Spring 2020 Project Menu

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Open Source Analysis of Student Wing Violence in Bangladesh 2009 – 2019

EAP-SCA

Conflict and Stabilization Operations

Overview:

Bangladesh returned to democracy after an extended caretaker government with the 2009 parliamentary elections. That election marked the first poll since Bangladesh had truly entered the internet era, with mobile phones proliferating throughout a country the size of Georgia with a population half as large as the United States (160 million people). It was also marred by violence between rival student wings – with each other and amongst themselves. In Bangladesh's winner-take-all politics, demonstrations are too often measured in the number of casualties. Since 2009, there have been two more elections. The ruling Awami League has won all three. In 2014, most opposition parties boycotted the polls. In 2019, the opposition parties participated yet the Awami League won an even larger share of the vote. In between the national polls there have been municipal elections, political movements, and unrelated skirmishes among the student wings at Bangladeshi universities. Recently, Bangladeshi politicians have suggested that student wings be introduced into private universities where student movements have existed for decades but are not allowed to organize openly to prevent disruption (which their students explicitly pay for).

This purpose of this project is to have a university team analyze open source reporting of violence available on the internet; both in traditional media like newspaper and TV and social media. Using the elections as different chapter markers, we want the winning team to map out where clashes occur, who it involves, what the motivations were, and what if any positive response followed those incidents. This project will enrich our existing data sets with qualitative insights; i.e. the "why" in addition to the "where" and "how many." The project will further inform our efforts to reduce and eventually end the violence in Bangladeshi politics.

Format of Final Project:

Monthly and Final Reports, Powerpoint Summary/Presentation, and Posterboard Display for Potential DC Showcase

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

International Relations

Comments:

[Additional Information]

Safety First

POL

African Affairs to #South Africa

Overview:

South Africa suffers from high incidents of gender-based violence specifically and violence in general. As schools are an extension of their surrounding communities violence pervades all aspects of schooling. Despite large investments in Basic Education, which has the greatest share of the national budget, returns on education and learning in South Africa are minimal. USAID has invested in promising education interventions that have been touted by the President of South Africa as the way forward to achieve greater learning; however, it is becoming readily apparent that violence in schools is hindering reform efforts on achieving their full potential. One cannot learn under stress, especially stress caused by fear of violence and our hypothesis is that (gender-based) violence is a root cause of lower than expected education outcomes.

As Education is slated to be a main technical focus of USAID/Southern Africa's next five-year strategy we are interested in better understanding violence in South Africa and how it affects the education sector. We would like two main questions answered a) What information exists on the violence in South Africa especially on its prevalence in schools and effects on learning and b) what sort of programming has been successful in creating safe spaces for learning that would work in the South African context.

Format of Final Project:

We are not tied to any format but I would think a research paper, options memo and/or presentation would fit. We would discuss with those performing the work on the format they may think is best.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Gender Studies

Comments:

POC is kroberts@usaid.gov

Police Accountability in Africa: Mapping and Analysis of External Police Oversight Mechanisms

POL

African Affairs to #South Africa

Overview:

Over the past 10 years, the debate on police oversight in Africa has shifted from one of actors like APCOF justifying its importance, to its formal acknowledgement in regional human rights instruments and policy documents as central to the achievement of democratic governance and human rights. APCOF now seeks to undertake a study to map and analyse the ways in which external police oversight manifests across the continent, at the regional, sub-regional and national levels.

The research will be the first of its kind to demonstrate how police accountability is understood and implemented in Africa, and whether the influence of regional mechanisms and their security sector reform and governance agendas are contributing to national reform. Critically, it will also provide examples of innovations in design and delivery of police oversight that respond to the particular policing challenges experienced in Africa as a result of the colonial legacy inherent in modern policing practices, post-independence policing governance deficits, and chronic resource constraints. The research will provide a much needed stocktake of the police accountability debate 10 years on, against the backdrop of significant investment by APCOF and others in this work, and identify both the good practice from which other states can draw on, as well as critical challenges in the progressive realisation of police accountability as central to democratic governance and the realisation of human rights at the regional and domestic levels.

Format of Final Project:

Ideally, APCOF would like to receive a 20 – 30 page research paper that identifies (a) police oversight mechanisms, both formal and informal, in each African state, with information on the background to their establishment (in particular, the socio-political context); (b) the mandate and function of the mechanism; (c) any information on how their performance is measured, and how they are performing against that framework; and (d) challenges or innovations observed in the design and functioning of the mechanism. The type of mechanisms to be mapped include, but are not limited to, both formal and informal structures such as statutory bodies dedicated to police oversight, national human rights institutions; national preventive mechanisms; and civil society organisations who perform a range of functions from research, to the provision of medico-legal services. Other actors, such as parliamentary committees the judiciary, may play an important role in police accountability in a national context, and can be included in the mapping exercise where appropriate. APCOF has an extensive network of police oversight practitioners across the continent, and can share this information with the US research institution to aid in the identification of relevant mechanisms. Ideally, the US research institution would have the capacity to draw on information in English, French, Portuguese and Arabic, though the research itself would be presented to APCOF in English.

APCOF will then use this research paper to develop a broader publication that will look broadly at the last

10 years in terms of normative standard development at the regional level, how it has manifested in police accountability at the national level, and draw conclusions on what the police accountability agenda can and should look like for the next 10 years, based on the research findings.

<u>Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest</u>:

Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement; International Relations

<u>Comments</u>:

Point of Contact email Sean Tait (sean@apcof.org.za)

South Africa's Protests and the Traditions of Non-Violence

POL

African Affairs to #South Africa

<u>Overview</u>:

South Africa has a significant tradition of non-violent strategic action being used to effect change. The ANC, for example, only chose the armed route after many decades of peaceful protest action. More recent protest, however, such as the #feesmustfall campaign and community service delivery protests, appear to resort to violence as a matter of course, often with destruction of property and injury to people. It would be useful to examine the reasons for this change from the perspective of the non-violent traditions of Martin Luther King and Mahatma Ghandi.

<u>Format of Final Project</u>:

An overview of any research that has been in this area.

<u>Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest</u>:

International Relations

<u>Comments</u>:

Point of contact Mike Batley, CEO, mike@rjc.co.za

Restorative Justice and Meditation

POL

African Affairs to #South Africa

Overview:

When restorative justice began to take off internationally during the 1990s and 2000s, the leading thinkers did not equate it with mediation. In fact, some emphasized the differences. As time progressed, there has been convergence between the two fields, while noting differences. One of the ways in which this has been conceptualized is to locate restorative justice processes as part of facilitative mediation, as opposed to settlement-driven mediation. Both fields continue to grow and develop internationally, with restorative justice processes being applied in new areas. It would be helpful to be informed of current trends in this regard.

Format of Final Project:

a summary of most recent research and trends.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement; International Relations

Comments:

Point of contact Mike Batley, CEO, mike@rjc.co.za

Promoting Restorative Justice in South Africa and Its Criminal Justice System

POL

African Affairs to #South Africa

Overview:

Over many years, research has been undertaken to track the impact of a punitive approach and whether the severity of individual sentences as well as the general rate of incarceration in society has any bearing on reducing crime levels. This is important from a restorative justice advocacy approach, as 'being tough on crime' remains popular with politicians and in popular discourse. Having a summary of the latest research in this regard would be useful to counter these arguments.

Format of Final Project:

A summary of most recent research and key arguments, if possible with a presentation aimed at criminal justice practitioners.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement; International Relations

Comments:

Point of contact Mike Batley, CEO, mike@rjc.co.za

Holistic Integration and Care of Elderly Homeless People Through Innovative Housing Interventions

POL

African Affairs to #South Africa

Overview:

The face of street homelessness in South African cities changed considerably over the past 20 years. Apart from a much younger street homeless population, a new reality is the growing number of older homeless people, over the age of 55, living on the streets. In the capital city of South Africa, the City of Tshwane (Pretoria), 20% of street homeless people are in this age bracket.

Current housing policy and interventions are unable to create inclusive, sustainable responses fully integrating older homeless people. We would like our local body of research to be enhanced by a description of good practices from both the global North and South, innovatively dealing with the homelessness of older people. This would help strengthen policy and strategy recommendations in South African cities and towns, that would provide secure, affordable and dignified alternatives to the streets for older homeless people

Format of Final Project:

A 15-20 page research paper which could be translated into a peer-reviewed article, complemented by a one-page policy brief, a one-page strategy recommendations, and a short 10-12 slide presentation.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

International Relations

Comments:

NGO contact stephan.debeer@up.ac.za

Promoting Collaborative Science in Indonesia: Best International Practices for Policymakers

Environment, Science, Technology and Health Unit

U.S. Mission to Indonesia

Overview:

A sprawling archipelago with a young population, an abundance of unexplored maritime and terrestrial biodiversity, and dozens of government research agencies covering areas ranging from public health to space exploration, Indonesia should easily make a list of countries central to modern science. But, despite this immense potential, Indonesia has long lagged behind its regional peers in attracting and training scientists due to systemic issues like limited multi-year research funding, complex regulations, and a lack of job opportunities in STEM fields. According to the most recent OECD statistics, Indonesia invests less than .01 percent of GDP on research per year, with the majority coming from government grants. Moreover, only a small number of Indonesian universities manage to enter global ranking lists, a source of considerable concern for policymakers. To make the matters even more complicated, Indonesia imposes restrictions on foreign scientists through a research permitting system and material transfer agreements that can result in criminal penalties including jail time and large fines.

This year, Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo announced that boosting Indonesia's human capacity is one of his administration's top priorities. As a part of this effort, in August 2019, the Indonesian government passed a new comprehensive science and technology (S&T) management law (UU 11/2019) to tackle systemic challenges and reform its sprawling science bureaucracy. The law proposes new funding mechanisms for government research grants, peer ethics boards to review projects, and directs the national government to reorganize its science agencies under a national research coordinating body. These proposals will be implemented via Ministerial and Presidential regulations over the next two years, meaning policymakers face a significant challenge to figure out how to tailor regulations to create an open academic environment that supports President Jokowi's vision to boost the capacity of Indonesia's scientists, students and universities. This multi-disciplinary Diplomacy Lab collaboration will pair teams from U.S. public policy, comparative politics, or STEM-focused programs with the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, the State Department's Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, and prominent Indonesian science policymakers to produce reports detailing international and American best practices to promote scientific collaboration that will be presented to the Indonesian government as possible avenues forward for implementation of their new S&T bill. Teams will work closely with policy analysts at the Embassy and Indonesian government, and be expected to engage in comparative research and analysis of how countries, municipalities and universities successfully promote scientific collaboration and innovation.

Format of Final Project:

This Diplomacy Lab collaboration should result in an actionable report to be delivered to Indonesian policymakers on best practices that can be used to develop discrete regulations (such as peer ethics panels or grant funding) as the government seeks to implement the August 2019 S&T bill. This analysis can be presented as a research paper, data analysis, or otherwise, as long as it is in a form that is actionable and

comprehensible to the wider policymaking community. Accompanying presentations summarizing key points would be a plus.

<u>Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest</u>:

East Asian/Pacific Studies; Education & Cultural Studies; Global Health; International Law; International Relations; Science and Technology

<u>Comments</u>:

Please email State's Diplomacy Lab coordinator for text of the new S&T bill. We expect to have an English translation in the coming months.

How to Dismantle the Starving Artist Business Model

Cultural Programs Division

Educational and Cultural Affairs

Overview:

The NEA estimates there to be 2.1 million artists in the U.S. A recent survey revealed 47% of artists spend less than 25% of their time actually generating original art. 86% of female artists earned less than $10,000 a year from their art as compared with 77% of male artists (Artfinder). Becoming a successful artist is both a creative and an entrepreneurial challenge. To develop a sustainable career, an artist must possess skills in networking, marketing, finance, logistics, and sales. New artists are also operating under severely limited resources. Compounding the challenges of working in multidisciplinary roles and finite resources, new and emerging artists are geographically constrained by the cost of framing, packaging, transporting, and insurance the art they wish to exhibit (and sell). The cost of getting art to market narrows the choice of markets (i.e. galleries) where artists can show their work. Artists are also tied to a commission-based revenue model that allocates a significant percentage of the final sales price to partnered art galleries.

This project requests a re-evaluation of existing business practices for new and emerging artists and a business analysis to identify innovative practices to gain greater market access and increase profitability. Key activities include analyzing the current business practices of contemporary artists, exploring innovative supply chain models, identifying ways and means to leverage technology, and designing feasible and sustainable revenue models. The long-term goal of this project is to contribute to our understanding of how the creative economy can sustain entrepreneurship, create jobs, and cultivate relationships with diverse and underserved communities. Exploration of creating new business practices supports artists attaining economic success and the financial freedom to generate expressive works. The Cultural Programs division will incorporate the insight and relationships developed through this project in its programmatic efforts overseas as well as alumni development and engagement activities.

Format of Final Project:

A 15-page research paper and presentation

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Civil Society; Economic & Finance Issues; Education & Cultural Studies; Information & Communication Technology; International Relations; Marketing; Science and Technology

Comments:

Read A New Study Shows That Most Artists Make Very Little Money, With Women Faring the Worst
https//news.artnet.com/market/artists-make-less-10k-year-1162295

We Come from the Land of the Ice and Snow: A Network to Connect Arctic Museums

Cultural Programs Division

Educational and Cultural Affairs

Overview:

Museums play an essential role in community development and cultural heritage preservation. In the Arctic, the tangible and intangible heritage of the Arctic peoples is collected, represented, and interpreted by small museums, frequently located in geographically isolated communities. In the 21st century, technology offers unprecedented opportunities for museum professionals, artists, and communities to connect, share, curate and interpret art together. This project is a technology assessment and feasibility study of Arctic museums' needs and possible technological solutions, including, but not limited to, crowdsourcing, crowdfunding, virtual reality, and augmented reality. The project focuses on the Arctic Council member states and permanent participants. https//arctic-council.org/index.php/en/ The goal of the project is to identify practical and available technological solutions that can help advance museums' goals, in keeping with the Arctic Council's agenda. Further, our goal is identify synergies and affinities between different stakeholder groups which can grow into sustainable international relationships, with programmatic support from ECA. Recommendations for what forms such support may take are also welcome.

Format of Final Project:

A white paper; ideally accompanied by case studies. A publication in a discipline-specific journal/journals. A list of actionable recommendations.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Arctic Region Studies; Anthropology; Education & Cultural Studies; Public-Private Partnerships

Comments:

Background reading
https//www.arctictoday.com/northern-museums-exhibits-indigenous-art-increasingly-community-efforts/?wallit_nosession=1

Our office
https//eca.state.gov/programs-and-initiatives/initiatives/cultural-diplomacy

Building Resilience to Disinformation: An Audience Analysis of Rural Lithuania

Public Affairs Section

European and Eurasian Affairs to Lithuania

Overview:

Although Lithuania is a small country, only 2.8 million people, and a GDP of $53 million (ranked 81st in 2018), it's geopolitical position on the front lines of both Russian disinformation and hybrid warfare makes Lithuania a key U.S. ally and partner in regional stability, military deterrence, and economic cooperation. At the U.S. Embassy in Lithuania, our main goals are to enhance our partnership within NATO to enhance security and stability in Europe; to advance strong bilateral trade and promote energy diversification and security; and to foster our shared commitment to democratic principles and human rights. All of these goals are underpinned by our ability to reach Lithuanians all over the country with messages, programs, opportunities, and partnerships. The threat of malign influence in the Baltic region and around the world has increased and to better equip the Embassy to counter state actor influence and to positively reach audiences that are most susceptible to disinformation and targeted malign propaganda, we need better research, statistics, and analysis of our media environment and audience reach capabilities.

