

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS INTERNATIONAL AND GLOBAL STUDIES PROGRAM

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

2023-2024

Message from the Director

Dear INST Friends,

Thanks for your interest in the International and Global Studies Program. We are happy that you are engaging with our program.



Whether you are an alumni, current student, faculty, staff, or benefactor, we are glad to connect with you. I'm happy to join the program as Director and start my first academic year in this new role. The 2023-2024 year was robust, as usual, and many thanks to the Associate Director of INST, Kelly Hammond, who stepped in and directed the program during the Spring 2024 semester. Her leadership and vision kept the program vibrant, and I look forward to collaborating closely with her this year. Stay tuned for exciting initiatives in the Spring.

International and Global Studies students truly make “the world their classroom.” We are happy to see more study abroad opportunities offered to and enjoyed by our students. With our faculty alone, students were able to study in Italy, Japan, and Spain this summer, besides the diverse opportunities provided across campus.

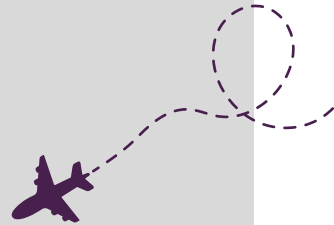
Numerous students have been engaging in internships all year long, whether assisting folks in Northwest Arkansas or abroad. This year we had students interning in Italy and Greece, working with diverse non-for-profit organizations. We had a series of stellar Honors Thesis projects this year, all highlighted in the Newsletter.

Finally, our alumni are making a direct, positive impact on the world we all share. Daisy Rehbock (2024) just graduated and will be off to the Peace Core. After completing law school, Benjamin Helper (2019) is working in criminal justice as a deputy district attorney. Allyson Layman (2021) is doing amazing work in the field of international cyber security. These are just three examples of our students' outstanding endeavors after graduation. A degree in International and Global Studies opens a wealth of opportunities for our students as it prepares them to be global citizens.

If you have new ideas, or are interested in getting more involved with INST, whether as a student, faculty member, or alumnus, we would love to hear from you. There is always a place for you and your expertise in the program.

Best wishes for a wonderful academic year,

Ryan Calabretta-Sajder
Director of International and Global Studies
Associate Professor of Italian, WLLC
Associate Director of Gender Studies



Message from the Associate Director

Welcome to INST! We are so glad you are here!

The International and Global Studies Program is a dynamic undergraduate program in Fulbright



College with great majors and minors. I have been a faculty member at the University of Arkansas in the Department of History since 2015, and I joined INST as the Associate Director in 2022. I am constantly amazed and impressed by the quality of the students in our program and their academic output, and it is a pleasure to watch our grads go on to do amazing things!

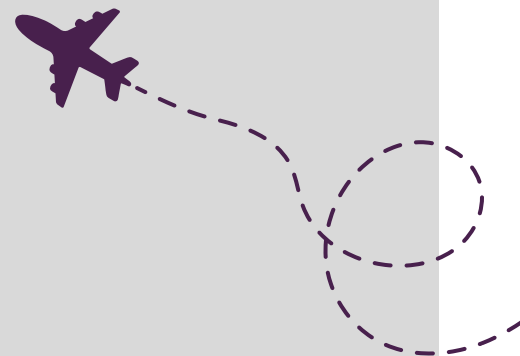
We are fortunate here at the University of Arkansas to have a great support system for our program. Our students take classes from affiliate programs like African and African American Studies, Asian Studies, Indigenous Studies, Gender Studies, Geography, History and Political Science, to name a few. We would not be where we are without our partnerships with these programs across Fulbright College and around campus.

We also rely on the support of the Study Abroad Program. They help us send our students to incredible destinations around the world to gain real life experience and the language skills to succeed in their fields upon graduation. We have been working with the Office of Study Abroad to curate specific programs for our INST majors and minors that will suit their specific degree needs.

As a mentor, I have seen students' study abroad in places like Taiwan, South Korea and Japan, and then go on to pursue master's degrees in Asian studies at top schools in the US and abroad or enter prestigious Law programs at top-ranked colleges around the United States. Our students also go on to be history teachers, work for tech firms in places like Austin and Palo Alto, and work for the government in varying capacities. All in all, we are extremely proud of our students and our grads and the difference they are making in Arkansas and further afield.

