From the Director

Here we are at the mid-point of the Spring term 2018. Much has happened since the Fall newsletter. The Peace Corps has officially partnered with the Center for International Studies and the Graduate College to offer to Peace Corps returnees an opportunity to pursue graduate work in International Studies through the Coverdell Fellowship.

We are pleased that our program has merited such recognition. Ms. Andrea C. Powell (BAIS, 1999), the co-founder and current CEO of Fair Girls, an organization with a mission to end human trafficking, was named a Liberal Arts Distinguished Alumna and will be honored at the annual alumni banquet in April. Five of our students made presentations in December to the Center’s Board of Advisors, and the Board members were so impressed that many of them doubled their scholarship support. Three International Studies students are making presentations at the annual convention of the Middle East Studies Association this Spring, thanks in large part to the guidance of Dr. Elizabeth Bishop from the Department of History. The Center is also proud to announce that current International Studies student, Nakia Edmond is the first graduate student at Texas State to be awarded a Critical Language Scholarship. Nakia will be studying Mandarin as part of the scholarship program. The Center also named five new Honorary Professors of International Studies, awarded seven research grants to Honorary Professors of International Studies (there are over 65 at the University), and awarded seven Wilson Fellowships to faculty studying Latin America.

Thanks to our generous benefactors and donors, everyone from alumni to friends and Board members of the Center. The staff and I have written a brief history of the Center and we hope to have it posted soon on our website.

Finally, I am retiring as Director at the end of August and Paul Hart, Professor of History and Associate Director, will be leading the Center and its students in the future. Please give him your support. In closing, I want to say that my time as Director has been a joy. I loved watching our students grow and assume their place in society.
Center News and Events

Dr. Paul Hart Presents New Book

On October 12th, the Center for the Study of the Southwest hosted International Studies Associate Director, Dr. Paul Hart, for a talk and book signing for his new publication, *Emiliano Zapata: Mexico’s Social Revolutionary*. The talk explored the life and legacy of Emiliano Zapata, tracking the ways his life, his actions, and his myths inspired many movements and cultures across North America, from 1950’s rural guerrillas to urban Chicana/os and from Agraristas to the current Zapatistas.

From the book cover:
“Combining a brisk, well-crafted narrative with incisive analysis, *Emiliano Zapata: Mexico’s Social Revolutionary* examines the life of one of the leading figures of the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920). An essential figure in any discussion of Latin American or Mexican history, Zapata continues to wield great influence throughout the region today. His advocacy of agrarian reform and peasants’ rights, his dashing lifestyle, and his assassination make him a fascinating figure. Featuring rare photographs of Zapata and primary sources that contextualize his life, this volume in the World in a Life series is the only contemporary text intended for general audiences.”

- Oxford University Press
Returning Peace Corps Volunteer Panel

As part of the Center for International Studies’ partnership with the Peace Corps and the development of Peace Corps Prep Program, the Center hosted its first panel of Returning Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCV). Students and faculty enjoyed insight from a diverse panel of returning Peace Corps Volunteers, and part of the Texas State community as faculty, staff, and students.

The event included presentations from each of the panelists on their Peace Corps experience, and an extended Q&A session, where guests were able to learn more about the Peace Corps Volunteer experience.

The panel members were:
Brendan Cavanagh – Regional Recruiter, Peace Corps - Ivory Coast, 1999-2002 Public Health Sector

Dr. Emily Summers – Associate Professor, Curriculum & Instruction, Texas State University – Guatemala, 1994-1997 Environmental Management


Dr. Celeste Domsch – Associate Professor and Graduate Advisor, Communication Disorders, Texas State University – Chad, 1990-1992 TEFL volunteer

Emily Hawarny – Career Counselor, Career Services, Texas State University – Philippines, 2010-2012 Education Sector
Texas State Welcomes Back Dr. Louie Dean Valencia-Garcia!

Texas State is proud to welcome back Dr. Louie Dean Valencia-Garcia. Dr. Valencia-Garcia is an alumnus of the International Studies undergraduate program and is now an Assistant Professor with the Department of History.