The media landscape data we currently have indicts that 84% of Lithuanians watch TV daily and on average a Lithuanian spends 3 hours 52 minutes per day watching TV (4 minutes less than in 2017). Lithuanian radio stations reach 70% of the population daily and almost 85% weekly. The internet has opened wider possibilities to reach audiences and radio stations have made good use of that – 25% of Lithuanians listen to live online broadcasts (KANTAR TNS 2017 data). About 74% of Lithuanians report they read at least one issue of a newspaper or magazine in 2018, however, this number is declining year-to-year. Lithuania is among top countries in the EU in terms of internet use and 72% of internet users read news online (2017 Eurostat data). The Embassy has strong information on media usage habits, including that there seems to be a stark difference between how ethnic Lithuanians and ethnic minorities (Russians and Polish) interact with media. A 2016 survey showed that 71% of national minorities watch their news on Russian TV channels and that television remains the most popular medium with internet news portals in second place. The survey also showed that 50% of national minorities regularly read news from Lithuanian language online news portals, while 39% said they get their Lithuanian news from local Russian-language news portals

We are looking for large-scale, systemic efforts to better and more richly analyze the media landscape in Lithuania, with a specific focus on rural and ethnic communities. We will rely on your team's research and audience analysis skills to focus attention to cut through the large amount of noise of this topic, and provide a meaningful analysis of the nuances and intricacies of how Russian disinformation, Russian allegiance, and feeling disconnected from Lithuania contribute to the social divide in Lithuania. Our main goal of this project is to use the research and analysis to better engage rural and ethnic communities to share the positive messages and opportunities of Lithuania's development, membership in the EU, NATO, and the OECD.

<u>Format of Final Project</u>:

Audience Analysis memo/paper
Presentation with graphics and key findings
Recommendations for best practices for engaging highly vulnerable populations (PowerPoint or report)

<u>Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest</u>:

Communications; European & Eurasian Studies; Human Rights; Information & Communication Technology; International Relations; Statistics

<u>Comments</u>:

We have some data from an audience analysis surrey done in 2018 that we can share that may help to frame the research. We are envision that this would be a combination of a literature review, analysis of existing survey research to highlight trends for compiling recommendations, but would welcome the possibility of in-country survey data collection.

Strengthening the Case for a Human Rights-Respecting Approach to the Internet

Multilateral and Global Affairs

Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

Overview:

An authoritarian approach to the Internet is gaining traction globally. From state sponsored network disruptions to censorship of online content, authoritarian regimes are finding new and innovative ways to stifle human rights online. The trend is not abating; "fake news" legislation is increasingly used to target dissidents and human rights defenders while repressive states use data localization laws to restrict citizens' data within their borders, where it is accessible by security agencies. As digital authoritarianism is on the rise, democratic societies have struggled to provide a similarly compelling argument for an open, interoperable, secure, and reliable Internet where fundamental freedoms, human rights, and the free flow of information flourish.

Our office leads U.S. government policy to promote and protect human rights online through bilateral, multilateral, and multi-stakeholder engagement globally. We request that your class conduct research and provide recommendations on how the U.S. government can most effectively promote and protect human rights online. Your work will enable the U.S. government to strengthen their ability to promote a human-rights based approach to the Internet.

Format of Final Project:

We would like students to provide three key components
● High-level synthesis of key findings from existing research on the economic, political, and social benefits of a human-rights based approach to the Internet. These can be drawn from country-specific or general/global resources
● Case studies of countries that are champions of Internet freedom and have experienced these benefits. We would like six case studies, one from each geographic region
● Recommendations for how the U.S. government, and when relevant the Freedom Online Coalition – a diplomatic network of 30 governments working to advance human rights online, can most effectively promote a human rights – based approach to the Internet globally.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Communications; Computer Science; Cyber Security; Democracy & Human Rights; East Asian/Pacific Studies; Human Rights; Information & Communication Technology; International Law; International Relations; Science and Technology

Comments:

The Internet Freedom and Business and Human Rights Section is eager to further students' understanding of Internet freedom and the role of government in this area while providing them with the unique opportunity to impact the field.

Strengthening Embassies' Capacity to Advance Business and Human Rights

Multilateral and Global Affairs

Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

Overview:

In recent decades, there has been increasing attention on the impact of business on human rights. Economic globalization has brought unprecedented levels of international trade and investment, generating both benefits and consequences. Decentralized global supply chains, have helped to lift millions of people out of poverty. And yet the same privatization and deregulation that contributed to growth has expanded the opportunity for human rights abuses to occur. From the Union Carbide Bhopal tragedy in India to the Rana Plaza collapse in Bangladesh, multinational corporations have experienced damaging media attention for human rights abuses, negatively impacting local communities, the company's brand, and the reputation of the government that is home to these companies.

Recognizing the role of business to respect human rights in challenging environments, the U.S. government endorsed the UN Guiding Principles – global guidance on business and human rights. The State Department's Internet Freedom and Business & Human Rights (IFBHR) Section leads U.S. government policy to promote and protect human rights online as well as with business, globally. To better equip our embassies to help advance business and human rights, the IFBHR Section is seeking to partner with a dynamic team of students to develop a manual for Foreign Service Officers. This resource will equip Officers, posted worldwide, with core knowledge on the business and human rights challenges across sectors; risks to look out for in their interactions with businesses, civil society, and other governments in country; recommendations on best practice; and resources for further information.

Format of Final Project:

The final project will be a manual providing a brief overview of business and human rights; general and sector-specific risks, including in agriculture, extractives, hospitality, manufacturing, mega sporting events, and renewable energy; best practices; suggested talking points for Officers interacting with businesses, civil society, and governments on these issues; and a recommended reading list. Please include citations. Further guidance will be provided by the IFBHR Section on content, level of detail, and format of the manual.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Democracy & Human Rights; Economic & Finance Issues

Comments:

The IFBHR Section is eager to further students' understanding of business and human rights and the role of government in this area while providing them with the unique opportunity to impact the field.

Strengthening Embassies' Capacity to Advance Internet Freedom and Business and Human Rights in Information and Communication Technology Companies

Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

Multilateral and Global Affairs

Overview:

Challenges to human rights online – namely privacy and freedom of speech, association, and peaceful assembly – have been on the rise globally. From state sponsored network disruptions to censorship of online content, authoritarian regimes are finding new and innovative ways to stifle Internet freedom. The trend is not abating; "fake news" legislation is increasingly used to target dissidents and human rights defenders while repressive states use data localization laws to restrict citizens' data within their borders, where it is accessible by security agencies. From Yahoo!'s role in China to Vodaphone's role in Egypt, information and communication technology (ICT) companies have also come under increased scrutiny for their role in corporate misconduct allegations. Multinational corporations have experienced damaging media attention for human rights abuses, negatively impacting local communities, the company's brand, and the reputation of the government that is home to these companies.

Recognizing the role of business to respect human rights in challenging environments, the U.S. government endorsed the UN Guiding Principles – global guidance on business and human rights. The State Department's Internet Freedom and Business & Human Rights (IFBHR) Section leads U.S. government policy to promote and protect human rights online as well as with business, globally. To better equip our embassies abroad to help advance Internet freedom and business and human rights, the IFBHR Section is seeking to partner with a dynamic team of students to develop a manual for Foreign Service Officers. This resource will equip Officers, posted worldwide, with core knowledge on the Internet freedom and business and human rights challenges pertaining to ICT companies; risks to look out for in their interactions with businesses, civil society, and other governments in country; recommendations on best practice; and resources for further information.

Format of Final Project:

The final project will be a manual providing a brief overview of Internet freedom and business and human rights pertaining to ICT companies; general and issue-specific risks, including state sponsored network disruptions, online censorship, and surveillance technology; best practices; suggested talking points for Officers interacting with businesses, civil society, and governments on these issues; and a recommended reading list. Please include citations. Further guidance will be provided by the IFBHR Section on content, level of detail, and format of the manual.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Economic & Finance Issues

<u>Comments</u>:

The IFBHR Section is eager to further students' understanding of Internet freedom and business and human rights pertaining to ICT companies and the role of government in this area while providing them with the unique opportunity to impact the field.

Investors, Reporting and Human Rights

Multilateral and Global Affairs

Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

Overview:

The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor's Office of Multilateral and Global Affairs' Internet Freedom and Business and Human Rights Team is looking for a dynamic team of students to help us identify best practice in embedding human rights considerations into investment decisions of mainstream investors.

Format of Final Project:

The first part of this project will explore key challenges to making human right a core component of decision-making for mainstream investors. The second part will examine current legislative reporting initiatives, multi-stakeholder initiatives, human rights benchmarking, and other human rights-related information that might inform investor decisions on human rights-related issues. Part three of this project will involve using the information gleaned to develop a set of recommendations for the Internet Freedom and Business and Human Rights team on engagement with mainstream investors on these issues. Final work product will be a paper with an executive summary.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Democracy & Human Rights; Economic & Finance Issues; Human Rights; International Law; International Relations; Corporate Social Responsibility

Comments:

Internet Freedom and Business and Human Rights Section
https//www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/fs/2017/275867.htm

Mapping the Greenland Private Sector

EUR/NB

European and Eurasian Affairs to Denmark

Overview:

Greenland Private Sector Mapping - Greenland is an autonomous region of Denmark comprised of 58,000 people. The land holds tremendous strategic value for the United States, including hosting outmost northern military base, but we know limited information about the private sector and labor market. Embassy Copenhagen is looking for a mapping exercise on the private sector and government owned companies to help guide expected increased engagement with Greenland.

Format of Final Project:

A research paper complemented with graphics and a one page executive summary.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Economic & Finance Issues; Energy Security; International Relations; Oceans

Comments:

Expect project would take one semester. If chosen, post will provide further reference material.

Quantifying the Investment Climate Trends Implicit in the Investment Climate Statements for Select Sub-Saharan African Countries.

Economic and Regional Affairs

African Affairs

Overview:

PROBLEM: The Department of State has been qualitatively assessing country investment climates for more than 20 years in the form of the Investment Climate Statement – chapter VII of the Country Commercial Guide. Until now, data analytic technology was unavailable to quantify the trends and changes that diplomatic engagement produced.   This project seeks to apply qualitative data analytics to quantify the positive or negative effect of sustained diplomatic engagement – economic statecraft – in promoting a more U.S.-friendly investment climate in target countries.

BACKGROUND: Economic Sections have for years carefully crafted the investment climate statement section – particularly the opening paragraph assessment – to signal areas of significant progress and concern in a country's investment climate.

PROPOSAL: Apply word and phrase data analytics to track the evolution of and trends within the United States economic statecraft to promote more level playing fields and open investment climates in partner countries. Specifically studying 20 years of past investment climate statements for target countries to quantify trends, identify measurable results, and assess success of economic and commercial diplomacy to ultimately serve as a metric of diplomatic engagement efficacy going forward.

MODEL METHODOLOGY: www.npr.org/2019/05/03/720139562/episode-910-economics-sexism-data

Format of Final Project:

In addition to a report describing the trends and patterns revealed after quantifying the qualitative descriptions over time - the resulting insights might help inform a new metric to measure economic statecraft and engagement in the trade and investment policy space.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

African Studies; Economic & Finance Issues; International Law; International Relations

Comments:

The inspiration for this project stems from a recent podcast by Planet Money where an economic student was able to quantify and identify animus in the field of economics by studying online conversations in a well-regarded and famous professional exchange forum. The paper is widely regarded because where it is difficult to reach into a person's heart to see what motivates them, the quantifying of certain words and patterns of communication revealed real tendencies. These tendencies could then be measured and

assessed giving the researcher excellent insight into the hearts and minds of the collective. (Links to the press about the study and the actual paper are here: www.nytimes.com/2017/08/18/upshot/evidence-of-a-toxic-environment-for-women-in-economics.html and additional findings: www.aeaweb.org/about-aea/committees/cswep/survey).

This project seeks to replicate that same technique for the purpose of assessing the Department of State's success in economic diplomacy. Unlike private economists posting their opinions on a closed forum, the State Department's economic sections are posting for the public very carefully crafted assessments of a country's investment climate encapsulated in the Investment Climate Statements. The ICS assesses the current conditions in a country, progress made on previous areas of concern, and new challenges that have evolved. These snapshots are among the very few public tools that the U.S. Department of State has to communicate the US government's position on the investment climate in a country. Most Embassies carefully craft these assessments using a narrow range of linguistic techniques to describe their concerns without offending the host country. Studying these carefully selected words may reveal a trends, successes, and ultimately help to share a future tool for measuring the efficacy of economic diplomacy. The purpose of economic diplomacy is to level the playing field for U.S. investment and companies, foster greater global economic integration, and promote more shared prosperity.

China-Led or US-Led Trilats?

East Asia and Pacific Bureau's Korea and Japan Desk

East Asian and Pacific Affairs

Overview:

There are a number of US-ROK-Japan and China-ROK-Japan trilateral forums from the ministerial level down to the DAS-level. This project would research into the types, frequency, and levels of US versus China led trilateral forums over the past four years; analysis of outcomes from these trilateral forums; analysis on how each individual country loses/benefits; and finally recommendations on where U.S.-led trilateral discussions should delve into in future trilateral discussions and prediction of where China-led discussions will go.

Format of Final Project:

We would appreciate a 5 page research paper, a two-page chart outlining China vs. U.S.-led trilats, and a presentation.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

African Studies; Civil Society; Cyber Security; East Asian/Pacific Studies; International Law; International Relations

Comments:

This project could definitely be completed in one semester.

Who is spreading Disinformation in Sub-Saharan Africa?

Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs

African Affairs

Overview:

Disinformation is a not a new means of influencing public opinion, but it is spreading faster than ever online. Those who intentionally spread disinformation seldom have the well-being of their society in mind, and may be trying to fuel distrust, grievances, and divisions in society, between society and government, and between countries. It can be particularly powerful when picked up by normally reputable news sources, and linger even after it is refuted. In order to combat disinformation we need to know who is spreading it, what they are saying, and where they are saying it. We also need to know who is listening and sharing so that we can target those audience, with (for example) educational campaigns aimed at promoting critical thinking. This project will look at various sources of online media and identify the countries and platforms in Sub-Saharan Africa where disinformation is spread. The project should include examples from the Sub-Saharan Africa context.

Format of Final Project:

Please present your findings in a 1-5 page executive summary and a presentation, and share all sources of reference and data used. Presentations may be delivered in person or virtually.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

African Studies; Communications; Conflict, Stabilization, & Reconstruction; Counter Terrorism; Education & Cultural Studies; Information & Communication Technology; International Relations; Psychology; Sociology; Youth Issues

Comments:

https//www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-national-security-advisor-ambassador-john-r-bolton-trump-administrations-new-africa-strategy/

The Office of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs handles all press, social media, and exchange programs within the Bureau of African Affairs, Department of State. https//www.state.gov/p/af/ Research projects for this office should all focus more heavily on society, media, social media, education, and exchange programs. For more information on exchange programs please visit the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs https//eca.state.gov/

Implementing Exit Controls on the US Mexico border

Non Immigrant Visas

Consular Affairs to #Mexico

Overview:

The idea of implementing exit controls is not new, but has generally focused on air travel. Traveling by air offers a number of alternative methods to confirm travel beyond biometric or immigration checks. However, the US and Mexico share a long land border with many land border crossing points. Currently, there is no clear way to identify when someone leaves the US via land border. Part of the mandate of Consular Affairs is to promote border security while facilitating legitimate travel. Accomplishing that task would be made easier by having an ability to track when someone leaves the US.

We would be interested in working with a team to further identify the scope of this project, primarily to explore how exit controls for land borders could be implemented, and what the mechanics would be for such an implementation. We would like to be able to understand operational feasibility in terms of time, money, and structural changes required.

Format of Final Project:

Report of potential exit control implementation ideas for US-Mexico land border crossing points, and an analysis of the logistical and operational requirements for implementation of any resulting ideas.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement, Cyber Security, Information & Communication Technology, International Law, International Relations, Narcotics & Law Enforcement, Science and Technology, Statistics, Trafficking in Persons, Western Hemisphere Studies

Comments:

The expected timeframe of this project is 4 months.

Improving Consistency in Non-Immigrant Visa Adjudication Decisions

Santo Domingo/Consular Section

U.S. Mission to Dominican Republic

Overview:

Have you ever thought about how someone can enter the U.S. just for a short period of time? Have you heard stories about how so-and-so was denied a visa and felt it was unfair? Or have you heard that the same so-and-so was later issued a visa after applying a second time? In the Dominican Republic some people even think of applying for a visa as though it's a lottery.

This project will ask, how can we be more consistent in deciding which visitors are granted a visa to visit the United States for a short period of time? Non-immigrant visa (NIV) decisions are made quickly, often in three minutes or less relying on information from a self-reported questionnaire (DS-160) and a short interview. The law that most NIV adjudications are based on, INA 214(b), was designed to be sufficiently vague to facilitate travel for potential visitors coming from any country in the world to the United States for tourism or short business trips while protecting our borders from potential harm these visitors could pose, from terrorism to engaging in unauthorized employment. Given the speed with which these decisions are made, we are wondering what information already exists that might help us make more consistent decisions from one adjudicator to another. This project would take an interdisciplinary approach to answering this question, drawing on a wide base of research that already exists from behavioral economics, psychology, political science, and business (though we are open to exploring information from other fields of study as well that may have relevance to answering our question). The outcome of this project should be a series of recommendations for best practices from these studies to help us manage the work flow of decision making in our NIV unit and possibly around the world. This is a great opportunity for researchers and students to help improve the implementation of the part of our immigration system that brings in the highest volume of individuals into the United States each year.