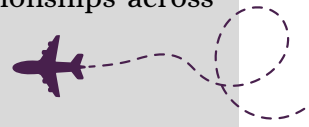
We appreciate the ongoing support from the INST community and hope to see it grow over the next few years. Please stay in touch and tell us what you are up to!

Take Care,
Kelly Hammond
Associate Professor, Department of History



THINGS WE DO

- Run a capstone seminar which every student must complete to graduate
- Encourage students to pursue College or Departmental Honors and write a Honor's Thesis
- Offer specialized courses, such as Introduction to International and Global Studies and the International Studies Seminar (capstone) on a regular basis
- Promote area studies in our curriculum
- Provide interdisciplinary course offerings
- Mentor Honor's students and supervise Honor's theses
- Bring in internationally renowned speakers to give student-centered talks
- Provide students with funding to participate in events and associations such as Model UN, International Honor's Society, and Sigma Iota Rho
- Run thesis and study abroad workshops
- Fund faculty research
- Support study abroad and collaboration with area studies programs
- Cultivate interdisciplinary relationships across campus



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Allyson Layman, INST 2021 Alumni

Allyson Layman graduated from the University of Arkansas in 2021 with an impressive triple-major degree in Political Science, International Studies, and Arabic. After graduation, Layman went on to pursue a master's in Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. Layman currently works for a British intelligence company called Sibylline as an Embedded Threat Monitoring and Global Intelligence Analyst. She is embedded at Apple Corporate in Austin, and provides intelligence on threat actors and geopolitics for Apple.

When asked how her INST background helped her get to where she is now, Layman said, "I took a research writing course through INST that was incredibly helpful for writing in graduate school. I felt equipped to structure larger research projects because of it. Dr. Hammond's *Islam in Asia* course was also very helpful in exposing me to Islam in cultures other than those found in the Middle East. I felt it gave me an advantage, especially when embarking on courses I didn't have a lot of expertise in. I was able to approach those courses more open-mindedly."

For any incoming INST students, Layman advises students to, "lean into courses that interest them and to take courses they might not have considered."

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

**Benjamin Hepler,
INST 2019 Alumni**

Benjamin Hepler graduated from the University of Arkansas in 2019 with a degree in International Studies with a concentration in International Security, and a minor in Criminal Justice. From there, Hepler attended the University of Colorado Law School, graduated in 2022, and passed the Colorado bar that same year. His internship experiences during grad school included interning for a private law firm, and the 1st Judicial District Attorney's Office. Hepler now works at the 1st as a deputy district attorney, where he maintains a felony



docket. Hepler said, "I absolutely love this job as I work to keep the community safe and advocate for victims of anything from theft to domestic violence and sexual assault."

When asked how his INST background helped to get him where he is now in life and in his career, Hepler said, "My INST degree was very helpful in law school. I had a lot of incredible INST professors at the U of A who taught me how to look at problems and come up with creative solutions and answers, which has been great in making me a better trial attorney."

Hepler expressed great appreciation for his INST degree and the lessons he was able to learn during his undergraduate experience, specifically highlighting several INST courses. When asked if he had any advice for any current or incoming INST students, Hepler said, "Study abroad! I was lucky enough to get a second chance to do this, but you won't all have that. Also take advantage of office hours. I didn't start doing this until junior year but the mentorship I got from my professors was invaluable to getting me to where I am now."

INST UNDERGRADUATE HONORS THESES, 2024

Andrea Abarca, “The Purepecha and Food Identity”

Daisy Rehbock, “Gender Equality Threatened: A Digital Communication Analysis of Spanish Right-Wing Political Parties.” **Daisy won the research symposium!**

Jessica Soto, “Discourse Analysis of Social Media’s Perception of GenZ Culture in the United States”

Josie Zakrzewski, “How Ideas of Race Impact Displaced People: An Analysis of Humanitarian Resources in Ukraine and Afghanistan”

Victoria Savage, “Responsible Great Power or Threat? Chinese Involvement in 21st Century Africa”

HIGHLIGHTED FACULTY AWARDS AND PUBLICATIONS

Dr. Ryan Calabretta-Sajder

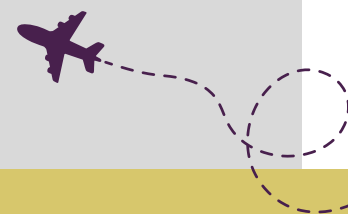
- Inducted to the **University of Arkansas's Teaching Academy**, Fall 2023
- American Association of University Supervisors and Coordinators, **Innovation in Language Program Direction Award**, December 2023.
- **Guest Editor** of *Italica's* 100th Anniversary issue.

