert in the impact of conflict-related refugee flows on affected groups and host communities, particularly in the Middle East. Professor Deborah Levison studies the work—both labor force and “chores”—and schooling of children in low-income countries.

How is the Humphrey School preparing students to navigate changes in the geopolitical landscape?

Students start with a rigorous foundation in policy analysis, research methods, and professional skills, adding courses addressing a range of global issues, such as international trade, human rights, development practice, and diplomacy. Students have access to leading experts across the University of Minnesota and can earn minors in international law, public health, and human rights.

Our partnership with the Stimson Center in Washington, DC, provides research and internship opportunities on emerging issues in international security, including through dedicated capstone projects. Our faculty, experienced in diplomacy and politics, teach students negotiation skills through courses in diplomacy and a crisis exercise presented by the U.S. Army War College.

After leaving the Humphrey School, alumni are making an impact serving in senior positions in agencies, such as the Department of State, the Government Accountability Office, and at NGOs. Drawing upon the knowledge they gained and networks they built at the Humphrey School, recent graduates have embarked upon careers in the U.S. Foreign Service and with Minnesota-based foreign consulates, at think tanks, such as the Atlantic Council, and in leading international democracy-building and human rights organizations.

Mary Curtin
Diplomat-in-Residence
Humphrey School of Public Affairs
University of Minnesota

Humphrey School of Public Affairs
University of Minnesota
ENRICO LETTA
Dean
Paris School of International Affairs, Sciences Po
Former Prime Minister of Italy

Shaping Global Actors for a More Secure World

What encouraged you to take up the position as dean of the Paris School of International Affairs (PSIA) at Sciences Po in September 2015?

By 2015, PSIA was already recognized as one of the world’s leading professional schools in international affairs. With my experience in European politics and public affairs, I was eager to contribute to PSIA’s outstanding, multilingual community, which is designed to train and shape global actors to understand and respond to the complexities of our world. Our approach of combining theory and practice is, from my perspective, essential when training tomorrow’s leaders and changemakers. By bringing together the best and brightest students from across the globe with world-renowned faculty and practitioners, PSIA has created a space that fosters dialogue, understanding, and, most of all, action for the twenty-first century.

What new projects and innovations have you instigated during your time as dean?

A first priority was to further develop the school as a platform for public debate. We launched our Youth and Leaders Summit in January 2016, which has become an annual conference for leading international affairs personalities to engage PSIA students in an open dialogue about a major global policy. In November 2018, PSIA students and faculty were important contributors to the Paris Peace Forum, a new initiative spearheaded by French President Emmanuel Macron. Through such events, PSIA students have the chance to challenge world leaders and engage with global policy directly.

We have also launched new, collaborative initiatives relating to economic diplomacy and science diplomacy with our university and institutional partners. Our aim is to contribute and raise awareness of the study of these important fields and to develop world-leading training for students and professionals.

As you prepare to celebrate PSIA’s tenth anniversary, what is your vision for the next decade?

Our aim in the coming years is to ensure that PSIA goes from strength-to-strength. We are all proud of what PSIA has accomplished so far—notably, our top-three global ranking for international studies, from the 2019 QS World University Rankings. This is the result of continuous improvement to our curriculum, our collaboration with leading university partners, and, of course, our ability to attract incredible students from across the globe.

Degrees and courses at PSIA will continue to evolve, including in response to student feedback, to ensure we provide the most relevant and effective training so that our graduates learn to understand, navigate, and engage with a complex world, with a view to making it a better, more secure place.
Understanding the Global Economy Through Interdisciplinary Lenses

What sets Fordham University’s Graduate Program in International Political Economy and Development (Fordham IPED) apart from other international affairs programs?

Fordham IPED offers a unique, rigorous, and innovative approach to analyzing contemporary global economic relations. Issues in international economic relations and development are understood from both the political and economic perspectives. Furthermore, we provide a strong quantitative methods foundation, which allows our students to develop robust analytical skills in data analysis, project assessment, and computer programming. We also stress professional experience outside the classroom.

How does Fordham IPED prepare its students for a changing international affairs landscape?

Our core curriculum, consisting of economics and political science foundational courses, provides our students with an advanced interdisciplinary knowledge of economic relations. Our electives allow students to specialize in the fields of international banking and finance, international development studies, international and development economics, or global environmental and resource economics.