Format of Final Project:

We'd like to see a concise literature review (5 pages or less) with a complete bibliography to support your suggestions for how to make our decision making more consistent. Your suggestions for how to make our decisions more consistent can be displayed in whatever format you prefer as long as it is clear and concise - this will be our action item that we will use internally and could be reviewed at higher levels within the Bureau of Consular Affairs.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Economic & Finance Issues, International Law, International Relations, Marketing, Public-Private Partnerships, Science and Technology

<u>Comments</u>:

Santo Domingo is one of the busiest Consular Sections in the world. On a daily basis we adjudicate approximately 1,000 non-immigrant visa cases/day by interview alone and an additional 300+ cases that don't require interviews. The Bureau of Consular Affairs has advised consular managers that adjudicators should interview no more than 120 cases per day due to decision fatigue. Due to the high volume of cases, adjudicators are advised to make decisions on most cases within three minutes or less. All adjudicators are commissioned officers who have completed a six week training course about all relevant laws pertaining to consular services, from issuing non-immigrant visas to U.S. citizen passports and notarial services. Consular management encourages ongoing training, especially about the unique cultural factors that exist in each individual country context. Consular officers generally rotate through their positions quickly, most adjudicate NIV cases for about one year before changing to another unit (such as immigrant visas or American citizen services). This project will allow your team to take a deep dive into the body of law governing NIV decisions, focusing on B1/B2 visitor/business travelers, and also on management practices for managing such a large volume of customers and help us improve our services to potential visitors to the United States.

Marketing & Message Testing in Central Asia

ENR/EGA/PAPD

Energy Resources

Overview:

Marketing and message testing in Central Asia. Design and carry out a market-analytic approach to audiences in Central Asia, in the form of analyzing and interpreting results from focus groups. Extensive data have already been collected in the form of video, audio, and transcripts. On this marketing and message testing team, we will analyze our data to draw conclusions about what is most resonant and then we will propose a messaging strategy on that basis. The final output will be a series of papers with recommendations to public diplomacy professionals who work on messaging in Central Asia. A specialized component of this will be to discern a strategy for appealing to Kazakhstani audiences on energy policy issues and energy partnerships.

Format of Final Project:

The final output will be a series of papers with recommendations to public diplomacy professionals who work on messaging in Central Asia. A specialized component of this will be to discern a strategy for appealing to Kazakhstani audiences on energy policy issues and energy partnerships. Ideally there will be three papers that will emerge in the format of peer-reviewed academic journal articles for possible publication in a journal of political psychology, foreign affairs, or marketing.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Communications, Education & Cultural Studies, Energy Security, European & Eurasian Studies, Information & Communication Technology, International Relations, Marketing, Psychology, Sociology, South/Central Asian Studies, Youth Issues

Comments:

Ideally there will be three papers that will emerge in the format of peer-reviewed academic journal articles for possible publication in a journal of political psychology, foreign affairs, or marketing.

U.S.-Norwegian Arctic Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Mapping

U.S. Embassy Oslo Public Affairs

European and Eurasian Affairs to #Norway

Overview:

U.S. Embassy, Oslo is looking for a Diplomacy Lab partner to carry out research and collect data on the current entrepreneurial ecosystem in the U.S. and Norwegian Arctic regions, including actors, networks, laws, policy, and regulations. The goal of this project is to document and provide a comprehensive analysis of the challenges and barriers faced by Norwegian and American entrepreneurs, investors, and stakeholders, including youth, in a U.S-Norwegian Arctic Startup Ecosystem Report and slide share presentation.

This work would be done in cooperation with the U.S. Embassy Oslo's Public Affairs Section and build on current efforts in the wider Arctic community to track these issues, including those being carried by Norwegian and American universities and organizations. A special emphasis on youth and education as they pertain to the Arctic entrepreneurial ecosystem would be welcome.

Using an acceptable and widely-recognized approach (such as the GIZ Guide for Mapping the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem) as a guideline, the DipLab partner should prepare a list of the players and stakeholders in the Arctic region's entrepreneurial space. In mapping the "ecosystem,"; the DipLab partner should use the following tools/metrics

o   Quantitative survey to gather data from Norwegian and Alaskan entrepreneurs, youth, indigenous peoples and organizations, and other critical stakeholders on the challenges in the current environment.
o   Qualitative research and interviews with key stakeholders in the Arctic business ecosystem, including entrepreneurs, support organizations, investors, and government officials.
o   Review any relevant secondary research on the market.
o   Mapping should cover Alaska, Norway, and other geographical locations critical to the wider success of U.S. and Norwegian Arctic business endeavors.

Further information and for background on internal and external efforts currently underway in this area, please see the following links (not an exhaustive list but provided as a starting point)
o   https//www.thearcticinstitute.org/blue-economy-potential-alaska-north-norway/
o   https//www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=318953
o   https//en.uit.no/forskning/forskningsgrupper/gruppe?p_document_id=455225

Format of Final Project:

Microsoft Word report and PowerPoint presentation. Both of these products should use non-technical English language and incorporate data and statistics when possible.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Arctic Region Studies, Communications, Economic & Finance Issues, International Relations, Public-Private Partnerships, Statistics, Youth Issues

Comments:

Certain aspects of this project are flexible. U.S. Embassy Oslo is open to discussion, ideas, and suggestions from its DipLab partner.

Building U.S. Capacity to Fight Disinformation on the Digital Battleground

Public Affairs

European and Eurasian Affairs to #Poland

Overview:

How can Public Diplomacy press shops utilize social media algorithms to proactively push out positive messaging and strategic communications narratives about USG policy priorities so that we are not constantly reacting to malign actor disinformation messaging in the digital media sphere? Currently, we are only able to use the paid advertising features of various social media platforms to sidestep algorithmic limitations, while malign actors are able to populate closed groups, utilize trolls and bots, and plant fake news to virally propagate their anti-U.S. and socially divisive narratives. While in Poland we are very strong content creators, and we are able to disseminate our proactive and strategic narratives through mainstream media outlets, we would like to understand models that would fall within USG policy guidelines and utilize platform algorithms to more successfully counter malign actors in the disinformation realm.   The importance of this project is that it would arm USG public diplomacy practitioners in the field to better understand and utilize existing social media environments more effectively in 1) pushing out positive USG policy messages, 2) closing the space for malign actor disinformation activities to disrupt USG policy narratives and 3) make malign actors fail in their efforts to manipulate public audiences.

Format of Final Project:

Training course and training manuals.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Information & Communication Technology

Comments:

If selected, Post can supply students and faculty with a number of locally-sourced data scientist monitoring reports on relevant bilateral issues and divisive social issues being manipulated by malign influencers, having direct USG policy implications.

Increasing Student Mobility between the U.S. and UK

Cultural Affairs Office

European and Eurasian Affairs to #United Kingdom

Overview:

For the third year running, and despite a relatively small population, the UK is the largest sender of students to the U.S. in Europe, and the 14th largest sender in the world. However political uncertainty in the UK continues as the country moves towards the date of withdrawal from the EU in 2019. The impact of Brexit on studying abroad is unclear and key questions still remain. Brexit has impacted the sterling's value against the dollar, causing the cost of U.S. study to change dramatically over the months. It is also unclear if UK students will still be able to take part in the Erasmus+ exchange scheme.

In spite of challenges, there is continued interest in U.S. study and young people in the UK continue to have an international perspective. Much of this success can be attributed to the work of the UK EducationUSA office which offers comprehensive and current information to thousands of British students interested in studying at accredited universities in the U.S. During 2016-17 year, the Open Doors statistics show that 11,489 British students studied in the U.S., which was a drop of about 110 (or 0.9%) from the previous year. However, the number of undergraduate students increased on 2015-16's record-breaking increase by a further 1.8% and the number of graduate students increased by 1.7%.

The fall in the overall numbers may be attributed to the 13.4% decrease in non-degree seeking students in the U.S. when compared to 2015-16. While difficult to be definitive about the reasons for this, anecdotal evidence suggests that more UK students studied abroad than before during this time, and that UK universities had heavily promoted the Erasmus+ European study abroad program before it ends due to UK's exit from the EU.

Format of Final Project:

Students will conduct research to identify reasons for why fewer British students choose to study in the U.S.; identify demographics (gender, ethnicity, household income) of students choosing and not choosing the U.S.; outline additional ways in which the U.S government may leverage opportunities presented by Brexit to increase the number of British students studying in the U.S.—greater promotion of HBCUs, vocational schools, etc.

Students will provide a brief research paper and a possible virtual presentation.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

International Relations, Youth Issues

<u>Comments</u>:

Resources
https//www.iie.org/opendoors/
http//www.fulbright.org.uk/going-to-the-usa/undergraduate/educationusa-advice

Malaysia: Meeting Energy Demand through New Sources and Smart Consumption

Economic Section

U.S. Mission to #Malaysia

Overview:

This project will examine ways Malaysia can meet growing energy demand through the onboarding of distributed energy sources and the development of sustainable consumption practices. Students groups will meet at regular intervals with Embassy stakeholders to identify areas of interest in the renewable (solar, biofuels, etc.) and green technology (microgrids, storage, etc.) sectors – particularly where we can recommend U.S. products, services, and expertise – and to research challenges and opportunities facing these energy sources and technologies in Malaysia. Throughout the project, students will develop a set of recommendations/action plan for the Embassy team to review and deploy.

The conclusion of the semester will feature an opportunity for the students to brief Embassy leadership on their research and recommendations, and to field questions from U.S. government officials tasked with implementing these solutions.

Format of Final Project:

One-page infographics capturing topline information from each student group; 20-page research paper synthesizing key points and analysis from all groups; and presentation with Embassy/outside stakeholders.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

East Asian/Pacific Studies, Energy Security, International Relations

Comments:

Greetings! U.S. Embassy Kuala Lumpur is proud to partner with Diplomacy Lab university affiliates once more to strengthen our energy diplomacy. Officials from the Economic Section's energy and environmental portfolios will work with student groups to develop research topics of importance to the U.S.-Malaysia energy relationship. The ten countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), of which Malaysia is a member, represent one of the most dynamic parts of the global energy system and their energy demand has grown by 60 percent over the past 15 years. It is essential the United States work with Malaysia to address the challenges (and explore the opportunities!) created by this growth.

This project typically takes a single semester to complete.

Making Smart Cities Meaningful to the Public

Multilateral Affairs

East Asian and Pacific Affairs

Overview:

Urban growth can benefit by the use of technology and data to improve the management and planning of cities. As technology advances and more cities adopt digital technologies (5G, internet of things, autonomy, machine learning and artificial intelligence), it is critical that residents are aware of new and growing uses of these technologies and how citizens can benefit them, but also how they can impact citizens' rights and privacy. The ASEAN Smart Cities Network and the U.S.-ASEAN Smart Cities Partnership are two flagship initiatives on this topic. This is an opportunity for students to understand both the positive and negative aspects of use of technology in city operations and come up with recommendations for governments in Southeast Asia for best practices in the adoption of smart cities technologies.

Format of Final Project:

2 page overview of positives and negatives of smart cities technologies, 4 page options memo for regional cities on how to promote positive benefits of smart cities technology and civic engagement in decisions regarding their use, easy-to-digest info-graphics on benefits and risks of smart cities technologies.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

International Relations

Comments:

N/A

Building ASEAN Identity Within Member State Sovereignty

Multilateral Affairs

East Asian and Pacific Affairs

Overview:

ASEAN is a regional body made up of 10 individual member states all with their own national identity. ASEAN has three pillars of work economic integration, political security, and socio-cultural sharing. However, one of the most important factors within ASEAN is that no country give up any kind of sovereignty to the regional body itself. Vietnam will chair ASEAN for 2020 and one of their priorities is building an "ASEAN Identity." How can ASEAN build an identity while simultaneously maintaining distinct national sovereignty? A comparison with the EU – who also has difficulty building a European identity while actually giving up some sovereignty – would be useful. If it didn't work for the EU (or why hasn't it?), how could it work for ASEAN? The United States government wants to see ASEAN succeed as a regional body and believe that supporting an ASEAN identity strengthens the effectiveness of the organization as a whole. The project will entail researching methods of building regional multi-national identity, doing a comparison of identity building within similar regional organization, notably the EU, and lessons learned on identity building.

Format of Final Project:

The final product should be a multiple-page, detailed, distinct recommendation memo for the public sector in the U.S. and ASEAN Member States that could build the image of an ASEAN identity, specifically that could be implemented within the next two years.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

International Relations

Comments:

http//www.eria.org/ASEAN_at_50_4A.2_Acharya_final.pdf,
http//warwickaseanconference.com/building-asean-identity/

GIS/Google Earth Mapping of Mission Mexico's Consular Resources, Natural Disaster History, and Crime Trends

American Citizen Services

Western Hemisphere Affairs to #Mexico

Overview:

The team(s) will create a Google Earth/GIS map of Mexico to include relevant information for Mission Mexico ACS crisis preparation. There will be two types of maps created. First, the team(s) will analyze historical data of natural disasters in Mexico and create map(s) displaying areas affected, extent of damage, and rescue/escape information (ie escape routes, shelters, emergency facilities, etc). These maps will serve as valuable reference material for evaluating how to prepare for or react to future disasters in Mexico.

The second map project will be to visualize existing US Department of State Travel Advisories for Mexico. The advisories are written documents to help ensure the safety and security of US Citizens in Mexico. The maps will provide the relevant information from the advisories in an easily digestible format in order to help US Citizens plan their visits to Mexico. Mapping these advisories will help make them easier to follow for US Citizens as well as making them more friendly for social media and wider distribution.

Format of Final Project:

(1) Google Earth or GIS Map file that is easily editable and understood by users of varying experience levels with maps. (2) Presentation about how mapping is innovative to ACS work.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

International Relations, Geography, Computer Science

Comments:

Mission Mexico is following the lead of Mission El Salvador in innovation with using mapping to visualize resources.

Lessons Learned: Anti-Gang Initiatives in the United States

Western Hemisphere Programs

International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs

<u>Overview</u>:

Gangs, including youth gangs and increasingly sophisticated transnational gangs, are one of the most important security challenges facing Central America. The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs' (INL) anti-gang programs fall into two broad categories – prevention programs aimed at keeping at-risk youth out of gangs altogether, and enforcement programs which help Central American law enforcement prioritize gang investigations and effectively take down gang organizations. To enhance this programming, INL would benefit from research that provides an in-depth study on anti-gang initiatives here in the United States. Specifically, INL recommends the research team examine anti-gang approaches in areas such as Los Angeles, Boston, Houston, and/or Northern Virginia.

The research team should answer three main questions:
 1) What specific activities and programs has the government spearheaded to combat gang violence in these cities?
 2) What have been the most effective areas for community involvement and leadership?
 3) What are the major lessons learned from anti-gang initiatives in these cities? Are there particular aspects that would translate well to other regions, or specific activities unique to area?

INL encourages the research team to be creative with its final product, but requests the team include a short written piece as part of its deliverable.

<u>Format of Final Project</u>:

We request ta short written piece as part of the deliverable. The research team can be creative if they'd like to include additional products (presentations, videos, etc.)

<u>Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest</u>:

Conflict, Stabilization, & Reconstruction, Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement, Democracy & Human Rights, International Development, International Relations, Western Hemisphere Studies

<u>Comments</u>:

N/A

Mapping Government Presence in the Northern Triangle

Western Hemisphere Programs

International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs

Overview:

The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) works with partner nations to build effective law enforcement capacity to counter transnational crime—everything from money laundering, cybercrime, and intellectual property theft to trafficking in goods, people, weapons, drugs, or endangered wildlife. INL programming is designed to help reduce crime, promote public safety, and ensure that citizens of those countries have access to a functioning and fair justice system. In most cases, government presence is critical to providing the law enforcement and justice services that achieve these goals. For this project, the research team will work with INL to first identify indicators of government presence (for example police precincts, court systems, prisons, health and human services, federally funded or controlled programs). Next, the research team will use open source research to locate and map these indicators across Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. Finally, the research team will determine where government presence is most and least concentrated, along with an analysis of possible reasons behind these results. With time permitting, the research team may choose to examine correlations to factors such as crime rates, economic factors, or migration trends.

