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To the Carnegie Mellon community,

The jobs for which we prepare our students require adaptability, discipline, and hard work. By nature of their choice of college, our students already possess the latter; this spring, as the COVID-19 pandemic relegated the second half of the semester to remote learning, they received a taste of the former.

The Institute for Politics and Strategy was already innovating, adapting its curriculum to meet the times. The pandemic forced further creativity, and IPS rose to the challenge. As lectures were canceled, virtual talks replaced them. Former Secretary of Defense James Mattis, former Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, and journalist Peter Bergen joined IPS students in small-group settings via Zoom. To foster a sense of connectivity during a time without physical interaction, we held remote gatherings, their tones ranging from informative to entertaining.

Several new courses broadened the reach of the IPS curriculum, and one of them – America and the World, which I taught – found new ways to keep students engaged. In addition to inviting Mattis, Wolfowitz, and Bergen, my students watched and discussed a documentary entitled “1968,” a year noteworthy for its similarity to 2020 in global discord and domestic upheaval. The students also watched and discussed an episode of the CNN documentary series “The Cold War,” and wrote blog entries about the way the Red Scare in the 1940s and 1950s relates to current government restrictions aimed at curbing the pandemic.

Other new courses augmented a curriculum that leads students to think about politics strategically and provides them the analytical skills needed to be competitive in today’s world. Foundations of Political Economy and Political Economy of Latin America furthered the study of economics as a lever in grand strategy; students who took War and Peace in the Contemporary Middle East and Intelligence and Policy emerged with an understanding of the issues facing our government, diplomats, and military and intelligence officials.

The Carnegie Mellon University Washington Semester Program featured its largest cohort yet, with nineteen students in the spring and thirty-seven total. Four of them came from Carnegie Mellon’s Qatar campus, a program first. We made final preparations for the launch of our two-year Master of Science in International Relations and Politics program; the first cohort will enroll this fall.

We did all this while maintaining a high standard of education, made possible by our wonderful faculty. The professors create and maintain relationships with the students. They ask a lot from them in the classroom, but give a lot of themselves in return, and alumni speak highly of the faculty’s impact on their educations and careers long after they leave campus.

The coming academic year will be no easier. We face a hybrid instruction model that could change at a moment’s notice. Providing our students with the education and support they need will require adaptability, discipline and hard work. In IPS, we look forward to the challenge.

Sincerely,

Kiron Skinner
Director and Taube Professor, Institute for Politics and Strategy
Faculty and Staff
FACULTY AND STAFF

DIRECTOR, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, AND Core Faculty

KIRON SKINNER
Director and Taube Professor, Institute for Politics and Strategy; Director, Center for International Relations and Politics; Director, Institute for Strategic Analysis; Carnegie Mellon University Washington Semester Program; Distinguished Fellow, CyLab; W. Glenn Campbell Research Fellow, Hoover Institution; Visiting Fellow, Heritage Foundation

BARUCH FISCHHOFF
Howard Heinz University Professor, Institute for Politics and Strategy and Department of Engineering and Public Policy; Member, National Academy of Sciences, National Academy of Medicine; Past President, Society for Judgment and Decision Making, Society for Risk Analysis

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND CORE FACULTY

KATHLEEN CARLEY
Professor of Computer Science, Institute for Software Research; Fellow, Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers; Director, Center for Computational Analysis of Social and Organizational Systems

COLIN CLARKE
Assistant Teaching Professor; Senior Fellow, Foreign Policy Research Institute; Senior Research Fellow, The Soufan Center; Associate Fellow, International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT) – The Hague

IGNACIO ARANA
Assistant Teaching Professor

LECTURERS

MOLLY DUNIGAN

ADJUNCT INSTRUCTORS

FORREST MORGAN

SUSAN SOHLER EVERINGHAM

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

JOHN CHIN

DANIEL HANSEN

DANI NEDAL

DANIEL SILVERMAN

MILITARY FELLOWS

ALMA KESHAVARZ

LCDR EREN CATALOGLU

Navy Federal Executive Fellow

COL MARK ZAIS

Army War College Fellow

ISAAC PORCHE

SUSAN SOHLER EVERINGHAM

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CORE FACULTY

BARUCH FISCHHOFF
HOWARD HEINZ UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR, INSTITUTE FOR POLITICS AND STRATEGY AND DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING AND PUBLIC POLICY; MEMBER, NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, NATIONAL ACADEMY OF MEDICINE; PAST PRESIDENT, SOCIETY FOR JUDGMENT AND DECISION MAKING, SOCIETY FOR RISK ANALYSIS

KATHLEEN CARLEY
PROFESSOR OF COMPUTER SCIENCE, INSTITUTE FOR SOFTWARE RESEARCH; FELLOW, INSTITUTE OF ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS ENGINEERS; DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR COMPUTATIONAL ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEMS

COLIN CLARKE
ASSISTANT TEACHING PROFESSOR; SENIOR FELLOW, FOREIGN POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE; SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW, THE SOUFAN CENTER; ASSOCIATE FELLOW, INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR COUNTER-TERRORISM (ICCT) – THE HAGUE
FACULTY AND STAFF

CMU/WSP FELLOWS

RASHALL BRACKNEY  FRED CRAWFORD  DALE CROWELL  JOSEPH DEVINE

DEREK HARVEY  THOMAS KARAKO  KIM SMACZNIK

BEVERLEY WHEELER  JULIE WILSON  SEAN ZEIGLER

THE SPRING 2020 CMU/WSP COHORT TOURS THE NATIONAL MALL DURING ORIENTATION.

MS IRP CLASS OF 2020 GRADUATE JURE ERLIC AND IPS ASSISTANT TEACHING PROFESSOR COLIN CLARKE WITH DR. RITA KONAEEV, WHO SPOKE AT CARNEGIE MELLON IN MARCH.

STAFF

BILL BRINK
Communications Specialist

ALLISON A. FRYMOYER
Program Manager

EMILY HALF
Deputy Director

GRANT LOFTESNES
Project Administrator

MEGHAN MATTERN
Washington Semester Program Manager

ABBY SCHACHTER
Research Fellow

HILLARY TANOFF
CIRP Research Coordinator

EDITH YETTS
Business Manager
SELECTED FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

Kiron Skinner
How Do Civilians Ascribe Blame for State Indiscriminate Violence?
*Journal of Peace Research, April 30, 2019*

Personal exposure to violence shapes one’s blame attribution for provoked state attacks on civilians.

Ignacio Arana
Judicial Reshuffles and Women Justices in Latin America
*American Journal of Political Science, July 20, 2020*

Political reshuffles may produce short-term advances for women in the judiciary, but do not represent a path to substantive progress in gender equality.

Baruch Fischhoff
Making Decisions in a COVID-19 World
*Journal of the American Medical Association, June 4, 2020*

Done to a publication standard, risk analysis requires advanced training and substantial resources. However, even back-of-the-envelope calculations can help individuals make sense of otherwise bewildering choices.

Colin Clarke
After the Caliphate: The Islamic State and the Terrorist Diaspora
*Polity Books, June 10, 2019*

Is this the beginning of the end of the Islamic State? Or can it adapt and regroup after the physical fall of the caliphate?

Molly Dunigan
Private Military Contractors’ Financial Experiences and Incentives
*Defense & Security Analysis, April 17, 2020*

Using a survey of 187 private military contractors, Dunigan concluded that contractors are motivated by a range of factors and that their financial experiences are not clearly more positive than that of state military troops.

SELECTED FACULTY PUBLICATIONS (CONT’D)

John Chin
Hong Kong’s Escalating Protests: Three Questions
*Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, December 9, 2019*

Nothing less than the future of “one country, two systems” — the framework through which China agreed to maintain Hong Kong’s autonomy for fifty years in exchange for British agreement to restore Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty in July 1997 after more than a Century of British administration — is at stake.

Daniel Hansen
The Effectiveness of Fiscal Institutions: International Financial Flogging or Domestic Restraint?
*European Journal of Political Economy, June 2020*

Fiscal rules and transparency promote better budget balances because domestic political actors use fiscal institutions to constrain executive policymaking.

Dani Nedal
Urban Concentration and Civil War
*Journal of Conflict Resolution, December 10, 2019*

High levels of urban concentration — the concentration of populations in one or relatively few urban centers — increases both the likelihood of civil wars and their intensity.

Daniel Silverman
Too Late to Apologize? Collateral Damage, Post-Harm Compensation, and Insurgent Violence in Iraq
*International Organization, June 18, 2020*

Post-harm compensation does significantly diminish local rates of insurgent violence, and that is true across different types of payments.
Academic Programs
When Carnegie Mellon first introduced the international relations major, in the 1999-2000 academic year, the twin towers still stood, Vladimir Putin had just become Russia’s Prime Minister, and the eventual founder of ISIS had just been released from a Jordanian prison. Things change. The Institute for Politics and Strategy changes with them.

IPS infuses the traditional study of political science with analytical instruction that provides students the skills necessary to succeed in the modern world and sets them apart from their peers at other institutions. Word is spreading: When IPS was founded, in 2015, 106 students were enrolled in the department. In 2019-2020, that number increased to 185.

Carnegie Mellon as an institution prioritizes the optimization of learning – one of the tenets of CMU’s Strategic Plan 2025 is the innovation of the approach to teaching and learning – and IPS is no different. IPS forces students to think about politics systemically. Incorporating decision science into the study of politics and international relations helps students understand not only the ramifications of the actions of nation-states and non-state actors, but the rationale behind them, an important component of seeing the entire picture.

The Bachelor of Science in International Relations and Politics is undergraduate program’s flagship major. Yes, Bachelor of Science: Students take prerequisites in mathematics, statistics, and analytical methods. They do this because this is not a theoretical exercise; students who major in IRP leave Carnegie Mellon with the tools to make an impact in the world and leave it better than they found it.

Introductory courses such as Decision Processes in American Political Institutions and Foundations of Political Economy lay the groundwork for American Political Institutions and Foundations of Political Economy. IPS forces students to think about politics with that of economic institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and the use of economic coercion. It enables students to understand economic statecraft more broadly. Whether coercion is successful depends not just on the levers of power but on complex linkages in the international economy. This is also important for our understanding of the relationship between international economics and human rights practices, including how treaty commitments can facilitate compliance with a global initiative to combat climate change.

In 2019-2020, IPS added new courses, Political Economy of Latin America and Foundations of Political Economy, that contribute to the study of the subject. Today, everything is tied to everything else. This major examines the intersection between two of the biggest categories of national and international power.

IPS offers two additional minors. The first, in Cybersecurity and International Conflict, is as relevant as ever: It focuses on the implications of cyberwarfare on modern statecraft, traditional warfare, economics, and politics. The minor gives students foundational knowledge in the strategy surrounding cybersecurity. In Emerging Technologies and the Law, a new addition to the curriculum in 2019-2020, students learn the legal implications of autonomous vehicles, artificial intelligence, and cryptocurrencies.

The third and final minor, in Politics and Public Policy, is only available to students who participate in the Carnegie Mellon University Washington Semester Program, which allows students from any course of study at Carnegie Mellon to live, intern, and study in the nation’s capital. If power resides where people believe it resides, then American power lives inside the Beltway, and the CMU/WSP gives students a semester-long taste of DC’s inner workings.

During the day, students intern with the Washington establishment: Congress, lobbying firms, embassies, think tanks, and nonprofits. This past academic year, CMU/WSP participants interned at the State Department, the Qatari Embassy, the American Enterprise Institute, the office of Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, and the White House Council of Economic Advisors.

At night, students gather at Carnegie Mellon’s Washington, DC, office, next to the Supreme Court and down the block from the Capitol, and learn from those who know how Washington works. One night it’s policy from Fred Crawford, who spent three decades as lawyer for the CIA. Another night Dale Crowell, the Congressional Liaison for the Organization of American States, teaches on the intersection of lobbying and politics.

The past few years reminded the country of the importance of the intelligence community. In 2019-2020, IPS introduced a new CMU/WSP course (taught by Derek Harvey, the former Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for the Middle East at the National Security Council and an aide to Congressman Devin Nunes, the ranking member of the House Intelligence Committee) called Intelligence and Policy. The class examines the role of intelligence in decisions, from those made by George H.W. Bush to Barack Obama, and examines the two wars in the Middle East.

It’s not just the professors who have DC experience. Each week, CMU/WSP faculty invite policy makers to visit the class and answer students’ questions in a roundtable format. In 2019-2020, guests included former Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Policy David Trachtenberg, Jeff Dressler, the National Security Advisor to former

The Bachelor of Science in International Relations and Politics is undergraduate program’s flagship major. Yes, Bachelor of Science: Students take prerequisites in mathematics, statistics, and analytical methods. They do this because this is not a theoretical exercise; students who major in IRP leave Carnegie Mellon with the tools to make an impact in the world and leave it better than they found it. IPS major focuses on the study of grand strategy and political institutions. The major also draws on interdisciplinary methods, as students are exposed to the use of game theory, economic and statistical analysis, qualitative analysis, rational choice theory, and theories of behavioral decision-making. International Relations and Politics is also offered as a minor.

The overlap between politics and economics is endless. Political institutions and political decision-making impact economic growth, income distribution, and many other aspects of economic life. Both fiscal and monetary policies affect the world’s best technology programs. IPS facilitates partnerships with other departments to imbue its curriculum with the latest in computer science, artificial intelligence, and robotics. The past decade has shown us the importance of technology on the world stage: the hacking of Iranian centers to disrupt uranium enrichment; Russia’s misinformation campaign during the 2016 presidential election; the possibilities of, and drawbacks to, facial-recognition technology.

IPS students already had the opportunity to earn both their Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in International Relations and Politics in the IRP Accelerated Master’s Program. Now, for students seeking IPS’ interdisciplinary and analytic bent on political science at the graduate level, IPS offers the MS IRP as a traditional two-year graduate degree. The first cohort will enroll in Fall 2020.

Understanding the threat posed by an al-Qaida-inspired gunman is now just as important as understanding North Korea’s nuclear capabilities. By providing students a framework within which to think about politics, the IPS curriculum adapts to the political issues of the moment. As political structures, foreign and domestic, become increasingly fractured, a comprehensive and measured approach to the study of international relations and politics becomes more important than ever.
IPS worked hard since its elevation to a university-wide institute in 2018 to strengthen its graduate programs. One initiative will come to fruition this fall – the Master of Science in International Relations and Politics, which will welcome its first cohort in Fall 2020. IPS seeks to train the next generation of political scientists who understand government institutions and processes in the twenty-first century’s continuously changing global political structure, and the MS IRP will prepare them to do so.

The program allows students to specialize in international security, international relations, American politics, or comparative politics. It then equips them with the methodological skills necessary to set themselves apart. Regression analysis, model diagnostics, and parameter estimation might not fall into the category of traditional political science study, but things change, and IPS changes with them.

Undergraduates with a major or minor in IPS can enroll in the Accelerated Master of Science in International Relations and Politics program during their senior year. They take some graduate courses during their final year of undergraduate instruction and complete an internship between their fourth and fifth years.

The interdisciplinary relationships IPS formed across campus shine in the Master of Information Technology Strategy, a cooperative endeavor between IPS, the College of Engineering, and the School of Computer Science. MITS equips students to understand the latest cybersecurity threats, the information technology and systems security to combat them, and the politics and strategy that play into their execution.

**MS IRP THESIS TOPICS**

**SPRING 2020 GRADUATES**

**Jure Erlic**  
*Shuffling or Eliminating: The OECD Anti-bribery Convention’s Impact on Global Financial Corruption*  
Advisor: Daniel Hansen

**Antonio Freiria**  
*Truman to Trump: Analyzing Foreign Policy Campaign Promises*  
Advisor: Ignacio Arana

**Aysar Gharibeh**  
*Misinformation and Truth Distortion*  
Advisor: Colin Clarke

**Kimberly Huang**  
*Public-Elite Decision Making Gap on Drones in the US*  
Advisor: Dani Nedal

**Micah Rabin**  
*Voter Suppression Rhetoric and Voter Turnout in United States’ Election Cycles*  
Advisor: Daniel Silverman
Data presented here represents all internships held by Institute for Politics and Strategy primary and additional majors between 2011 and Spring 2020.
Upon graduation, college students face the challenge of translating the theories they studied in the classroom into entry-level jobs in the real world. For those interested in politics and policy, the Carnegie Mellon University Washington Semester Program (CMU/WSP) streamlines the process.

Students spend a semester living, interning, and studying in the nation’s capital. Some of them work on Capitol Hill – down the block from Carnegie Mellon’s Washington offices, which overlook the Capitol and the Supreme Court. The Spring 2020 cohort, the largest in program history at nineteen students, held internships at the State Department, the Embassy of Qatar, the American Enterprise Institute, and in the offices of a Congressmen and Congresswoman.

At night, the students receive instruction relevant to the issues and responsibilities they’ll face in the workforce. One night, they write policy by finding the underlying law in the US Code. Later in the week they’ll delve into the intersection of intelligence and policy. During weekly policy forums, students get access to veterans of the Beltway world: government officials, politicians, and thought leaders who have experience in the fields about which the students are learning.

Add the value of living away from campus, in a bustling city that serves as the nexus of power in the country, and the CMU/WSP gives students a unique foundational experience.

**INTERNSHIP BREAKDOWN**

CMU/WSP Internship Breakdown

**BREAKDOWN BY CMU COLLEGE**

CMU/WSP Participation by College

- **LEGAL/ADVOCACY**
  - National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Polaris Project, Vera Institute for Justice

- **MUSEUM/ARTS**
  - Kennedy Center for the Arts, Ford’s Theatre

- **MEDIA**
  - C-SPAN, Center for Budget and Policy Priorities

- **EMBASSY**
  - Embassy of France, Embassy of Mexico, Embassy of Peru

- **PRIVATE SECTOR**
  - Venga Start-Up, Jacques & Associates

**CONGRESSIONAL**

- Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Office of Senator Bob Casey, Office of Senator Pat Toomey

**THINK TANK**

- Brookings Institution, Heritage Foundation, Environment and Energy Studies Institute

**GOVERNMENT**

- Department of Justice, Department of State, White House Council of Economic Advisors

Data presented for the Internship Breakdown represents all internships held through CMU/WSP between 2014 and 2020.
CMU/WSP POLICY FORUM FALL 2019

FALL 2019, MINI 1
INSTRUCTOR: THOMAS KARAKO

- Menna Demessie
  Vice President of Policy, Analysis, and Research at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation

- Jennifer Griffin
  Fox News Pentagon correspondent

- Michael Morell
  Former Acting Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, currently with Beacon Global Strategies

- Aaron Saunders
  Drumfire Public Affairs

- Seth Jones
  Director of the Transnational Threats Project and senior advisor to the International Security Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies

- David Trachtenberg
  Former Principal Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Policy

CMU/WSP POLICY FORUM SPRING 2020

SPRING 2020, MINI 3
INSTRUCTOR: THOMAS KARAKO

- Michael Allen
  Managing Director, Beacon Global Strategies, Former National Security Council staffer

- Todd Harrison
  Director of Defense Budget Analysis, Director of the Aerospace Security Project, and Senior Fellow of the International Security Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies

- Frank Rose
  Senior Fellow and co-director of the Security and Strategy team at the Brookings Institution

- Kelley Sayler
  Congressional Research Service Analyst, Advanced Technology and Global Security

- David Trachtenberg
  Former Principal Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Policy

CMU/WSP POLICY FORUM FALL 2019

FALL 2019, MINI 2
INSTRUCTOR: SEAN ZEIGLER

- Elbridge Colby
  Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense

- James Dobbins
  Former US Ambassador and Assistant Secretary of State

- Michael O’Hanlon
  Senior Fellow and Director of Research in Foreign Policy at the Brookings Institution

- Gian Gentile
  Senior Historian at RAND and former Iraq War commander

- Douglas Ollivant
  Senior Fellow, New America Foundation, and Former National Security Council Director for Iraq

CMU/WSP POLICY FORUM SPRING 2020

SPRING 2020, MINI 4
INSTRUCTOR: DEREK HARVEY

- David Asher
  Former co-chair of the North Korea Activities Group Policy Coordinating Committee for the National Security Council, former special coordinator of the State Department’s North Korea Working Group

- Peter Bergen
  Author, journalist, Vice President for Global Studies and New Fellows at the New America Foundation, and CNN contributor

- Jeff Dressler
  Former National Security Advisor to the Speaker of the House of Representatives

- Clare Lockhart
  Director of the Institute for State Effectiveness, Senior Fellow at Yale University’s Jackson Institute for Global Affairs

- Paul Packer
  Former New York fund manager appointed by President Trump to chair the US Commission for the Preservation of America’s Heritage Abroad

- Seth Jones
  Director of the Transnational Threats Project and senior advisor to the International Security Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies

- David Trachtenberg
  Former Principal Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Policy
Ariane Tabatabai - "Iranian Global Relations: Strategic Thinking in the 21st Century"
CIRP OVERVIEW

Carnegie Mellon University derives its intellectual distinction from research across disciplines as well as from the application of basic science to issues of public policy. Firmly situated in this long-standing tradition, the Center for International Relations and Politics (CIRP) uses analytical social science and interdisciplinary research to better understand, explain, anticipate, and solve public policy problems.