Through our summer intern fellowship program, we fund a number of internships for our students to gain practical field experience with international businesses, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations, not only here in New York but also in Washington, DC, as well as in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America.

What unique advantages are available for students in the Fordham IPED program?

Our curriculum and our location in New York City are ideal for anyone who wishes to be at the center of the world economy. Our location affords our students a wealth of internship opportunities, ranging from the United Nations to international nonprofit organizations, international policy institutes, and Wall Street.

We also complement our classes with a weekly lecture series and career trips in New York and Washington, DC, that feature a broad range of professionals highlighting the practitioner perspective on contemporary issues in international affairs.

We have a small class size of roughly twenty-five students, providing the opportunity for close interactions with our supportive and distinguished faculty of experts. Our students come from diverse cultural and professional backgrounds. We draw our students from among the top 40 percent of all applicants to U.S. graduate programs. We offer generous scholarships to exceptional students and provide funding for students’ participation in internship placements, language immersion programs, and international fieldwork overseas.

Lastly, we have a strong alumni network and close association with various international organizations. Our placement record is strong, with about 40 percent of alumni in the private sector, 25 percent in nonprofit, 22 percent in government, and the remaining 13 percent in academia.
Welcoming Challenges to Settled Conceptions

Graduate programs at the Vienna School of International Studies (DA) prepare students to excel in a range of international careers. The eclectic, interdisciplinary teaching approach encourages both theoretical and methodological innovation while maintain a strong practical thrust. Located in the heart of Vienna, the DA is just down the road from numerous international organizations, NGOs, diplomatic missions, and cultural institutions. With alumni from more than one hundred and twenty countries, the DA is just one node in a vast alumni network.

If definitions of power as we knew them are changing, how are DA students and faculty examining emerging sources of power and influence?

Eclectic coursework and a diversity of student backgrounds ensures that DA students welcome challenges to settled conceptions of power and influence. Each of our three graduate programs—the Master of Advanced International Studies, the Master of Science in Environmental Technology and International Affairs, and the Diploma—prepares students to analyze power and influence from numerous angles. Furthermore, local faculty and a robust rotation of visiting professors and experts makes the DA an unwelcome setting for dogma.

Cities and other subnational areas are becoming more influential on international issues. How do students prepare to lead on the local, national, and global levels?

Vienna itself is a city with growing influence on international issues, and DA students benefit from their proximity to the bustling international scene.

Since the campus doubles as a curated forum for international affairs, student life is an immersion experience. Intensive trips to areas such as Kurdish Iraq, Kiev, and the Balkan Peninsula also add experiential depth to student life. The DA makes international affairs tangible, which benefits graduates across the board.

How do DA programs help equip students with flexibility and adaptability in problem-solving?

The DA prepares students to view complex problems through multiple perspectives. Our programs encourage students first to traverse the disciplines of economics, law, history, and political science. Doing so pushes students to think beyond their background knowledge. After completing the initial core coursework, students then acquire in-depth knowledge on the issues and regions that interest them most. Complimented with a battery of language training and practical skills seminars, DA graduates enter the job market comfortable crossing multiple paradigms.

The fourth industrial revolution will change the way people work and live. What innovations has your school promoted to prepare for these changes?

Cutting edge courses, such as Digital Diplomacy and Strategies in Cyberspace, ensure that students always incorporate technological considerations into their analyses. Recent years have also seen a growing interest among student and faculty in computational methodologies, especially regarding econometrics and text mining. Whether by cooperation with the Austrian Artificial Intelligence Agency or representation at start-up incubators, DA faculty go to great lengths to encourage technological experiments with international resonance.
Mastering Analysis and Public Engagement

You’re an international development and foreign aid scholar who also writes for leading general-audience publications and is frequently quoted in the media. How does your public engagement influence students who take your classes?

Graduate students at the Sanford School of Public Policy prepare for careers through coursework that teaches both rigorous analysis and the ability to communicate conclusions to diverse audiences. In today’s workplace, knowing how to write an effective blog post or communicate with a radio host can be as important as demonstrating mastery of the well-known policy memo. My scholarly work has examined the impact of trade agreements and foreign aid in Central America. When extreme violence, food insecurity related to climate change, and high levels of poverty led to increases in migrants leaving that region, there was demand for engaging on these issues with a broader audience. My own efforts to engage different audiences help me teach these techniques more effectively.

