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The University of Vermont

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COLLEGE OF ARTS and SCIENCES



Global & Regional Studies News - 2016

Message from GRS Director, Professor Pablo Bose *Department of Geography*



2015-2016 was a year of many transitions for the Global and Regional Studies (GRS) Program at UVM. Jonah Steinberg (Anthropology)

and I came aboard as interim chairs of Global Studies and GRS respectively, positions that we will be continuing this year on a more permanent basis. GRS also said goodbye to its longtime administrator Mary Lou Shea who departed for the warmth of Florida last fall. We wish her well and thank her for her many years of dedicated service to GRS and its predecessor

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programs. In November the GRS program welcomed her replacement Marilyn Eldred, a member of the UVM community for nearly two decades who has been highly active in the Staff Council and certainly knows her way around a budget! Marilyn has a full plate providing administrative expertise not only to GRS but also to the Miller Center for Holocaust Studies and the Humanities Center at UVM.

The coming year will be another invigorating one with the arrival of three new directors within GRS, taking over duties from their seasoned predecessors who have done much to build their respective programs. Latin American and Caribbean Studies welcomes Caroline Beer (Political Science) to replace Alexander Stewart (Music), Asian Studies welcomes Tom Borchert (Religion) to replace Erik Esselstrom (History), and Middle East Studies welcomes Ilyse Morgenstein-Fuerst (Religion) to replace Bogac Ergene (History). They join African Studies Director Vicki L. Brennan (Religion), Canadian Studies Director David Massell (History), European Studies Director Steven Zdatny (History), Russian and East European Studies Director Michele Commercio (Political Science) and Vermont Studies Director Richard Watts (Environmental Studies) as the core leadership of GRS along with Jonah and myself.

Jonah and I will be taking advantage of all the enthusiasm and energy of all the new directors to help build on the work of our predecessors—especially Luis Vivanco (Anthropology) and Peter VonDoepp (Political Science)—in order to continue building and growing all of the GRS programs. This includes bringing more speakers onto campus, organizing more panels, workshops and film screenings reflective of current events and interests, and helping to bring more focus and direction to our majors and minors, engaging more faculty in teaching and research in the GRS areas from across campus, developing our study abroad and internship programs – both short-term and semester-long—and re-envisioning the GRS program through strategic grants and fundraising in the near future. For more on the specifics of these various initiatives, please check the “top news” articles below.



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Best,
Pablo

Top News

Study Abroad

Through an initiative of the College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Office, the GRS Program undertook a comprehensive review of study abroad programs and options at UVM this year. The Office of International Education estimates that nearly a third of all UVM students go on study abroad programs over the course of their studies, yet only a handful go through UVM – either it's one existing semester-long program in Oaxaca, or any one of its faculty-led programs to places as far flung as Nepal, Ecuador, Belize, Mongolia, Uganda, and Iceland, or as near as New York City, New Orleans and Boston.

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Global Studies Major Reorganization



While our Global Studies major continues to be one of the top draws in the college and indeed the entire university in terms of majors, some students still struggle with the perennial question asked by peers and parents alike – “so what exactly is Global Studies?” The intention of an interdisciplinary and flexible major such as this is not to define the scope of the major too narrowly, yet we do feel that some definition and

focus may be helpful, especially since so many Global Studies majors are also juggling other commitments including internships, work, and travel for study. Accordingly over the next year Jonah and myself will be working to define three ‘concentration areas’ for Global Studies majors to focus on: 1) Peace, Conflict and Justice, 2) Migration and Diaspora, and 3) Global Health. These three areas are ones in which we have faculty and course strength, that are recognized as growing topical interests in both scholarly world and the world at large, and have been witness to considerable student interest over the years. We are hoping to have all three concentrations – with course and faculty lists as well as related internship and scholarship opportunities – in place by Fall

2017.

Seminar Series

The 2015-2016 seminar series for GRS focused on several key themes including the politics and culture of the Olympic Games, gender and development across the globe, environmental issues, and urban transformations. Here are a few highlights from some of our speakers:

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