RESEARCH LAB TEAM MEMBERS

CIRP RESEARCH COORDINATOR
Hillary Tanoff, Center for International Relations and Politics (2018–2020)

JUNE 2019–MAY 2020 RESEARCH ASSOCIATES:
- RUEL BERESFORD
- PATRICK BERNHARD
- AYSAR GHARABIEH
- SARAH GOUGH
- LAUREN KELLY
- SAMUEL KIM
- SARAH KIM
- LISA OGUIKE
- RUTH PACE
- AUGUSTE PIROMALLI
- ABIGAIL SAVIT
- MOHAMMED SIDDIQUI

CIRP RESEARCH PROJECTS

Undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty members in the CIRP research lab apply scientific reasoning and findings to problems in the political sphere. Carnegie Mellon’s comparative advantage in the social sciences lies in its ability to investigate issues, whether functional or specific to a country or region, through interdisciplinary research that combines fields such as social science and engineering. Contributing to this tradition, CIRP fosters research, teaching, and policy analysis in diverse regions of the world through its flagship program, Grand Strategy, as well as its Regions Initiative.

Over the past several years, CIRP research associates have worked in collaboration with managing senior research associates to conduct research on a variety of subjects.

The following projects have been completed or are in the process of being completed.

ORGANIZING FOR WAR
The primary research activities of the CIRP lab support the Organizing for War (OFW) project. The goal of the project is to observe the shifts in US grand strategy throughout the Cold War regarding the Middle East and terrorism. These changes are examined through historical, textual, geographic, and data analysis.

ANALYZING SPEECH AROUND TERRORISM
A major component of OFW has been the textual analysis of public statements and speeches by presidents and secretaries of state from the administrations of Presidents Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, and George H.W. Bush. This effort consists of two parts: first, collection of all the public statements of the identified key officials; second, examination of the frequency of certain terms, phrases, and syntax related to terrorism.

Using statistical analysis, CIRP has been working with the statistics departments of CMU and Harvard University to examine the language related to terrorism and counterterrorism during the Carter, Reagan, and Bush I administrations. Researchers have used online databases, archival research, and resources from the Library of Congress, the National Archives, and the US Department of State Historian.

MILITARY BASE LOCATIONS AND PERSONNEL NUMBERS
Included in the OFW analysis of grand strategy shifts are the locations of domestic and international US military bases. Examination of the installation locations, openings, closings, shifts in location or acreage, and changes in personnel reflect strategic and tactical shifts in policy. The final presentation for both sets of research will consist of a set of time-series graphs and maps using Geographic Information System software.

MILITARY EXERCISES
This section of the project includes collection and analysis of the frequency and type of military exercises the United States conducted around the world during the examined time period. The results of this analysis will serve as a supplement to the strategic and tactical policy shifts found in the military base locations and personnel numbers section. The final presentation for this research will consist of a set of heat maps using a statistical and graphics programming language.

ARMS TRADE AND AID
This section looks at both weapons and aid given to foreign countries by the US government.

The former utilizes government-published World Military Expenditures and Arms Trade (WMEAT) documents to collect data on arms transfers from the United States to foreign countries. The latter pulls from the USAID Greenbook, which divides US government aid into two subsections, economic and military aid. Greenbook data can also be isolated by regional subsections, and even further by individual countries.

US DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS
The next section of the project, an examination of diplomatic relations, is achieved in two parts. First, meetings between presidents and US ambassadors or presidential visits to an embassy are recorded. This database also includes meetings between a country’s ambassador to the United States and the president. Second, the research team records presidential meetings and calls with heads of state from other countries. In addition to presidential schedules, the research team has been given access to the schedules of Secretary of State George
The most recent issue published, in Winter 2019, represented the theses of the 2019 Accelerated Master of Science in International Relations and Politics cohort. This edition of the CIRP Journal does not have a strict theme, as the most recent cohort of graduate students had a broad range of specializations and interests. All of the articles loosely relate to how societies are governed, whether it be through analysis of legal interpretations, the effects of different variables on democracies, or changing cybersecurity policy.

This issue includes interviews with Scott Sagan, a political science professor at Stanford University, and Victor Cha, the senior adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the inaugural holder of the Korea Chair at the organization.

Previous issues of the Journal have covered national security, international development, the future of conservatism and liberalism, and refugees. For those issues, students have interviewed George Shultz, Paul Wolfowitz, Debbie Lee James, and Tony Podesta.
The Policy Forum represents one of the means by which the Center for International Relations and Politics integrates international relations and politics into the intellectual conversation at Carnegie Mellon University. CIRP’s Policy Forum regularly brings statesmen, scholars, policy makers, journalists, and other thought leaders to the university to address major issues facing the United States and the world. During the 2019-2020 academic year, CIRP sponsored several public lectures on campus, that were promoted and open to the public in the greater Pittsburgh area.

**FALL 2019**

**Elizabeth Bodine-Baron**  
Senior information scientist at the RAND Corporation  
“Understanding and Countering Russian Social Media Influence”  
October 29, 2019

**David McCormick**  
CEO of Bridgewater Associates, former Treasury Under Secretary for International Affairs  
“Economic Statecraft and National Security”  
September 10, 2019

**Ariane Tabatabai**  
Associate political scientist at the RAND Corporation  
“Iranian Global Relations: Strategic Thinking in the 21st Century”  
September 17, 2019

**John Mueller**  
Adjunct Professor of Political Science and Senior Research Scientist at The Ohio State University’s Mershon Center for International Security Studies.  
“Has the United States been necessary for ‘Pax Americana’? Peace as an independent variable”  
November 6, 2019

**CIRP POLICY FORUM**

Michael Horowitz  
Professor of political science and the Associate Director of Perry World House at the University of Pennsylvania  
“Power, Ethics, and International Competition in an Age of Artificial Intelligence”  
November 19, 2019

**SPRING 2020**

**John M. Carey**  
Associate Dean of Faculty for the Social Sciences at Dartmouth University  
“Campus Diversity: The Hidden Consensus”  
February 3, 2020

**Rita Konaev**  
Research Fellow at Georgetown University’s Center for Security and Emerging Technology  
March 2, 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the postponement of the final four Policy Forum lectures, which included a panel on women leading technological innovation in the Navy, George Mason University Professor Colin Dueck, professor and counterterrorism expert Jason Blazakis, and Stanford University Professor Morris Fiorina, until Fall 2020.
If the Institute for Politics and Strategy is to succeed in preparing the next generation of leaders for the challenges they’ll face in the real world, the curriculum cannot be purely hypothetical. In 2013, IPS founded the Institute for Strategic Analysis, a program that brings together IPS faculty and decision makers in the fields of government, military, intelligence, and security to facilitate the sharing of information.

ISA accomplishes this by organizing both day-long courses and year-long seminars to introduce government and military officials to the latest scientific research, information that could help those officials combat the latest threats. In July 2020, ISA engaged with the intelligence community by hosting a short course for the Defense Intelligence Agency. These relationships are symbiotic, keeping faculty abreast of the challenges facing the government and military in the twenty-first century and allowing them to apply real-world scenarios to classroom theory.

ISA sharpens the understanding of military and intelligence priorities, especially those involving cybersecurity. The institute is uniquely situated to inform the national conversation on cybersecurity because its faculty members are engaged in cybersecurity research. Through CyLab, CMU has a well-established research center in cybersecurity, and ISA partners with CyLab to host government officials and other national thought leaders who are working on cyber challenges.

ISA receives funding from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation’s Cyber Initiative and the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation.

MEETING OF NATIONAL THOUGHT LEADERS

A key activity of ISA has been convening the meeting of national thought leaders at the National Security Agency. ISA co-hosts the series of unclassified briefings with Dr. Emily Goldman, director of the NSA/Cyber Command Combined Action Group. The Institute brings together leaders from academia, the private sector, civil society, and former government officials. ISA began co-hosting these meetings in 2014, under NSA director General Keith Alexander, and has been privileged to continue this role under former NSA director Admiral Michael Rogers and current director General Paul Nakasone.

US ARMY WAR COLLEGE INTERNATIONAL FELLOWS PROGRAM

The US Army War College hosts a cohort of international Fellows from more than seventy-five countries that study at the college each year. The program allows the fellows to tour universities, defense labs, and US Army Commands. For the fourth year in a row, the US Army War College chose CMU as one of the universities included in the program for 2020. ISA co-hosted the visit with the CyLab Security and Privacy Institute. The program included demonstrations on formal methods, network analysis, decision science, and cybersecurity.

On February 18, 2020, the International Fellows visited Carnegie Mellon for a day of lectures and a tour of CyLab’s facial-recognition technology.

Fellows heard from IPS Assistant Teaching Professor Colin Clarke, Center for Computations Analysis of Social and Organizational Systems director Kathleen Carley, and associate Computer Science professor Bryan Parno. During the tour of the CyLab Biometrics Center, PhD student Dipan Pal described how facial-recognition technology helped identify the Boston Marathon bomber and demonstrated the latest in long-range iris scanning.

SPONSORED LECTURES

Ariane Tabatabai, an associate political scientist at the RAND Corporation and an adjunct senior research scholar at Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs, gave a talk at Carnegie Mellon on September 17, 2019. The talk, entitled “Iranian Global Relations: Strategic Thinking in the 21st Century,” drew on Tabatabai’s expertise in Iran. She is the co-author of “Triple Axis: Iran’s Relations With Russia and China.”

On October 29, 2019, RAND information scientist Elizabeth Bodine-Baron presented a lecture titled “Understanding and Countering Russian Social Media Influence. Baron’s presentation discussed the US intelligence community’s 2017 revelation of the Russian social-media campaign to disrupt the 2016 presidential election and the ways in which the US can respond to such threats in the future.

Rita Konaev, a Research Fellow at Georgetown University’s Center for Security and Emerging Technology, tackled a similar topic in her March 2, 2020 lecture: “US Military Advancements in Autonomous and AI-Enabled Weapons and Systems: Costs, Benefits, and Strategic Effects.” Her talk analyzed the current military investments in AI, the implications of those investments, and situations where AI could harm US interests.

EXECUTIVE SHORT COURSES

On July 31, 2019, ISA held a course at the Army War College campus in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. The Army War College focuses on land-based warfare, but during this course, ISA presenters discussed cyber technology, space, artificial intelligence. IPS Adjunct Instructor Isaac Porche gave a talk titled...
ISA EVENTS

FALL 2019

Ariane Tabatabai
“Iranian Global Relations: Strategic Thinking in the 21st Century”
September 17, 2019

Elizabeth Bodine-Baron
“Understanding and Countering Russian Social Media Influence”
October 29, 2019

Executive Short Course on Emerging and Disruptive Threats
July 31, 2019

This course was held at the Army War College and covered cyberwarfare, waged on servers and in the cloud, and space warfare. IPS faculty members Isaac Porche, Thomas Karako, and Colin Clarke gave presentations on the policy of cyberwarfare, the role of air and missile attacks among great power competition, and technology and international security.

SPRING 2020

Defense Intelligence Agency Executive Short Course
July 29, 2020

The IPS faculty members that presented during this course spoke about violent extremist organizations, technological innovation and the changing nature of warfare. IPS Director and Taube Professor Kiron Skinner opened the proceedings; Colin Clarke spoke on the transnational violent extremist movement; Molly Dunigan, on private contractors; Daniel Silverman, on disinformation; and Forrest Morgan, on artificial intelligence and the military.

ISA

“Technology and Policy of Cyber War”; CMU/WSP Fellow Thomas Karako tackled the space aspect with his talk, “Complex Air and Missile Attack in an Era of Great Power Competition”; and IPS Assistant Teaching Professor Colin Clarke spoke on “Emerging Technologies and International Security.”

Though the COVID-19 pandemic forced it to take place via videoconference, ISA held an executive short course for the Defense Intelligence Agency on July 29, 2020. The course focused on violent extremist organizations, technological innovation, and the changing nature of warfare. Professor Clarke spoke about racially motivated violent extremism. Computer Science Professor Kathleen Carley gave a talk titled “COVID-19, Synthetic Actors, and Extremism.” IPS Adjunct Instructor Forrest Morgan spoke about artificial intelligence and the military, and IPS Lecturer Molly Dunigan, an expert in military privatization, presented on their role in irregular warfare.

Mario Savvides, the director of CyLab’s Biometrics Center, discussed the latest in facial recognition technology, and IPS Postdoctoral Fellow Daniel Silverman lectured on the methods in which violent extremist organizations use disinformation.
News and Events
IPS News
August 7, 2020

IPS CLASS OF 2020 GRADUATES SHARE THE NEXT STEP IN THEIR JOURNEYS
By Bill Brink

Finding a job out of college was hard enough before COVID-19. Class of 2020 graduates entering the workforce now must contend with the fallout of the pandemic, which raised unemployment to near 15 percent and led to a 33 percent second-quarter drop in the gross domestic product, the largest such drop in US history. Advice from recent Institute for Politics and Strategy graduates to future classes – begin the process with plenty of time – becomes even more prescient.

“I think starting early, and having an understanding of what places you’re looking for, really helps you in making sure that the job search goes smoother,” said Sim Ahuja, an International Relations and Politics and Decision Science major who graduated this spring.

IPS caught up with Ahuja and three other Class of 2020 graduates to learn about their time at Carnegie Mellon, their job search, and the next step in their studies or careers. For all of them, graduate school is in their future.

Like Munden, Ahuja will spend some time in the workforce before law school. By starting early, she had an offer in December, and accepted a position as a communications and government affairs associate at GlaxoSmithKline, a pharmaceutical company. Ahuja interned in the private sector, with stints at Coesler Media & Issue Advocacy and ExxonMobil. She also spent a summer on Capitol Hill interning in Congress. The connection between the two is her sweet spot.

“Freshman and sophomore year, I was fairly confident I wanted to work in government,” she said. “My junior year summer, I worked at ExxonMobil in their public and government affairs department, and that was when I realized that I really liked the private-public intersection rather than just purely public. When I was exploring job options my senior year first semester, I was really focusing in on companies that had these departments so I could have both the public exposure and private exposure.”

Gabriella Bettino also had a formative experience in Washington, DC. As a member of the Spring 2019 Carnegie Mellon University Washington Semester Program cohort, she had coffee with Frank Rose, a former Assistant Secretary of State. “Do whatever you can to get your Master’s as quickly as possible,” he told her. She took the advice to heart and entered IPS Accelerated Master of Science in International Relations and Politics program, which allows her to earn both her Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in five years by taking some graduate courses during senior year.

“I breathed a sigh of relief when I was looking at job numbers and knew I had another year of school,” Bettino said.

Bettino comes from a military family and would like to work in the defense sector. She had never considered lobbying or advocacy. When her current boss contacted IPS Deputy Director Emily Hall looking for interns, Bettino sent her resume on a whim, and landed an internship this summer with The McKeon Group, a lobbying and consulting firm.

“I’ll do anything from getting draft copies of bills, getting contact information, or actually doing outreach on bills that we’re trying to get passed for our clients,” she said. “No two days are exactly the same, and that’s been very exciting to move through, especially with the appropriateness process happening right now.”

Cassie Scanlon joins Bettino among those going directly to graduate school. Scanlon, an IRP major, will enroll in the University of Pittsburgh’s law school in the fall.

“I was that weird kid in fifth grade, ‘I want to go to law school when I get older,’” Scanlon said. “But I have a lot of different interests in the law. I specifically have worked a lot with survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, and in that process have been exposed to so many holes in the legal system. I want to have a career that focuses on creating a more survivor-centered approach and a more trauma-informed approach in the legal system.”

Scanlon has worked at the Women’s Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh for more than two years, answering the text and chat lines, providing crisis counseling and emotional support, and helping with housing applications. She also interned with Rise, a sexual assault survivor advocacy organization, lobbying for sexual assault bills at the state, local, and United Nations level.

Scanlon has talked to Carnegie Mellon alumni who assured her that the rigorous undergraduate work load prepared her well for law school. Whether grad school or a first job, CMU and IPS provides its graduates with the skills necessary to succeed.

“I had a lot of really awesome professors that encouraged us all to be working toward this concept of the greater good, serving the public and engaging in public-service jobs to make a better tomorrow,” Munden said. “I think that really helped me in terms of philosophy or motivation or something along those lines, just guiding me on the paths that I want to go into.”

Those professors created an environment for close examination of the issues of the day.

“I think CMU, especially IPS, the classes I’ve had, have facilitated a lot of really great discussion and have allowed for a lot of critical thought in the majority of things that happen in the world,” Ahuja said. “For someone like me who has been pursuing internships in government or advocacy or media relations, that’s something that’s really important, to be able to look at things that are happening in the world, major events, and seeing how they impact companies on a day-to-day basis.”

Munden is a planner. During the first semester of her freshman year, she created a spreadsheet detailing the courses she needed to take, and after mapping out her junior year, she realized she was done. She graduated in three years, but she won’t go straight to law school: She joined Teach for America, and will serve as a Special Education Corps Member in Nashville.

“I really liked the idea that I could basically serve my country, but in a very non-traditional sense, and get to explore education in a first-hand way,” Munden said. “I think after my time with Teach for America, if I go into the policy world, education is going to be relevant, and it will be nice to have had that experience and used the time while I was young to serve before I needed to be in a certain place or start doing more obligations that you had as an adult.”

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IPS News
July 27, 2020
"THIS IS SUPER VALUABLE INFORMATION. NOBODY ELSE HAS IT": HOW IGNACIO ARANA’S PHD RESEARCH INFLUENCED HIS LATEST PAPER
By Bill Brink

The genesis of Ignacio Arana’s most recent paper occurred nearly a decade ago, after a project as a PhD student led him to scour century-old books in the basement of the Guatemalan Supreme Court. In the United States, the high court’s history is accessible to anyone with a cell phone, but that isn’t the case for some Latin American countries.

“I thought, this is super valuable information,” said Arana, now an Assistant Teaching Professor in the Institute for Politics and Strategy. “Nobody else has it, so I should think of ideas to propose research.”

Last week, one of his ideas came to fruition. Arana and two co-authors – Melanie M. Hughes, a sociologist professor at the University of Pittsburgh, and Aníbal Pérez-Liñán, Arana’s advisor and mentor when Arana was a PhD student at the University of Pittsburgh and now a political science and global affairs professor at the University of Notre Dame – published a paper entitled “Judicial Reshuffles and Women’s Representation in Latin America” in the American Journal of Political Science. The AJPS is the top publication in the field, ranked first in Political Science and tenth in Social Science by Google Scholar.

Several years back, Pérez-Liñán won funding from the National Science Foundation and enlisted Arana, his research assistant, to help him build a database. During the two years Arana worked on the project, which involved tracing the composition of supreme courts in Latin America since 1900, he conducted field research in Guatemala. Eventually, he began studying the relationship between leftist governments and the appointment of women to high courts, and Pérez-Liñán contributed the idea of examining judicial reshuffles – the forced removal of more than half of the justices on a court. Because of the small number of judges who serve on high courts and their lengthy terms, increasing the percentage of women is a slow process – unless the government intervenes.

“It’s an erosion of judicial independence,” Arana said. “The government is inducing justices to leave the bench through different means. This can be through offering really appealing retirement plans, it can be inducing them through criticism through the media, it can be through all sorts of informal pressure.”

The trio hypothesized that reshuffles initiated by leftist governments would create opportunities to add more women to the court. After studying ninety-five such episodes across eighteen countries between 1961 and 2014, they found that hypothesis to be correct, but also that the gains in gender diversification were small and unsustainable.