How does the Sanford school help students transition to meaningful careers?

The small size of Sanford programs allows students to receive individualized career counseling. Our career services professionals help students pinpoint meaningful internships and jobs. Students receive assistance in networking and guidance on how to prepare professional materials. A highlight is the annual trip to Washington, DC, where students meet a variety of alumni and potential employers with interests similar to their own, through panels and site visits.

Sanford alumni work in nearly one hundred countries. Graduates include the founder of the Global Fund for Children, a peacebuilder working in Syria, U.S. Foreign Service officers fighting human trafficking, and the founder of a global nonprofit helping improve health-care access. Our loyal alumni often return to campus or connect in other ways with current students to offer guidance and advice.

What are some distinguishing characteristics of the Sanford curriculum?

Sanford graduate programs train students in economics, policy analysis and empirical analysis. The Sanford Master of Public Policy program also takes the unusual step of requiring a course in ethical analysis, training students to examine ethical implications of foreign and domestic policy. The Master of International Development Program offers flexibility to meet the needs of mid-career professionals. The combination of these two programs results in as many as thirty countries being represented in our programs each year. This creates opportunities for learning from classmates with diverse experiences and perspectives. Courses incorporate multiple forms of policy writing and critical thinking in individual and group assignments. All students complete a master’s project that allows them to dig more deeply into a client-based or research-oriented project.

Opportunities also exist outside the regular classroom, including our Global Policy Program in Geneva and our Summer School for Future International Development Leaders in India. Bass Connections is a unique on-campus opportunity, allowing students to join interdisciplinary research teams focusing on critical, contemporary problems. Current project teams are exploring clean energy access and impacts of electronic waste on maternal and fetal health, among other issues.
In the Nation’s Service and the Service of Humanity

What’s unique about the Woodrow Wilson School’s approach to policy?

Our distinctive course of study strikes a balance between theory and practice. Ninety-two full-time faculty members teach at the school, most with dual appointments, representing eleven different departments. International relations scholars combine expert analysis of a shifting world order with insight into how history influences today’s geopolitical landscape. Our faculty conduct innovative research; provide policymakers, nonprofits, and research centers with expert, nonpartisan policy analysis; and provide students with the tools and knowledge needed to tackle important policy issues. Students select one of four fields of concentration and can deepen their knowledge in specific areas of study through certificates in health and health policy, urban policy, or science, technology, and environmental policy. All students receive an education focused on rigorous quantitative and qualitative analysis—an adaptable “policy toolkit” that allows them to excel in any field, domestically or internationally.

How do Woodrow Wilson School students apply classroom lessons to real-world policy challenges?

We believe that learning extends beyond the classroom. Formal coursework is enriched with public lectures and informal talks with policymakers and advocates working on the important issues of the day. We send students all over the world to learn in the field—required summer internships for Master in Public Affairs students, policy workshops to analyze a complex issue and present recommendations to a real client, or fieldwork to supplement formal studies. The result: students are able to learn about any policy topic from various vantage points.

How does the school support students’ career goals and objectives?

We take the view that the school should invest in the students so they can focus on their studies and pursue careers in public service without worrying about financing their graduate education. Generous financial aid is offered to all graduate students covering full tuition and required fees for everyone, as well as financial support for travel to complement policy workshops, for language training, and for summer internships. Our career services team is dedicated to helping launch students’ careers, providing coaching, guidance, and resources for the lifecycle of their careers.

How does the Woodrow Wilson School engage in foreign affairs and foreign policy, especially as the rules of international affairs seem to be changing?

For a school our size, we offer remarkable range in this regard. Our faculty and practitioners study international relations, politics, and economics, and our twenty centers and programs focus on policy issues ranging from climate change and forced migration to security studies, health, and finance. We are a home for the study and debate of national and international policy and support a variety of educational, research, enrichment, and outreach activities. Opportunities abound for students to gain the skills necessary to become the next generation of strategic thinkers and decision-makers. Recognizing the ways in which advancements in information technology are affecting global relationships, we invest heavily in IT policy studies. In addition to our eighty-plus tenured faculty, we regularly host visiting leaders and diplomats. Ambassadors Daniel C. Kurtzer and Ryan Crocker, both of whom have led crisis decision- and policymaking processes, teach at the school and engage with our community.
Develop Real-World Adaptable Skills for Improving Communities Around the World

The way Roza Vasileva sees it, the future is data: in particular, data gathered by governments—local, regional, national, international—and shared with citizens to make their communities, and their countries, better.