Dr. Valencia-Garcia received his Ph.D. and M.A. from Fordham University and prior to returning to Texas State, served on the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University. He studies Early and Late Modern European, Spanish, Mediterranean, and Transatlantic history, with interests in print and digital technology, knowledge creation and distribution, urban space, youth and queer culture, fascism, anarchism, exile and displacement, education, and health care. He is also interested in public history, digital and museum curation, museum education, and methodology. He currently serves on the Research Editorial Committee for EuropeNow, the monthly journal of the Council for European Studies at Columbia University. His forthcoming book, Antiauthoritarian Youth Culture in Francoist Spain: Clashing with Fascism, will be published with Bloomsbury.

International Studies Graduate Assistant, Pablo Gomez sat down with Dr. Valencia-Garcia regarding his journey back to Texas State.

**PG: Why Texas State as an undergrad?**

**LV:** I was interested in two things. One, the Honors College, which, at the time, International Studies was in the same building as Honors. So, whenever I came to visit, there was everything, sort of, nearby. So, I was interested in the Honors College, I had read a little bit about it, it was a great program, you have classes of 20 students. Then, when I was there, first semester, I took a “University Seminar” class with Professor Gorman, who teaches in International Studies, and that was my first exposure to college, it was Gorman. It was a really good experience, I took two other classes with him. I took an “International Law” class and “Intro to International Studies,” and I was like: “All right, this is for me!” I was interested in European studies and, because of the European studies track, International Studies seemed to be very

**PG: Why International Studies?**

**LV:** There was more flexibility to study what I wanted to study. I had friends who did African studies, Latin American studies, etc. and each one of them wanted to study, not just politics or history, but also literature or art, and be more comprehensive, and that is really only possible through the International Studies track.
Also, for me, being already pretty set on what I wanted to study, it was a good fit. So, I took a lot of history classes. So, within International Studies, I would say half of my classes were history classes. So, it was never that history was not part of it, but it was also being able to go over to modern languages, or going to literature, or going to what have you; it just made it seem more complete than I would have gotten just in a non-interdisciplinary major. The inter-disciplinary nature of the program is what I think is the really strong part about it. It gives you a lot of flexibility.

**PG: Was the inter-disciplinary nature of your Undergraduate work beneficial for your Graduate career?**

**LV:** I think that inter-disciplinary aspect of it really did help. So, going into a Masters or PhD program, you sort of focus on a discipline, right? So, you learn the tools and trades of the discipline, which I think Fordham definitely does incredibly well. One of the benefits going in was that I had read a lot of the literature about the period in ways that some students, who had just been a history track did not do. So, I read Early Modern European and Modern European literature fairly extensively. So, not only could I talk about the things that happened, or political figures, or social and cultural issues, but also had read a lot of the texts that are the background of those cultures.

**PG: Why did you decide to come back to Texas State?**

**LV:** That was my goal, that was THE goal, that was the only goal! That was the plan. There are professors here, who would vouch for that. I said: “I will be back!” I was teaching at Harvard last year, and the position was up to three years, and I was in my first year, and a position opened up here. So, I was like: “All right!”

One of the things that is difficult, I think, is to come back to a place where you started, once you have a PhD. I did not realize that when I started my goal, I had no idea, just because there has to be a position open, it has to be your field, it has to be any number of things for that to work out. Then, you have to apply, and there are who knows how many other candidates, and then you have interviews, and all of that stuff, so… as an Undergrad I had no idea about any of that, that was just the goal, but I think, for me as a Grad-student, I said: “ok, how do I position myself to be a good candidate for where I want to be”.

I think that it does not matter if you are going into academics or trying to work at the UN, it is a matter of trying to see who they are hiring, and how you can make yourself as good as them, and maybe try to do a little bit more, to make yourself irresistible. So, you’ve got to set your goals on where you want to be.
Student Spotlight

Michael Blanco - B.A.I.S. class of 2017

The 10 months of my life I spent living and studying in Lille, France and exploring the European continent was a truly enlightening journey full of valuable learning opportunities. Classroom studies are at the foundation of your education but there is no replacement for removing yourself from your comfort zone and challenging yourself in a completely different culture with a new language. For a student majoring in International Studies, it was the opportunity to travel to over 15 countries, to embrace the French academic community, and to interact and befriend students from all over the world. The best part of the journey was getting to meet people and explore cities that will forever hold a place in my heart.