“Over time, it does not become a virtuous cycle in which more women are appointed, and that leads to a sustainable increase of women in the court,” Arana said. “It’s a short-term shock.”

Arana’s research dovetailed with recent literature that studies the relationship between the positions in government that women hold and the actual power those positions wield. The country with the highest percentage of women in its legislature, Arana noted, is Rwanda. Next on the list is Cuba.

“It’s not only important to study when the women reach positions of power, but also when that newly acquired power is substantial,” Arana said. “... We should be looking beyond the superficial appointment of women to a position of power, and we should examine if they are actually empowered.”

IPS News
July 27, 2020
FRIEDMAN FELLOWS EMBRACE VIRTUAL “DC” EXPERIENCE
By Bill Brink

Cynthia Friedman lived in Washington, DC, for more than twenty years and loved every minute of it. Two of her children, Stephanie and Gordon, studied in the city, at George Washington University. Wouldn’t it be, she thought, “a good idea to give college students a chance to come there for the summer and intern.”

For the past twenty years, the Friedman Fellowships she created have given students that opportunity. Last week, Friedman met with this year’s Summer Friedman Fellows. She’s done this before, but this time, the COVID-19 pandemic turned the usual DC dinner into a Zoom call. The virtual setup also allowed her three children, Stephanie, Gordon, and Bill, to join the gathering remotely.

“Come back to me later when the world opens up,” said Friedman, the co-founder of the Women’s Leadership Forum of the Democratic National Committee. “I’m all for dinners together, that would be a great pleasure.”

Friedman created the Fellowships in honor of her late husband, Milton Friedman, who earned Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees from Carnegie Mellon College of Engineering in 1947 and 1949. She has long supported the university, initially as a volunteer, and she is now a trustee. Four CMU students received Friedman Fellowships this summer, which support the participation of undergraduate and graduate students in policy-related internships in Washington, DC. Policy is important for Friedman, who opened doors as the first woman to be elected to local government in the Johnstown area. Friedman’s ties to members of Congress and former presidents allow her to make important contacts in Washington on behalf of Carnegie Mellon.

“My internship is not something I’d be able to pursue without your support and external funding,” said David Robusto, who is pursuing his Master’s degree in Public Policy and Management and Data Analytics. Robusto, who this fall will enter his second year of graduate school, is interning in the office of the Chief Technology Officer for Public Diplomacy at the State Department.

Sean Donnelly, a Civil Engineering and Engineering and Public Policy major who will be a senior this year, interns with the Office of Positioning, Navigation, and Timing, and Spectrum Management at the Department of Transportation. He is working on the issue of GPS “spoofing” on US cargo ships, figuring out how to prevent hacks.

Teagan Goforth, who graduated this spring with degrees in Civil Engineering and Engineering and Public Policy and will return to Carnegie Mellon in the fall to pursue her PhD in Engineering, is interning for the EPA. She works in the Clean Air Markets Division, modeling the phasing out of coal plants and the implementation of renewable energy. Jacob Feldgoise, a Policy and Management and Science, Technology, and Public Policy major, is spending the summer working as a House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology intern.

“We peer edit each other’s work, consolidate each of our contributions,” Feldgoise said. “It’s been fun to work with other interns even when they’re remote. We have zoom watch parties for hearings – everyone is super interesting, and I really enjoy getting to know them.”

Feldman could join Friedman alumni who currently serve as congressional staffers and hold positions in federal agencies, fulfilling Friedman’s mission in creating the fellowships: empowering students to become more involved in, and knowledgeable about, government.
Set up a table with brownies, the plan went. Who doesn’t like brownies? That should be enough of a carrot to halt students between classes and nudge them toward a voter registration table.

But the COVID-19 pandemic nixed the brownies. And the focus groups. And the in-person interviews. Students working on their group research projects in Institute for Politics and Strategy Postdoctoral Fellow Dan Silverman’s Political Science Research Methods class faced the same challenges as the rest of the world: a disruption of nearly everything.

The groups all studied the subject of political participation on college campuses. Why are some students active and others not? What accounts for the difference in engagement? Five groups of students took five different approaches: Surveys, quantitative analysis, interviews, case studies, and experiments. They all faced pandemic-related challenges.

“You would have people drop out of the study, saying, ‘I can’t deal with this right now,’” said Renée Nikolov, a member of the interviews group.

“I think having to stay at home, and this pandemic, might have contributed to our limited sample size,” said Tanvi Siddharthan, from the group initially assigned to case studies. “In the list of things you have to do, answering a survey really isn’t one of them. When we collected data, it was us reaching out to our personal networks.”

According to Tufts University data, 40.3 percent of college students voted in the 2018 midterm elections, up from 19.3 percent in 2014. In the 2016 presidential election, 44.8 percent of college aged eighteen to twenty-one voted. The study found that smartphone use correlated with voting behavior.

“The quantitative analysis group used data from the American National Election Studies to determine the effects of financial security and access to technology on political participation.”

“Given that so much politics has gone online in the past decade, specifically, we thought there might be a really fruitful relationship there to explore,” group member Ruth Pace said.

To encourage that type of dialogue across other fields of study, it would be really beneficial.”

The case studies group planned to identify factors that lead students to attend political protests using focus groups, but the pandemic relegated them to Google forms. They tested two variables: parental political ideology and income status. Hoping for fifty responses, they received ninety-eight.

The majority of both the survey respondents and their parents identified as liberal, but the study found no link between ideology/income and participation in political protests, their chosen indicator.

“You want to use their voices and engage in these political processes, but they just find the transaction cost too high, or they find barriers to participation.”

The students in Professor Silverman’s class tried to find underlying factors, testing the effects of students’ socioeconomic status and their parents’ political views on their propensity to join or shun the political process.

Rigorous collegiate education can leave little time for the consideration of much else, so the survey group decided to examine the possible effect of stress on political participation. Using a scale of one to five, they collected information on stress, political participation, school, and demographics, but the surveys proved challenging. They had to remove half of the surveys from the data set because respondents either left sections blank or submitted junk responses. They did not find the impact of stress level to be statistically significant.

“When we did the very preliminary analysis, you’d expect the base level of stress, the higher level of stress, if you were a five, you were less likely to vote than a four,” said Sujay Utkarsh, one of the group members. “It turned out to be the opposite scenario.”

The quantitative analysis group used data from the American National Election Studies to determine the effects of financial security and access to technology on political participation.

“The quantitative analysis group used data from the American National Election Studies to determine the effects of financial security and access to technology on political participation.”

“Across the humanities, even modern languages … you can see how professors are pretty intentional with making [politics] a point of conversation, and weaving that into the discussion,” group member Audrey Pederson said. “I think if we’re able to encourage that type of dialogue across other fields of study, it would be really beneficial.”
Richard Grenell, the former United States Ambassador to Germany and former acting director of national intelligence (DNI), has joined Carnegie Mellon University’s Institute for Politics and Strategy as a Senior Fellow.

Grenell brings a decade of experience in diplomacy and international relations to Carnegie Mellon, where he will engage with students and faculty. He spent eight years as the United States spokesman at the United Nations before assuming the role of U.S. Ambassador to Germany.

“The offices of the Institute for Politics and Strategy in Pittsburgh and Washington, DC have a proven track record for convening leaders throughout the world for research, teaching, and discussion on some of the most pressing global problems,” Grenell said. “It is an honor to join Professor Kiron Skinner and her IPS colleagues to help develop projects concentrating on the new Europe and the global campaign to decriminalize homosexuality.”

President Donald Trump appointed Grenell as Ambassador to Germany, Presidential Envoy for Kosovo-Serbia and as Acting DNI in February 2020. In that role, Grenell oversaw the 17 agencies in the intelligence community and served as the principal advisor to the president and the National Security Council on intelligence matters. During his short tenure, Grenell dramatically reformed the Office of the DNI, moving it toward an agency that coordinates intelligence rather than functioning as a competing body.

“Ambassador Ric Grenell’s role as acting director of the Office of National Intelligence has given him a unique understanding of the complexities facing the intelligence community and how to address them,” said IPS Director and Taube Professor Kiron Skinner, the founder of the Institute for Politics and Strategy. “I am struck by the fact that Ambassador Grenell is especially interested in sharing his insights with our students and faculty as well as learning from them. I look forward to welcoming the Ambassador to Carnegie Mellon University.”

As U.S. Ambassador to Germany from May 2018 until June 2020, Grenell pressed Germany to increase its defense budget to meet NATO guidelines and worked to ensure the security of shared intelligence as the nation fielded bids for 5G mobile-infrastructure.

“Ambassador Grenell joins the Institute for Politics and Strategy at a critical juncture in our nation’s history,” Professor Skinner said. “Having served a decade at the State Department, representing the United States at the highest levels at the United Nations and later as ambassador to Germany, I could not think of anyone more qualified to help the nation think through twenty-first-century diplomacy.”

In 2004, Grenell was appointed as an alternate representative to the UN Security Council with full voting rights and privileges.

Grenell’s service as UN spokesperson coincided with worldwide upheaval following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. He crafted communications strategies related to the war on terror, Middle East conflict, nuclear proliferation and the security of Israel.

In 2010, Grenell founded the international consulting firm Capitol Media Partners. He has contributed to Fox News, and has written for The Wall Street Journal, The Los Angeles Times, CBS News, CNN and The Washington Times. He previously taught at the University of Southern California’s Annenberg School of Communications.

Grenell holds a master’s degree in Public Administration from Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government and a bachelor’s degree in Government and Public Administration from Evangel University.
There were two acts of terror in September 2001, last week, he opened with a pop quiz. Paul Wolfowitz knows his way around a classroom. He earned a PhD in political science from the University of Chicago, taught the subject at Yale, and served as the Dean of Johns Hopkins’ School of Advanced International Studies. So when he began his work on Persian Gulf security, Secretary of State Al Haig brought in Wolfowitz as the head of the policy planning staff at the Department of State in 1981, and Wolfowitz became the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs after George Shultz replaced Haig two years later.

In that role, Wolfowitz thought he would spend most of his time dealing with China and Japan. Instead, he spent more time on the Philippines than either of them, going toe to toe with Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos. When in 1986 Wolfowitz became the ambassador to Indonesia, Shultz told him, “You earned it.”

Wolfowitz’s career brought him back to the Middle East in 1989, when he worked for President George H.W. Bush as the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, and it was during this time that he got a feel for Iraq’s leader, Saddam Hussein. Later, in 1993, when ex-President Bush visited Kuwait to commemorate the victory in the first Iraq war, the Kuwaitis discovered a car bomb on the motorcade route. Subsequent investigations pointed, Wolfowitz said, to Iraqi intelligence.

“I know of only two possible motivations for doing that,” he said. One was revenge. “And the second possibility, which I think is more likely, is for Saddam to assert to his own people that he hadn’t lost the war, that he was still fighting.” Either attitude represented a danger for us.

After seven years at Johns Hopkins, Wolfowitz returned to government, this time as Deputy Secretary of Defense. He’d held the role for less than a year before the September 11 attacks. Al Qaeda and Afghanistan were one issue, but, Wolfowitz said, the anthrax attacks altered the way the government felt about weapons of mass destruction and Iraq at the time as well.

“[Hussein] had kicked out the UN inspectors in 1998, so there was no basis for saying there wasn’t a threat there,” Wolfowitz said. “And to the contrary, his own rhetoric was pretty threatening. Every single world leader that you can think of condemned the 9/11 attacks. … The only world leader who did not condemn those attacks happened to be the leader of Iraq, Saddam Hussein.”

In retrospect, Wolfowitz pointed to two mistakes in Iraq. He questioned why the US did not employ the counterinsurgency tactics, which proved effective when General Creighton Abrams Jr. switched from search-and-destroy to clear-and-hold near the end of the Vietnam War, in Iraq. Had the US employed General David Petraeus’ counterinsurgency plans from the beginning, Wolfowitz said, the Iraqis could have built and managed their country. Wolfowitz also said that the Iraq war did indeed require more troops – but more Iraqi troops, not Americans.

“We needed a light force that could do counter-insurgency, that could deal with the local people, that didn’t need to have big heavy equipment,” he said.

Nearly 20 years after the beginning of the second Iraq war, the Middle East remains vital to the rest of the world. Wolfowitz compared it to a Go board: Leaving the most important squares on the board empty spells defeat.

“You’ve got to think about what you leave behind,” he said.

Afghanistan, which the US invaded in 2001 with the intent of vanquishing al Qaeda and the Taliban, remains an issue, and were Wolfowitz advising President Trump on Afghan policy, he would recommend bringing Pakistan in line.
“I would encourage you to really beat hard on your State Department and Defense Department and CIA colleagues to give you some serious options of getting the Pakistanis to start behaving differently,” Wolfowitz said in response to a question from a student about the decision to remove troops from Afghanistan.

Another student asked Wolfowitz about sanctions on Iran regarding its nuclear weapons program, considering Wolfowitz’s experience with Iraq.

“It’s important to be confronting Iran over its malevolent activities throughout the region, throughout the world, but especially through the Arabian Peninsula, and Syria and in Iraq,” Wolfowitz said. “So far, I can see no serious sign that even though the maximum pressure seems to be a good idea, it’s getting us what we want. Having said that, from the point of view of the Persian Gulf states who are all rather weak compared to Iran, it’s built up their confidence that the United States has their back. Sometimes too much so.”

The Middle East’s oil reserves make it important to the rest of the world, including what Wolfowitz called the greatest threat to the United States: communist China.

“It’s a surveillance state, it’s a brutal surveillance state,” he said. “They’ve made pretty clear how they treat their people, their subjects.

“I think any Chinese war planner that thinks about invading Taiwan has to think, ‘Well, the next thing America might do is cut off all our energy.’ I don’t know that we would or could, but I’d like to be in a position where they’d have to worry about that.”

After his tenure as Deputy Secretary of Defense, Wolfowitz served as president of the World Bank, as chairman of the Department of State’s International Security and Advisory Board, and as Chairman of the US-Taiwan Business Council. Given the breadth and scope of his career, he advised students to forget about what they’re going to be someday, and instead, to do something they love.

“If you’re happy with what you’re doing, you’ll do well at it,” he said. “If you do well at it, people will discover that you can do well at other things, and you will end up with opportunities that you could not have planned on.”

IPS News
May 6, 2020
UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES CAN THE GOVERNMENT CURTAIL CIVIL LIBERTIES? IPS DIRECTOR AND TAUBE PROFESSOR KIRON SKINNER’S STUDENTS SET TO FIND OUT

By Bill Brink

On March 26, 1947, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover appeared before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. “Communism, in reality, is not a political party,” he told the committee. “It is a way of life – an evil and malignant way of life. It reveals a condition akin to disease that spreads like an epidemic; and like an epidemic, a quarantine is necessary to keep it from infecting the nation.”

More than seventy years later, as the world deals with an actual epidemic, Americans face questions regarding their civil liberties similar to those at the beginning of the Cold War. Students in Institute for Politics and Strategy Taube Professor Kiron Skinner’s class, “America and the World,” grappled with the question: Under what circumstances can the government curtail civil liberties?

To inform their arguments, they watched – physically distanced, but together, via Zoom – the sixth episode of “Cold War,” the 1998 CNN television series. The episode, titled “Reds,” included clips from the time period, including Hoover addressing theHUAC, and interviews with key players.

“This particular segment is my favorite because I think it brings together American politics and international relations in an interesting way,” Professor Skinner said.

Following the viewing, the class discussed the Red Scare of the late 1940s and early 1950s and par-
In the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin forced the Soviet Union to conform to the model of Communism onto the satellite nations he controlled. Moscow orchestrated a show trial containing Communist ideas. Screen Actors Guild and the Soviet Union turned their fear of the other against their own people. The HUAC was formed in 1938 to investigate Communist organizations that arose during the Great Depression, but the committee increased its activity in the late 1940s. It directed much of its attention to the film industry, sentencing what became known as the Hollywood Ten, a group of screenwriters and directors that included Ring Lardner Jr. and Dalton Trumbo, to prison terms. Gary Cooper said he turned down scripts containing Communist ideas. Screen Actors Guild president Ronald Reagan testified.

"If you did get subpoenaed, you didn’t have much of a choice of what to do," Lardner said. "Either you completely co-operated with the committee, which meant saying yes or no to the question about whether you were a Communist or ever had been, and if the answer was yes, as it was in my case, we knew the next question was, who else was?"

The HUAC included Richard Nixon, a first-term congressman from California whose investigation into Communist spying by former State Department official Alger Hiss turned Nixon into a national figure. In the Senate, Wisconsin’s Joseph McCarthey followed in the HUAC’s footsteps and used his chairmanship of the Committee on Government Operations, which included the Permanent Sub-committee on Investigations, to hunt down suspected Communists in the government.

"It seems like McCarthyism and the domestic political climate would have made it nearly impossible, frankly, to have an honest conversation about what foreign policy priorities would be," one student said during the discussion.

In the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin forced the Soviet Union to conform to the model of Communism onto the satellite nations he controlled. Moscow orchestrated a show trial in Czechoslovakia in 1952, where fourteen defendants were tortured into confessing to crimes that didn’t exist. At the end of the Slansky Trials, so named for the General Secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, eleven of the fourteen defendants were hanged. The show trial, along with the Doctors’ Plot — an anti-semitic fabrication in Moscow in the 1950s — were examples, the documentary noted, of how both sides persecuted Jews because of their connection to the “enemy.”

“Stalin needed an internal enemy ... and the Jews fit that role very well,” said Yakov Eltinger Jr., whose father was imprisoned in the Doctors’ Plot and who spent time in a Soviet gulag. “Jews had family in America.”

"I was just interested in the lack of evidence when it comes to convicting people, both in the Soviet Union and in the US,” one student said.

When the episode ended, the students and Professor Skinner discussed the relationship between the fear of Communism in the early years of the Cold War, and the actions that resulted from that fear, to the actions taken to combat the spread of the coronavirus. Students then heard from Schachter, who blogged about politics for the New York Post during her career as a journalist, about how best to construct their argument: Write about an idea you find exciting and interesting. Craft a strong thesis statement. Be concise and clear.

The students, writing under pseudonyms to freely express their opinions, cited examples of past restriction of civil liberties in their blogs: the suspension of habeas corpus during the Civil War, Japanese internment camps during World War II, the Patriot Act after September 11th. More argued against restrictions than for them.

"When crisis situations demand that some sacrifices be made in terms of civil liberties, because the public’s reaction is so often knee-jerk opposition, government officials are incentivized to forego the public forum altogether,” one student argued. “The fire of freedom may be choked but as long as the fires burns, it can burn brighter,” wrote another.

Students who argued in favor of the restriction of some civil liberties during times of crisis appealed to the notion that it must be done for the good of the nation. “No singular American,” wrote one, “can defeat a pandemic.”

He called them by name, drew from his military service and extensive reading of history when answering their questions, and provided valuable insight to a class that offers real-world instruction in foreign policy through the study of original source materials.

"There’s really no way to completely learn this from a book,” Mattis said. “You need to talk to people that have been there.”

Dr. Martial Hebert, the Dean of Carnegie Mellon’s School of Computer Science, attended Mattis’ virtual lecture.

“We have a joint program with Professor Skinner in the area of AI, in the area of cybersecurity, which allows us to link together the expertise in technology, the expertise in computer science, with the expertise in political science, decision science, social science, etc.,” Dr. Hebert told Mattis.

Mattis brought more than four decades of experience to the position of Secretary of Defense, which he held from January 2017 until December 2018. He led an infantry battalion in Iraq in 1991, and an expeditionary brigade in Afghanistan in 2001, before eventually commanding all Marine forces in the Middle East. He later ran US Central Command (CENTCOM), which governs all American forces.
in the Middle East, and directed NATO’s Supreme Allied Command for Transformation.

His research on NATO – he read 22 books on the organization prior to assuming command – informed his process on the National Defense Strategy. After consultation with Congressmen, NATO allies, think tanks, and others, Mattis produced a three-part plan. The US needed to increase the lethality of its military forces. It also needed more allies and stronger alliances. Finally, the Department of Defense needed to gain the trust of Congress and the American people regarding its spending.

“We are going to make the world safe for democracy,” he said.

To do so, the Department of Defense would support the Department of State, which needed to drive foreign policy. In late December 2016, after President Donald Trump had won the election but before he or his Cabinet had taken office, Mattis heard that Rex Tillerson, the nominee for Secretary of State, was in Washington, DC. Mattis called three hotels until he found Tillerson, and invited him to dinner. For too long, Mattis told Tillerson, State and Defense did not work together.