Roza’s desire to make the world a better place drove her to study in the United States as a Fulbright Scholar and to launch a career spearheading open data in more than a dozen countries. What made that happen, more than anything, were her experiences at the No. 1 ranked Maxwell School of Syracuse University.

As she puts it, “Maxwell was life changing for me, in terms of discovering what I should be doing with my life.”

Roza is an information and communication technology (ICT) and open data consultant at the World Bank—a Maxwell internship that turned into a career—with an eye toward her PhD. We caught up with her before her latest trip to Tanzania.

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What is open data’s role in international development?

Open data for government is an initiative to release raw data for use in everyday applications. In Tanzania, we are working with geospatial data in a range of projects: participatory mapping, using drones for collecting high-resolution geodata, and developing flood preparedness plans with communities.

Technology is developing so fast—it’s fascinating seeing how it can help communities.

You graduated before Maxwell launched a certificate in Data Analytics for Public Policy and the Autonomous Systems Policy Institute. How did the school prepare you for these rapidly evolving fields?

I remember when I started at the World Bank, my boss said to me, “You don’t have any background in ICT. What are you doing here?” Six years down the road, I’m still here; he doesn’t want to let me go.

My interest in ICT began during a class in which we discussed how to apply a range of technologies in government work. Then, Maxwell gave me a push—especially through the internship at the World Bank—to explore ICT for development. Part of my assignment was to pilot, in Russia, a new methodology they were developing: the Open Data Readiness Assessment, which we’ve since implemented in dozens of countries.

Every day, I use my leadership and program management training from Maxwell, including budgeting, proposal writing, identifying and framing problems, program evaluation, and managing people and teams. I often have flashbacks of Maxwell professors and their modules!

One of the benefits of Maxwell is its campus in Washington, DC, where students take classes and engage in high-profile internships. What was your experience like?

It was a big draw for me. I took classes in international programs and foreign affairs, all in the evening, while earning credit for the World Bank internship during the day.

Maxwell is also famous for networking. It’s one of the key skills they instill. We established an alumni network at the World Bank that meets regularly. While I was in DC, our numbers jumped from twenty to fifty to over eighty alumni, who stay in touch and help each other.

Maxwell
Meeting the Challenges of Emerging Sources of Power and Influence

For over twenty years the Bush School of Government and Public Service has prepared the next generation of public servants to deal with the complex challenges of a changing world. In a strictly nonpartisan environment, Bush School students discuss and debate the key international and domestic issues affecting our country and the world as a whole. A typical class could be led by a distinguished academic expert on the Middle East, a former administrator of the Agency for International Development, or an experienced practitioner in the field of international NGOs. The focus is clearly on the future: how can Bush School students make a difference in a world where power centers are changing, technology is rapidly altering how ideas are transmitted, and the once bipolar international arena has been replaced by a multiplicity of threats?

How is the Bush School different from other schools of international affairs and public service?

Probably the most distinctive feature of the Bush School is its professional focus. There is an expectation that the majority of Bush School graduates will go into careers in government, nonprofit management, or some other form of public service. As a result, the faculty is a blend of academic professionals and nationally recognized practitioners from the worlds of diplomacy, intelligence, the military, law enforcement, homeland security, nonprofit, development, and state and local government. In our experience, this has been a winning formula in preparing students for professional careers. Bush School graduates are comfortable in their academic fields but also have the hands-on skills and knowledge that employers value. Our intelligence and counterterrorism classes, for example, include practical training in professional tradecraft.

What are some of the other advantages of the Bush School experience?