Nakia Edmond - Current Graduate Student, International Studies

The Center for International Studies is proud to recognize current graduate student Nakia Edmond! Nakia is Texas State's first ever graduate-level recipient of a Critical Language Scholarship. The Critical Language Scholarship is an intensive overseas language and cultural immersion program, under the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, during which students spend the summer studying a critical language abroad. The experience is fully-funded. Nakia will be traveling to Changchun, China where she will be studying Chinese.
Ryan Elliott - B.A.I.S. class of 2014, M.A.I.S. class of 2017

I’m currently teaching English as a Second Language at a small private university in Ulaanbaatar, the capital of Mongolia. Back in Austin, San Marcos, and even Phnom Penh on my study abroad this past summer, I had a very keen interest in working with university level students in the realm of ESL. Since I was finishing my Masters in Cambodia I thought “hey, I’m already here in Asia, why not look for work?”. The only place that offered me an ESL position at the university level was Mongolia so I accepted! At the moment I’m working roughly 30 academic hours a week teaching undergraduate, graduate, and adult English courses. Every week some new opportunity arises whether it’s teaching extra hours at school, one on one tutoring with eager students, or English courses for security personnel at the US embassy.

A bit of background on how IS contributed to all of this. When I first came to Texas State I thought I was going to be a music major. When the school didn’t accept me I sat in the orientation audience on orientation day frantically flipping through the big “book o’ majors”. By chance I happened to fall upon International Studies, for whatever reason it greatly interested me so I decided to go with it. That was quite possibly the greatest “by chance” decision I’ve ever made in my life. The Center for International Studies, both in my undergraduate and graduate studies, challenged me in many dimensions. The courses I took helped me develop a strong foundation of critical thinking, a broad global perspective, and provided opportunities for me to challenge myself as an academic; my Masters Thesis on the International Monetary Fund was the most challenging and rewarding experience of my life.

In short, working in a developing country like Mongolia has plenty of challenges. There is crippling poverty, numerous socio-economic issues as they try to navigate their post-soviet command economy into the 21st century, a resurgence of dangerous nationalism and rhetoric, I could go on and on. However, I think that my studies have helped me see past what would scare anyone else away into the opportunity for development and aid that someone with my skill sets can contribute. Despite their country’s challenges, Mongolians are proud, empathetic and hopeful people. The young people in particular are eager to integrate into the international system and create a new future for their country. I could have taken a comfy desk job in the States or gone to a country with sandy beaches, terraces and cafes. However, I chose Mongolia because I know how much of a challenge this will be and I think my time at Texas State has well prepared me for it.
Graduation Announcements

Congratulations BAIS Class of Fall 2017

Elizabeth Agho
Andrea Arredondo
Amber Callahan
Jasmine Davies
Margaret Fast
Yolanda Fierro Ulloa
Daisy Jaimez
Andrea Jilot
Shannon Long
Jesus Lopez
Isabel Mauricio
Rachel McAlister
Ivette Miranda
Donald Moreno Gomez
Nancy Patino
Courtney Rector
Kara Rekemeyer
Carley Rich
Anga Ruiz
Cassandra Rumping
Millie Saroha
Alexander Spadaro
Eduarard Alberto Tejera Moran
Jurnee Troublefield
Marcus Vemgren

Congratulations MA Class of Fall 2017

Ryan Elliott
Kateyln Lyman
Scott McBryde
Jace Waechter
Seth Worley

The Center for International Studies is proud of your accomplishment and wish you well in your professional journey. We are confident that as new graduates, you will utilize the knowledge and skills cultivated in the International Studies program and develop into global citizens in an effort to become leaders in an interdependent world.
Support The Center for International Studies at Texas State

If you would like to make a difference for current students at Texas State, please consider supporting the Center for International Studies. Your contribution will aid students in the form of academic and travel scholarships, research awards, presentation opportunities, public programming and academic resources.

You can view the various scholarships that benefit current International Studies students HERE and decide which fund you are interested in supporting.

The Center for International Studies thanks you for your generosity.

Dr. Dennis Dunn
Center for International Studies
Texas State University
San Marcos, Texas 78666

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