Dr. Kelly Hammond

- University of Arkansas Library **Open Access Publication Grant** for her forthcoming article “Wearing many hats: Chinese Muslim General Bai Chongxi,” in the *Journal of Chinese Military History*
- **University Distinguished Rising Teaching Achievement Award**, UARK Alumni Association
- **Outstanding Teacher Award**, Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences

Dr. Edward Holland

- Dr. Holland coauthored a paper titled “Born for a storm”: Hard-right social media and civil unrest,” which won the **American Sociological Association's Section on Collective Behavior and Social Movements Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship Article Award**.



FACULTY AND STAFF NEWS

Dr. Ryan Calabretta-Sajder was appointed as the new INST Director in May 2024. Dr. Calabretta-Sajder has been with the university since 2013, and is also an associate professor and section head of Italian, as well as associate director for the Gender Studies program.

Dr. Samuel Scurry joined the INST Faculty as an Instructor after obtaining his Ph.D. in History from the University of Arkansas in May 2024.

India Carlson joined INST as the new administrative specialist in May 2024. India is a 5th generation University of Arkansas alumni and holds a B.A. in interdisciplinary studies with concentrations in anthropology, history, and rhetoric studies.

FACULTY HIGHLIGHT

**Dr. Samuel Scurry,
INST Instructor**

Dr. Sam Scurry graduated from the University of Arkansas with his Ph.D. in History in May 2024, with support from the King Fahd Center for Middle East Studies. Scurry is from South Carolina and received a B.A. in History and German from Clemson University in 2008, which included a year of study as a German Academic Exchange Service Fellow at the University of Mainz in Germany. He then received an MA in History from Clemson University in 2010, as well as an AA in Modern Arabic from the Defense Language Institute in 2014. He served as an Arabic Translator and Intelligence Analyst in the US Air Force from 2011 to 2017.

In addition to his research and teaching courses on the modern Middle East, Scurry has traveled and studied extensively in the region and received numerous awards, grants, and medals for his research and language study and translation. He studied in Morocco in the Defense Language Institute's immersion program and twice was a recipient of the US State Department's Critical Languages Scholarship, in Tunisia and in Jordan. He received the Sturgis International Fellowship through the University of Arkansas and spent five months conducting research in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, and also was awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal for Meritorious Service as a Cryptologic Language Analyst and the National Security Agency and US Air Force Joint Service Achievement Medal for Exceptionally Meritorious Service as a Language Analyst. Scurry was also the recipient of the Hudson Award, the top research-support award for doctoral candidates at the University of Arkansas.

In fall 2024, Dr. Scurry will be teaching two new courses: INST 35003, **“Issues in the Global South: Modern Islamic Political and Intellectual Movements,”** and INST 40003, **“Special Topics in International and Global Studies: Security and Extremism.”**

NEW COURSES OFFERED

In fall 2024, Dr. Hammond will teach a new course called **“Approaching Global History.”** This class is listed as an INST course (INST 46903) and it is cross listed with the Department of History (HIST 46903). Dr. Hammond designed this class to serve two purposes. Firstly, the course is meant to get students to think about the ways that they do history. When we think about larger, more global implications of our work, it allows us to write more compelling and more compassionate history. Secondly, global history allows us to talk about BIG concepts (such as urbanization, environment, migration, displacement, ideology, time, and space) in a way that is grounded in specific historical events. Understanding why global history is important and how it has evolved as a field will give students more tools in their historical arsenals and help them be better informed global citizens. This class will provide tools to think about ways that framing our own work in a more global, ecumenical, and inclusive way leads to better histories.