All students accepted into the Bush School’s two-year programs receive a financial award and in-state tuition, reducing their debt load. Additionally, College Station offers an affordable cost of living, much lower than many competitor programs offer. These cost savings enable our students to choose jobs of interest to them, not what best repays their loans. Bush School students participate in culminating capstone projects where they deliver high-quality, faculty-guided research to real-world clients, such as the State Department, the Director of National Intelligence, U.S. military commands, and state and local governments. To develop their language skills, international affairs students are given no-cost access to foreign language software and discussion groups led by native speakers. In the summer between their first and second years, students either complete internships with government agencies or other sponsors or, alternatively, do intensive foreign language study. Finally, the Bush School is part of a large research university of over 60,000 students that features world-class departments and institutes in a variety of fields, including public health, cyber, nuclear engineering, transportation, agriculture, and many others. The Bush School’s close collaboration with these other units enables students to design tailored academic programs to address specialized career goals. With dedicated career staff and faculty helping along the way, Bush School students find careers that matter to them, with between 81 and 95 percent employed within six months of graduation.
Preparing for an Ever-Changing World

What is the most important change in international affairs over the past five years?

Global leadership by the United States is no longer a given. By turning away from multilateral agreements, the Donald J. Trump administration accelerated a shift already underway with the rise of China as a global power. In response, other nations are creating new alliances or strengthening existing ones. A good example of this is the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership. When the United States withdrew from the Trans-Pacific Partnership in January 2017, eleven nations adjusted goals and proceeded with an agreement that more closely aligns them with each other.

How does the School of International Service (SIS) prepare students for a world in which the United States’ dominance in global affairs is no longer guaranteed?

We teach our students about the realities and the potential of an ever-changing world and prepare them with skills in international and intercultural relations, including diplomacy and communication. Our International and Intercultural Communication program is the first program of its type in the United States, and more than fifty years on, it’s still an innovator in the field. We also offer a graduate program in International Economic Relations, which focuses on international trade, finance, investment, development, and governance.

How does SIS remain at the forefront of international affairs teaching and learning?

The future of graduate education offers students a choice of where and when they can study. We now offer an on-campus, skills-based degree in International Affairs Policy and Analysis; starting this fall, we’ll offer a new online degree in International Relations and Business, jointly with the Kogod School of Business.

Our faculty continue to take prominent roles in advancing the scholarship and policy applications of our field. Our new Center for Security, Innovation, and New Technology is a forward-thinking collective that leverages research, engagement, and a community of scholars to find optimal, humane solutions to technology-based issues. Our Accountability Research Center, on the other hand, works toward global transparency and responsive governance with an impressive roster of partners promoting citizen action. Viewing these two together provides a snapshot of the SIS personality: engaged in important global questions from a human-centered perspective.

What responsibility do international affairs schools have to adapt to the changing face of work in how we prepare our students?

The Fourth Industrial Revolution is breaking down barriers between nations even more than previous moves toward globalization. This brings both challenges and opportunities. We prepare our students for cultural fluency and careers in global service.

As a higher education institution, we must advocate for coherent U.S. policy on international education, underpinned by an understanding that “international education” isn’t simply sending our students abroad or bringing international students to our campuses. We must holistically develop curricula that include scholars and thought leaders from the global south. We must engage with cultural nuance and prepare our students to flourish in a world where very little is clear cut.
You launched the school’s newest research center. What is it, and how can future Global Policy and Strategy students benefit from the work the center is doing?

We launched the Center for Commerce and Diplomacy in early 2019 to understand the causes and consequences of the institutions of trade diplomacy. Diplomats operate within a set of domestic and international institutions that govern their behavior in international trade negotiations. But we have little systematic knowledge about the specifics of these procedures, how they came into being, how they vary over time and across countries, and how they affect economic outcomes. As the world looks to shape the rules and institutions governing the next era of globalization, we hope to provide the analytical tools and knowledge to policymakers who seek to make these as robust as possible.

Why is commercial diplomacy important in today’s political and economic climate?

After World War II, countries negotiated a series of multilateral, regional, and bilateral agreements that dramatically reduced policy barriers to global trade and investment. Most notable among these was the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, which was the predecessor of the current World Trade Organization. These agreements led to massive increases in trade, foreign investment, and productivity, over the past seventy-five years.

Today, the open world economy, which has bolstered global economic growth, is under threat. Populist pressures, nationalism, and financial crises have weakened the base of support for global integration even at its core. We seek to design institutions that allow commerce and diplomacy to interact for the advancement of worldwide peace and prosperity.