“I’ve had lance corporals catch RPGs in the chest because we didn’t have our policy and our strategy together,” he said. Not on his watch; if they were confirmed, he told Tillerson, they would meet every week so that when they walked into the White House, they were in alignment.

Tillerson reached across the table and shook his hand.

The alignment of the Departments of State and Defense augments Mattis’ strategy of creating and strengthening alliances. In answering a student’s question about whether alliances expanded or reduced America’s use of force, Mattis cited NATO. Following World War II, America could have dismissed Europe after fighting in two wars in Europe and the Pacific, and the American people regarding its spending. Mattis pointed to the result: The only time NATO went to war, he said, was after the September 11th attacks.

“Make sure you’ve got a way to come out physically better,” Mattis said. “Mentally, perhaps go and study something you mean to study but you haven’t had time. And stay connected to whatever your source of spiritual strength is.”

Mattis’ presentation impressed the students. One student commented following the talk, “You can see how he got where he was.”

The thesis symposium of the Accelerated Master of Science in International Relations and Politics’ 2020 cohort was certainly of its time.

The students presented studies on misinformation in the news, global finance, voter suppression and turnout, drone warfare, and the outcome of foreign-policy promises made during presidential campaigns – all issues which are currently relevant, especially in an election year. Further, the symposium took place remotely, via Zoom, because of the physical distancing practices resulting from the global spread of COVID-19. The coronavirus even influenced the outcome of at least one of the studies: When Aysar Gharaibeh began constructing his experiment, months ago, part of the material he presented to those whom he surveyed dealt with a hypothetical pandemic.

The symposium marked the completion of the final project for students in the program, which allows Carnegie Mellon students to earn both a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree in five years by beginning graduate coursework during their senior (fourth) year. The students had ten minutes to present their findings, sharing their slideshows with the rest of the attendees on Zoom, followed by five minutes for questions.

Gharaibeh’s thesis, titled “Misinformation & Truth Distortion,” began as an attempt to examine Russian disinformation before he expanded the topic to cover misinformation and disinformation in general. The distinction between the two is intent. “Misinformation is false information generally; if somebody misquotes a statistic or mistakenly says the wrong [team] won the football game, [they] like their favorite team, that is disinformation,” he said. “But if they do it on purpose, they tell you who won the football game yesterday to make [you] like their favorite team, that is disinformation.”

Gharaibeh studied the effects of misinformation by soliciting feedback from 445 participants who read four articles, including a control article and
three others that fell on the political spectrum as left-leaning, non-partisan, or right-leaning. To the two articles on political issues, Gharibeh added five different levels of distortion, from zero (just the facts) to four (downright conspiratorial).

“The early levels, as I suspected, was about the same as level zero on all three of my conditions,” Gharibeh said. “... I can say with high confidence based on my results that trust in articles significantly falls at the higher levels of misinformation, but at the medium levels, it’s (similar to) just facts.”

Asked by his thesis advisor, Institute for Politics and Strategy Professor Colin Clarke, to provide a policy recommendation based on his findings, Gharibeh cautioned that there was no silver bullet.

“It needs to be a coherent strategy,” he said. “My recommendation would be establishing some sort of (government) office, some sort of department, that is specifically tasked with handling these issues and giving them full empowerment to tackle these problems.”

Micah Rabin’s thesis, “Voter Suppression Rhetoric and Voter Turnout in US Election Cycles,” used a similar method. She provided a group of 723 people with four vignettes related to voter suppression and turnout, but tinged three of them with an appeal to the voter, using a sense of self-interest, a sense of civic duty, or both.

“One of the main takeaways from the study, were she to advise a political campaign, was to appeal to voters using this type of rhetoric, rather than the standard ‘get-out-the-vote’ message, and to target civic-minded groups and those invested in speaking to voters,” Rabin said.

“From that, I was able to see that self-interest and civic duty are having some effects here, and they are important in speaking to voters,” Rabin said.

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“Turnout is an understudied field, as well,” Rabin said. “A lot of people are focused on very specific niches in the field. There’s a lot of studies about, does rain affect turnout? People aren’t really taking a step back and looking at the broader issue as much.”


“These events are extremely formal and very organized and structured, so any talking points that they touch upon would be planned in advance and would eliminate the possibilities of these promises being off the cuff or a random, in-the-moment promise,” Freiria said.

Freiria evaluated the promises on a scale of zero, a complete whiff, to three, completed in full. He discovered that one of his hypotheses — that the rate of promises kept will increase during an election year — proved correct.

“I found that some of these promises... they started very early on, but ended up completing it later,” he said. “For example, a lot of presidents during the Cold War had promises relating to disarmament. The START [Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty] negotiations started early on, the START II [talks] started early on.”

Sometimes foreign-policy concerns require presidents to make tough decisions, and Kimberly Huang gave her study subjects a taste of them while working on her thesis, “Public-Elite Decision Making Using Drones in the US.” By presenting her subjects with actual scenarios, Huang tested her hypothesis that the use of drone strikes would be higher among those acting as “elites” in the government rather than those acting as themselves. She offered an overseas threat and three options — drone strike, conventional strike, or no strike at all.

Huang continues to gather data.

Journal-length versions of the theses will be published this summer, in the next issue of the Center for International Relations and Politics (CIRP) Journal. As for the subjects of the theses, they will remain relevant as the year progresses.

“I’m very worried, I would say,” said Gharibeh, regarding disinformation leading up to the election this fall. “I don’t think we’re prepared yet. I think there’s a lot more work to be done, and unfortunately with these things, I think we’ll only be able to evaluate what happened after the fact.”

IPS News
April 16, 2020
MEGHAN MATTERN BRINGS USAID EXPERIENCE TO THE INSTITUTE FOR POLITICS AND STRATEGY

By Bill Brink

In 2013, while Meghan Mattern attended Harvard University’s Graduate School of Education, she had the opportunity to work part-time. She did so as a college advisor at Godman Academy Charter Public School in Dorchester, a neighborhood south of Boston.

“That was my first foray into student affairs and advising,” Mattern said, “and I loved it.”

After two stints working for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and companies with which USAID contracted, Mattern drew upon her appreciation of the collegiate advising role, and in March joined the Institute for Politics and Strategy as the program manager of the Washington Semester Program. The job combines her skills, experiences, and interests: government and international relations, and collegiate advising. She supports the academic, personal, and professional development of students participating in the program.

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Mattern worked in several Bureaus at USAID, an agency created by President John F. Kennedy in 1961 to lead the US government’s international development and humanitarian efforts. She knew she wanted to work in development early on: She attended Calvin University in Grand Rapids, Michigan, because it offered international development as a major.

She considered dividing her studies between international development and one of the sciences, possibly biology or pre-med. Then she spent Janu-

ary of her sophomore year studying in Tanzania.

“(I) just loved that experience, and learned so much, and I got to study the language,” Mattern said. “When I came back from that trip, it was like, this is definitely what I want to do, and I switched full-time to that track.”

Mattern knew she wanted to move to Washington, DC after graduating in 2009, but the job search
opportunities to students displaced by the Boko project, which provided nonformal education for students in two northern states. Mattern was assigned to support both projects.

“I was spending most of my time in Nigeria. Just getting it set up and starting up a new project like that, as you can imagine, a lot of work,” Mattern said. “I did that for a while, a little over a year just traveling back and forth all the time. And then I was recruited by Dexis Consulting Group, who holds a staffing contract with USAID’s Office of Education, to come back to their office of [education] in conflict.”

Back at USAID, Mattern felt that her judgment was correct: A graduate degree was crucial. She worked in the Office of Education on the Education in Crisis and Conflict team, which aligned with what she had studied.

“I just felt like I could contribute a lot more and I had a lot more opportunity to speak up and write and do all kinds of things, because I did have this technical experience in the sector that I didn’t have the first time,” she said.

The move to Carnegie Mellon was not entirely random. Mattern grew up in Ligonier, Pennsylvania, about 50 miles east of Pittsburgh. Her grandfather, Gerry Mattern, is an Adjunct Professor at Carnegie Mellon’s School of Architecture and Civil and Environmental Engineering. When she was young, she attended the university’s C-MITES program, a hands-on learning experience for talented youth.

In her role as program manager for the Washington Semester Program, which allows students from any course of study at Carnegie Mellon to live, intern, and study in the nation’s capital, she advises and assists with internship searches and applications, serves as a resource for living and working in Washington, DC, and maintains partnerships with intern-hosting organizations.

“When I started brainstorming about what my next steps might look like after USAID … I started to think about what, are the experiences that I’ve really enjoyed when I had a job? And one of those was this role as a college advisor,” Mattern said. “And then I saw this job come up in January, which was advising, but also needed somebody who had had government and international relations experience. That sounds kind of like a nice fit.”

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the director of IPS, suggested engaging local officials, and a virtual fireside chat with Dan Gilman, a Dietrich alumnus and Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto’s chief of staff, was planned. After adding Networking 101 with Washington Semester Program and Dietrich alumnus Juan Acosta, a LinkedIn workshop with the Career and Professional Development Center, and an information literacy lecture with IPS Professor Dan Silverman, Fremoyer filled the month of April with virtual events.

The programming includes social events as well, such as political science trivia on April 16 and a follow-along baking class on April 29. The events are open to all Dietrich College students.

“I think the lesson here is, build relationships, maintain relationships ...” Fremoyer said. “The fact that our department maintains strong connections with its alumni is really important.”

Students also joined Professor Skinner for a remote group viewing and discussion of the Oregon Public Broadcasting documentary “1968,” which detailed the tumult of that year in American history. Public Broadcasting documentary “1968,” which detailed the tumult of that year in American history.

Journalist, author, and producer Peter Bergen detailed the turmoil of that year in American history. Journalist, author, and producer Peter Bergen detailed the turmoil of that year in American history. Public Broadcasting documentary “1968,” which detailed the tumult of that year in American history. Journalist, author, and producer Peter Bergen detailed the turmoil of that year in American history. The documentary is currently airing on public television. The documentary is currently airing on public television. 

Professor Derek Harvey’s CMU/WSP class on counterterrorism, the effectiveness or lack thereof of torture in tracking bin Laden, and coronavirus spread models. 

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“I thought he’d be a table-thumping revolutionary,” Bergen said. “Instead he was very soft-spoken. He carried himself like a cleric.”

Bergen, the director of New America’s International Security and Future of War programs, curates a daily roundup of coronavirus news and analysis.

“You can’t have policy if you have no idea what is actually happening,” he said. “... We are in an unraveled chapter in both health-wise and in terms of the economy.”

Bergen also discussed counterterrorism, the effectiveness or lack thereof of torture in tracking bin Laden, and coronavirus spread models.

Al-Ali didn’t care. She was doing the Washington Semester Program.

“I am going,” she said. “I want to do this program so bad that I don’t care if it’s World War III.”

This school year, Al-All and three other students became the first from Carnegie Mellon’s Qatar campus to participate in the Washington Semester Program, which allows students from any course of study to live, work and learn in Washington, DC. Each semester, a cohort of roughly 20 students lives together in the Senate Square Building; itinerates with Congressmen, think tanks and nonprofits; and takes courses in policy, media, intelligence and lobbying at night.

“If anyone has any interest in public policy or working in the government, this is definitely a very eye-opening experience,” said Abrahm Farooqui, another CMU Qatar student who participated in the program. “It shows you what your options are and what there is available.”

As a kid growing up in Qatar, Al-All dreamed of becoming an ambassador. She wanted to study politics and policy until she got to high school, when business seemed more prudent, and she is now majoring in Business Administration. Taking some history classes when she got to college awakened her inner diplomat.

“... And then when I saw this program, it was like getting the best of both worlds, studying in CMU and graduating with a business degree, but then at the same time I can have a minor in public policy and politics, which is something I wanted to do since I was in high school,” said Al-All, now a junior. “I wanted to try this.”

Auguste Piromalli found his way to DC from France, his home country, via Qatar. He applied to several universities in the United Kingdom, and only one -- Carnegie Mellon -- in the US. Waitlisted, and set to go to the University of Edinburgh, Piromalli got an email from CMU suggesting, with his international profile, that he consider the Qatar campus.

“Carnegie Mellon was the choice for me because it aligned very much with the values that were important to me, this idea that innovation was important, this entrepreneurial spirit was very appealing to me,” Piromalli, a junior, said via video conference from France during spring break. “I just liked the whole
environment. It offered a very, very quantitative education and therefore a prestigious and good education, while having a very research-oriented, innovation-oriented environment.”

Farooqui was born in Arizona, but moved to Saudi Arabia and then Qatar before college. He is a senior Business Administration major concentrating on finance accounting analytics, with plans for graduate studies in economics.

“I wanted to get more exposure to this area, so I thought DC and the internship opportunities that were present in DC would give me enough exposure to see, what are my opportunities out there,” he said via video conference from Doha, the site of CMU Qatar.

When Al-Ali arrived in the US, she was scared. She wore a hoodie to cover her hijab.

“I got homesick my first month,” she said. “I was like, ‘I want to go back,’ but then I got used to it. I got used to the workload, the lifestyle, working in the [Qatari] embassy and then coming here and having work, it all worked out fine, I’d say.”

“Here” was Carnegie Mellon’s DC offices and classroom, on the fifth floor of the United Methodist building on Capitol Hill. It sits next door to the Supreme Court; down the block is the Capitol. Farooqui could walk from the apartment to his internship at The Heritage Foundation to class of the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Farooqui rented a bike to explore the city. “It feels a lot more open,” he said. “I think that’s because the buildings aren’t as tall, you can actually see the sky. It exceeded my expectations of what there is available, what there is to do.”

The COVID-19 outbreak cut the Spring 2020 semester short for Al-Ali and Naram Hajar, the fourth student from CMU Qatar, but the students left DC with valuable lessons.

“If you have an interest into understanding how policy works and how the policy-making process works, which is everywhere for our democracies … those are processes that are at the heart of virtually all of our actions,” Piromalli said. “As a citizen we should be interested in those processes. Understanding those by being at the heart of it in Washington is amazing.”

Al-Ali interned in the public diplomacy department of the Qatari embassy. She interacted with charities, attended galas and wrote proposals. The Qatari embassy works with a nonprofit called Children of Fallen Patriots, which provides scholarships and educational counseling to children who lost a parent in the line of duty, and Al-Ali authored a proposal to have the children travel to Qatar to study.

At a talk about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the man sitting next to Al-Ali noticed her notebook’s embassy watermark and asked who she was. “I said, ‘I work at the embassy,’” she said. “He said, ‘I’m the former ambassador of the US for Israel, UAE, Jordan, Egypt,’ and then he gave me his card. I was like, wow. It’s DC. You don’t know how’s sitting right next to you. That’s been really cool.”

Piromalli enjoyed Washington Semester Program fellow Joseph Devine’s internship seminar, as well as the guest speakers in the policy forum. Al-Ali was pleasantly surprised that the curriculum included the Department of Defense.

“Before coming here I didn’t know anything about DOD,” she said. “But now I know how to write a memo to the Secretary of the Department of Defense. I have a toolbox and now I have more tools to put in that toolbox. I can write very formally, I can write to someone very important.”

Recently, Al-Ali spent three hours on just one floor of the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Farooqui rented a bike to explore the city. “It feels a lot more open,” he said. “I think that’s because the buildings aren’t as tall, you can actually see the sky. It exceeded my expectations of what there is available, what there is to do.”

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PIRS News
March 16, 2020
Carnegie Mellon University Washington Semester Program (CMU/WSP): A Day in the Life
By Bill Brink

YOU’RE UP early. The Congressman for whom you intern is on Ways and Means, and they’ve got a meeting at 9 a.m., meaning you need to be on the Hill by 8. Could be worse. You’ll swing by Ebenezer’s on 2nd and F on your walk to work for a pour-over and a muffin.

You shuffle out of bed in the Senate Square Building, careful not to wake your roommates. There are six or seven of you total, in a three-bedroom, two-bathroom apartment. This is where you’ll start your day during the Washington Semester Program, which is part of the Institute for Politics and Strategy but open to undergraduates from any course of study.

“You’re kind of thrown into the real world very quickly, with a whole lot of support, which I feel doesn’t happen in a lot of universities,” said Cristina Pullen, a Class of 2021 Professional Writing major who is in the Spring 2020 CMU/WSP cohort.

“You’re here and you’re given these incredible, very non-traditional professors and you’re learning just as much, if not more, from these types of classes, while at the same time you are immersed in the DC culture and the political realm of the national government. And it’s really interesting to see yourself develop professionally in that way, in an opportunity that I feel you can’t get anywhere else.”

Pullen is a communications intern at the US Global Leadership Coalition, a network of businesses and non-governmental organizations that argues for an
increase in the international affairs budget. Other students interned at the Qatar Embassy, Georgetown’s Center for Security and Emerging Technologies, and the office of Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman.

In the fall of 2014, Susanna Seltzer interned at the International Center for Terrorism Studies, a crucial place at a crucial time: ISIS had just taken large swathes of territory in Iraq. For months, Seltzer wrote about ISIS, and that work became part of a book called “The Islamic State: Combating the Caliphate Without Borders.”

“Everybody had their own little commute and then in the evening we’d all come back together and sort of talk about our days,” said Seltzer, who graduated in 2016 with a degree in International Relations and Politics and later got an accelerated master’s degree in IRP as well. “… I would take the Metro out to Arlington (Virginia), commute back home like a whole adult, and make a schedule. I loved being in the city. It’s very vibrant. There’s always stuff going on. So many different activities, the museums were free. You didn’t have any reason to be bored.”

KELLEN CARLETON also experienced good timing. He spent the Spring 2017 semester in DC and interned with Senator Pat Toomey, a Pennsylvania Republican, during the beginning of the Trump administration.

“It was honestly a really transformational semester for me,” said Carleton, a 2018 Carnegie Mellon graduate who earned his master’s in IRP the following year. “… It was kind of a wild time to be in DC and just see how things were changing and looking at all the Cabinet nominations going on.”

From Toomey’s office in the Russell Senate Office Building, Carleton could throw a baseball to Carnegie Mellon’s classroom in the United Methodist Building on Maryland Ave. Look out one window of the conference room and see the tall Corinthian columns of the Supreme Court; out another, the Capitol rotunda. Down the hall, past a small kitchen that on a recent Monday night housed Mediterranean food for the class, is a large classroom and event space – the place you’ll spend four nights a week learning from faculty who have been there and done that.

On that recent Monday it was Professor Fred Crawford (Carnegie Mellon ’83), who spent the better part of three decades as, among other posts, a lawyer for the CIA. As students filed in and out of the adjoining event space to grab slices of his wife’s almond cake, Crawford ran the students through an exercise in finding legal precedent in the Congressional Record or the United States Code.

“I’m not an academic,” Crawford said. “I’m a retired federal government employee and attorney. And if I were to try to structure a class as an academic, it’d be sort of like bringing a knife to a gunfight. I’d be outgunned and outclassed by the CMU faculty. But I try to take 35 years or so of working as a federal government employee and the tips and the tricks and the foibles that I’ve experienced and to try to prepare the students to avoid my prior foibles and the things I’ve stepped into, and to try to help them understand how policy is done at the level of introductory policy officers, which is where I think they’d be looking for the next two to five years.”

“(Crawford) is absolutely incredible,” Carleton said. “I think one of the best professors I’ve ever had. Just the way he was interested in what we did and he really, really cared. I remember during that semester he probably connected me with five or ten people that I could talk to about professional life and just what to do next.”

ANOTHER NIGHT, you might show up for a policy forum. Yes, the course has professors, but it also involves bringing in a diverse set of thought leaders for weekly roundtable discussions. Another day, perhaps a field trip: to the Pentagon press room, to the set of Meet the Press, to the Kennedy Center.

“I cannot recommend the Washington Semester Program enough,” said Lucy Truschel, a 2019 graduate and IRP major. “I think having the opportunity to have an internship during the school year is really great and there are so many more positives that come with the Washington Semester Program specifically. There’s a lot of support. It’s great to be in DC. It’s a really exciting and scary time to be in DC right now.”

After all that, it’s back to the Senate Square Building to debrief with your roommates and get ready to do it all over again.