Format of Final Project:

Written analysis (preferably a memo or paper, but would accept PowerPoint or other format)
Finalized map using GIS or similar software (preferable)

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Civil Society, Democracy & Human Rights, Geography, International Development, International Relations, Narcotics & Law Enforcement, Western Hemisphere Studies

Comments:

N/A

Understanding Cross-Cultural Linkages Between Contemporary African American and African Pop Culture

Public Affairs

African Affairs to Botswana

Overview:

Woke is as a political term of African American origin that refers to a perceived awareness of issues concerning social justice and racial justice. It is derived from the expression "stay woke." Recently this term has been adopted into the vernacular of the youth in Botswana. In the U.S., the term is generally associated with youth who are politically engaged and it arose from a specific context of the black struggle against racial injustices. However, in Botswana, youth populations largely remain outside of political and civic engagement sphere. In the most basic of terms, Botswana does not suffer from a legacy of apartheid or racial segregation like in the U.S. or South Africa.

Natural hair has gained popularity in both the African American and African communities in recent years. For decades, many black and African women wore chemically straightened hair, wigs, and/or weaves. However, women in the U.S. and Africa are now choosing to wear their hair naturally. Studies by Mintel, a market research firm, indicate that natural hair is associated with a new found element of beauty, respect, empowerment and pride. In a recent interview, the director of the Miss Botswana beauty pageant revealed that 2019 is the first year in which contestants will be allowed to wear their natural hair during the competition.

This proposal seeks to understand the cross-cultural influences/linkages between contemporary African American and African pop culture. Why have some aspects of African American culture translated to contemporary African pop culture while others have not? Does the U.S. even play a role in influencing contemporary African pop culture? What are the linkages that exist that could allow the USG to better understand its audience and allow Embassies to draw on cultural similarities to create more effective programming and achieve policy goals.

Format of Final Project:

Research Paper and presentation

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

African Studies, Education & Cultural Studies, International Relations, Sociology, Youth Issues

Comments:

N/A

Measuring the Effectiveness of Confucius Institutes

Public Affairs

African Affairs to Botswana

Overview:

The Confucius Institute program was founded in 2004 to promote Chinese culture and increase China's soft power worldwide. The rapid expansion of institutes in Africa within a short period has coincided with the rise of China as an emerging global superpower. This seems to reflect a long-term strategy aimed at securing the country's growing footprint on the international stage. China's growing geopolitical influence in Africa is well-documented through its investments and expansion of its military role in the region. The Chinese government is also seeking to increase Chinese cultural influence by hosting exchanges for political leaders, students, educators, and journalists. Botswana recently established a Confucius Institute in partnership with the University of Botswana to teach Chinese language and culture. This project seeks to understand the effectiveness of Confucius institutes in comparison with US Binational centers and "America Spaces." What makes them succeed/fail at achieving policy goals? Has the rapid expansion in Africa equated to a change in how China is viewed on the continent compared to the US? Are the Chinese using the institutes promote communist ideology or specific trade polices? Is there evidence China is using these institutes to gain political influence within governments?

Format of Final Project:

Research Paper

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

African Studies, East Asian/Pacific Studies, International Relations

Comments:

https//www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-49511231

https//www.reuters.com/article/us-china-education/china-aims-to-optimize-spread-of-controversial-confucius-institutes-idUSKCN1QD00Z

http//aeaa.journals.ac.za/pub/article/view/155

https//qz.com/africa/1351749/chinas-confucius-institutes-in-africa-spread-mandarin-culture/

How Do You Make HIV/AIDS Messaging Attractive/Effective in the Digital Age?

PAS

African Affairs to Botswana

Overview:

The principal idea of this project is to explore effective messaging to youth populations that are at risk of contracting HIV or spreading HIV/AIDS. We would like to address two key areas 1) Effective messaging and 2) message fatigue. We would like to analyze how the youth populations (ages 16 to 25) received information in the digital/soundbite age. How can the US government update its messaging through content and delivery to ensure the message does not miss its target audience and encourage youth to take the necessary precautions? Is the same message from 15 years ago still relevant today? Much of the youth population were not alive during the AIDS epidemic that decimated much of Botswana, does this change their perception of at risk behavior? Are their key marketing strategies the US government has overlooked?

Format of Final Project:

Presentation with option to provided additional accompanying memo research report.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Communications, International Relations, Marketing, Youth Issues

Comments:

https//www.avert.org/professionals/hiv-around-world/sub-saharan-africa/botswana

http//www.bw.undp.org/content/botswana/en/home/ourwork/hiv_aids/overview.html

https//www.unaids.org/en/regionscountries/countries/botswana

Do Employee Recognition Awards Work?

Policy and Public Outreach

Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs

Overview:

The Frank E. Loy Award for Environmental Diplomacy recognizes achievement in international environmental diplomacy. This covers advancement of U.S. interests, analysis and policy development, integration of environmental topics into broader U.S. diplomacy efforts, and interaction with key public and private actors. By creating the award, Frank Loy hoped to recognize and reward outstanding work on environmental topics, to encourage employees to increase emphasis on environmental topics, and to assist these officers on their career promotion potential.

This award is one of several Department of State employee recognition awards focused on rewarding and supporting various specialized aspects of diplomacy. Receiving such an award is considered a high honor, and most come with a significant financial bonus, so they are generally highly competitive and popular. What we do not know is how effective these awards are at stimulating the behaviors they are aimed at, and what effect winning such an award has on the subsequent career of the recipient. In short, are employee recognition awards effective tools to encourage and reward specialization in targeted diplomatic fields, to recognize outstanding individuals, and to advance their careers?

This award has been granted annually for 17 years, and the creator, Frank Loy, is available for an interview. Further, many of the recipients are still working at the Department of State and could be interviewed about their work and the effect that winning the award has had on their career. This research project envisions researching and documenting the career paths of the recipients and establishing what effect, if any, receiving this award has on promoting environmental diplomacy.

Format of Final Project:

Research paper analyzing career paths of award recipients.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

International Relations, Science and Technology, Sociology

Comments:

Frank Loy, creator and sponsor of the award, is available for interviews on the topic.

Entrepreneurship Across the Western Hemisphere

Networks Unit, Office of Policy Planning and Resources, Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs

Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs

Overview:

Inform the future of U.S. entrepreneurial diplomacy. The U.S. Department of State's Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs's Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources is commissioning a report of the entrepreneurial landscape of the Western Hemisphere. This work should elucidate on regional entrepreneurship trends, significant actors in the entrepreneurial space, and challenges and opportunities for entrepreneurs in the region. The final report will inform strategic and tactical decisions by public diplomacy practitioners across the Department and around the world, providing critical information about the environments and contexts in which American diplomats conduct their work.

Format of Final Project:

1. Overview of regional trends, excluding the United States (Google Doc)
--Executive summary (500-1,000 words)
--Annotated bibliography
2. Review of entrepreneurial environment for each Western Hemisphere HA country (Google Doc)
--Quick summary for each country (150-200 words)
--Executive summary for each country (500-1,000 words)
--Annotated bibliography
Note countries should be grouped by U.S. Missions overseas.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Economic & Finance Issues, International Development, International Relations, Marketing, Western Hemisphere Studies, Youth Issues

Comments:

Foreign language skills (Spanish, French, Portuguese) recommended.

The Networks Unit manages the Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative (YLAI) Network, a vibrant community of young entrepreneurs and changemakers from Latin America, the Caribbean, and Canada who are committed to fostering economic development and prosperity, security, human rights, and good governance in the hemisphere. We empower entrepreneurs, civil society, and young leaders with the training, tools, networks, and resources to transform their societies. The YLAI Network is a signature part of the U.S. government's efforts to increase partnerships with future leaders to help promote economic growth and strengthen civil society.

5G and Democratic Governance

MLGA

Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

Overview:

The introduction of 5G wireless technology will increase data transfer speeds and enable the full connectivity of internet of things (IoT) devices, augmented/virtual reality, telehealth and smart cities. However, authoritarian governments can use 5G technology to centralize control and threaten fundamental freedoms. To what degree will these technologies allow for increased surveillance and control over the information environment by governments and malicious actors? What are the potential impacts on democratic governance?

The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor's Office of Multilateral and Global Affairs is looking for a technologically savvy team of students to assess the potential impact of widespread 5G adoption on human rights, democracy promotion, and the subsequent U.S. foreign policy implications.

Format of Final Project:

We envision the final project to be a report, 10-20 pages long, addressing the following questions
•	What are the key human rights concerns arising from the spread of 5G technology and its follow on technologies (mentioned above)? How can 5G technology centralize power in authoritarian governments and challenge open discourse?
•	Are there any aspects of 5G technology that can empower civil society, activists, opposition movements or marginalized populations?
•	What are the key government agencies, thought leaders, and organizations that are examining the human rights and democratic impact of 5G technology? Please include brief summaries of their positions.
•	If available, include summaries of ethics/human rights statements from the key companies involved in installing 5G technology or that will be utilizing 5G technology in their products.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Civil Society, Cyber Security, Democracy & Human Rights, Human Rights, International Relations

Comments:

White House Statement on 5G https//www.whitehouse.gov/articles/ensuring-america-reaches-its-5g-potential/

Global Attitudes on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights

MLGA

Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

Overview:

As the capabilities of artificial intelligence (AI) increases, there are increasing concerns from the NGO community that these technologies pose a significant threat to basic human rights such as freedom of expression, privacy, and freedom from discrimination, among others. However, achieving global consensus on which rights should be protected and how to achieve that goal has been difficult.

The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor's Office of Multilateral and Global Affairs' is looking for a dynamic team of students to compare and contrast how different countries view the nexus of AI and human rights.

Format of Final Project:

We are looking for students to select approximately ten countries (aside from the United States) from a variety of geographic regions that are likely to influence the future of AI. For each country, we would like a short report (3-5 pages) with the following information (if available)

•   A brief summary of the overall human rights – AI policy priorities for the country
•   Short summaries of key ethics/human rights policy statements from government agencies, companies leading AI research based in those countries, or local NGOs monitoring the impact of AI on society.
•   An overview of the main actors in that country influencing AI ethics development, including regulatory agencies, corporations, major organizations and prominent thinkers
•   A short memo suggesting a strategy for DRL and the United States to engage with that country on AI and human rights, including areas of agreement and disagreement.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Computer Science; Democracy & Human Rights; International Relations

Comments:

White House Executive Order on Artificial Intelligence and American Values
https//www.whitehouse.gov/ai/ai-american-values/

SHIFT: Initiating Legal and Socio-Cultural Transformation of Attitudes towards Sexual Violence

Public Affairs Office

European and Eurasian Affairs to Lithuania

Overview:

While victims of domestic violence and violence against women are experiencing increased attention from lawmakers, state institutions, and NGOs in Lithuania, little was done to improve the legal protection of victims of sexual violence and modernize the legislation related to the issue. This project aims to seize the opportunity that the discussions on violence against women have created and expand the understanding of the complexity of sexual violence. It also aims to enable key stakeholders to develop legal amendments, effective referral mechanisms, create sensitive identification system, and increase awareness on sexual violence, involving different target groups law enforcement agencies, health care professionals, NGOs, and the general public.

Complete a comprehensive desk study to present to experts and decision-makers, who will be brought together to discuss the issue and the potential changes in the regulation. Cooperating with the different state institutions as well as NGOs will present a unique opportunity to tackle the issue from various angles and strive for a change in legislation that would be both beneficial to the victims and practically applicable for law enforcement.

With the booming research and awareness-raising campaigns that Lithuania has experienced in the field of violence against women in the last years, little has been done to improve the situation of women who have experienced sexual violence. No national-level research or advocacy campaign has tackled sexual violence in independent Lithuania, which impedes the pursuit of justice the legal definition of sexual violence in the Lithuanian Penal Code is narrow, and initiation of criminal process sometimes lies on survivor's shoulders. The cases often do not reach courtrooms, the medical professionals do not have clear instructions or rape kits to perform abductions in such cases. Due to the lack of systematic data on sexual violence, the NGOs lack effective advocacy tools and struggle to convince lawmakers, legal practitioners, and society at large that a drastic change in the field sexual violence is necessary.

Format of Final Project:

Research paper, Literature review, data analysis of existing data to pull together a comprehensive plan.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Civil Society, Communications, Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement, Democracy & Human Rights, Education & Cultural Studies, Gender Studies, Human Rights, International Law, Psychology, Sociology, Statistics, Trafficking in Persons, Youth Issues

<u>Comments</u>:

Comprehensive research comprehensive research will provide data on the obstacles that are faced by victims as well as legal and other professionals, who are involved in the supporting victims and prosecuting the crimes of sexual violence. The research will also provide data on the prevalence of victim-blaming Lithuania.

1. The research will identify the barriers that victims face in their pursuit of justice. It will consist of desk research, in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 15 – 20 survivors who have experienced sexual violence, will help to identify the practical obstacles that victims face in access to legal procedure and support of victims, ranging from victim-blaming and practical deficiencies of the Lithuanian medical and legal systems.

2. The research will identify the barriers that professionals encounter while providing legal, psychological, medical, and other necessary support for victims of sexual violence. One focus group will be organized with the legal professionals (prosecutors, attorneys, etc.) that will identify the legal flaws that paralyze the effective prosecution of perpetrators of sexual violence. The second focus group will be organized with professionals who provide support for victims (psychologists and counselors at Specialized Assistance Centers, medical professionals, etc.)

3. The research will identify the perceptions of the general public and measure the level of victim-blaming that prevents the victims from sharing their stories and seeking both legal and emotional support. Advocacy based on the results of the research, comprehensive

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Blockchain in Improving Human Rights in Global Supply Chains

International Labor Affairs

Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

Overview:

Blockchain is one type of a distributed ledger. Distributed ledgers use independent computers (referred to as nodes) to record, share and synchronize transactions in their respective electronic ledgers (instead of keeping data centralized as in a traditional ledger). If adopted on a large scale, blockchain projects can help achieve transparency throughout the entire supply chain. This transparency can drive social impact by monitoring human rights in the supply chain. In this vein, a global dataset that tracks the status of blockchain projects with a focus on human rights and a qualitative assessment of their effectiveness would be a useful reference for the Department of State. This database would have five components (1) the initiator of the project – this could be a single firm or a group of firms that come together to implement blockchain in their operations; (2) the scope of the project – this would capture how far in the supply chain does the project extend to (including the upstream and downstream partners); (3) the information sources – this would highlight the different information sources that are leveraged by the project and the technology partners that help them collate this information at different nodes in the supply chain; (4) performance metrics – these would be the standards and metrics used to capture the human rights condition in the chain; and (5) qualitative assessment – this would track the effectiveness of the project in improving human rights in the supply chain as well as list the benefits and challenges encountered in this effort. Such a database would help track, on an on-going basis, the status of these projects as they go from pilot to full-scale implementation, the supply chains they impact, and the issues that they uncover in the process.

Format of Final Project:

The deliverable would be a complete dataset, in matrix form, showing by year, firm, and industry, the projects implemented, and the status of implementation. For each blockchain project, it would have additional detail on the company doing the implementation, the partners involved in the project, the underlying information sources, technology partners, and the human rights or social impact parameters that are captured through this project, as well as track the improvement in these measures (if any) during the course of the project.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

International Relations; Experience with human rights issues, information technologies, database applications

Comments:

The following links provide some background information on the potential of blockchain to drive social impact:

1. https//www.gsb.stanford.edu/faculty-research/publications/blockchain-social-impact

2. https//www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/blog/2018/realizing-the-potential-of-blockchain-for-social-impact.html

The United States as Colombia's Economic Partner of Choice: Ensuring Prevailing Narratives Support U.S. Interests

Economic Section; Public Affairs Section

Western Hemisphere Affairs to Colombia

Overview:

The United States is Colombia's largest trading partner and largest source of foreign direct investment. Based on anecdotal impressions, our theory of the case is that key Colombian stakeholders generally view the United States as Colombia's economic partner of choice they want more bilateral trade and investment and they see the United States as a model for economic development and entrepreneurship. Thus, as we see it, both the strong bilateral economic relationship and narrative about it reinforce critical U.S. interests. Throughout the region, although new partners are emerging, the United States still has much to offer Colombia as its economic partner of choice.