In fall 2024, Dr. Scurry will teach a new course titled **“Issues in the Global South: Modern Islamic Political and Intellectual Movements”** (INST 35003). In this course we will examine the primary Islamic intellectual and political movements which have emerged in the modern era, spanning North Africa and Southwest and Central Asia, South and Southeast Asia, Indonesia, and China. We will begin with an overview of the rise of Islam and the development of the four main Sunni schools of legal thought, as well as Shi'i legal traditions and Sufism. Building on this historical background, the focus for most of the course will be the new ways in which Muslims came to view their political systems and Islamic law and customs in the context of colonialism, modernization, and globalization. We will consider intellectual movements ranging from Islamic modernism and Salafism to militant nationalists and other extremist groups, and political systems including Islamic democracies, Arab socialist dictatorships, and monarchies. The final weeks of the course will be devoted to several case studies in which we will more closely examine topics including global Salafism and contemporary Wahhabism in Saudi Arabia, democracy in Tunisia and Indonesia, and the treatment of Uyghurs in China.

In fall 2024, Dr. Scurry will teach **“Special Topics in International and Global Studies: Security and Extremism”** (INST 40003). This course will be an in-depth study of prominent threats to global security and the various institutions combating these threats internationally. We will begin with a survey of the field of international security studies and why this emerged as a discipline in the twentieth century, then devote roughly half of the semester to examining various state and non-state threats to regional and global security, as well as the state-level institutions and international alliances and organizations seeking to safeguard against these threats. We will also evaluate the broader context of globalization and industrialization and consider the roles that resulting economic changes and challenges to religious and political orthodoxies have played in shaping the ideologies of both state and non-state actors which pose threats to international security. In the second half of the course, we will examine case studies including (but not limited to) the following: Islamist and Arab nationalist extremists such as al-Qa'ida, the Islamic State, Hamas, and Hizballah; White Nationalists, Neo-Nazis, QAnon, and other homegrown extremist movements and conspiracy theories in the US; the rise of mass shootings and lone-actor terrorist attacks; nuclear non-proliferation efforts, with a focus on Iran, North Korea, and Libya; and Russian and Chinese cyber threats.

PAST EVENTS

In fall 2023 and spring 2024, INST facilitated a “Global Development & Sustainability Speakers’ Series,” which included:

- **Dr. Tabitha Grace Mallory**, who presented “Oceans Apart: Global Governance Approaches to the Deep-Sea Strategic Frontier”
- **Dr. M. Scott Taylor**, who presented “International Trade, Noise Pollution, and Killer Whales”
- **Dr. Jayson M. Porter**, who presented “Strong Enough to Remove Dirt Skin: Coconut Soap, and Other Early Histories of Biofuels in the US and Mexico”



UPCOMING EVENTS

- **August 27th, 1-3pm** we are hosting **Caffè with Calabretta** in our office, **Old Main 517**. Join INST director Dr. Calabretta-Sajder for coffee and refreshments!
- **August 28th, 5-6pm** there will be a webinar with **Diplomat-in-Residence Shane Hough** about how to apply for State Department grants.
- **September 27th, 12-1:30pm** we will have the opportunity to hear from **Dr. Peter Thilly** who will present a talk called “**Drug Money and Modernization in Coastal China.**” Dr. Thilly is Associate Professor of History and Director of the Interdisciplinary Minor in East Asian Studies at the University of Mississippi. He is the author of *The Opium Business: A History of Crime and Capitalism in Maritime China* (Stanford, 2022), and is currently working on a project about the Small Sword Uprising of 1853.
- **November 18th, 12-1:30pm** **Dr. Ed Pulford** will give a talk titled “**Ghosts of Progress in a Northeast Asian Borderland.**” Dr. Pulford is an anthropologist and Senior Lecturer in Chinese Studies at the University of Manchester. His research focuses on cross-border approaches to experiences of socialism and empire across Eurasia. His new monograph, *Past Progress: Time and Politics at the Borders of China, Russia and Korea* came out in May 2024 with Stanford University Press.

ADVISING INFORMATION

Academic Advising

All non-honors students are advised by the Fulbright advising center. The program encourages students to meet with advisors regularly for curriculum planning and graduation checks.

For mentoring questions, including questions about internships, careers, research, or study abroad, please contact INST director Dr. Calabretta-Sajder (calabret@uark.edu)

Honors in International Studies

First year honors students are advised by the Fulbright College Honors Program in Old Main 525. All second-, third-, and fourth-year students are advised by the Fulbright College Advising Center

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Please consider giving a gift to the International and Global Studies program

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