IPS News
February 27, 2020
SEPARATING SIGNAL FROM NOISE: IPS STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN AN NCTC INTELLIGENCE SIMULATION
By Bill Brink

It’s October 2016. The Chicago Cubs are in the playoffs, and Wrigleyville figures to be packed. Lady Gaga and Pitbull are performing in Miami. Warriors of the Islamic Caliphate (WIC), a radicalized militant group, is quickly spreading throughout the Middle East, Africa and Western Europe.

It doesn’t want to control territory. It just wants to attack the West.

“When we look at threats, we are looking at intentions and capabilities,” a member of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) tells her analysts. “What do they want to do, and are they capable of doing what they want to do?”

Warriors of the Islamic Caliphate does not exist. The “analysts” are Institute for Politics and Strategy students, spending lunchtime at an NCTC simulation designed to mirror the challenges the intelligence community faces in separating signal from noise. Although a fictional exercise, the NCTC campus recruiter facilitating the simulation (whose name is being withheld) made the event feel real.

“This isn’t the fight that people were fighting in 2000 or even in 2006,” she told the students at the IPS event in the Cohen Center’s Dowd Room.

“The single greatest structural cause for the September 11th problem was the wall that segregated or separated criminal investigators and intelligence agents,” Attorney General John Ashcroft told the 9/11 Commission in April 2004. “Government erected this wall, government buttressed this wall, and before September 11th, government was blinded by this wall.” Out of the 9/11 Commission’s recommendations later that year came the NCTC, tasked with both integrating analysis and coordinating information sharing, and reporting its findings to both the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and the President.

As a recruiter for a relatively small agency, she needs to make sure she finds the right people, including those with quantitative and analytical skills.

“It is not by accident that NCTC wanted to come to CMU,” the NCTC facilitator said. “We know that you guys have some really, really great instruction.”

The NCTC is looking for analytics help, but that’s not the only desirable trait. The recruiter also noted a need for candidates who are passionate and intellectually curious.

To illustrate the work the NCTC does, the simulation provided the eleven students in attendance with mock briefing books containing newspaper headlines, reports from “sources in the field” and law enforcement actions.

The students were divided into two groups, one to determine WIC’s intentions – attach a baseball game, a concert, something else entirely, etc. – and the other to analyze its ability to carry them out. In reality the analysts would have a little more info: dates, background information on sources. But for an afternoon, the students got a taste of the high-stakes analysis used to combat terrorism world-wide.
The cartoon, shown during a presentation about the International Fellows Program at the Army War College, did not represent the latest and greatest in intelligence maneuvers to actually create polarization or mass hysteria; and there’s new technologies, new resources out there, tactics, techniques and procedures.”

The Institute for Strategic Analysis and the CyLab Security and Privacy Institute collaborated to produce a day of presentations the Army War College’s International Fellows, a group of eighty or so officers from militaries around the world who spend 10 months on the Carlisle, Pennsylvania campus taking courses and completing a research project.

“Both current and future leaders recognized that it is through university partnerships where services are enabled to develop concepts and to acquire capabilities,” said Colin Clarke, an assistant teaching professor in the Institute for Politics and Strategy who also works with the Institute for Strategic Analysis. “University partnerships provide the military, government and intelligence agencies with the theories and technology to meet and overcome seemingly intractable security challenges. These relationships often produce operational and tactical solutions, and I know that the network and relationships that are forged here today will go on to serve you all in the future.”

The fellows heard from Professor Carley about efforts to trace terror groups to determine the method of their next attack and how eager a country is to obtain a nuclear weapon. Bryan Parno, an associate professor in the Computer Science Department, detailed the latest advances in verified encryption systems. Known as Project Everest, the program attempts to verify the accuracy of code for HTTPS — Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure, the prefix you look for when submitting your credit card information.

“We can promise you that it is going to run correctly, that it is not going to leak secrets,” Professor Parno said.

The fellows toured the CyLab Biometrics Center for a demonstration of Carnegie Mellon’s advances in facial recognition software. They gathered around Dipan Pal, a PhD student working in the lab. Pal stood in front of a monitor displaying a blurry picture of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, one of the brothers who bombed the Boston Marathon in 2013. The image was of no use to facial recognition software, but in one day, crowd-sourcing unveiled a picture that worked. Carnegie Mellon’s software pins sixty thousand points on the face — “The reason you do it,” Pal said, “is because now you understand the face” — and the digital rendering of Tsarnaev’s face ranked in the top twenty among a million mugshots in a database.

“The haystack gets smaller,” Pal said.

The day of presentations concluded with presentations on creating national Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) and how decision and behavior science factor into policy.

“We are the school of strategic land power, but we have people from Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Civilians, now that we have a space force — and we do have some space officers at the War College,” said Colonel Brian R. Foster, the director of the International Fellows Program at the Army War College. “It’s definitely relevant now. Cyber, the information, the fake news, that’s a really big topic these days.”
ACHIEVEMENT IN ATHLETICS AND ACADEMICS

Sixth annual ceremony recognizes student athletes with highest GPAs

By Michael Henninger

December 11, 2019

After a standout fall where five of six athletic teams made the postseason, capped off by the women’s soccer team making the NCAA Division III Women’s Soccer National Semifinal for the first time in school history, Carnegie Mellon University invited 31 student-athletes to be recognized at their sixth annual Student-Athlete Academic Achievement Celebration in the Posner Center.

The event celebrates the top junior and senior student-athletes with the highest GPAs across each academic college and team. The students honored hold an average 3.83 GPA. Ten have a perfect 4.0.

“I feel strongly that our student-athletes, as they pursue their athletic dreams, are some of the best-rounded individuals on this campus. They are leaders. They impact others. They leave a legacy,” said Josh Centor, associate vice president of student affairs and director of athletics, physical education and recreation.

The room boasted seven Academic All-Americans, some multiple honorees. Invitees set 12 school records in 10 sports. Recognized students ran with the cross-country teams as they earned a trip to the NCAA Championship in November, played with the women’s tennis team as they reached the NCAA quarterfinals last spring, and play for the women’s golf team as they enter this spring season ranked first in the country.

One student was notably absent: senior Michael Lohmeier was unable to attend, as he was in New York for a ceremony that announced the winner of the William Campbell Trophy. Lohmeier was the only Division III student-athlete to be a finalist for the award, which is widely recognized as the Academic Heisman.

“Athletics is a vital component of the overall CMU experience, contributing to our vision of a healthy and well-balanced community for everyone,” said James H. Garrett, Jr., provost and chief academic officer of Carnegie Mellon.

Each recognized student is asked to invite a faculty or staff member who has contributed to their academic success. Joshua Pinckney is a junior on the tennis team who is double majoring in international relations and politics and Hispanic studies with a minor in sociology. He’s hopeful that after he completes his finals this week, he’ll get a 4.0 for the first time. He invited Professor Baruch Fischhoff to attend the event with him.

“I try to have a lot of conversation in my class and Joshua was one of the students who made it happen,” said Fischhoff. “Many of our best students have a separate, second life. They have started NGOs. They make large contributions to our athletic department. I’m never surprised when a student has a second life like Joshua does. We’re lucky to have him.”

Support from professors was crucial for some students pursuing life as an athlete at CMU. Lavonca Davis, a senior member of the golf team, is pursuing a degree in chemical engineering with a minor in computer science.

“I’m glad they have this event to reward those who are doing really well at balancing athletics and academics,” Davis said. “I think most of my support has come from professors, who are very open when you ask them for help.”

Bruce Armitage, a professor in the department of chemistry, was able to see several of his students at the event, including student speaker senior Camille Williams, a chemistry major that plays on the women’s soccer team. Williams is a two-time Academic All-American who played in more games for the women’s soccer program than any other Tartan in history.

“I think what’s special about CMU is that in Division III, the ‘student’ part of ‘student-athlete’ really means something compared to other universities,” Armitage said. “Camille was very interactive in class, adding a lot to the discussion. I wish I had a room full of students like Camille.”
CMU News
December 9, 2019
CMU OFFERS NEW MASTER’S DEGREE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND POLITICS
Program combines coursework in Pittsburgh with experiential learning, networking in Washington, DC
By Abby Simmons

Carnegie Mellon University’s Institute for Politics and Strategy (IPS) has launched a new Master of Science in International Relations and Politics program (MS IRP) and is accepting applications for its first cohort, to begin in fall 2020.

“The Institute for Politics and Strategy is uniquely situated as a university-wide institute at a top research university dedicated to interdisciplinary work. The MS IRP provides students with the resources they need to understand, navigate and lead in our rapidly changing political landscape,” said Kiron Skinner, IPS director and Taube Professor of International Relations and Politics.

Through the full-time, two-year program, IPS seeks to train the next generation of political scientists to examine and understand domestic and international government institutions and processes in the 21st century’s continuously changing global political structure.

The MS IRP preserves and expands CMU’s interdisciplinary tradition in political science, while at the same time, taps into and contributes to CMU’s strengths in other sciences that combine analytical and empirical methods. IPS also employs an innovative approach incorporating decision science in political science.

The program serves four academic goals:
• To allow students to specialize in one of four conventional areas of political science: international security, international relations, American politics or comparative politics;
• To equip students with strong methodological skills;
• To guide students in the production of a significant and publishable thesis; and
• To prepare students to enter the job market, whether their interests are in academia or the professional world.

Through support from the Hewlett Foundation, students interested in international security will benefit from IPS courses uniquely focused on cybersecurity and international conflict. In addition, all MS IRP students will have an opportunity to publish excerpts from their theses in CMU’s Center for International Relations and Politics’ CIRP Journal. While coursework is located on CMU’s Pittsburgh campus, students will participate in networking and policy-oriented events at the program’s Washington, D.C. office on Capitol Hill.

In addition, students are required to complete a summer internship in a related field between the first and second years of the program. The internship will allow students to synthesize the program’s studies in the context of practical and hands-on experiential learning opportunities. IPS has dedicated staff to support students in all aspects of the internship process.

The CIRP Policy Forum is one key way in which IPS brings international relations and politics into the intellectual conversation at CMU’s Pittsburgh campus. The CIRP Policy Forum regularly brings diplomats, scholars, policymakers, journalists and other thought leaders to the university to address major issues facing the United States and the world. MS IRP students will enroll in a three-unit Policy Forum Seminar each semester and be expected to participate in and reflect on their interactions throughout the CIRP Policy Forum lectures and roundtable discussions.

In addition to the new MS IRP Program, IPS will continue to offer its Accelerated Master of Science in International Relations and Politics (MS IRP-AMP) specifically for CMU undergraduate students. Students in the MS IRP-AMP begin graduate coursework in their senior year and complete the master’s degree in their fifth year of study. The MS IRP-AMP, launched in 2016, provided the foundation for planning the MS IRP program.

“The greatest impact the program had on me was the opportunity to work in-depth with leading researchers in a smaller class setting,” said Rob Stephens (DC 2017, 2018), who now works for the U.S. Department of Defense. “The opportunity to work one-on-one with the faculty in IPS has given me a greater attention to detail that I employ every day in a fast-paced government environment.”

While many program graduates pursue employment in the public and private sectors, others have continued to pursue additional advanced education.

“The graduate program was the perfect opportunity to explore a subject matter focus prior to law school. The professors were especially impactful in shaping and inspiring my career goals,” said Alex Pasch (DC 2017, 2018), who now is enrolled at Georgetown Law.
GLOBAL SECURITY EXPERT KIRON SKINNER JOINS THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION AS VISITING FELLOW

The Heritage Foundation

Kiron Skinner this week joined The Heritage Foundation as a visiting fellow at the Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute for National Security and Foreign Policy.

Skinner brings broad expertise in international relations, international security, U.S. foreign policy, and political strategy. Her work at Heritage will focus on analyzing how cutting edge technology – including artificial intelligence (AI), quantum science, and a host of other breakthroughs – will make her a treasure for Heritage.”

“Dr. Skinner brings vast knowledge, experience, and a practitioner’s perspective that will keep Heritage on the leading edge of shaping policy around emerging technology,” Heritage Foundation Vice President for National Security and Foreign Policy James Carafano said. “Dr. Skinner provides unique insight into the nation’s foreign policy priorities, strategies, and key influencers and will be key in ensuring our policy analysis is bold, realistic, and aimed at maximum influence.”

“Congratulations to Heritage on the appointment of Dr. Kiron Skinner as a visiting fellow,” said Mary Ann Glendon, the chairwoman of the State Department Commission on Unalienable Rights and a Harvard Law School professor. “As director of policy planning for the State Department, Dr. Skinner was instrumental in establishing the Commission on Unalienable Rights and in settling it on a promising course. Her wisdom, skill, and experience will make her a treasure for Heritage.”


Skinner is the Taube professor of International Relations and Politics and director of the Institute of Politics and Strategy, the home of the study of international and politics at Carnegie Mellon University. She is a member of the artificial-intelligence faculty community at CMU, which holds the No. 1 spot among all U.S. universities for AI research – including artificial intelligence (AI), quantum science, and a host of other breakthroughs – will make her a treasure for Heritage."

“Kiron is a longtime thought leader known for her high character, tireless work ethic, stellar collaborative ability, and deep connections across influential communities,” Heritage Foundation President Kay Coles James said. “It’s difficult to imagine a better mind joining Heritage for this work at a more perfect time, as the intersection of information, technology, and policy looms larger in every one of our lives every day. Her addition will help us navigate largely uncharted waters and contribute to a future in which technology, freedom, and security are complementary forces for societal good.”

Getting work experience in college can help students land a job after graduation. One option for students to gain that experience is cooperative education programs, which include paid full-time jobs that typically last three to 12 months, internships or other service-based experiential learning programs. In U.S. News’ spring 2019 survey, college presidents, chief academic officers, deans of students and deans of admissions from more than 1,500 schools most frequently nominated the following 23 schools – listed by rank in descending order – as examples of institutions with stellar internship and co-op programs. Each administrator was invited to nominate up to 15 institutions for top co-ops or internships. The 2020 edition of Best Colleges marks the first time U.S. News has ranked co-ops/internships.

21. (tie) Bentley University (MA)

U.S. News rank: 2, Regional Universities (North)

Overview: Bentley University’s HRE Education programs help students build on their career development skills every year. Starting freshman year, students have the option to take career development seminars; join career communities that connect students with professionals, students and faculty; and participate in other career-oriented events.

20. (tie) Butler University (IN)

U.S. News rank: 1, Regional Universities (Midwest)

Overview: Butler University offers students a variety of career development options, including the opportunity to participate in career communities that connect students with a network of alumni, employers and parent mentors to help students find, learn and develop their interests.

21. (tie) Creighton University (NE)

U.S. News rank: 104 (tie), National Universities

Overview: Creighton University’s EDGE Program provides students with a variety of paths to develop their career interests, including a shadowing program. Students planning to apply to professional programs in health and law have the opportunity to observe someone working in their chosen industry for a day.

19. (tie) Carnegie Mellon University (PA)

U.S. News rank: 25 (tie), National Universities

Overview: Carnegie Mellon University facilitates a variety of internship programs and fellowships, including a semester in the District of Columbia. According to the school’s website, a summer internship fund also helps students who take low-wage or unpaid internships pay for their expenses.

19. (tie) Worcester Polytechnic Institute (MA)

U.S. News rank: 64 (tie), National Universities

Overview: WPI students have the opportunity to participate in co-ops and internships. The school’s project-based learning plan also allows students to get hands-on experience in the classroom through required projects aimed at solving real-world problems.

18. Cornell University (NY)

U.S. News rank: 17 (tie), National Universities

Overview: Cornell University has a variety of summer programs to help students build experiences in their desired career fields. These include Cornell in Hollywood, a program that provides film-related internships in Los Angeles, and a 10-week internship that gives students experience at entrepreneurial companies.

17. Claremont McKenna College (CA)

U.S. News rank: 7 (tie), National Liberal Arts Colleges

Overview: Claremont McKenna College offers a variety of summer programs to help students build experiences in their desired career fields. These include Cornell in Hollywood, a program that provides film-related internships in Los Angeles, and a 10-week internship that gives students experience at entrepreneurial companies.

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DIETRICH COLLEGE WELCOMES 17 NEW FACULTY

By Stefanie Johndrow

From research to pedagogy, new frontiers are constantly met by professors and postdoctoral researchers in Carnegie Mellon University’s Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences. This fall, 17 new faces are joining the Dietrich College’s world-class faculty.

Ignacio Arana, Assistant Teaching Professor
Institute for Politics and Strategy

Koel Banerjee, Visiting Postdoctoral Scholar of English
Department of English

Zach Branson, Assistant Teaching Professor of Statistics and Data Science
Department of Statistics and Data Science

Susan Buchman, Special Faculty in Statistics and Data Science
Department of Statistics and Data Science

Philipp Burckhardt, Postdoctoral Researcher in Statistics and Data Science
Department of Statistics and Data Science

Katharine Burns, Assistant Professor of Second Language Acquisition and Hispanic Studies
Department of Modern Languages

Ebenezer Concepcion, Presidential Postdoc in Hispanic Studies
Department of Modern Languages

Jose Estrada, Assistant Teaching Professor of Hispanic Studies
Department of Modern Languages

Eugene Katsevich, Postdoctoral Researcher in Statistics and Data Science
Department of Statistics and Data Science

Whitney Laemmil, Assistant Professor of History
Department of History

Bonnie Nozari, Associate Professor of Cognitive Psychology
Department of Psychology

Anthony Pratcher II, Postdoctoral Fellow for Center for Africanamerican Urban Studies and the Economy
Department of History

Matthew A. Smith, Associate Professor of Neuroscience
Center for the Neural Basis of Cognition

Dan Yurovsky, Assistant Professor of Developmental Psychology
Department of Psychology

Hanshu Zhang, Postdoctoral Fellow in Decision Making and Human Factors and Psychology
Department of Social and Decision Sciences

A LESSON IN OPENNESS: STUDENT ORIENTATION KEYNOTE SPEAKER SHARES ADVICE WITH FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS

By Jamie Slomka

I’ve had here, all the lessons I’ve learned and the ones I wish I had known coming in. But I’ve chosen to focus on one: openness.

I’ve gotten to experience a lot of things here at Carnegie Mellon. I’ve joined a sorority, choreographed a musical, spent a summer studying in France, a semester in Washington D.C., become an Orientation Counselor, and am currently pursuing...
I came in without a major and I was able to have a major that’s right for you. To your interests, or simply by helping you find the search, finding an internship or fellowship relevant and pursue them, whether that be by doing re- and graduate. They want you to find your passions and they’re here to help you with yours.

Carnegie Mellon is a land of a thousand opportunities, do yourself a favor and accept them. Go to Orientation events and meet new people. I found my home in a sorority because I originally tagged along with my floormates looking for free food at Greek Night and figured I’d give the process a try. I participated in Formal Membership Recruitment and was invited to join my chapter. I’ve had a younger brother since I was four and a half, but now I suddenly had 70 new sisters as well. Through my organization, I have been able to hold different leadership positions and found myself with a support system I never expected — a whole chapter of undergraduate women. This is just one of the means of support I’ve found here at Carnegie Mellon.

The guidance and support I’ve received through Dietrich are likely the main reason that I’ve been able to do what I’ve done here at CMU. The faculty and staff, professors, associate deans, and my academic advisors have helped me to realize my potential and they’re here to help you with yours. They don’t just want you to keep your head down and graduate. They want you to find your passions and pursue them, whether that be by doing research, finding an internship or fellowship relevant to your interests, or simply by helping you find the major that’s right for you.

I came in without a major and I was able to have a slew of incredible academic experiences because my adviser took the time to get to know me and say, “Why don’t you take a look at our Washington Semester Program, I think you’d be a great fit.” I hemmed and hawed about spending a summer away from all of my friends and usual support systems, afraid of feeling like I was on my own. But I applied, and last fall, I interned in Senator Cory Booker’s office during the day and took classes next door to the Supreme Court building at night. It was one of the best decisions I’ve ever made. My cohort and I in the program were able to tour the city, visit a lot of museums, and watch a performance at the Kennedy Center. I fell in love with the city and discovered my career path, all because I opened myself up to the opportunity (as well as that email from my adviser).

That’s what college is about — opening yourself up. This includes opening your mind to new perspectives and knowledge, opening your heart to new passions and friends, and opening your arms to the unknown. You may not know what these next few years may hold, but I know that they’re going to be great, but only if you let them.

One of my favorite quotes from C.S. Lewis states: “You will not be very safe if you go to sea without a map, but you will not get anywhere by looking at maps without going to sea.” Doing without thinking is unwise, but thinking without doing will get you nowhere. It can be easy to get caught up weighing options and considering outcomes that let opportunities slip past. Do not let them go without living.