We are seeking a Diplomacy Lab partner to (1) develop a data-driven, replicable model to test our theory of the case; (2) highlight any emerging counter-narratives with the potential to challenge the perception of the United States as Colombia's economic partner of choice; and (3) identify proven strategies we can implement to promote this core message. Successful completion of this project will require combining an understanding of international economics and Colombia's political economy with a data-driven analysis of media and social media. It will also require a solid understanding of Spanish language in order to read through a wide variety of Colombian media sources as well as social media influencers to determine the current public stance on this issue.

Format of Final Project:

For a deliverable, we would like a PowerPoint presentation responding to the three goals noted in the project description. Supporting this presentation would be a data-driven, replicable model we could implement on an iterative basis to test our theory of the case and track changes over time as well as data that support conclusions/recommendations related to the second and third goals.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Communications; Economic & Finance Issues; International Relations; Western Hemisphere Studies

Comments:

If we make a match with a Diplomacy Lab partner, we would look forward to a call early in the semester to clarify goals and deliverable, as well as iterative consultations throughout the project. We trust this project represents an exciting opportunity to meld economic and public diplomacy disciplines to create an analytical product we will put to good use!

Engaging the Social Work Discipline in Countering Violent Extremism

CVE

Counterterrorism

<u>Overview</u>:

Social work (SW) as a discipline has been identified by several prominent academics and organizations in CVE as being a discipline well suited to address the prevention and countering of violent extremism (VE). The discipline has a long history of addressing the psychosocial needs of vulnerable children and adolescents along with pioneering a variety of violence prevention programs. However, this expertise has only recently been examined and promoted as a possible avenue for CVE. In the US, among SW academics, there is very little research into CVE programs or discussion of the role of SW in CVE. In the cases where this expertise has been utilized for CVE, there has been push back from some SW academics and practitioners on the potential for securitization of the profession. Others discuss the potential for CVE activities to stereotype groups. These potential issues are considered to be antithetical to ethics of the profession.

Research Question

How can CVE engage the profession of the social work at four levels?

1.   Social Work academics and researchers
2.   Social Work organizations
3.   Community social workers
4.   Direct practice social workers

Please be specific in all four arenas in how you would engage social workers (e.g., communication strategy, trainings, professional conferences, etc.).

<u>Format of Final Project</u>:

20-30 page research report

<u>Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest</u>:

Anthropology; Civil Society; Communications; Counter Terrorism; Global Health; Information & Communication Technology; International Development; Marketing; Public-Private Partnerships; Psychology; Sociology; Youth Issues

<u>Comments</u>:

Engaging major social work organizations such as the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR), and the National Association of Deans and Directors of Schools of Social Work (NADD) domestically will be

essential. Abroad, organizations such as the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), the British Association of Social Workers (BASW), Moroccan Association of Social Workers (AMAM) , International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) should also be considered.

Best Practices in Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Partners and Minors of Foreign Terrorist Fighters

CVE

Counterterrorism

Overview:

The capturing or killing of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) from ISIS and other affiliated groups in Syria/Iraq has resulted in many wives and children of FTF being relocated to internally displaced camps (IDP) in Syria. Evidence suggests that FTF women and children have higher levels of radicalization to violence, through constant de-sensitization to violence. Many also suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The evidence further suggests that women in these camps may have facilitated, actively participated in, or inspired violence. In addition, the process of relocation along with the poor conditions in the camps when they arrive, perpetuates this trauma. It is thought the exposure to terrorist ideology, along with these traumatic experiences, may be a major risk factor for either the continued acceptance of violent extremist (VE) ideology, or future adoption of VE ideology. As these women and children are repatriated back to their home counties, there is a consensus concern that these women and children may be a substantial security risk. Many counties are reticent to receive their FTF citizens back for this reason.

The Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) has advocated for a set of broad-based best practices in the rehabilitation and reintegration of FTF, female partners of FTF, and their children. And though several countries have created programs to address the above, there remains a dearth of evidence on their effectiveness. Further, the descriptions of these interventions, for example, 'psycho-social support,' 'counseling,' 'psychological care,' from these programs is vague thus making replication difficult. Further, most described programs do not describe a 'whole-of-society' framework (macro/mezzo-level interventions) outlined as a GCTF best practice.

Given social work, psychology, education, and sociology theory, create a proposed best practice model for the rehabilitation and reintegration of partners and children of FTF in a country known to have FTF partners and children in Syrian IDP camps. Be specific in the recommendations and create two separate models; one for children and one for female partners. Include a community-level intervention strategy to address the potential for discrimination and stigmatization of returning women and children. Lastly, as faith is major identity component of this population, describe how to engage individual religious beliefs, along with the faith communities in their home country, in the model.

Format of Final Project:

30-40 page research paper

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Conflict, Stabilization & Reconstruction; Counter Terrorism; Psychology; Youth Issues

Comments:

Social Work as a discipline should also be considered

Utilizing Visa Restrictions to Mitigate Tension and the Risk of Political Instability

Africa Office

Conflict and Stabilization Operations

Overview:

The goal of this research is to create a tool that will assist policy makers in identifying the country conditions and the types of individuals worthy of visa restrictions and the restrictions' likelihood to improve country dynamics. Students will conduct research on cases where the United States has utilized visa restrictions and identify examples that objectively demonstrate positive impact. The students will develop a framework for the United States to identify the conditions and individual profiles susceptible to U.S. visa restrictions that would improve host country dynamics and achieve desired outcomes. This framework, or tool, would be used to determine when each type of profile should be targeted for a specific objective, the requisite international community coordination, and the appropriate nature of the restriction announcement. Profiles should capture the individual's characteristics related to the governing body (i.e. government position, relation to head of state, culpability of human rights violations, level of exposure to the international system, etc.).

This project will help policy makers discern which visa restrictions imposed in the past met specific objectives through objective analysis and evaluation. This work will also assist policy makers and subject matter experts of the Department of State to identify prime dynamics and individuals to impose visa restrictions to improve host country dynamics. This improvement could potentially save lives, strengthen democratic institutions, and enhance regional stability, which all would have a positive effect on U.S. national security.

Format of Final Project:

- 10 page research paper, which includes case studies and data analysis.
- A presentation
- A 2 page summary that highlights the conditions and individual profiles that would predict potentially effective visa restrictions

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

International Relations

Comments:

The mission of the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) is to anticipate, prevent, and respond to conflict that undermines U.S. national interests. The bureau implements this mission in two complementary ways through data-driven analysis and forward deploying stabilization advisors to conflict zones. The objective is to inform and execute U.S. strategy, policy, and programs on conflict prevention and stabilization.

CSO's expertise focuses on three key lines of effort 1) political instability; 2) security sector stabilization; and 2) countering violent extremism (CVE). CSO collaborates with regional and functional bureaus, DOD, and USAID, and details stabilization advisors to posts and Geographic Combatant Commands (COCOMS) requiring specialized expertise. Deployed CSO staff sometimes broach the subject of visa restrictions when collaborating with Embassies when considering methods to mollify the risk of widespread instability or to punish bad actors for facilitating violence.

We expect this work to be completed within a semester.

Science Rules!: An Investigation into the Rules and Norms of Scientific Integrity

Office of Science and Technology Cooperation

Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs

<u>Overview</u>:

Science intrinsically operates on certain principles, which are essential to a healthy and vibrant international research ecosystem. An important activity of our Office is outreach to international partners to discuss scientific cooperation as anchored to the shared values and principles that underpin research values and principles such as transparency, peer-review publication, consideration of ethical ramifications, etc. Part of this exciting project will be determining just what exactly those principles are for us and for our international partners.

To better inform our efforts in discussing shared principles of science with partners, we'd like to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of how the principles of research integrity (and what those principles are!) are discussed and deliberated in scientific bodies worldwide – such as scientific societies, universities, or research funding institutions. For instance, both the U.S. National Academies and European Academies have deliberated such principles and values (see 2017 Fostering Integrity in Research by NASEM and 2017 The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity by ALLEA (All European Academies)); no doubt, many others exist as well. By researching existing efforts in this space – both domestic and international – your team will enable our office to amplify these principles and more effectively engage new partners on conversations mapped to shared principles. We will rely on your team's public policy and research skills and meaningful analysis of why these case studies matter. Your team taking on this project would advance our efforts to include meaningful and powerful science and technology relationships around the world. This is a great opportunity to think about science from a scientific, philosophical, sociological, and/or ethical lens. We can't wait to work with you.

<u>Format of Final Project</u>:

We would like to receive a PowerPoint presentation of case studies – domestic and/or international - along with a more detailed written report with greater levels of detail, information, and data.

<u>Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest</u>:

International Relations; Science and Technology; Sociology; Statistics

<u>Comments</u>:

Were your team to be selected, we'd work with you to identify background readings and other materials. We don't anticipate this project would last longer than a semester. For more information, our office's website is https//www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-economic-growth-energy-and-the-environment/bureau-of-oceans-and-international-environmental-and-scientific-affairs/office-of-science-and-technology-cooperation/

Follow the Money: A Statistical Investigation into the Relationship between Funding Levels, Cooperation, and Science & Technology Agreements

Office of Science and Technology Cooperation

Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs

Overview:

The Office of Science and Technology Cooperation manages the negotiation of nearly 60 international bilateral science and technology agreements. Because the U.S. approach to science funding is diffuse and bottom-up, we often don't have direct insight into the amount of cooperation that takes place under these agreements. It would be extremely useful to our office's work and in bilateral relationships to have a sense of the effect of the presence of an S&T Agreement on bilateral scientific cooperation.

We would love to work with a team that has rigorous statistical analysis skills, as well as the ability to set variables and explore relationships between those variables in a way easily translated into policy documents. This would be a chance to design an original analysis and work with international data sets among a variety of policy and social settings.

Format of Final Project:

We would like to receive a written report, which includes statistical analysis, and a data set.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

International Relations; Science and Technology; Statistics

Comments:

Were your team to be selected, we'd work with you to identify background readings and other materials. We don't anticipate this project would last longer than a semester. For more information, our office's website is https//www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-economic-growth-energy-and-the-environment/bureau-of-oceans-and-international-environmental-and-scientific-affairs/office-of-science-and-technology-cooperation/

Scientific Herstory: An Elevation and Celebration – through Social Media – of American Women's Contributions in STEM Fields

Office of Science and Technology Cooperation

Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs

Overview:

A barrier to girls' and women's full participation in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields is the historic under-appreciation and lack of acknowledgement of women's contributions to STEM fields. Without a full understanding of women's achievements, society perpetuates myths about women's competence and contributions in these fields, and girls and women are taught that they don't below in STEM.

By organizing a comprehensive and evidence-based social media strategy, the Department of State's Bureau of Oceans and International Environment and Scientific Affairs hopes to demonstrate to massive audiences the importance of acknowledging and celebrating American women's achievements in STEM fields. We also view this as an opportunity to represent a full spectrum of women's experience and identities, and any proposal and approach should be intersectional in its identification of role models.

Format of Final Project:

We would like to receive a social media strategy and up to 50 sample social media postings to celebrate the contributions of American women in STEM.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Communications; Gender Studies; Science and Technology

Comments:

Were your team to be selected, we'd work with you to identify background readings and other materials. We don't anticipate this project would last longer than a semester. For more information, our office's website is https//www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-economic-growth-energy-and-the-environment/bureau-of-oceans-and-international-environmental-and-scientific-affairs/office-of-science-and-technology-cooperation/

Attack of the Mega-Science!: Design A Survey of International Research and Development Infrastructure Projects

Office of Science and Technology Cooperation

Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs

Overview:

International research and development infrastructure (RDI) is in the middle of expansive growth, both domestically and internationally. Your team's work to survey and document current and planned RDI around the world would equip the U.S. government and U.S. scientists to have access to state-of-the-art facilities through scientific cooperation, understand where global gaps exist to invest in RDI smartly, and how to engage specific countries on RDI investments and cooperation. This is a great opportunity to develop your own survey methodology, explore international cutting-edge science, and contribute to the advancement of science diplomacy worldwide.

The U.S. Government is developing a definition of research and development infrastructure (RDI) to better understand the scope of both domestic and international research infrastructure. International infrastructure is of interest to the United States because it may provide American researchers with access to novel capabilities and reduce wait times for access to similar facilities. The Department has an interest in providing the interagency with information relevant to the needs and missions of the science and technology enterprise. An inventory of major international infrastructure could be valuable in developing our own domestic inventory and assist science agencies in assessing the state of American scientific leadership. A research team devoted to surveying the international landscape for present advanced facilities and planned major infrastructure investments could be helpful in maintaining America's science and technology edge while preserving our status as a destination for the world's most coveted science and engineering talent.

Format of Final Project:

We would like to receive a written report of the survey, as well as a matrix for evaluating capabilities of the infrastructure projects.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

International Development; International Relations; Science and Technology; Statistics

Comments:

Were your team to be selected, we'd work with you to identify background readings and other materials. We don't anticipate this project would last longer than a semester. For more information, our office's website is https//www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-economic-growth-energy-and-the-environment/bureau-of-oceans-and-international-environmental-and-scientific-affairs/office-of-science-and-technology-cooperation/

Open Science Policies and Perceptions in Asia Pacific

Office of Science and Technology Cooperation

Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs

Overview:

Open science policies, practices, and attitudes vary greatly around the world. Many countries are beginning to more closely at open science—both the benefits and the risks to domestic equities—and put in new policies. In the Asia-Pacific region, the 21 member economies of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) are beginning to discuss the topic in more detail, with a focus on the potential economic impact. In 2020, one of the primary topics of discussion in the APEC Policy Partnership for Science, Technology, and Innovation will be open science and what best practices or policies can be put in place to increase economic growth in the APEC region.

Your team's work to survey and document current open science-related policies, practices, and perceptions amongst the 21 APEC member economies would equip the U.S. government and other APEC stakeholders throughout the region with information to guide discussions and policy development. This is a great opportunity to develop your own survey methodology, explore the connection between policies and social norms and practices, and contribute to the advancement of science diplomacy worldwide.

Format of Final Project:

We would like to receive a written report on open science-related policies of Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) member economies, as well written report on 10 case studies on perceptions on open science in APEC economies.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

East Asian/Pacific Studies; Economic & Finance Issues; International Relations; Science and Technology; Statistics

Comments:

Were your team to be selected, we'd work with you to identify background readings and other materials. We don't anticipate this project would last longer than a semester. For more information, our office's website is https//www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-economic-growth-energy-and-the-environment/bureau-of-oceans-and-international-environmental-and-scientific-affairs/office-of-science-and-technology-cooperation/

Healthcare Systems in the Western Hemisphere

EPSC

Western Hemisphere Affairs

Overview:

Project teams are expected to research and present (in writing) a comprehensive analysis of national healthcare systems in each country in a selected sub-region of the Western Hemisphere. This semester, we are particularly interested in South and Central America. This description should include healthcare finance systems (private, public, insurance systems, etc.), physical distribution of healthcare facilities throughout the country, distribution of healthcare workforce, healthcare provider training resources (medical schools, nursing schools, vocational schools), major health challenges, legislation affecting healthcare services, etc. Additional information will be described prior to final submission of this proposal.

Format of Final Project:

We would like to receive 20 page summary reports of findings

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

International Relations; Public Health; Global Health; Health Economics; Regional Security

Comments:

We will be happy to provide contact information of appropriate resources.

Eradicating Bacha Bazi Exploitation in Afghanistan

POL/ECON Section

South and Central Asian Affairs to Afghanistan

Overview:

Bacha bazi is a practice, criminalized under Afghanistan's penal code, in which men exploit boys for social and sexual entertainment. According to the Department of State's 2018 Human Rights Report covering Afghanistan "Police reportedly beat and sexually abused children. Children who sought police assistance for abuse also reported being further harassed and abused by law enforcement officials, particularly in bacha bazi cases…. During the first six months (of 2018), (UN authorities) documented credible reports of five cases of sexual abuse involving six boy, attributed to the Afghan National Police, and the Afghan Local Police." The true number of cases is believed to be much higher, but because most victims are unable to speak out against police perpetrators, media and other reports on the practice are rare. Successful prosecutions are even rarer. Prosecutors and other experts say many of the bacha bazi cases in Afghanistan involve sexual assault and that many of these crimes – perhaps a majority – occur at police checkpoints, where police commanders customarily have a private room. Physical and psychological damage from bacha bazi is extensive. Warfare, terrorism, dislocation, family separations and poverty all contribute to bacha bazi. While the Afghan peace process moves forward and there is hope that Afghans may soon be better positioned to bring about a more peaceful and prosperous nation, there is no indication that the scourge of bacha bazi will end anytime soon. Harnessing the creative power of an American university or universities could generate a creative approach that could help eradicate one of Afghanistan's most insidious problem.