You grew up in Jamaica and went to school on the East Coast. How has living in California shaped your outlook on policy and economics?

The culture of freedom that permeates the state infects all who live here, in the best way possible. My experience in California has served to reinforce many of the basic principles governing markets that economics teaches. At the same time, it has heightened my awareness of income disparities within the United States. Coming from a poorer country, inequality in a large developed country was not salient. However, my California experience has taught me that inequality is as much of an issue within countries as it is across countries. This is a feature of development that has yet to be addressed adequately in the economics or politics literature.

What skills do students in your classes gain to help them in the future job market?

As a game theorist, I teach my students about the politics of international trade policy, focusing on the games being played between countries. Game theory helps students understand the purpose of trade agreements: when they can be successful and when they are likely to fail. The game structure and payoffs are determined by market structure, and so students are taught what strategies are feasible in industries that are perfectly competitive versus industries marked by market power, externalities, or other market imperfections. Through the lens of game theory, students are taught to critically assess actions and pronouncements of policymakers, and consequently, to be able to guide future trade policy strategy.
Preparing Leaders for an Era of Change

Why is the study of international relations important today?

International relations is an inescapable part of everyone’s life, from the foods we eat to the goods we purchase to whether countries go to war. Everyone is affected by it.

Today, the international order that has made possible the remarkable growth and improvements in quality of life over the past 75 years is at a watershed. Geopolitics are changing; global forces such as climate change exercise power that no state can control; and liberal democracy faces competition and challenges that we have not seen in generations. The world needs leaders who understand these developments, and who have the practical skills to respond to them.

Why study at Johns Hopkins SAIS?

Johns Hopkins SAIS is a unique professional school that was founded in 1943 at a time when the world was in extraordinary flux. Today, our students may focus on different issues, but our tradition of structured learning—rooted in international economics, American foreign policy, strategic studies, international development, and regional studies—combined with practical skills and policy engagement remains as relevant as ever.

We are integrating new fields of inquiry into the study of international relations, such as global health, food insecurity, cybersecurity, and sustainable energy. And while our two-year Master of Arts degree remains our flagship program, we are rapidly broadening our offerings in specialized one-year degree programs in fields like global risk, international economics and finance, European public policy, and energy and sustainability. We have recently introduced a new practitioner’s doctorate and are increasingly offering part-time, online, and hybrid forms of education.

Our graduates are known around the world for their cultural fluency, mastery of complexity, and approach to decision-making informed by the realities of the world as it is. And hands-on learning is a hallmark of the Johns Hopkins SAIS experience. Through summer internships and practicum projects with professional clients, students apply what they have learned in the classroom to complex, real-world problems. They go on dozens of staff rides and study trips each year. In this year alone, they met with officials in Colombia coordinating that country’s response to migration out of Venezuela, analyzed the energy sector in Pakistan, met with authorities planning and overseeing free trade zones and ports in China, and studied democratization and stabilization efforts in Tunisia.

Our faculty of practically-minded scholars and scholarly practitioners, are all committed to teaching and learning. Students gain exposure in the classroom to scholars in the forefront of their field, and to experts who have negotiated treaties and trade pacts, run multimillion dollar aid programs, and commanded military forces in the field. Our global alumni network includes 20,000 graduates working in leading roles in 140 countries. They mentor current students, host group visits, and help students make direct connections to employers in their field.

Studying at Johns Hopkins SAIS means learning from the best, becoming part of a large and growing community, and preparing to adapt to whatever challenges a turbulent world will throw your way.
Rockefeller College at UAlbany: Preparing Students for a Rapidly-Changing World

In what ways does Rockefeller College’s Master of International Affairs (MIA) program differ from other international affairs programs?

We offer our students a highly flexible program that can be tailored to suit their particular goals. Our classes tend to be small, usually with fewer than fifteen students in a classroom. In order to accommodate the needs of working professionals, we offer all of our core courses in the evenings. These courses are designed in a way that allows students who may be out of town to join the class by videoconference. The program’s location in Albany, the state capital of New York, offers many advantages: we’re within easy reach of global hubs, such as New York City and Washington, DC, but by being in a smaller city, we’re able to offer our students a program that is much more affordable than others in terms of both tuition and living costs.