Congratulations, and again, welcome to Carnegie Mellon University.

CMU News
July 10, 2019
OH, THE PLACES THEY’RE GOING

By Stefanie Johndrow

Every May, graduates of Carnegie Mellon University’s Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences depart campus with a hard-earned diploma and plan for what’s to come. For some that means attending a top graduate school or accepting a dream job, but no matter where Dietrich College graduates land, they’re headed for success.

“What strikes me about Dietrich College graduates is the wide variety of career paths they are prepared to follow,” said Kristin Staunton, assistant director and career consultant in the Career and Professional Development Center.

She continued, “Whether pursuing a technical position in Silicon Valley, continuing studies in law school, or contributing to groundbreaking research, our students are able to thrive in a highly competitive, global and ever-changing workplace. They leave Dietrich College with confidence in their knowledge and secure in their ability to find fulfilling work. As a career consultant, it’s incredibly rewarding to see students realize their potential, and exciting to know that a Dietrich College education has prepared them to create their own unique paths to success.”

Here’s what just a few of Dietrich College’s most recent graduates are up to next.

Orchi Banerjee

Since graduating from CMU’s Department of Social and Decision Sciences (SDS) and Institute for Politics and Strategy (IPS), Banerjee has returned home to Washington, D.C. where she’s working as a research assistant at the Institute for the Study of War (ISW), a military intelligence think tank.

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As a research assistant, Banerjee is responsible for monitoring all political, military, economic and social developments within her portfolio in order to understand how in-country developments interact with and affect U.S. regional objectives.

“I started out as an ISW intern on the Iraq portfolio in spring 2013, through CMU’s Washington Semester Program,” Banerjee said. “I then extended my internship for that summer. I also completed a separate summer seminar on war studies that was taught by the ISW President. After interning at ISW for about eight months I was offered a research assistant position to begin the summer after graduation.”

In addition to her previous internship with ISW, Banerjee’s studies have helped prepare her for this role.

“All my courses in IPS and SDS have either indirectly or directly helped prepare me for this position. A lot of my IPS coursework discussed key developments in international affairs, allowing me to focus on the Middle East, which is my area of interest,” Banerjee said. “In addition, most of the IPS and SDS coursework prioritize research methods in social science. Learning about research methods became a valuable tool while I was interning at ISW, as much of my work as an intern was evaluating multiple hypotheses at a time and understanding what indicators and pieces of evidence would support or refute those hypotheses. In general, CMU’s focus on teaching research methods really helped me prepare for the methodology needed in intelligence collection and analysis.”

Banerjee urges incoming students to take advantage of classes, office hours and research presentations to forge connections with their professors.

“Students should definitely leverage the professors in both IPS and SDS, as they all have incredibly professional backgrounds and interests,” Banerjee said. “One of my IPS professors recommended that I apply for an internship at ISW because he was aware of my interests, knew about the areas ISW researched and thought the organization would be a good fit for me.

David Hua

A graduate of CMU’s Economics Program, joint between the Dietrich College and Tepper School of Business, Hua is taking his skills across the country and joining Facebook as a software engineer. “While I don’t know the specifics of my team, I know that I’ll face a variety of technical challenges that affect millions of people all over the world,” Hua said.

Hua is set up for success, thanks to his diverse coursework.

“CMU had a crucial role in helping me build both the technical skills and communication skills I needed to be successful. The algorithms and systems courses in the School of Computer Science gave me a solid technical foundation which will be more relevant for my role, and my experience in the Economics Program helped me build more quantitative and communication skills that will be also valuable throughout my career,” Hua said.

He continued, “CMU’s Economics Program has a quantitatively challenging curriculum —nearly every class forces you to think mathematically about the models that support various economic issues. Employers are really interested in hiring people with problem-solving skills that aren’t afraid to get into technical details, and CMU’s Economics Program does a great job of helping students develop those skills. Students from Econ go down a variety of career paths such as finance, consulting, tech and research.”

Patrick Walsh

With his Ph.D. from the Department of Philosophy in hand, Walsh will be going from one CMU campus to the next as a teaching professor of philosophy at Carnegie Mellon in Qatar.

“My teaching will focus mainly on ethics, at least for the first couple years. That includes business ethics (how should managers/owners see their obligations to society and their employees), introduction to ethics (straight philosophy, with some history on what sorts of theories people have about how to act morally) and finally a class on either the ethics of computers or more specifically artificial intelligence,” Walsh said.

Having worked at CMU’s Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence and Educational Innovation as a graduate teaching fellow, consulting other graduate students and post-doctoral students on effective pedagogy, Walsh is looking forward to developing better teaching methods for philosophy classes.

“Because I’ve only teach two classes a semester, with class size often well below 30, I will also get to use my time with the Eberly Center to do ‘Teaching as Research’ and contribute to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. I can conduct experiments, write articles, go to conferences and I’m thinking of developing a blog or contributing to some publication in a more informal venue,” Walsh said.

“This last part was the major selling point for me. I will have the resources, both in time and capital, to really try to assess the impacts of my strategies on student learning and an intellectual freedom that is so rare for teaching professors.”

The transition from Pittsburgh to Doha will be eased by Walsh’s ability to communicate with different audiences, something he picked up during his six years at CMU.

“My work is often way more technical and mathematical than a standard humanities education usually includes, so I’ve had to be able to talk to people from many backgrounds about my interdisciplinary work. This has improved my communication skills, surely. But more importantly, it has improved my willingness and understanding of other worldviews, educational backgrounds and interests,” Walsh said.

He continued, “Although not an official part of my program, the sorts of conversations I’ve had with the intellectually diverse graduate students in philosophy have widened my perspective and helped me be more empathetic and understanding. I think I’m a better person having known the graduate students here, and I’ll certainly take that into my future.”

Laine Weatherford

After completing her master’s degree in rhetoric and deciding which of nine law school acceptances to pursue, Weatherford is off to University of Texas at Austin School of Law in the fall. How did Weatherford react to her nine law school acceptances?

“In one word: shock,” Weatherford said. “But overall, I think my reaction sort of developed cumulatively. With the first few, I was just really excited and kind of surprised. As more arrived, that excitement was definitely still there, but I also began to feel really honored.”

Weatherford, who worked at CMU’s Global Communication Center, plans on going into public interest law.

“I’d like to work specifically in government law, particularly on issues relating to poverty, though I’m still narrowing from there. I was inspired to go in this direction because of my summer employment experiences. I spent the last three summers working as a grant writer at a nonprofit community action agency. In that job, I really had a chance to see the depth of need in our country, and the ways in which we can apply unique solutions to try and mitigate some of it,” Weatherford said.

Courses like Stephanie Larson’s “Feminist Rhetoric” and Doug Coulson’s “Law Performance and Identity” and “Race, Nation and the Enemy” were influential for Weatherford.

“I absolutely believe that my time in the English Department will deeply impact the work I do for the rest of my life,” Weatherford said. “My studies in rhetoric have given me so many tools for understanding a problem in its full complexity, for teasing out the factors at play, for never taking an issue at face value. Beyond that, this program taught me to communicate more effectively. It taught me to use writing to look at the world as it is and consider how it could be better. I expect this knowledge will inform my work as a lawyer, both in how I analyze the discursive situations at play in my own work and in how I write and construct texts.”

Weatherford continued, “Overall, I think CMU made me better. It challenged me, deepened my compassion, brought me great friends and honed skills that I really value. I’m really grateful for the time I spent here.”
CMU News
June 24, 2019
NEDAL NAMED A WIMMER FACULTY FELLOW

Carnegie Mellon University’s Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence and Educational Innovation has named Dani Nedal, an Institute for Politics and Strategy postdoctoral fellow, one of four 2019-2020 Wimmer Faculty Fellows.

The fellowships are made possible by a grant from the Wimmer Family Foundation and are designed for junior faculty members interested in enhancing their teaching through concentrated work designing or re-designing a course, innovating new materials or exploring a new pedagogical approach. Fellows work in close collaboration with Eberly Center colleagues and receive a stipend to acknowledge the work it takes to improve their effectiveness as an educator.

“Dani is a gifted and dedicated teacher, and committed to getting even better, with the support of the Wimmer Fellowship and Eberly Center,” said Baruch Fischhoff, Howard Heinz University Professor and interim director of the Institute for Politics and Strategy.

Nedal’s project will focus on his Global Nuclear Politics course, offered this fall. The course is designed for students to become “informed consumers of academic and policy debates about nuclear issues, capable of critically engaging with different arguments and positions, and of articulating their own views on the subject.”

“The goal is to help students become more efficient and effective readers — to help them not only get through the readings, but also get the most out of the material,” Nedal said. “We want to help them build a skill set that enhances their experience at CMU, but that they can also carry over to their broader personal, academic, civic and professional lives.”

Achieving this goal is no small task, especially in an introductory-level course where students come in with varying amounts of background knowledge and skills. Nedal plans to help his students develop these skills by designing weekly assignments and classroom activities that provide students with targeted practice and feedback on their critical reading skills.

Alumni Spotlight
July 15, 2020
DANIEL NESBIT

By Bill Brink

When considering colleges, Daniel Nesbit sought diversity of instruction. He knew he wanted to study political science or history, but hoped to augment that focus with a range of academic fields.

“One of the things that attracted me to Carnegie Mellon was that I would be around other disciplines and I would be able to try to incorporate some of that thinking into a more humanities or political science-oriented degree,” Nesbit said. “I was interested in that intersection between the different ways different disciplines think.”

The blending of disciplines has proven useful in the working world. Nesbit, who graduated Carnegie Mellon in 2013 with a degree in International Relations and Politics, now works as an attorney with California Rural Legal Assistance, a nonprofit that serves the state’s low-income communities.

“It’s a connection between the medical world and the legal world to solve problems for their patients and their clients,” Nesbit said. “It’s a way of trying to find people with legal issues that might normally not think about what’s happening through that particular lens.”

Nesbit grew up in Waterford, Virginia, about forty-five miles northwest of Washington, DC. He believed in political activism and knew political science was for him. Carnegie Mellon’s strong robotics, engineering, and computer science programs helped him sharpen his persuasion skills: As an organizing fellow for Organizing for America during the 2012 election, he struggled initially to connect with students who were laser-focused on their
understand the patterns and report the patterns. “It confirmed my suspicion that I wanted to be in the Olympics. My times, and a special piece related to the 2012 Olympics in York City, working on the website, business ac-
tion between disciplines, especially in a school that is really hard-nosed around CS and engineering, was really useful because it opened up my capacity to communicate why these other perspectives are not just valuable, but really essential to every-
body’s well-being.”

Nesbit contributed to the community during his time at Carnegie Mellon. He served as a sexual assault advisor and a SafeZone Ally, supporting the LGBTQ community on campus. He was a resident assistant, teaching assistant, and community advi-
sor. He also studied abroad, teaching English and computer skills to migrant workers in Qatar and working with teenagers in India. It was on this trip that he met his wife, Asha.

“She had a really positive attitude about the work that we were doing and the unpredictability of it,” Nesbit said. “She was another happy warrior on our team and we started to spend a lot of time because of that. The rest of that’s history.”

Two internships clarified for Nesbit what he wanted to do after graduation and helped him hone the skills he would need. He spent the summer of 2011 in Washington, DC, as an intern for the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, research-
ing how the media covered the recently passed Affordable Care Act. The experience told him that if he wanted to work on Capitol Hill, he wanted to do so after working elsewhere first before bringing his expertise to bear in Washington.

The next summer, he interned with NBC in New York City, working on the website, business ac-
tounts, and a special piece related to the 2012 Olympics.

“It confirmed my suspicion that I wanted to be in the trenches doing particular work rather than just understand the patterns and report the patterns to other people,” he said. “While I think that role is essential — a lot of times, legal work requires good journalistic skills — that wasn’t quite the right arena for me at the end of the day.”

Nesbit graduated in December 2013, a semester early, and traveled by himself for three months, visiting Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Colombia, and Ecuador. In the fall of 2014, he enrolled in Stanford law school and found his tribe: people as interested as he was in political activism.

“Everyone at Stanford was the smart person in the room at their previous school,” Nesbit said. “There were times where I was certainly struggling to keep up with the prowess and passion of my class-
mates. Ultimately it was a good thing, because we all learned from each other.”

Nesbit’s first job after law school was with the Impact Fund, a nonprofit in Berkeley, California that helped cover the nuts-and-bolts cost of litigation in addition to litigating the cases. He wrote amicus briefs in addition to working on cases. At California Rural Legal Assistance, Nesbit is part of the medi-
cal-legal partnership unit. CRLA attorneys visit local health clinics and handle clients whose medical issues might have a legal remedy.

“Let’s say their home is having issues with mold, and that’s affecting their health,” Nesbit said. “That’s an issue that can actually be addressed by a lawyer, who writes a demand letter to his landlord or basically tries to enforce that tenant’s rights.”

Nesbit’s time at Carnegie Mellon allowed him to engage those who were not as politically active as he was, and the broad array of knowledge to go with his politics and strategy focus. Its location also added value to his time there, something he noticed while running through Pittsburgh as he trained for an ultramarathon and something he did not fully appreciate until he left.

“It really is a city with this really interesting history of both plight and revitalization, and shifting eco-
nomic circumstances, and a deep history in labor and organizing,” Nesbit said. “It’s a place that’s not so big that you can’t get a handle on it. … If you’re politically minded or you’re civically minded, Pitts-
burg is this really rich place, both demographically and historically. But also it’s a place where you can dig into that context in a really fruitful way.”

When Yong-Gyun Choi returned home to Pitts-
burgh from California during the COVID-19 pan-
demic, he went through some old pictures. He found one from a decade ago, when, with the help of a small grant, he got an internship at the US Embassy in South Korea.

“As a student at CMU, these kinds of opportunities were hard to find, but they’re definitely there,” Choi said. “They’re there for people who want it and who seek it. It doesn’t just fall in your lap.”

Choi made the most of the opportunities Carnegie Mellon offered. He chose the Institute for Politics and Strategy, a relatively small program when he enrolled in 2008, because he saw the chance to help grow the department. He co-founded a stu-
dent-led academic journal. Choi, who graduated with degrees in both International Rela-
tions and Politics and Economics and Statistics in 2012, now works for YouTube as a senior quantitative business analyst.

“One thing that they don’t teach you about business, even in business, is how to work well with different teams,” Choi said. “I think as a policy ma-
jor, I had the chance to debate a lot with other people to try to get the best idea on the table. Even if you don’t agree with what people are saying, you have to compromise and still put forth a solution, and that’s pretty big, I’d say, in any field.”

Choi was born in South Korea, but moved to Pittsburgh in 2001. The chance to enter IPS on the ground floor, and the program’s interdisci-
plinary nature, attracted him to Carnegie Mellon. While there, he co-founded the Center for Inter-
national Relations and Politics journal, known as the CIRP Journal, which publishes scholarly articles written by undergraduate and graduate students. Working on the Journal took Choi to Washington, DC, to interview former deputy secretary of defense Paul Wolfowitz; to Col-
lege Station, Texas, for a conference on Afghan reconstruction at Texas A&M; and Northwestern
In late 2017 and early 2018, Choi embraced his entrepreneurial side. He founded NaNaba, a skincare intelligence startup that tests routines for effectiveness and value. He also worked for a biotech startup called Spira, which developded its own animal dependence.

"One thing that they don’t teach you about business, even in business, is how to work well with different teams. I think as a policy major, I had the chance to debate a lot with other people to try to get the best idea on the table. Even if you don’t agree with what people are saying, you have to compromise and still put forth a solution, and that’s pretty big. I’d say, in any field."

Choi’s next move allowed him to provide solutions to a company on the cutting edge. In May 2018, Choi joined YouTube, where he works with cross-functional teams to help remove bad content – hate speech, misinformation, pornography, and the like.

"My job is to define metrics, which tells us how good or bad we’re doing," he said. "Part of that job is to say, ‘Hey, how do you define good, how do you define bad, and then you try to measure.’"

Carnegie Mellon gave Choi foundational skills in using data to tell a story. IPS taught the soft skills and critical thinking in using that story to reach an effective compromise when problem-solving with other teams. Whether the policy in question relates to politics or not, debate, discussion, and compromise remain important.

"The world isn’t what it seems like in textbooks and theories drawn on the board," Choi said. "I am still wandering through my career to dedicate myself to a problem that is close to me. I’m not too certain where that search will take me next, but I have the freedom and privileged opportunity to chase after the answer because of the tools and skillset that Carnegie Mellon equipped me with."

Alumni Spotlight

June 8, 2020

IAN EPPERSON

By Bill Brink

Ian Epperson has lived quite the life since arriving at Carnegie Mellon in 2008. He interned at the Central Intelligence Agency and the White House. As an officer in the Marine Corps, he trained foreign armies in the Middle East and served as an instructor for the Marine’s Infantry Officer Course. He studied at the London School of Economics.

"I’ve never tried to plan anything in a prescriptive way, but I’ve always tried to seek out opportunities that I thought were interesting and challenging," said Epperson, who graduated Carnegie Mellon in 2012 with degrees in International Relations and Politics and History and is now attending Harvard Business School. "… I went to LSE because I wanted to know more and I wanted to go deep in social science. I wanted to be a rifle platoon commander because I wanted to learn how to lead people and fight for my country, and I thought that was a challenge worth seeking. I wanted to train lieutenants because it felt like a way to give back that I thought could be transformative for me. If I had any method to the madness, I’m trying to seek out things that I think are interesting, stimulating, and enlightening. What will let me keep growing, is the idea."

Epperson chose Carnegie Mellon after searching for a top academic university with a good Division III athletics program. He played four years of varsity soccer for the Tartans, and after intending to major in Economics, he shifted to International Relations and Politics upon arrival.

"I felt like I had a ton of choice, and also a lot of individual attention that I don’t think I would have gotten at a bigger humanities program," Epperson said.

As a business student now, Epperson appreciates the breadth of coursework at Carnegie Mellon: It gave him prior experience with calculus, operational research methods, and quantitative analysis. The size of the Institute for Politics and Strategy allowed him to create connections with faculty.

"I knew professors who had mentored me and seen me academically, and offered to spend their time to help me with research and things I was doing," he said.

The summer after his freshman year, Epperson interned at the CIA. His father, Michael Epperson, worked for the agency for fifteen years. The World Trade Center terrorist attacks and his father’s service contributed to Epperson’s decision to join the
is proud of his service but careful to note that he in Iraq and Syria. He commanded forty Marines; he commanding Operation Inherent Resolve against ISIS Africa, Jordan, and off the coast of Yemen in 2015, six years on active duty and deployed to East But he fell in love with being an officer. He spent demic,” Epperson said.

“I was so interested in my research and the stuff that I had done in humanities that I honestly thought I was going to do four years fighting for my country and then go get my PhD and be an aca-

“military.”

“I was inspired by actions I saw Americans taking after September 11,” he said. “I felt like I had an obligation.”

For the next two summers, Epperson attended Officer Candidate School. His commission as a Sec-

ond Lieutenant in 2012 coincided with the looming sequestration, meaning a military drawdown, so Epperson was granted the unusual, but not un-

heard of, option to attend graduate school during his first year in the Marines. He earned a Master’s in Comparative Politics from the London School of Economics.

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“demic,” Epperson said.

But he fell in love with being an officer. He spent six years on active duty and deployed to East Africa, Jordan, and off the coast of Yemen in 2015, supporting Operation Inherent Resolve against ISIS in Iraq and Syria. He commanded forty Marines, he is proud of his service but careful to note that he did not see combat, lest he misrepresent himself.

“My last tour in the Marine Corps, I was teaching in a school, training the next generation of Marine officers,” said Epperson, who rose to the rank of Captain. “I felt like I got to make a strategic impact because every rifle platoon junior infantry leader over the last two years, I trained. They’re all deployed around the world right now. But I also still felt like I was curious about so many things. I felt like I had learned a tremendous amount, and the more I thought about service, if you broaden it out from what my father did and then what I did, there’s a ton of ways to serve your country. The more I considered that, the more I thought that business school could be a good fit for me.”

Epperson enrolled at Harvard last August, and he began consulting internship at McKinsey & Compa-

ny this month. Harvard gives him another oppor-

tunity to exercise the principles that he found so helpful at Carnegie Mellon.