Format of Final Project:

Presentation

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

International Relations; Youth Issues and Human Rights

Comments:

n/a

Supporting Reconciliation in Post-Conflict Afghanistan

POL/ECON Section

South and Central Asian Affairs to Afghanistan

Overview:

Project Description Afghanistan has for decades been ravaged by war, from the fight against Soviet occupation and years of civil war to the Taliban's rise, NATO's intervention and the past 18 years of conflict. As the Afghan peace process moves forward, there is hope that Afghans may soon be able to develop a more peaceful and prosperous nation. However, achieving true reconciliation will involve rehabilitating many ex-combatants, not only from the Taliban, but from militias and other armed groups that have carried out bloody attacks, not only on fellow combatants but in many cases civilians. While it should be, and will be, up to the Afghans themselves to decide how best to promote forgiveness and reconciliation in their society, it would be helpful for an informed, outside organization, such as an American university with expertise in societal reconciliation, to offer advice on how other societies have successfully fostered reconciliation following prolonged conflicts. There might, for instance, be lessons for Afghanistan in the way Germany reconciled with Holocaust victims, or the way bad blood gave way to hope in Belfast, or from settlement efforts in Sri Lanka, Nepal, and/or Colombia. The Afghans could benefit from finding out what barriers to reconciliation exist and learning effective strategies for overcoming those barriers. How can fear be replaced by non-violent coexistence? How can trust and confidence be promoted among combatants who were trying to kill one another months earlier? How can Afghans – combatants or non-combatants – overcome the anger and resentment over losing loved ones or their land or property, and start the long, arduous and necessary process of rebuilding their country (whose economy and infrastructure remain in very poor shape)? Harnessing the creative power of an American university or universities could generate a creative approach that could help Afghans come to terms with their painful past and craft a brighter future.

Format of Final Project:

Flexible

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

International Relations

Comments:

n/a

Cultural Economy in Times of Financial Crisis

Public Affairs

Near Eastern Affairs to Lebanon

Overview:

Embassy Beirut seeks to survey cultural institutions in Lebanon and better understand their contributions to the economy. As part of this project, the Embassy wants to identify areas for further engagement, namely the most impactful or influential cultural institutions. In addition, the Embassy would like to identify one or two model U.S. institutions, from whom Lebanese counterparts could glean best practices for sustainable cultural contributions. The ultimate goal of this program is to understand which cultural entities impact the Lebanese economy so that the Embassy can more wisely target resources and engagement.

According to a 2015 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) report, these industries collectively generate $2.25 billion in revenue, representing a work force of 29.5 million (or 1 percent of jobs worldwide). Economic growth in Lebanon is stymied by its confessional political system and can be seen in the country's estimated 25 percent unemployment rate and zero percent growth. Given the weak economic situation, the U.S. Embassy is interested in understanding more about potential opportunities for Lebanon's numerous cultural institutions.

Post encourages the review of models and best practices from museums, art galleries, archival centers, pop up concept/design stores, concerts/music/performance/dance venues, residency spaces, cultural funding organizations, theaters, and libraries.

Format of Final Project:

20-30 pages research paper
Data analysis
Action plan with suggestions of improvement for the current cultural sector in Lebanon.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Civil Society; Economic & Finance Issues; Education & Cultural Studies; International Relations; Marketing; Middle East/North African Studies; Statistics

Comments:

Anticipated outcome might take longer than 1 semester

Political Parties in Elections: Exploring Hybrid Possibilities Between "Individual Merit" and Parliamentary Electoral Models in the Kingdom of Eswatini

US Embassy Mbabane

African Affairs to #Swaziland

Overview:

Eswatini is an executive monarchy, governed in a combined parliamentary and traditional structure. Traditional forms of governance and elements of representative government share power and control over policy development, law making, law enforcement and dispute resolution, though the executive has outsized influence. Though the 1968 Independence Constitution provided for the possibility of multi-party parliamentary democracy, King Sobhuza II revoked the constitution in 1973, outlawed political parties, and proclaimed his authority over all branches of government. In 2006, the country enacted a new constitution that enshrined broader political freedoms and expanded the roles of the legislative and judicial branches, yet implementation of the constitution remains slow and imperfect, particularly in the area of political party participation in elections.

The 2006 constitution emphasizes individual merit as a basis for elections, which has been taken by most to mean that political parties may not contest elections. Many in the country still believe that political parties are banned, even though the 2006 constitution and a later court ruling effectively annulled the 1973 decree. Political parties exist, but conditions for their operations, particularly in elections, are undefined, legally unclear, or culturally restricted. We are seeking to help Eswatini open the space for greater participation of political parties within the "individual merit" based system by documenting examples of electoral systems that have successfully melded political party advocacy and engagement with ballot structures that list only candidate names and not party affiliations (for example, the State of Nebraska, where parties recruit and endorse candidates, but legislative election ballots do not include political affiliation with candidate names).

Format of Final Project:

We would like a series of case studies of electoral systems and experiences (including countries and, where relevant, individual states/regions within countries) where legislative candidates can campaign with the full support of political parties, yet are elected as individuals (where no indication of political party affiliation is listed on elections ballots). Each case study should describe 1. How the electoral process works; 2. What the results have been in terms political party and citizen engagement in both elections and governance; 3. What the results have been in terms of quality and effectiveness of legislative governance; 4. How the electoral system/practice is perceived by international organizations; and, 5. An assessment of how that experience could be adapted to the context of Eswatini. An accompanying PowerPoint presentation should introduce the current Eswatini context, summarize each case study, and provide recommendations regarding specific aspects of the different cases which could be adapted for use in Eswatini. We anticipate sharing the findings of the research with Swati civil society organizations, political parties, and government bodies.

<u>Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest</u>:

African Studies; Civil Society; Democracy & Human Rights; Human Rights; International Relations; Political/Military Affairs

<u>Comments</u>:

It would be ideal (though not required) if the class and/or instructor had expertise in electoral politics and/or administration.

Innovative Approaches to Documenting IUU Fishing and Marine Destruction in the Philippines

Public Affairs Section

East Asian and Pacific Affairs to #Philippines

Overview:

The Philippines government struggles to effectively police marine resources in its territorial waters, specifically in the South China Sea (SCS), because of insufficient naval/coast guard capacity and the uniquely sensitive geopolitical conditions in the SCS. This leaves its rich marine resources vulnerable to illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing by vessels from other countries, including other SCS claimant countries. Coral reefs are also being destroyed due to dredging related to the buildup of artificial islands and illegal giant clam harvesting.

Embassy Manila Public Affairs Section (PAS) is interested in how to apply technological resources such as satellite imagery, big data analysis, and other sources to better inform the Philippine government and public about the scope, scale, and nature of the environmental damage taking place in their waters. By raising the awareness of Filipinos about the extent and rate of the marine resource loss, there can be a broader national discussion about the appropriate action to prevent it.

This project aligns well with Embassy Manila's ongoing initiatives to highlight the importance of marine sustainability. Partners for our programs include local and international environmental NGOs, Philippine government agencies, local tech and business incubators, leaders of coastal communities, and alumni of U.S. exchange programs.

We envision the U.S. university team engaging in collaboration (which PAS will facilitate) with some of these partners to develop a platform that will be useful to promote sustainability and counter practices such as IUU fishing and destruction of marine habitats, including coral reefs.

Format of Final Project:

Interactive online map, mobile application, or other format to be built in collaboration with Filipino partners to create a platform that could continue to be used beyond the end of the project. We are flexible and open to other creative ideas as well, and look forward to refining the scope of the product through engagement with the university team.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Computer Science; Geography; Information & Communication Technology; Oceans; Science and Technology; Statistics; Water Security

Comments:

None

Utilizing Technology to Access Potential Students and Exchange Participants in Remote, Socially Conservative Regions

U.S. Consulate General Jeddah - Public Affairs Section

Near Eastern Affairs to #Saudi Arabia

Overview:

U.S. Mission Saudi Arabia employs a range of social media platforms to engage in outreach, but the pool of potential students and exchange participants remains fairly limited to segments of society which the Mission is already engaged with. Interest in these programs is spread generally by word-of-mouth and accessing remote, socially conservative areas of the country remains a challenge to establish a foothold for program expansion. Post is seeking a better understanding of how technology might be employed in new and innovative ways, more than simply advertising the availability of these programs, to gain access to these audiences and establish a wider, more engaged social network to fuel future recruiting efforts.

Format of Final Project:

Written product, 20 page research people, with explanation of the data analysis. Also the raw data used to assess the target audiences.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

International Relations

Comments:

Saudi Arabia is a country in a state of rapid social change. This change is felt most greatly in larger metropolitan areas that the Consulate is able to more easily access, but we are more particularly interested in understanding the target audiences and finding ways to recruit students remotely from areas like southern Saudi Arabia, where security restrictions and cultural conservatism limit our ability to regularly access and engage the local population.

The Extractive Industry in Latin America: Developing Business and Human Rights Toolkits

Multilateral and Global Affairs

Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

Overview:

We are seeking the opportunity to collaborate with a group of students to help us more effectively equip foreign service officers at embassies to address human rights and environmental issues in the extractive sector in Latin and Central America. The region offers significant opportunities and challenges to maximize stakeholder benefit throughout the value chain, from local communities to employees and shareholders. As increasing attention is placed on the role of businesses in respecting human rights, foreign service officers are uniquely placed to work across stakeholder groups to help facilitate responsible business. To increase officers' ability to make an impact, we propose making toolkits customized to specific country and industry contexts. These toolkits would contain brief economic, political, and social background relevant to the country's extractive sector; a list of extractive companies operating in the country; a mapping of key extractive sites; a timeline of activities in key extractive sites; a list of tools - soft and hard international law - that could be deployed to address challenges at the sites; and a list of resources for further reading and guidance. We would be particularly interested in developing toolkits focused on Guyana, Honduras, Peru, Columbia, Argentina, Chile, and Mexico. Our team is currently working on a toolkit for Guatemala, which will serve as an example.

Format of Final Project:

This project would be well-suited for a class comprised of small groups of students. We would suggest that as a final product, each small group of students assemble a Word document toolkit for a specific country with a section dedicated to each of the six sections (brief economic, political, and social background relevant to the country's extractive sector; a list of extractive companies operating in the country; a mapping of key extractive sites; a timeline of activities in key extractive sites; a list of tools - soft and hard international law - that could be deployed to address challenges at the sites; and a list of resources for further reading and guidance).

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Democracy & Human Rights; Economic & Finance Issues; Energy Security; Geography; Human Rights; International Development; International Law; International Relations; Public-Private Partnerships; Western Hemisphere Studies

Comments:

Business and Human Rights https//www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Business-and-Human-Rights.pdf

Shifting Tides: Who has the competitive edge in international educational exchange programs?

U.S. Embassy Quito - Public Affairs

Public Affairs to Ecuador

Overview:

For decades, the United States has been at the forefront of promoting opportunities for global scholars to study at U.S. colleges and universities through people-to-people exchange programs like the Fulbright Program. Traditionally, these opportunities for U.S.-government sponsored study abroad have been highly sought by scholars and academics from around the world. However, trends in international education are showing increasing competition, which is impacting application rates to U.S. programs. For example, in recent years, China has greatly expanded its cultural, political and economic influence through the Belt and Road Initiative, which has significantly increased the availability of scholarship opportunities for international students to study in China. Europe, Canada and Australia are also offering competitive scholarships to English-speaking study abroad programs. As a result, some U.S. missions are reporting decreasing application rates to flagship government programs like Fulbright. This project would take a look at the impact of Chinese state-sponsored education exchange programs and other English-language study abroad programs on trends in international education, and would make recommendations for how U.S.-sponsored programs could remain competitive to international students. The key areas of inquiry would be what are the current trends in international education and how do the impact U.S. programs? How can U.S. government-sponsored study abroad programs stay competitive in this rapidly changing landscape?

Format of Final Project:

The final product would be a 10 page report with clear recommendations.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

International Relations

Comments:

Open Doors publication gives a great look at international student enrolment rates at U.S. universities. Fulbright can also offer in-depth look at application rates to any of their programs, per country.

Prioritization of Cost Effective Energy Conservation Measures

Design & Engineering, OBO Energy Program

Overseas Buildings Operations

Overview:

Informed decision-making is the foundation for success. The Presidential Management Agenda seeks to modernize the government with the use of data. This project supports this initiative by facilitating prioritization of facility energy conservation measures (ECMs) through data collection and analysis of simple payback to determine the most cost effective measures.

Overseas Building Operations (OBO) maintains facilities in countries all over the world, except in the United States. While many locations employ local staff for maintenance, the requirements of some of the proposed ECMs exceeds their available time or skills and it would be desirable to contract the work locally.

OBO has formed an Energy Program to reduce energy consumption and costs in our locations. This project seeks to obtain worldwide labor rates for skilled trades (mechanical, electrical, building controls, etc.) to implement energy conservation measures. In addition to collecting data, the desired outcome of this project would include a tool to calculate ROM cost estimates for each proposed project, that combined with expected cost savings (provided), will rank projects to implement based on a variety of factors such as cost or simple payback.

Format of Final Project:

The final product will be in three parts
1)   Presentation to review project and demonstration on the use of the tool
2)   Tool, using software capabilities already available to Department of State (excel, Power BI, etc)
3)   20 page (max) report describing resources used to obtain data for locations, documentation of gaps in available data, limitations of the tool, how to keep the data current/relevant going forward, and instructions for use of the tool.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Climate Change; Computer Science; Economic & Finance Issues; Energy Security; Information & Communication Technology; Science and Technology; Statistics

Comments:

The OBO Energy Program is eager to further students' understanding of the financial and operational challenges associated with reducing energy consumption and costs, while providing them with the unique opportunity to impact our future energy conservation efforts throughout the world.

https//www.sustainability.gov/policy.html
https//www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/The-President%E2%80%99s-Management-Agenda.pdf
https//strategy.data.gov/

Investors, Reporting, and Human Rights

Office of Multilateral and Global Affairs

Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

Overview:

The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor's Office of Multilateral and Global Affairs' Internet Freedom and Business and Human Rights Team is looking for a dynamic team of students to help us identify best practice in embedding human rights considerations into the investment decisions of mainstream investors.

The first part of this project will explore key challenges to incorporating human rights into the decision-making of mainstream investors. The second part will examine current legislative reporting initiatives, multi-stakeholder initiatives, human rights benchmarking, and other human rights-related information that might inform investor decisions on human rights-related issues. Part three of this project will involve using the information gleaned to develop a set of recommendations for the Internet Freedom and Business and Human Rights team on engagement with mainstream investors on these issues. Final work product will be a paper with an executive summary.

Format of Final Project:

Written report with recommendations and presentation. If report ends up being long, it should include an executive summary. Report should be no more than 10 pages.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Civil Society; Democracy & Human Rights; Economic & Finance Issues; Human Rights; International Law; Public-Private Partnerships; Trafficking in Persons

Comments:

Please reach out to our team we will provide you with recommended resources to consult.

Climate Change Modelling for Southern Africa

Regional Environmental Office

U.S. Mission to Botswana

<u>Overview</u>:

What does the latest climate change data say about rainfall and other weather for Southern Africa? We have an understanding that the region will be drier, but to water degree, and is it possible to identify climate changes at the sub-regional level, for example, rainfall in the Lesotho highlands or Kalahari desert? If the data is available, then what are the implications for land use?

<u>Format of Final Project</u>:

Written report

<u>Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest</u>:

Climate Change

<u>Comments</u>:

The data likely exists, but I'm not sure whether anyone has run the models or made public the results for Southern Africa.

Effective Tools to Mitigate Human Wildlife Conflict

Regional Environmental Office

U.S. Mission to Botswana

Overview:

The Kavango - Zambezi (KAZA) Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) boasts one of the largest concentrations of wildlife in Africa. However, civil war, political instability, economic challenges, and climate change over the past several decades have increasingly put humans and wildlife in competition for resources. Subsistence faming communities often blame elephants for crop destruction and large cats for the death of livestock. However, there is scant empirical evidence about the incidence of human-wildlife conflict. Is it possible to compile reliable data on human-wildlife conflict using KAZA government information, press report, and reports from NGOs and universities conducting research in the region?