How do the courses taught in the program reflect the changing nature of global politics?

Many of the features of the international system that had been taken for granted in the post-Cold War era have been thrown into doubt as a result of recent political developments. Our faculty are able to bring their extensive expertise in the worlds of academia and policymaking to help students make sense of these changes. For instance, in my seminar on global environmental politics, we spend a lot of time discussing attempts to address climate change through mechanisms that lie outside of conventional state-to-state diplomacy—for example, through transnational networks of cities, such as the C40, or through market-based mechanisms. Many members of our faculty have had years of experience working with organizations, such as the U.S. Department of Defense, the United Nations, or the World Bank, among many others. They teach courses that address contemporary issues, such as the global refugee crisis, cybersecurity, economic underdevelopment, and the rise of transnational terrorist movements.

How does your program help to develop the skills that students will need to succeed in a rapidly changing international environment?

Our MIA is, first and foremost, a professional degree. It’s designed to prepare students for careers in international affairs, and the design of our program reflects this. The courses are taught in a way that emphasizes practical skills, such as writing policy memos and effectively presenting complex material to diverse groups of decision-makers. We also train all of our students in the statistical and computational skills that are required to succeed in an increasingly data-driven field.

What support is offered to students trying to find careers in international affairs?

Rockefeller College alumni have an excellent placement record, thanks in large part to the emphasis we place on helping to develop our students’ skills in preparing for a competitive job market. All of our students are required to take a professional development course in their first year. We also offer one-on-one coaching to help students develop their résumés, prepare for interviews, and make connections through Rockefeller’s extensive alumni network.
Dr. Amanda Klekowski von Koppенфельс

Advancing International Studies in the Capital of Europe with World-Leading Academics and Experienced Practitioners

What makes the Brussels School of International Studies special?

Our school is right at the heart of Europe and sits close to the institutions making decisions influencing all of us, wherever we are in the world. Our students are part of this, combining a world-class master’s level education while being immersed in conferences, internships, seminars, and lectures across the city. It is a truly unique experience that will prepare students for an exciting range of careers in the international sector. Students that hit the ground running and grab all the opportunities that Brussels has to offer will find a rewarding experience that is hard to beat.

Can you discuss in more detail about how students are equipped with flexibility in problem-solving?

Our programs are interdisciplinary, and this encourages students to build a degree that brings together a variety of disciplines. For example, following a master’s degree in Conflict Studies allows students to study conflict in a theoretical and historical context and also looks at the legal and practical aspects via modules such as Law of Armed Conflict and Negotiation and Mediation. The variety of classes ensures students learn a range of problem-solving skills, and the combination of academic and practitioner teaching brings a contemporary flavor to the classroom, sometimes involving real-life, ongoing case studies. In several modules, students play simulation games—for example, acting as mediators in an international conflict or negotiating among EU member states.

Could you expand on your curriculum and program structure, and how it has developed?

We are a truly international school and endeavor to teach on contemporary issues that reflect the changing world order. Our master’s degrees in Migration and International Relations particularly investigate the challenges faced by organizations, charities, and NGOs to keep abreast of shifts in political structures and a more globalized world. Students relish the opportunity to combine two specializations into one degree, and this interdisciplinary approach ensures students are equipped with a wide range of skills. New modules in Development, Disability, and Disadvantage, along with Politics of Health in Humanitarian Disasters, will enhance our offer and bring in subjects from a global health pathway. Global health issues continue to dominate headlines and are likely to become more prevalent, directly impacting international relations.

How do you prepare graduates to lead on the local, national, and global levels?

At the Brussels School, we aim to equip our students with a quality education while exposing them to internship, job, and networking opportunities across a wide spectrum of industries in the city of Brussels. This approach enables students to implement their knowledge in a variety of sectors and gain valuable experience for future careers. Internships with lobbying groups, for example, enable students to develop skills that will teach them to be influential within various sectors, be it politics, the oil industry, or within human rights. International organizations invariably have an office in Brussels, and this gives our students fantastic access to develop networks on an international level and bring these skills back to their own local or regional area.
Looking to the Future

The Fourth Industrial Revolution will change the way people work and live. What innovations has your school promoted to prepare for these changes?