“I think the best advice I would have would be to find out what interests you, and try to form deep connections with professors and classmates that share those interests,” Epperson said. “I had sev-

eral professors spend an extraordinary amount of time exploring things that I was passionate about, challenging me intellectually, and I felt like the preponderance of my growth came from a small program like that, where people really do care about you and want you to develop.”

Alumni Spotlight

June 2, 2020

IAN MCINTYRE

By Bill Brink

Early in Ian McIntyre’s time at Carnegie Mellon, he took an international relations course with Institute for Politics and Strat-

tegy Director and Taube Professor Kiron Skinner. That course introduced him to Stuxnet, a powerful virus that infiltrated Iranian computers and disrupted centri-

fuges used to enrich uranium.

“That has taken me on a marvelous jour-

ney where I, within a couple weeks, ap-

plied to get my Master’s degree in cyber-

security, took my first programming class, took an information security class. Here I am close to ten years later working in the cybersecurity field,” said McIntyre, who earned degrees in International Relations and Politics as well as Policy and Manage-

ment in 2012. He works as a security ana-

lyst for Varonis, a data security firm. “That was all based on realizing that there was a destructive ability behind cyberattacks that was totally foreign to me. I always knew you could steal data, but to actually break things … that came out of, probably, a homework assignment.”

McIntyre grew up in Pittsburgh and went to Schenley High School, and a personal connection drew him to Carnegie Mel-

lon – his mother works for the university. He knew he wanted to study international relations or something similar, and he liked Carnegie Mellon’s approach to the subject.

“As I looked at different programs and different universities, what I found was a lot that were very theoretical, a whole lot of talk and not a whole lot of do,” McIntyre said. “When I compared that to what I saw with Carnegie Mellon, there was a lot more use of statistical rigor in terms of testing the theories of why things might happen.”

Carnegie Mellon exposed McIntyre to a variety of subjects. He took classes in statistics, economics, negotiation, decision processes, and empirical research methods, but it was Professor Skinner’s class and Stuxnet that sent him down the cyber-

security path. He earned his Master’s degree from CMU in Information Security Policy and Manage-

ment in 2015, with the help of Scholarship For Ser-

dvice, a government program that provides financial aid for students pursuing degrees in cybersecurity. In exchange, participants work for the government in a position related to cybersecurity after gradua-

tion.

While earning his Master’s, McIntyre interned at Carnegie Mellon’s Software Engineering Institute in the CERT Insider Threat Center.

“Ever since then, I’ve been the go-to person on my team for cybersecurity, specifically for the insider

Women’s Rights and Empowerment Network (WREN) Summit

Anna-Jamieson Beck, a senior BHA student studying Politics and Public Policy and Drama, attended the 2019 WREN Annual Summit in Columbia, South Carolina. WREN is a South Carolina based network whose mission is to build a movement to advance the health, economic well-being, and rights of South Carolina’s women, girls, and their families. The theme of the conference was “The Time is Now,” and focused on creating change and well-being, and rights of South Carolina’s women, girls, and their families. The theme of the conference was “The Time is Now,” and focused on creating change and rights of South Carolina’s women, girls, and their families. The theme of the conference was “The Time is Now,” and focused on creating change and rights of South Carolina’s women, girls, and their families. The theme of the conference was “The Time is Now,” and focused on creating change and rights of South Carolina’s women, girls, and their families. The theme of the conference was “The Time is Now,” and focused on creating change and rights of South Carolina’s women, girls, and their families. The theme of the conference was “The Time is Now,” and focused on creating change and rights of South Carolina’s women, girls, and their families. The theme of the conference was “The Time is Now,” and focused on creating change and right
threat component of cybersecurity,” McIntyre said. “Even now, I’m our point person when we have to investigate insider threat breaches. That background, that foundation, is something I’ve leaned on a lot. That was a great opportunity to have while I was working on my Master’s degree.”

Being the point man for insider threats came with plenty of responsibility in McIntyre’s first post-graduate job, as a computer network defense analyst for the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine. The shipyard served as the shore-side support for nuclear submarines in need of maintenance, and if there’s one thing you don’t want hacked, it’s the computer systems that run multi-billion-dollar submarines carrying nuclear reactors and warheads.

“All the fundamentals that you need to put effort into, the prevention side, the detection side, the responding side, all of those need to be ... at full capacity,” he said. “On the prevention side, so much work around secure coding, proper patching, proper ... scanning, making sure we had a good handle on how every single system in the environment was configured down to the letter.”

McIntyre spent more than two years at the shipyard before joining Varonis in October 2018. He still draws upon skills learned as an undergraduate, measuring and testing systems to ensure they identify attempted data breaches.

“It’s a lot of being able to come up with, here’s a plan for how we’re going to test this, let’s make sure we do it in a way where we can feel confident in the results once it’s there, and that there is at least some sort of scientific methodology,” he said. “Sample sizes are often a lot smaller given how cumbersome and time-consuming the testing process can be, but to be able to do it in a scientifically sound manner puts a lot of confidence into our clients and customers that our capabilities are there and they work.”

McIntyre’s advice to current and prospective students is simple, and easy to do at Carnegie Mellon.

“Just being around people with good ideas, smart ideas, ones you haven’t even thought of that you couldn’t even think to try and articulate,” he said. “That all seems so intangible, but it is such a powerful force in learning and growing and being able to progress ourselves. I found that in abundance at Carnegie Mellon.”

Alumni Spotlight
May 11, 2020
ALICE TRIPP
By Bill Brink

Initially, Alice Tripp’s decision to accept an internship felt like a blow to her ego. She already had a Bachelor’s degree in International Relations and Politics from Carnegie Mellon, and had just earned a Master’s degree in Public Policy and Management.

“It was something where I was like, ‘Jeez, is this really the right decision for me?” Tripp said. “All this time and money in school, and now you’re going to go be an intern, a-gain?’ Hindsight’s twenty-twenty. I’d say it was the right decision.”

Her internship with The Nature Conservancy as an assistant on their water policy team grew into a full-time job within a year. After nearly six years with the organization, a global environmental nonprofit that preserves land and water, addresses climate change, and provides sustainable food and water, Tripp works as a policy strategy associate on the organization’s federal legislative campaigns team.

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“Initially, Alice Tripp’s decision to accept an internsh
Tripp’s decision to enroll, she said, was her acceptance into the Science and Humanities Scholars program, a now-defunct initiative that allowed her to explore multiple paths of study.

By sophomore year, she’d ruled out science. She thought about teaching, and served as a teaching assistant at Pittsburgh’s Environmental Charter School, but that wasn’t for her.

“It was, on the one hand, ruling out and figuring out what I didn’t want to do, and as I crossed those things out, more and more of what was left fell into the decision science and the IRP world,” Tripp said.

During the summers, she returned to San Francisco and worked for the Greater Farallon National Marine Sanctuary. Tripp acted as a liaison between the sanctuary and the Isla Guadalupe biosphere reserve in Mexico. Both are home to significant white shark populations, so she worked to establish a sister sanctuary relationship.

“I was doing that international relations part to a very small degree during the summers and enjoying it, and then going back to Carnegie Mellon and finding, oh, there’s a place for this here, too,” she said. “Terrific.”

Tripp knew she needed a graduate degree for the policy and conservation work she envisioned for herself. She liked Carnegie Mellon’s quantitative focus. Realizing she’d already completed some of the prerequisites and requirements for the Public Policy and Management program, she said, what the heck?

“That’s a common attitude I take to my life,” she said. “What the heck? What’s the worst? All they can say is no.”

After graduate school, Tripp wanted to work for a large organization, with a broader reach than just the maritime realm. She applied everywhere, or so it felt, before accepting the internship with The Nature Conservancy.

“Everyone I talk to — and five and a half years down the line, I say the same thing — it’s about getting your foot in the door,” Tripp said. “With a place like The Nature Conservancy, it’s very competitive. Positions only come up every so often, so it was a way for me to get my foot in the door.”

Tripp spends most of her time on calls with state chapters, mostly those states where have congressional representatives influential in conservation, and working with policy advisors on messaging. She also helps the conservation staff understand how federal policy fits into their priorities.

“Policy is your lever,” she said. “That’s how you bring results to scale. There’s been a shift in the organization as we realize the impact policy can have on delivering our outcomes. I can help staff figure out what a policy outcome would look like in terms of the conservation outcomes we have set out.”

Carnegie Mellon provided Tripp with both hard and soft skills that she uses daily. The first is Excel. She knows forwards and backwards, which is vital for a nonprofit.

“The other piece is being methodical,” she said. “People are surprised when they see I have a Bachelor’s of Science in International Relations. They’re like, well, how does that work? And I think the courses that are required and the atmosphere at the school is very quantitative, and so it’s a skill set that is not common in my field.

“It’s something where, when I’m working on what a policy outcome might be, there is often pressure to measure it quantitatively, which might not be the most natural expression of what we are trying to achieve. I can come in and say, ‘Let’s make this qualitative information a number. This is how you do that. Or here’s the argument that it doesn’t have to be a number.’”

By sophomore year, she’d ruled out science. She thought about teaching, and served as a teaching assistant at Pittsburgh’s Environmental Charter School, but that wasn’t for her.

“I was doing that international relations part to a very small degree during the summers and enjoying it, and then going back to Carnegie Mellon and finding, oh, there’s a place for this here, too,” she said. “Terrific.”

Tripp knew she needed a graduate degree for the policy and conservation work she envisioned for herself. She liked Carnegie Mellon’s quantitative focus. Realizing she’d already completed some of the prerequisites and requirements for the Public Policy and Management program, she said, what the heck?

“That’s a common attitude I take to my life,” she said. “What the heck? What’s the worst? All they can say is no.”

After graduate school, Tripp wanted to work for a large organization, with a broader reach than just the maritime realm. She applied everywhere, or so it felt, before accepting the internship with The Nature Conservancy.

“Everyone I talk to — and five and a half years down the line, I say the same thing — it’s about getting your foot in the door,” Tripp said. “With a place like The Nature Conservancy, it’s very competitive. Positions only come up every so often, so it was a way for me to get my foot in the door.”

Tripp spends most of her time on calls with state chapters, mostly those states where have congressional representatives influential in conservation, and working with policy advisors on messaging. She also helps the conservation staff understand how federal policy fits into their priorities.

“Policy is your lever,” she said. “That’s how you bring results to scale. There’s been a shift in the organization as we realize the impact policy can have on delivering our outcomes. I can help staff figure out what a policy outcome would look like in terms of the conservation outcomes we have set out.”

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When Amy Badiani was a child, her mother took her to India to spend summers with her grandparents. They were communal, social creatures, entrepreneurs who owned a garment business, and they built their house on top of a well, a prescient decision when a drought hit.

Badani’s grandparents shared water conservation tips with neighbors, including how to pump water from wells and how to sanitize water. They also checked in regularly with community members to share advice.

“I noticed that I couldn’t do anything to make it rain, yet I could do something to help with the levity,” Badiani said. “I got together with my cousins and friends and went door to door and gave free tickets for story-telling and dance performances that we would have on the street in India for anybody to come and watch and enjoy and laugh during a time of tension. I remember my grandparents were really proud of that.”

Badiani, who graduated from Carnegie Mellon in 2011 with degrees in International Relations and Politics as well as Policy and Management, never lost that desire to help the community. She is now the program manager of the Silicon Valley Social Venture Fund, or SV2, a philanthropic organization that invests in nonprofits.

“I wanted to understand and be a part of funders’ efforts to empathetically support social ventures,” Badiani said.

Carnegie Mellon’s interdisciplinary approach attracted Badiani out of high school, during which she championed the development of a cultural and social impact center and started a community garden. She saw parallels between those experiences and the way Carnegie Mellon approached holistic problem solving.

“I loved Carnegie Mellon’s focus on interpersonal connections, learning about the student life program, as well as just some opportunities of how to
really connect with the Pittsburgh community,” she said.

A world history class in high school sent Badiani down the International Relations and Politics path. One of her final projects in high school, a human rights case study, opened her eyes to the refugee populations in Myanmar, and she knew she wanted to further explore human-rights issues and international development in college. She created a hands-on opportunity in the summer of 2009 and learned valuable lessons through failure.

Badiani co-founded Project Rwanda, a community-led initiative that partnered with an NGO called One Laptop Per Child to develop lessons in programming, music, and acting for primary-school students in Kigali. It was, she said, “a total fail.”

“We sort of threw everything up when we got to Rwanda because it didn’t work, the teachers didn’t want to be a part of it,” she said. “We had started with the technology and not the people, and we sort of flipped that and started with the people.”

The students saw music as a way to bridge language barriers, Badiani said, and they wanted to display their new skills in a community showcase. Badiani and her team made connections with local universities to set up a mentorship program, and the project became successful.

“It was neat to also hear an international NGO like One Laptop Per Child tell us that they were redesigning their program to be more community-centric, based on what they had experienced with us,” Badiani said.

As graduation neared, Badiani found that people who held jobs in international development and human rights, even entry-level positions, had graduate degrees. She wasn’t in any hurry to leave CMU – “I felt like I didn’t squeeze all the juice that I could out of my experience” – so she got a Master’s degree in Public Policy and Management in 2012.

“Even though this decision made sense in the moment, I was unsure about what I’d actually want to do after graduation,” Badiani said. “I was so energized by, and grateful for, the support — morally and financially — of my family to explore the possibilities.”

Her first job after graduation, with the International Institute Community Development Corporation in St. Louis, introduced her to the potential impact of entrepreneurship on community development.

A woman from Senegal who ran a hair-braiding business touched Badiani. St. Louis experienced a lot of gun violence while Badiani worked there. After one of the refugees whom Badiani’s organization was supporting, a man who had recently arrived in the United States with his family, was shot, the woman decided enough was enough. She turned her hair-braiding business into a community wellness center, teaching her clients how to start a business and how to build credit. Watching this reminded Badiani of the importance of social innovation. She wanted to work globally, so in 2014 she joined Ashoka, an international community of social entrepreneurs and changemakers.

After nearly five years at Ashoka, working in Washington, DC, and Africa, Badiani wanted to work locally again and joined SV2, in Silicon Valley. The organization provides unrestricted one-year and multi-year grants, as well as impact investments to social ventures. SV2 has invested more than $5 million since its launch in 1998. Badiani and SV2 streamline or eliminate application and reporting processes to support nonprofits in doing their actual work.

“We bring together a lot of people in the Bay Area community to engage in grants and impact investments, learning programs, capacity building, and family philanthropy,” she said.

Badiani shared three pieces of advice for prospective and current CMU students. Use empathy and action, she said, to solve problems. Start by starting; just go, don’t worry about failure. The third: Use Carnegie Mellon as a testing ground of sorts.

“For me, when I was on campus, that was during the G20 [summit, in Pittsburgh in 2009], and using that as a time to raise awareness of human rights issues,” she said. “Just plenty of opportunities and support at the university to really use the experience as a playground to test or further develop ideas, or get a sense of what you would want to do in the world and the impact that you want to have.”

“It’s very innovative,” Venema said. “It feels like a start-up. People are passionate about what they do, and the company fills a niche in the market of impact investing.”

Venema, who earned degrees in both International Relations and Politics and Economics from Carnegie Mellon in 2014, parlayed those skills into a position as an impact valuation manager at Future-Fit Foundation, a London-based nonprofit that curates methods and tools to help companies become more sustainable.

“I thought my role was interesting and the work was challenging, but at the same time I wanted to do something that was a little bit more socially impactful,” Venema said. “… But I still saw the value of the efficiency and power of the financial market, and I wanted to find a way to combine those interests in one.”

Alumni Spotlight
April 27, 2020
YASMIN VENEMA

By Bill Brink

After spending three years working in Citigroup’s Capital Markets Origination department, Yasmin Venema acquired a powerful skill set. As an analyst on the asset-backed securities team, she worked on bond issuances from start to finish – structuring the deal, checking legal documents, generating marketing materials, and coordinating the execution process until the transaction closed.

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Venema is from Singapore. Though she initially attended Carnegie Mellon with Architecture in mind, she realized it wasn’t for her, but she enjoyed classes that related to IRP and Economics. In 2013, she studied abroad at Maastricht University in the Netherlands. In addition to exposing Venema to more than a thousand fellow exchange students from all over the world, Maastricht’s history in the formation of the European Union provided an

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“There’s a lot of opportunity in the IRP program to take courses that really interest you and are very unique, because of how they take advantage of CMU’s expertise in other fields like technology, science, and business. This gives you the opportunity to learn about things you never thought you’d learn about and analyze them through a political science lens.”

While Cate Yu attended Carnegie Mellon, she worked for CMU Solutions, a pro bono student consulting group that helped local companies and organizations while providing students with real-world experience. As President and Project Lead her senior year, Yu broadened the group’s reach by bringing in Creative Writing and French and Francophone Studies in broad terms and from different angles, and to communicate her opinions clearly.

“You chose Carnegie Mellon because of its interdisciplinary nature. She has many interests, and she liked CMU’s combination of technical programs, humanities, fine arts, and business. She discovered an affinity for international relations over time.

“I wanted exposure to different fields, and international relations incorporated economics, policy analysis, and statistics,” she said. “But my favorite component was world culture and languages.”

Yu spent a semester attending Université Jean
and you just can't hire fast enough. Those con-
ing, “Yu said. “Our teams were constantly growing
“The pressure to scale was exciting and challeng-
medallia quadrupled in size.
be cultural cross-pol-
to sum up my thesis
to high-brow and
itself from low-brow
said. “I was fascinated
my youth to more cerebral foreign films of my
“I always loved film, from the popular movies of my
college years,” Yu
“Failure”: The Legacy of Federico Fellini
interests further manifested themselves in her se-
elusion. She explored the country’s heritage, history, and
Fulbright Wales Summer Institute, where she
Moulin Lyon 3 in France, living with a host family
after graduating, Yu
decided to move to San Francisco. She’d never been there; she’d never been west of Texas, but friends were moving there and she wanted a new experience.
After graduating, Yu
“My major prepared me for a variety of opportunities, and
yet there’s still so much to learn. Working in tech these past years, I keep arriving
at the cusp of hyper-growth. What this demands is adapt-
ability and a willingness to be stretched. But the rewards are immense professional and
personal growth.”
Yu currently supports executive-level research recruiting for computational advertising, which she said is the fastest-growing business at Amazon.
“The pressure to scale was exciting and challeng-
ing, “Yu said. “Our teams were constantly growing and you just can’t hire fast enough. Those con-
straints force you to adapt and be creative.”
After three years at Medallia, Yu joined Facebook as a technical recruiter at Medallia, a customer ex-
perience management firm. While she was there, Medallia quadrupled in size.
There’s a deeper lev-
ely of thoughtfulness, and creativity that’s needed to engage these prospects,” she said. “The way I approach recruiting is less about fulfilling company needs, and more about match-
ing what people are looking for with what we can offer. When you respect people’s
talent and their time, you can build a relation-
ship with them. And when we find mutual alignment, that’s the key.”
Eventually, Amazon came calling with an oppor-
tunity in their Strategic Recruiting group. Unlike
the rest of Amazon’s recruiting departments, the Market Intelligence team is centralized, so the executive candidates Yu recruits receive maximum exposure to all business lines across Amazon.
Effective recruiting in this role requires courtship
and patience.
“His major prepared me for a variety of opportu-
nities, and yet there’s still so much to learn,” she
did. “Working in tech these past years, I keep arriving at the cusp of hypergrowth. What this demands is adaptability and a willingness to be stretched. But the rewards are immense professional and personal growth.”
Tait took Grand Strategy in the United States with Professor Colin Clarke and loved it. In his spare
time, he began reading more about political sci-
ence, and he took more classes on the subject.
Tait’s housemate, Borge Feliz, was a fourth-year student in the Accelerated Master of Science in In-
ternational Relations and Politics, and he frequent-
ly sang its praises to Tait. After looking into it, Tait
decided it was the right step to take. While in the
program, Tait conducted research and qualitative
field work in Colombia and Northern Ireland.
“It was amazing,” he said. “Northern Ireland, I went with a class, Art, Technology, and Conflict in
Northern Ireland, so I was there doing stuff with
them. But then I also did research for my thesis
when we didn’t have any programming.”
After earning his master’s degree in 2019, Tait got a fall internship at the Middle East Institute as a
research assistant. He researched the conflict in
Syria, analyzing rule of law and levels of gover-
nance in non-regime-held areas of the country.
After a brief stint at the Khalidi Institute at the
conclusion of the internship, Tait got a full-time job
at the Middle East Institute.
“I’m a program associate here, and so I propose, plan, and implement our public and private events,” he said. “I work with the scholars as well as come up with my own ideas. I manage four
interns, which is odd for me because they’re all my
age.”
Eventually, Tait would like to work in peace pro-
cesses and conflict stabilization. He credited Carne-
gie Mellon with providing the requisite depth of
knowledge for him to enter the workforce ready to
contribute.
“I have no idea where I’d be in the world right now
without Carnegie Mellon,” Tait said. “It was very
impactful on my life, and I think most importantly, it’s the faculty that work there. I became very close
with, in particular, Ignacio Arana and Colin Clarke.
All the faculty and professors, they actually care
about the students and work with you on what
you’re interested in, so you can kind of cater what-
ever you want to do with the program.”
As Lucy Truschel began considering colleges, she knew she wanted a medium-sized school in a city. She also knew she loved Pittsburgh, because her parents were from the area and she had family here.