Given the anecdotal evidence that human-wildlife conflict is increasing, what are the best methods for mitigating such conflict? For example, are dogs effective in guarding livestock from large cats? Do bees and chili peppers really deter elephants from trampling crops? We've heard reports that these told are effective, while other sources report just the opposite. What is the truth? We often get requests to fund various groups that work on these issues, so it would be good to know what the reality is so that we can invest better.

Format of Final Project:

Written report.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Anthropology; Climate Change; Food Security; Geography; International Development; Science and Technology

Comments:

This project may require some experience/expertise in animal ecology.

Southeast Asia Regional Maritime Law Enforcement Cooperation

East Asia

International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs

Overview:

Maritime law enforcement (MLE) cooperation has become a United States Government foreign policy priority in the past several years. We are asking for a comprehensive report/s in the following areas 1) What is the level and nature of MLE cooperation in the South China Sea via formal and informal channels, such as WhatsApp and Viber; 2) what are the MLE capabilities and orders of battle in the South China Sea claimant states, including future projections and the capacities of any maritime militias; and 3) determining a baseline for maritime related crimes (piracy, IUU fishing, etc.) in Southeast Asia to better enable the U.S. government to understand emerging trends. We would also ask for a creation of a tool that would allow us to continue updating the data set and to use that data for visual aids.

Format of Final Project:

Report and visualization tool

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Conflict, Stabilization, & Reconstruction; Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement; East Asian/Pacific Studies; International Relations; Oceans; Political/Military Affairs

Comments:

This research will have a direct impact on South China Sea policy and regional MLE cooperation priorities.

China's Domestic Drug Problems

East Asia

International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs

<u>Overview</u>:

Little is known about Chinese domestic drug abuse trends, its chemical and pharmaceutical industry and this industry's role in the illegal drug trade (specifically synthetic drugs), and China's efforts to expand their international cooperation to combat crime and narcotics. We are asking for a comprehensive report/s into these three priority areas.

<u>Format of Final Project</u>:

Report

<u>Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest</u>:

Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement; East Asian/Pacific Studies; International Relations; Narcotics & Law Enforcement

<u>Comments</u>:

This research will better enable the United States Government engage China in counter narcotics cooperation and better address our own opioid crisis here in the United States.

Indo Pacific Narcotics Trafficking

East Asia

International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs

<u>Overview</u>:

It is a United States Government priority to combat opioids and synthetic drugs emanating from the Indo-Pacific region. Using open source data, we are asking for a visual data set which maps the flow of narcotics throughout the region, with an emphasis on synthetic drugs and any connections to the United States whether those be direct, secondary, or tertiary. We would like the data set to be used to create a mapping tool that will allow the U.S. government to manipulate and add to the data after the project is completed.

<u>Format of Final Project</u>:

Research paper and mapping tool

<u>Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest</u>:

Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement; East Asian/Pacific Studies; International Relations; Narcotics & Law Enforcement

<u>Comments</u>:

This project will directly help the U.S. Government better understand narcotics networks in order to better prioritize limited resources.

Smartphone APP for U.S. History in the Azores

U.S. Consulate Ponta Delgada

European and Eurasian Affairs to #Portugal

Overview:

The U.S. Consulate in the Azores, located in the capital city of Ponta Delgada, seeks a creative and tech-proficient team to help research and design a smartphone APP that visitors to Ponta Delgada can use to venture around the city and learn about sites of historical importance to the U.S.-Azores relationship. 2017-2019 marks the centennial anniversary of U.S.-Azores cooperation during World War I, including the U.S. Marines fending off a German U-boat attack on downtown Ponta Delgada, as well as the first flight in the Azores, made by one of the U.S. Marines aviation units in February 1918. The team will collaborate with a local historian to identify a dozen or so points of historical interest (ex, cemetery where U.S. soldiers are buried), then develop text and graphics to inform the public of the many contributions the United States has made in defense of the Azores, one of Portugal's autonomous regions, and with strong ties to U.S. diaspora communities in MA, RI, and CA. This project will help the U.S. Consulate meet our strategic objectives of reinforcing the historic U.S.-Portugal relationship and supporting the growth of the local economy, which is based in large part on tourism.

Format of Final Project:

A working, user-friendly smartphone application.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Computer Science; European & Eurasian Studies; Information & Communication Technology; International Relations; Political/Military Affairs; Science and Technology

Comments:

Depending on the group's progress, number of sites can be scaled down or increased to include other islands of the Azores. APP should be in English, and local partners can help translate content into Portuguese as an add-on, if there is sufficient time.

Determine the Value of Kuwaiti Educational and Medical Travel (and Possibly Shrink the U.S. Trade Deficit)

Economic Affairs Section

Near Eastern Affairs to Kuwait

Overview:

Embassy Kuwait seeks Diplomacy Lab assistance to survey, measure, estimate, and report on the total economic value of Kuwaiti spending in the U.S. education and health sectors. Your efforts to track these exports of U.S. services could lead to a material adjustment in the U.S. balance of trade with Kuwait, which is typically reported to be in deficit.

Kuwait relies disproportionately on U.S. institutions to improve the health and education of its citizens, to the benefit of both countries. More than 15,000 Kuwaitis currently study in the United States (one percent of all citizens!) Another 3000 Kuwaitis sought U.S. visas for medical treatment in the past year.

Despite earlier estimates of spending in the billions of dollars annually, we have reason to believe the value of this partnership is materially underreported in official statistics. Embassy Kuwait needs your help to prove (or disprove) this assertion and to create reporting and statistics we can reference in our diplomatic engagement, both in Kuwait and in Washington.

Format of Final Project:

-        A short paper (about five pages) summarizing your research efforts and your methodology, including a detailed analysis that explains how you arrived at the dollar values you assigned.

-        An estimate of the number of U.S. jobs attributable to Kuwaiti medical and educational travelers, directly or indirectly.

-        An estimate of the export value of the U.S. services (and goods) used by Kuwaiti medical and educational travelers while in the United States.

-        (if appropriate) a comparison of the U.S. trade flows with Kuwait, in light of growth in trade in services like education and health care. How do your findings compare with existing government statistics?

-        (If appropriate) a PowerPoint presentation highlighting your most surprising findings.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Economic & Finance Issues; Education & Cultural Studies; Global Health; International Relations; Middle East/North African Studies; Public-Private Partnerships; Statistics; Youth Issues

<u>Comments</u>:

The economic section at Embassy Kuwait has sought to quantify the value of Kuwaiti spending on medical treatment and education for some time.

Kuwaitis' unique travel patterns make it difficult to extrapolate from other cost estimates or worldwide averages.

Statistical Analysis of Federated States of Micronesian Citizens in the U.S.

U. S. Mission

East Asian and Pacific Affairs to #Micronesia

Overview:

Since the inception of the Compact of Free Association between the United States and the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), concerns of the Compact's impact has been a lingering issue, especially in places where the majority of FSM citizens have migrated since the Compact went into effect. The majority of FSM citizens are living in Guam, Hawaii, Washington state, and the mid-west of the U.S. mainland. We do not have detailed statistics on FSM citizens residing in the U.S. and neither does the FSM government. According to perceptions, FSM citizens are a draw on public resources in these locations. It would be helpful to have a detailed study on FSM citizens residing in the United States that includes data on population, employment, income, education, age, mortality and health. The results of this study would help U.S. and FSM governments better understand their needs and conditions impacting their successes and failures; and more importantly, their contributions to society, including their services in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Format of Final Project:

A research paper with detailed statistics.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Statistics; Demographics

Comments:

The project should take no more than 4 months.

Impact Analysis of the 10-Year Visa for Chinese Nationals

Embassy Beijing Nonimmigrant Visa Section

Consular Affairs to China

Overview:

In November 2014, the Department of State increased visa validity for Chinese visitor visas (B1, B2, and B1/B2 visas) from 1 year to 10 years. Given that Chinese travelers represent the largest international share of the U.S. tourism market, this research project aims to answer the question, "What impact, if any, has the change to 10-year validity for Chinese visitor visas had on Chinese traveler behavior and the U.S. economy?"

Sub-questions may include:
-Have the marketing tactics of visa and travel facilitators and the typical profile and travel style of Chinese tourists changed post-November 2014?
-How do Chinese travel patterns correlate with trends in the Chinese economy (for example, province- and city-level GDP changes, or the opening of new flight routes to the U.S.)?
-Has online discussion in Chinese social media reflected any notable changes in attitude toward travel to the U.S.?

The study results will be useful to Embassy Beijing as context for Chinese traveler motivations and typical travel patterns as we continue to facilitate legitimate travel while upholding border security.

Format of Final Project:

- Presentation of Research Findings - Data Analysis and Corresponding Executive Summary and Report of Findings

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Anthropology; Communications; East Asian/Pacific Studies; Economic & Finance Issues; Education & Cultural Studies; Geography; International Relations; Marketing; Statistics; Tourism

Comments:

As part of the research project, you will be liaising with the Beijing Nonimmigrant Visa Unit's Metrics Team, who can answer questions, direct research, and serve as a resource on contextual or other information.
Potential sources regarding the economic relationship include news stories, tourism studies, and trackers on U.S.-China investment and travel, for example
www.cabi.org/leisuretourism/news/25577
www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-01-23/-12-000-trips-abroad-replace-chinese-new-year-treks-to-grandma-s
ec.europa.eu/DocsRoom/documents/15746/attachments/1/translations/en/renditions/native

https//www.ustravel.org/system/files/media_root/document/Research_Fact-Sheet_Summary-Country-Profile_China.pdf
https//rhg.com/impact/china-investment-monitor
http//www.aei.org/china-global-investment-tracker/

Commercial 'Start-Up' Diplomacy

Economic Section

Near Eastern Affairs Embassy Tunisia

Overview:

Commercial 'Start-up' Diplomacy is a project that aims to connect American start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with international customers and clients with the objective to increase U.S. exports and bilateral trade at the start-up and SME level. The project involves the creation of a database that categorizes the products, services, and core competencies of American start-ups and SMEs that were developed and mentored within an American incubator space. U.S. Embassy Tunis has a strategic objective to lower Tunisia's unemployment rate. The Government of Tunisia aims to bring down unemployment from 15% to 12% by 2020. Tunisian college graduates represent 40% of the unemployed population. High unemployment is a national security concern. Therefore, this project intends to support job creation at the SME level for Tunisia as well as the United States.

Why should the big companies have all the fun? While the objective for this American start-up database would eventually be utilized by diplomatic posts worldwide, Tunisia will serve as the beta testing ground. Connecting foreign start-ups and SMEs with American partners supports U.S. exports, facilitates cultural exchange, and augments USG capacity to better conduct commercial diplomacy at the SME level. In practice, the database would assist existing USG commercial services. If a Tunisian start-up were developing a device that required a specialized chip, for example, the database would allow commercial officers to locate American start-ups and SMEs that have the ability to design and export the product to the Tunisian customer. When American partners are identified, Commercial and Economic Officers would then facilitate connecting the parties and closing deals.

While there are likely countless incubator workspaces in the United States, university teams would prioritize start-ups housed within, or those that recently graduated from top American incubator spaces identified by Forbes magazine. Students also will consider other factors when selecting incubators so that the database covers regional diversity and a variety of sectors across the United States. Parameters of the database and its usage will be further discussed with the team(s).

Format of Final Project:

We would like a database that has a modern interface, is user friendly, and easy to manage. The objective is to run queries where we can search products, services or core competencies of American start-ups and SMEs. Ideally, the database would have background information of the company including websites, location, and contact information, a description of products, services and competencies as well as pictures if necessary. We are including SMEs because the database would capture start-ups that graduated from an American incubator (within the past 3 years) and are now operating in their own workspaces.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Entrepreneurship; Business, Commerce, Trade, Development

Comments:

This is the first phase of this database project. Once the beta test is completed in Tunisia. It is our hope that Commercial 'start up' Diplomacy will become managed by the U.S. Department of State or Commerce. Students will also help create a name for the database program.

Incubators
1. https//www.forbes.com/sites/alexkonrad/2017/06/07/best-accelerators-of-2017/#3073f2610cb6

2. https//www.forbes.com/pictures/mee45jmk/the-research-park-at-the-university-of-illinois-at-urbana-champaign/#4118d21b4848

3. https//www.forbes.com/sites/richardkestenbaum/2018/05/13/this-is-how-accelerators-and-incubators-build-consumer-businesses/#42796f37428a

4. https//www.forbes.com/sites/brennancusack/2018/08/22/tunisias-equal-inheritance-law-could-boost-female-entrepreneurship/#3724b7cf155a

The Overstay Mentality: Understanding Unlawful Immigration of Cabo Verdeans

U.S. Embassy Praia, Consular Section

Consular Affairs to Cabo Verde

Overview:

Cabo Verdeans have strong ties to and a large diaspora in New England. In fact, by some estimates, the community of Cabo Verdean Americans in Massachusetts and Rhode Island is as large as the population of Cabo Verde itself. The consular section at the U.S. Embassy in Praia, Cabo Verde, is responsible for adjudicating tourist visa applications for the steady stream of Cabo Verdeans wishing to visit their family and friends in the United States. In FY2017, U.S. Embassy Praia's consular officers adjudicated nearly 5,000 nonimmigrant visa applications. However, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security estimates that in the same period 13.66% of Cabo Verdean travelers overstayed illegally in the United States, one of the highest overstay rates of travelers from any country.

To accurately make adjudication decisions, the Embassy's consular officers are seeking information about the prevalent overstay mentality amongst Cabo Verdeans. Why are so many Cabo Verdeans overstaying illegally in the United States and how can this trend be discouraged? We envision a project that could be both quantitative and qualitative. Quantitatively, students could examine publicly-available DHS overstay data to see how this trend has changed over time. Qualitatively, students could assess this overstay mentality through discussions with individual immigrants, community organizations, ICE, and CBP, among others. Linked to this would be an evaluation of the education Cabo Verdeans receive about visa regulations and the consequences of overstaying illegally in the United States. Ideally, this project could help U.S. Embassy Praia combat unlawful immigration without dissuading legitimate visitor travel to the United States.

Format of Final Project:

The ideal deliverable is a short analysis memo that includes suggestions on how to combat illegal immigration without dissuading legitimate Cabo Verdean travel to the United States.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Anthropology; International Relations; Sociology; Public Policy/Government Studies/Demography

Comments:

https//www.migrationpolicy.org/article/cape-verde-towards-end-emigration

Immigration and Government Aid: Evaluating Cabo Verdean immigrants' reliance on public assistance programs

U.S. Embassy Praia, Consular Section

Consular Affairs to Cabo Verde

Overview:

Cabo Verdeans have a long history of immigration to New England. By some estimates, the community of Cabo Verdean Americans in Massachusetts and Rhode Island may be as large as the population of Cabo Verde itself. The consular section of the U.S. Embassy in Praia, Cabo Verde, is responsible for adjudicating immigrant visa applications for the steady stream of Cabo Verdeans intending to immigrate to join family in the United States. In FY2017, Embassy consular officers adjudicated the cases of over 2200 immigrant visa applicants in Praia. The Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs recently revised guidance on the "public charge" visa ineligibility, granting broader discretion to consular officers overseas to determine whether a visa applicant is likely to depend on certain types of government assistance in the United States and therefore not qualified to receive a visa. To accurately make these life-changing decisions, the Embassy's consular officers are seeking information regarding Cabo Verdean first generation immigrants' actual use of public assistance programs. We envision a project that may involve both quantitative data regarding use over the past several years of certain categories of assistance by Cabo Verdean immigrants by age, gender, education level and length of time in-country, for example, as well as qualitative assessments through discussion with individual immigrants, community organizations, social workers, and others. Linked to this would be an evaluation of how the Cabo Verdean American community assists new arrivals and patterns of support provided for recent immigrants by their well-established family members.

Format of Final Project:

The ideal deliverable is a report that summarizes the data gathered regarding aid programs used and beneficiaries, and analyzes the qualitative trends. The report would highlight factors that appear tied to use of certain classes of public assistance and conclusions regarding the support that Cabo Verdean immigrants receive from their established family and community.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Anthropology; International Relations; Sociology; Public Policy/Government Studies/Demography

Comments:

https//www.migrationpolicy.org/article/cape-verde-towards-end-emigration

Understanding Perceptions of U.S. Economic Investment in Singapore and Southeast Asia

U.S. Embassy Singapore

East Asian and Pacific Affairs to #Singapore

Overview:

There is a widespread perception that China is the dominant economic power in Southeast Asia and that the United States is not engaged economically, and to some extent politically, in the region. This perception does not match reality. U.S. investment in ASEAN is still consistently higher than that of China. American commercial presence in the region has never been stronger and it is continually growing.