We recognize that technological innovation is the underlying foundation of the international system. Everything is rooted in how changes in technology impact the way people engage with each other, either the way they do harm to each other or the way they cooperate and create opportunities. If the forms of engagement change, as they have with changing technology, that will have ripple effects on all the other elements based on that foundation. Changing technology has also impacted the ways that great powers, nonstate actors, and small powers engage with each other and the international community.

We are making a major investment to try to understand the implications of new technology. In January 2019, we launched the Center for Security and Emerging Technology (CSET), a research organization focused on studying the security impacts of emerging technologies, supporting academic work in security and technology studies, and delivering nonpartisan analysis to the policy community. As one of the biggest centers on how emerging technologies reshape the security landscape, CSET will initially focus on the effects of progress in artificial intelligence and advanced computing.

We have hired new faculty who are working on cybersecurity, and students in our Security Studies graduate program can choose to concentrate on technology and security. Georgetown has always been an innovator in science, technology, and international affairs at the undergraduate level, and we’re working on expanding it to the graduate level. We recently launched a partnership between the World Bank and our Master’s in Foreign Service program, Global Human Development program, and Science, Technology and International Affairs program, focused on how digital technology is transforming agriculture around the world. Students will be asked to delve into multiple facets of technology and agriculture, including digital financial services and precision crop monitoring with the aim of examining how these will transform markets and individual livelihoods worldwide.

Cities and other subnational areas are becoming more influential on international issues. How do you prepare graduates to lead on the local, national, and global levels?

Increasingly, there are more entities outside of the U.S. federal government who are playing roles in international affairs. Our students need to be prepared for that. They need to understand how Washington, DC, works, but they also need to be able to make innovations outside of the Beltway. With the federal government pulling back on issues such as climate change and the recent changing trade policies, states are building up their own apparatuses to handle international affairs. Our alumni are taking the lead on that; for example, Bud Colligan, class of 1976, recently became senior advisor for international affairs and trade to California Governor Gavin Newsom. Although we’ve always been a Washington school, that doesn’t mean we only train students for the Washington power structure.
Dr. Weaver conducts research on and teaches international development, evaluation methods, and writing for global policy.

How does the Lyndon B. Johnson (LBJ) School equip students to engage with the global policy world?

Students at the LBJ School get hands-on training through projects with leading institutions, such as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the World Bank, the United Nations and the State Department. Our students learn a lot of practical skills—ArcGIS, evaluation methods, and grant writing—and have opportunities to intern all over the world. One of our global policy students recently wrote our resident intelligence officer from the U.S. Consulate in Frankfurt, where she is interning, to share how prepared she felt for her work thanks to her LBJ courses. An alumnus who specializes in Asia and foreign policy works for the Congressional Research Service and says he owes it all to his experiences at the LBJ School.

How do you work with students in your research?

I love working with students in our yearlong policy research projects—the LBJ School’s capstone course. On one trip to Malawi, my students and I worked with international aid donors and the government to gather subnational data on all the aid projects in the country. We geo-mapped the data to create interactive maps that policymakers could use to assess the allocation of aid. In one meeting, a minister of finance looked closely at one of the maps and, with great excitement in his voice, declared, “We’re putting all of resources in the wrong spot! I have to talk to the donors about this!” It was a great moment when we realized our research was going to make a real difference. Our work quickly led to other multimillion-dollar research grants that have directly contributed to international aid transparency and accountability, while providing LBJ students with tremendous opportunities to delve into the complex world of global development finance.

Most recently, I worked with students to develop an online, open-source advocacy toolkit for groups working toward the UN sustainable development goal to end global hunger, improve nutrition, and enhance food security. While learning how to use Python and R Shiny App required a steep learning curve, the students developed deep familiarity with policy advocacy and how to influence Congress on these critical global issues.

What makes the LBJ School stand out?

The LBJ School provides an extraordinary number of fellowships, in addition to the lowest tuition rates—by far—of any top ten policy school. This includes numerous fellowships to support professional development and internships around the world, as well as research and teaching assistantships. On all counts, the LBJ School provides the best value. We offer a top-tier education and outstanding career placement records in foreign service, federal and state agencies, international governmental and nongovernmental organizations, and the private and philanthropic sectors. Students are taught by world-class faculty and mentored by an alumni network over 4,300 strong.

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