As it turned out for Truschel, who graduated last year with degrees in International Relations and Politics, Pittsburgh wasn’t the most influential city during her time at Carnegie Mellon.

“I cannot recommend the Washington Semester Program enough,” she said. “I think having the opportunity to have an internship during the school year is really great, and there are so many more positives that come with the Washington Semester Program specifically. There’s a lot of support.”

Truschel entered Carnegie Mellon with an interest in political science and American history, so she loved one of the IRP core classes – Decision Processes in American Political Institutions with Professor Geoff McGovern. While at CMU, she also began working in education, a field in which she still works today, by serving as a classroom assistant at Carnegie Mellon Children’s School.

“I loved working with people, and especially kids,” Truschel said. “As I had more exposure to courses in the IPS program and developed my policy interest more, putting those things together in terms of education policy came out of that as a way of not necessarily working directly with people, but thinking about the larger picture.”

That continued when she participated in the Washington Semester Program, which allows students from any course of study at Carnegie Mellon to spend a fall or spring interning and studying in Washington, DC. She was an early childhood policy intern at the Center for American Progress during the spring of her junior year.

“I was the first intern that they had [on] just their team, so they were excited, and gave me a lot of substantive work to do,” Truschel said. “It was fairly research-heavy in looking at how states had implemented universal preschool programs and looking at their effectiveness. I was exposed to the media side of things, too, building their press list. I had the opportunity to write a column on Native American maternal and infant health, which was really great.”

As one of eleven students that semester, Truschel enjoyed the bonds formed with her classmates. She liked the balance of the courses, the internship, and the faculty, and though it was busy, she said it was doable.

“Being on campus in Pittsburgh, we’re used to a pretty demanding schedule,” Truschel said. “I loved my internship at the Center for American Progress, so that definitely helped that I was enjoying what I was doing during the day. The courses, even though they were at night, the professors were really energizing and engaging. Even though the days were long, it was always a good day. And we definitely still had time to go explore DC and do the fun, touristy things, too.”

For Truschel, that included a bike ride to see the cherry blossoms and a Nationals game. She’s back in the city now, again working in education, as a communications associate for the National Head Start Program. She writes newsletters and blogs, sometimes contacting Head Start alumni for stories like this one.

“I work with great people and love that I’m still in early childhood policy,” Truschel said.

For current and prospective IPS students, Truschel recommended that they get to know the faculty, especially the research they’re doing.

“There’s a lot of ways to go into IPS and bring your individual interests,” she said. “There’s so many great elective courses, you can tailor the program to meet the areas that you care most about.”

As Kellen Carleton began his junior year at Carnegie Mellon, he thought he had his career figured out. Two summers before, he interned with Octagon, one of the world’s largest sports agencies. The summer after that, Carleton, a lifelong hockey player and Pittsburgh sports fan, interned with the Penguins during a playoff run that resulted in the first of two consecutive Stanley Cups.

Sports management seemed to be the likely path for Carleton until the following spring, when he participated in the Washington Semester Program. He interned with Pennsylvania Senator Pat Toomey. He attended Donald Trump’s inauguration.

“It was an absolutely transformational semester in my college experience,” Carleton said. “It’s made all the difference, it really has.”

Carleton graduated in 2018 with a bachelor’s degree in Policy and Management and a minor in Politics and Public Policy. Two years later, he earned a master’s degree from Carnegie Mellon’s International Relations and Politics program. He now works as a security consulting analyst with Accenture, serving a large financial services firm.

“It definitely took me a long time to find this job that I’m doing now,” he said. “Accenture just started a security practice where they’re focusing specifically on cybersecurity in the private sector, a whole arm of their consulting wing just focusing on these kinds of issues and these kinds of projects.”

Government and policy had always interested Carleton, and exploration of possible avenues of study when he got to Carnegie Mellon further solidified
it. At first, he said, he wasn’t sure he was getting what he wanted out of his Policy and Management major. The Washington Semester Program changed that.

“The professors we had in DC were absolutely incredible,” Carleton said. “They had their own wealth of experience that they told us as a student group and allowed us to pick their brains about a lot of things. That was a pretty important semester in my whole college career, I would say.”

Washington Semester Program fellow Fred Crawford stood out to Carleton. From Crawford’s policy class, Carleton learned to read long, convoluted pieces of legislation and understand them, something he still uses today. The beginning of his internship with Toomey coincided with that of the Trump administration, a busy time for everyone in Washington but especially for a senator charged with confirming nominees to federal appointments.

“He’s not always on the fence about things, but he is enough that people are interested in how he’s going to vote on things, whether he’ll go a certain way,” Carleton said. “Just to have all these things happening and with a Republican Senate and President, I think they all kind of knew … they were going to have a chance to push a lot of things through.”

Enjoying his studies and wanted to keep the train rolling, Carleton enrolled in the Master of Science in International Relations and Politics program. It was during this time that Carleton interned with the CERT (Computer Emergency Response Team) Division of Carnegie Mellon’s Software Engineer- ing Institute while working on his thesis, which centered on the cybersecurity policy that governs defense contractors.

“How cybersecurity policy governs, what kind of information they have to share with the public, how much information-sharing they have to do amongst themselves, company to company,” Carleton said. “And also how much information they have to share with the government and [Department of Defense]. It was interesting to see what policy mandates that kind of stuff, how they interact with it and really how they shape their businesses day to day around that.”

While researching his thesis, Carleton interviewed cybersecurity experts inside and outside the government. It gave him the chance to apply his thesis to real life. He knew he wanted more. At Accenture, he applies industry frameworks to the financial services company’s cybersecurity program, translating the latest in cyber policy and technology into applications that fit the company’s needs.

Carleton advises current students to take advantage of their professors and attend events with expert speakers. “And if they have a chance to go to DC, 100 percent do it,” he added. “… It’s kind of brought to life this whole world of politics and public policy and how all these different fields are changing so rapidly. Any small way you can get involved in IPS, I would absolutely recommend it.”

On March 9, Ashraf Ghani was sworn in for his second term as president of Afghanistan. The same day, next door, Abdullah Abdullah, the Afghan government’s former chief executive, held his own swearing-in ceremony and began to launch a parallel government.

Afghanistan’s election commission declared Ghani the winner in February, but Abdullah rejected the outcome, calling the results fraudulent. Halfway across the globe, Susanna Seltzer worked to bolster their legitimacy.

Seltzer, who earned a degree in International Relations and Politics from Carnegie Mellon in 2016 and later got a master’s in the same subject, works for Maxar Technologies, a geospatial satellite imaging firm. She and her team assessed the threat of violence at various polling places in Afghanistan and ranked them, then shared that information with US and Afghan security personnel.

“We were able to help the Afghan government ensure better elections,” Seltzer said. “That’s real-world impact. That’s big-picture impact. These are skills, a majority of them I learned at Carnegie Mellon, that I was able to contribute to free and fair elections in a country halfway across the world.”

Seltzer is from Philadelphia and wanted to stay in the northeast for college. She also knew she didn’t want to be the smartest person in the room. She wanted to be challenged. Carnegie Mellon fit the bill, and it wasn’t long after she arrived on campus that she gravitated toward international relations.

“What actually drew me to it was, I did a course freshman year that was technically a history course but exposed me to all of the different conflicts going on in the Middle East and the US’ role over time, over the last two decades and what we’ve been doing there,” Seltzer said. “And I said, ‘Wow, we keep making mistakes. We should stop making so many mistakes. I want to help with that.”

Seltzer’s experience with the Washington Semester Program in 2014 threw her into Middle East analysis. She interned at the International Center for Terrorism Studies right as ISIS captured large swaths of territory in Iraq.

“A lot of people were like, is it ISIS, is it ISIL, what’s going on, is this a big deal?” she said. “And I could answer that, and that felt very big-picture. I got to understand a lot of great research skills that still apply today.”

Some of her work became part of a book, “The Islamic State: Combating the Caliphate Without Borders.”

“That did a lot of confidence building,” Seltzer said. “OK, I’m not just some kid reading the news. I can contribute to a sophisticated output.”

While Seltzer assisted Institute for Politics and Strategy Director and Taube Professor Kiron Skinner with classes and logistics in the Center for International Relations and Politics lab, Professor Skinner asked Seltzer if she wanted to apply to the Accelerated Master of Science in International Relations and Politics program, which allows students to begin graduate courses during their senior undergraduate year. She filled out the application that evening.

“I really valued the accelerated master’s program because it took the quality of my work so much further,” Seltzer said. “You learn how to do real in-depth research on your own, self-directed. So much of what you do in undergrad, you’re kind of given more boundaries to help you develop those
Kato is now a program associate at DreamWakers, said. "In national security, if you’re trying to get something done, you need to know where you’re looking for something, where you need to go,” Seltzer said. “You need that done really specifically, and you can’t use Google Maps. And so that’s where companies like Maxar come in.”

Now, Maxar benefits from what Seltzer learned at Carnegie Mellon.

“The really great thing about IRP, and the rest of Carnegie Mellon, you have engineers, you have the computer scientists, and they’re always looking at the how, the new technology,” she said. “But when you’re doing IRP, when you’re doing politics, you’re looking at the who and the why. You’re learning about the decision-makers and why they make the decisions that they do and what influences those decisions. You learn how to contribute to that process.”

Alumni Spotlight
March 13, 2020
CELETE KATO
By Bill Brink
After more than four years overseas, Celete Kato was coming home. The America she left in 2014 was not the America to which she returned last year. She said, so she thought she’d ease into it.

“And so I was like, let me ride across the country,” she added.

So much for easing into it.

But that endeavor fits Kato, who graduated from Carnegie Mellon in 2012 with degrees in both International Relations and Politics and Decision Science, well: She’s a people person with the urge to step outside her comfort zone to be like, I don’t know if this is the right answer, but it quickly became clear that he’d already decided to hire her.

As an all-source analyst, Seltzer blends the data from Maxar’s proprietary satellites with her Middle East expertise and Arabic skills. She helped evaluate water scarcity in Yemen, using social media to prioritize the areas most in need. She worked on the Afghan elections; her office had a timeline on a dry-erase board, writing down the dates at which the election commission said it would announce the results, then crossing them off as the day came and went without a winner.

“Peace Corps in a lot of ways was the hardest thing I’ve ever done,” Kato said, “but also one of the most amazing.”

Kato accompanied families to government appointments, helped with paperwork and passports, and ran a guest house. She’d taken French in school, but had to learn Creole. At the same time, she felt a calling to travel again. A TED-Talk addict, Kato began following Sugata Mitra, a professor of educational technology at Newcastle University in England. One of Mitra’s experiments inspired the novel Q & A, which was adapted into Slumdog Millionaire.

“I was like, oh my gosh, I need to learn from this man,” she said. “Because I think that definitely a thread throughout my career, for my jobs thus far, has been education. I just don’t feel like you can get anywhere without education, and international development and education go hand-in-hand in so many ways.”

So off she went to Newcastle, almost three hundred miles north of London, to learn about the intersection of technology and education. Upon completion, she pursued something she’d thought about since high school, when a return volunteer gave a presentation.

“Peace Corps in a lot of ways was the hardest thing I’ve ever done,” Kato said, “but also one of the most amazing.”

Kato traveled to Kha0 Chamao, a small village in Thailand 120 miles southeast of Bangkok. It was an hour from the nearest bus stop. The 7-Eleven was a ten-mile bike ride away. She taught English and worked on health and gender equality projects.

“Living in such close proximity to people who have a lot and people who have nothing can really mess with your brain,” Kato said. “...And so it was just very interesting to go to Bangkok for a weekend and then go back to your village and be like, wow, this is night and day within a six-hour drive of each other.”

Kato biked everywhere in Thailand, but to be a team leader for Bike & Build, a nonprofit that uses cross-country group cycling trips to benefit affordable housing initiatives, she had to complete 500 miles of training. She and the other three trip leaders each had to fundraise $5,000, which covered basic costs and affordable housing grants. Each leader planned a quarter of the trip’s food and shelter for the 31 riders, and they got as much as they could for free. Sometimes they stayed in a church or a YMCA. Sometimes they camped in a park. Sometimes they showered in the back of a dugout at a community baseball diamond, or bathed in a river.

They dipped their wheels in the Atlantic Ocean in Yorktown, Virginia at the start. After riding about seventy miles a day for seventy-seven days, they did the same in the Pacific, in Astoria, Oregon.

Kato knew she wanted to return to Washington, DC, eventually, and found DreamWakers through a friend of a friend on LinkedIn. As a program associate, she runs their communications and their educator and pipeline partnerships.

“DreamWakers is trying to harness technology to close the career opportunity gap,” she said. “We’re exposing rural and low-income communities to professionals in a variety of different careers. Realistically, our goal is making sure that kids who are sitting in class are seeing people who look like them doing jobs that they could do in the future.”

Her career has been all over the place. And that’s OK.

“I think I came into college thinking, whatever degree I get is going to be what I do for the rest of my life,” Kato said. “I feel like I would tell a younger me, one, calm down, and two, this is a time for you to explore and try new things. You can use college to experience new places and new people and give yourself the opportunity to step outside your comfort zone to be like, I don’t know if this is something that I’m going to like, but I’m going to try it.”
Alumni Spotlight
March 6, 2020
EMILY FEENSTRA

By Bill Brink

For Emily Feenstra, São Paulo beckoned. She had spent a year and a half there, on and off, investing in education technologies for low- and middle-income families in Latin America. She’d learned Portuguese.

Now the operations were there, and she had a choice: Move to Brazil, or move on?

“I didn’t want to be a funder anymore,” said Feenstra, who graduated Carnegie Mellon in 2013 with degrees in both International Relations and Politics and Policy and Management. “I wanted to make sure that I was capable of doing what we were asking our entrepreneurs to do in our portfolio.”

Now Feenstra is the COO of Henry Health, a digital healthcare community based in Washington, DC that focuses on black men – the adult subgroup with the lowest life expectancy in the US. Her new role, which she started in October, is the latest in a series of positions that allowed her to help the less fortunate. During the past decade, Feenstra worked in a woman’s health organization in Nicaragua focused on domestic violence, tutored and provided for refugees in Pittsburgh, and started an education-to-employment program for disconnected youth.

“I was raised in a household where parts of our family’s core values were giving back,” Feenstra said. Feenstra’s father, Randall, is a CMU physics professor. She was aware of the opportunity afforded her.

“The more that I’ve learned over the course of my career about privilege, the more I recognize the privileges I’ve had, to grow up in the school district that I grew up in, that was an outstanding public school district, to have the opportunity to attend a private expensive university with the tuition benefit that I did,” she said.

Before beginning college, Feenstra taught English in Peru, but realized that her Spanish needed work. So she went to Nicaragua the summer after her freshman year and worked at a women’s community program.

“It was supposed to be an integrated approach to domestic violence, so it was a center that had a social worker, a lawyer, a physician and a community outreach person, and I worked with the community outreach person on a range of educational programming,” Feenstra said.

During the fall semester of her junior year, she went to Chile, this time through the School for International Training. The following summer she focused on public service through the government. She interned at the White House, an opportunity she received with the help of a Friedman Fellowship.

“I really think the White House internship was the first domino in opening a lot of incredible professional doors for me,” Feenstra said. “When I think about interning with McKinsey, which is one of the top three management consulting firms in the country, my background is quite atypical.”

McKinsey would be McKinsey & Company, where Feenstra worked for two years as a business analyst after graduating. There she worked on strategy, operations, mergers and acquisitions, consumer packaged goods and healthcare. She also was the manager of the first pilot program of Generation, a McKinsey-sponsored nonprofit aimed at helping young, unemployed people find careers.

“Over six months I was literally interviewing students, interviewing staff, setting up our program which was a partnership with the community college, thinking about how to implement best practices related to education-to-employment,” she said. “Ultimately while I didn’t stay on that project and went back to normal client work, I realized that there was so much potential impact to be had that it was hard to go back to serving Fortune 100 companies, where the definition of impact is client impact not social impact.”

McKinsey colleagues pointed Feenstra to the Omidyar Network, a philanthropic investment firm created by eBay founder Pierre Omidyar. Feenstra was involved in more than $25 million worth of investments, most of which went to education organizations in Latin America. Her work with the Omidyar Network Education team in Brazil eventually created the opportunity to move there full-time, but she was ready to do what she had asked of those in whom she had invested.

At Omidyar Network, Feenstra kept her finger on the pulse of social entrepreneurs. When she came across Henry Health founder Kevin Dedner, she messaged him on LinkedIn; fundraising was a challenge, so Feenstra offered to use her investing expertise to review Henry Health’s fundraising materials.

Two months later, Dedner invited her to join the organization as COO.

“We have four full-time people, six half-time people,” Feenstra said. “We just closed our first $100,000 in family-and-friends money and are on track to close $1 million in investment by the end of April. Henry Health is a tech-enabled community focused on providing self-care and mental health services to black men so that they can show up whole, operate with joy and live with power.”

Feenstra took a course on the political economy of inequality and redistribution at Carnegie Mellon that resonated in her career as she thought about capital markets and the role of philanthropy. Another thing she took from CMU into the workplace: Excellent writing skills.

“Particularly at Omidyar Network, we wrote relatively long-form investment proposals where we would analyze investment opportunities in great detail,” Feenstra said. “Definitely being comfortable laying out your argument, gathering supporting evidence, was something that I felt very well-equipped to do based on my experience at Carnegie Mellon.”

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In the summer of 2020, IPS Director and Taube Professor Skinner appeared on two panels discussing politics and national security. She joined former White House aide and historian Tevi Troy to talk about his book, "Fight House: Rivalries in the White House, from Truman to Trump," an event hosted by the Bipartisan Policy Center. She also participated in a Center for Strategic & International Studies panel titled "Civics as a National Security Imperative: Addressing Racial Injustice."

Professor Skinner continued to leverage her relationships for the good of IPS and Carnegie Mellon. In February, she hosted a salon dinner for Richard Grenell, at the time the US Ambassador to Germany, shortly after President Donald Trump appointed him as the acting Director of National Intelligence, at the IPS office on Capitol Hill. Grenell later joined IPS as a Visiting Fellow for 2020-2021.
In October, Professor Skinner spoke at a meeting of the Pumpkin Papers Irregulars, a “secret” society that meets each year in Washington, DC.

The Directorate Cordially Requests Your Company at the 42nd Annual Dinner of

THE PUMPKIN PAPERS IRREGULARS
with Remarks by Kiron Skinner and Others

The University Club
1135 16th Street NW • Washington, DC

Wednesday, October 30, 2019
6 PM Cocktails • 7 PM Dinner
Afterward, Brandy but no Cigars
RSVP by October 24 • Reply Card Enclosed

In September, Professor Skinner participated in a panel discussion regarding the way Russian misinformation affected the Black community during the 2016 election. Professor Skinner, a Fox News contributor, continued to be vocal about racial injustice: She appeared on Fox to discuss the riots after the death of George Floyd and spoke eloquently about what the country needed in the face of violence and police brutality.

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Attacks on Democracy:
Russia’s information Warfare Against the Black Agenda

Thursday, September 12
In Partnership with the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF) and the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)
4PM to 6PM
Washington Convention Center
Room: 147B

This panel session will investigate how Russia and other US adversaries used influence operations and active measures campaigns on minorities and all Americans historically, is the 2016 election and how they are likely to act in the 2020 election. It will discuss Russia’s larger geopolitical goals and what Americans can do to protect themselves.