Recent polling conducted in Singapore, which is home to 4,200 American companies, many of which serve as regional headquarters for the Asia-Pacific, does not reflect knowledge of the strength of American economic engagement. The polling shows that when asked "which country do you think has the best relationship with Singapore on trade and investment at present?" 46% said China and 26% said USA. When asked "which country do you think will have the best relationship with Singapore on trade and investment in five years?" 55% said China and 20% said USA. When asked "which country do you think has the best relationship with Singapore on technology and innovation at present?" 37% said Japan and 27% said USA. When asked "which country do you think will have the best relationship with Singapore on technology and innovation in five years?" 28% said China and 27% said Japan.

We would like to better understand public sentiments about U.S. economic engagement in Singapore and Southeast Asia. How well do Singaporeans understand the level of American economic investment in the region? To what extent do Singaporeans know about trade between America and the region? How do perceptions about American investments and trade with the region compare to how Singaporeans perceive other countries' investments and trade in the region? Why isn't America seen as a leader in technology and innovation in the region? What is the media narrative about these topics? What does survey data show? What messages or approaches would best help the U.S. Embassy to highlight the enduring importance of U.S. trade and investment to Singapore and the region?

Format of Final Project:

Phase 1 Research and analysis of local sentiments toward American trade and investment in Singapore and Southeast Asia, in general and specific to key industries, including a written report of findings and presentation to the U.S. Embassy.

Phase 2 Recommendations for a public messaging campaign to highlight the role of U.S. economic engagement and shift attitudes amongst Singaporeans, including a written report of recommendations and presentation to the U.S. Embassy.

<u>Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest</u>:

Communications; East Asian/Pacific Studies; Marketing; Business

<u>Comments</u>:

The lead office for this project will be the Public Affairs Section of U.S. Embassy Singapore, in cooperation with colleagues from the U.S. Commercial Service and other elements of the Mission community.

More information about the Embassy's work can be found at https//sg.usembassy.gov/

Design the State Department's IT School of the Future

SAIT Innovation Sandbox

Foreign Service Institute

Overview:

SAIT strives to empower our workforce to navigate a rapidly developing IT environment while broadening our reach through innovative and impactful learning In order to achieve these goals effectively, SAIT needs to continually innovate how we develop and deliver new curriculum, explore and understand emerging technologies while maintaining expertise for legacy systems, and expand our learning ecosystem beyond formal training via microlearning, social and peer-to-peer learning, and informal learning opportunities.

This project will assist SAIT to modernize our curriculum development processes, training delivery methods, and promote procedural and programmatic innovation in the use of IT in American diplomacy.

Format of Final Project:

I. Research Presentation/Whitepaper/Analysis - Design recommendations for the IT School of the Future for the Department of State. Tabula rasa, blue sky thinking, starting from scratch! We want the ideal theoretical design of what a modern IT school supporting the foreign affairs community should be setting aside all historical contexts, political administrations, bureaucratic limitations, and budgetary constraints.

Through a holistic lens, provide data-driven recommendations on overhauling curriculum design, delivery methods, e-learning ecosystems, classroom technologies, and necessary educational skills and strategies IT instructors should have beyond their specific expertise/domain of knowledge.

II. Data Analysis/Report/Dashboard - Development of a business intelligence/data analytics dashboard for SAIT leadership and management to monitor and make decisions in real-time the school's performance in regards to enrollment rates, student data (e.g. level, job series, years at State), instructor data (e.g. podium hours, course load, and areas of expertise), classroom usage data, etc.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Communications; Cyber Security; Information & Communication Technology; Public-Private Partnerships; Training

Comments:

As the U.S. government's premier foreign affairs training provider, the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) is dedicated to ensuring career-long learning required for success in today's global arena. FSI is proud to serve the U.S. Department of State and the entire USG foreign affairs community as a strategic enabler of diplomatic excellence by providing training for substantive, regional, and linguistic expertise, leadership finesse, and personal resilience and innovative problem-solving.

The School of Applied Information Technology (SAIT) prepares all Department employees for their Foreign Affairs mission by developing proficiency in information technology and business applications; including but not limited to the installation, configuration, administration, troubleshooting, repair, and enterprise use of technology, IT Tradecraft, and information security.

Designing For Diplomacy: Appropriate Architectural Representation for a U.S. Embassy of the Future and Facade Explorations with parametric Digital Design

PDCS/DE/AD

Overseas Buildings Operations

Overview:

The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) is seeking academic proposals for the study of Embassy design at both the urban scale and at the detailed level of façade exploration utilizing parametric digital design.

Part I Embassy of the Future the Urban Scale
The U.S. Department of State has historically commissioned architectural designs for U.S. Embassies through a variety of methods ranging from competitions to mandated standardized designs. The resulting buildings have also ranged from the iconic embassies in Beijing, London and Lima to a more architecturally understated group in Manama, Berlin, and Islamabad.
The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) is seeking academic proposals for the study of appropriate architectural representation through the design of a U.S. Embassy of the Future. Student work should answer these questions:
1.At an urban scale, what is the role of architecture in creating the appropriate representation of the United States diplomatically for its centers for engagement, and define what constitutes that architecture?
2. Further, how does the architecture of an American embassy engage and compliment the culture and context of the host country?
3. How much does the local contemporary or vernacular architectural context, materials, landscaping, climate and infrastructure influence the embassy's design?
4. How can the need for of security and the desire for openness are achieved through design and technological advancements?
5. In times of heightened security how can an American embassy of the future operate as a totally self-sufficient entity?
6. How does the embassy of the future create a better community within for its staff and visitors?

Part II Façade Exploration
The U.S. Department of State has historically built the new U.S. embassies with poured-in-place concrete due to its inherent strength, versatility, durability, and local availability nearly everywhere in the world. These concrete buildings are often clad in stone, pre-cast concrete, or masonry which is all considered traditional building materials. The biggest challenge in embassy design is how to balance need for security with the desire for openness.

The semesters work shall include the study of advanced building façade concepts and materials using parametric digital design analysis. Proposals could be inspired by ecological design, regenerative design, advanced acoustic design, light weight high strength structural and security products, and technological advances for façade materials that address these two opposing needs

Design proposals shall not compromise the existing levels of security required at U.S. Embassies.

Proposals shall assume that façade materials are backed up with poured-in-place concrete structural elements, or another material that will provide the necessary levels of physical security.
The study must embrace the notion that embassy typology requires principles of standardization such as standard bay sizes and certain building materials, however the typology does not need to result standard building design.

Format of Final Project:

These studies will be conducted as part of an architectural design studio that will address a specific embassy program on a specific site. Façade exploration will be conducted as an additional component of the studio. Studio deliverables will be in the form of 2D and 3D graphic architectural presentations and written text. Façade Exploration deliverables will be in the form of 2D and 3D graphic presentation supported by written text and data analysis.

It is anticipated that once a bid is accepted for this proposal, that Diplomacy Lab and the sponsoring School will enter into a detailed dialogue modifying and tailoring the content of the semesters work to address the goals and objectives of both the School and Diplomacy Lab within the definition of the project.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Architecture

Comments:

Resources:

https//overseasbuildings.state.gov/
https//de.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/chancery/building/
http//www.dw.com/en/new-us-embassy-in-berlin-triggers-architecture-debate/a-3325836
https//biomimicry.org/
https//living-future.org/lbc/
www.case.rpi.edu/
https//www.regenerative.com/what-is/regenerative-design
https//precast.org/2014/11/uhpc-offers-endless-possibilities
http//www.taktl-llc.com/What-is-TAKTL

Evaluating the Process and Outcomes of Cabo Verde's Graduation: Contributions and the Price of Graduating from Low-Income to Middle-Income

Political/ Economic Affairs

Economic and Business Affairs to Cabo Verde

Overview:

In 2008 Cabo Verde became the second country in the world to graduate from the list of least developed countries (LDC) to become a lower-middle income country (MIC). As an independent country since 1975 and once considered "unviable" by the IMF and the WB, it soon became clear that economic growth would depend on a strong development strategy and vision to face fundamental challenges. Cabo Verde is a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) natural resources – including water – are scarce, the arid climate limits agriculture and industry, and the small market and population make external interest hard to attract (approximately 550,000). Despite substantial difficulties, the progress made on various fronts – education, infrastructure, health, water and sanitation, political will for ambitious reforms, embracing modernization and technology – has been commendable. The graduation to MIC status represents the international community's recognition of this small archipelago's development strategy, its respect for human rights, and its commitment to democracy and socio economic progress. Progress made since 1975 reflects continuous good performance based on two of the three UN established evaluation criteria for graduation GDP per capita and the Human Development Index. However, Cabo Verde still struggles with a variety of vulnerabilities including addressing poverty, transportation, high public debt and unemployment rates, and other fundamental needs; it is also heavily dependent on external financing such as remittances, official development assistance, and favorable attention from European tourism operators.

Ten years following graduation, it is important to understand and evaluate if and how graduation – as a prize for good performance – is contributing positively and practically towards economic growth and sustainable development. Although graduation is considered a positive development, it can have a complicated impact on the country's relationships with IFIs, IOs, and multi- and bilateral partners. The country's own role in promoting graduation versus remaining at the top end of the LDC list and the role of the international community in the transition period, especially as regards access to finance, are important. Cabo Verde's experience may contribute to smoother transitions for other SIDS. </p>
<p>The proposed project would use a variety of data and analysis (obtained via reports and records as well as direct interviews) including from the United Nations, World Bank, and various entities in Cabo Verde (public, private, academic, and civil society) to evaluate the process, the transition, and the outcomes. The evaluation should address, but not be limited to, the following questions and topics Who drove the graduation initiative, and why? Was it sufficiently consultative? What has changed in the country, specifically as regards poverty, spending choices, investment, and development? What are Cabo Verde's short- and medium-term future prospects? What lessons learned and recommendations can be mode to Cabo Verde and to the IFIs/ IOs who make the decisions? How can Cabo Verde's experience help shape other SIDS' graduation processes?

Format of Final Project:

Strategy paper with actions and actors identified

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

African Studies; Economic & Finance Issues; International Development; International Relations; International Finance

Comments:

This question is clearly broader than Cabo Verde.

Can You See Me Now? – Identifying Camera Problems Autonomously

DS/STO/QAL

Diplomatic Security

<u>Overview</u>:

Over 300 U.S. diplomatic buildings in almost every nation in the world rely on closed-circuit television systems (CCTV) as part of their physical security apparatus. Many video cameras are installed outdoors in harsh conditions of sand, sun, and salt spray and suffer from a range of maladies.

Dust, dirt, salt, lichen, and atmospheric pollution on the camera bubble degrade the quality of an image. A camera that is out of focus suffers a similar loss in quality. A broken camera may not produce an image at all. Pan, tilt, and zoom (PTZ) functions may not function. Over time, foliage can grow to block key parts of a camera view. Each of these situations degrades our ability to protect the people who work at and visit our diplomatic facilities.

Since dirty camera bubbles are the biggest problems, proposals must address this issue at a minimum. Teams can choose to address problems of focus, foliage, missing images, and PTZ functionality, as desired. Teams can also choose to use analog cameras, digital cameras, or both. If requested in the proposals, ST may loan the actual cameras and control systems that we use. Since we are looking for autonomous problem detection, the outcome must notify a person who is sitting at a computer. This could be done through email, SNMP trap or table, or any other method teams come up with.

<u>Format of Final Project</u>:

Teams can choose how they will communicate the results of their research. Keep in mind that the project's sponsor only has about 15 minutes to dedicate to understanding your efforts, as she has several solutions to review. You can provide an in-person demonstration -- recorded on video -- write a short paper, provide a dissertation with an executive summary, or come up with your own way of presenting your results. You must both communicate your results and document your project well enough that someone else can reproduce it.

<u>Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest</u>:

Science and Technology

<u>Comments</u>:

For proposal purposes, teams can plan for Samsung SNP-6320H cameras for IP-based systems and SCP-2373 for analog. Both of these are capable of pan, tilt, and zoom; teams can use these features or not. Proposals can request additional hardware to build a system. When a proposal is accepted, ST will provide current hardware from our stock, which may differ from what is requested.

Inclusive Legislation: Advancing Disability Rights – Regional Survey

MLGA/International Disability Rights

Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

Overview:

According to the 2011 World Report on Disability, jointly issued by the World Health Organization and the World Bank, the population of persons with disabilities worldwide exceeded 1 billion, accounting for 15% of the global population. Of these, approximately 650 million persons with disabilities live in the Asia-Pacific region. The number of people living with disabilities worldwide continues to grow, along with the aging population.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol was adopted in 2006. As a legally binding international human rights treaty, the CRPD advances the movement from viewing persons with disabilities as "objects" of charity, medical treatment, and social protection towards viewing persons with disabilities as "subjects" with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent as active members of society.

Although over 170 countries have ratified or acceded to the Convention, many countries also need to more effectively implement and enforce the CRPD through domestic legislation. The State Department's International Disability Rights Team requests university professors and students concerned about human rights to determine which CRPD parties have enacted and effectively enforced laws upholding the rights of persons with disabilities (and which countries have not). This initial research will target two regions and 44 countries the East Asian and Pacific Region (31 countries) and South and Central Asian Region (13 countries). Research for the report would seek to understand laws, policies and programs on disability, as well as the inclusion of persons with disabilities in other relevant laws, policies and programs.

Format of Final Project:

The final report analyzing the regions' efforts to promote laws and legal enforcement, and any particularly successful programs, will help the State Department to promote the rights of people with disabilities around the world by highlighting gaps and identifying effective practices that can be scaled up or replicated elsewhere.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Democracy & Human Rights; East Asian/Pacific Studies; Global Health; Human Rights; International Law; International Relations; South/Central Asian Studies; Disability Rights

Comments:

The International Disability Rights Team leads the U.S. comprehensive strategy to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities internationally. The United States, as part of our foreign policy,

works to remove barriers and create a world in which disabled people enjoy dignity and full inclusion. Discrimination against people with disabilities is not simply unjust; it hinders economic development, limits democracy, and erodes societies. In pursuing diplomacy that is inclusive and empowering of persons with disabilities, the United States opposes discrimination against persons with disabilities everywhere and in all its forms; urges foreign governments to combat discrimination, prejudice and abuse against persons with disabilities in their countries, and to protect the rights and ensure the dignity and inclusion of all persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others; encourages and assists governments to learn about the development and effective implementation of laws to protect the rights of persons with disabilities; encourages and assists civil society organizations, including organizations of persons with disabilities and their families, to advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities; and encourages U.S. businesses operating overseas as well as domestic host country businesses to take into consideration persons with disabilities in relation to employment practices and local stakeholder engagement, including in their labor and human rights corporate social responsibility policies, programs, and practices.

Analysis and Recommendation on Training Satisfaction Surveys to Law Enforcement Personnel

Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, INL Mexico

International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs

Overview:

INL Mexico is conducting satisfaction surveys to around 7,000 law enforcement officials per year participating in training events, conferences and study tours. We look for a motivated team of students with experience in psychology, statistics and survey design that could help us review the current survey instrument and propose recommendations to improve it. This survey provides important information to decision makers on security cooperation between the U.S. and Mexico.

Format of Final Project:

20 page research paper, data analysis of 2016 and recommended survey instrument

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Psychology, statistics, survey design, Spanish

Comments:

None

Explain A Complicated Process - Passport Website Instructional Videos

Bureau of Consular Affairs, Passport Services, Community Relations (CA/PPT/S/PMO/CR)

Consular Affairs

Overview:

Travel.State.Gov is the only official resource customers can access to get the most up-to-date information on all things passport. The website tends to be text-heavy due to the amount of information that must be communicated to the customer, and a series of videos would help condense that information. This project seeks to develop a series of visually coherent videos that explain the complicated passport process in a way the public understands. The topics would likely include renewing a passport, applying for the first time, and minor passports, but are up for discussion.

Format of Final Project:

A series of 4-5 short videos explaining how to undertake basic passport tasks, such as renewing a passport, applying for the first time, getting a child's passport, etc. Ideal production would include a mix of animation, graphics, and text. Any sound would need to meet current 508 Compliance for the disabled or hard of hearing (example closed captioning).

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

Marketing, Graphic Design, Photography, Film, Advertising, Tourism Studies

Comments:

We are very open to suggestions for how these videos might look- and we will provide you all of the content you need.