

AREA AND GLOBAL STUDIES ANNUAL REPORT

‘18-19

Prepared by:

Vandana Pednekar-Magal, Chair of AGS

GSI Coordinator, Andy Schlewitz

AAA Coordinator, Ayana Weekley

EAS Coordinator, Yan Liang

LAS Coordinator, David Stark

MES Coordinator, Madj Al-Mallah

AREA AND GLOBAL STUDIES ANNUAL REPORT
ACADEMIC YEAR 2018-2019

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AREA AND GLOBAL STUDIES OVERVIEW

Area and Global Studies Annual Report for 2018-2019:

Area and Global Studies (AGS) has much to be proud of in its first year as a department in Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies. The department formed out of four Area Studies minor programs and a new Global Studies and Social Impact (GSI) major program offers unique curriculum with courses embedded in diverse global perspectives.

I came to AGS as chair, at the thrust of the unit's structural as well as internal transformation. Just as I acquired my new office in Lake Ontario Hall, I found myself on hiring committees. We recruited our new Office Coordinator Stacy Borr who proved us right in selecting her. Majd Al-Mallah came aboard to coordinate the Middle East Studies (MES) minor, and Ayana Weekley began her one-year position as coordinator for African and African American Studies (AAA). Kayla Wheeler joined AGS as Assistant Professor with a joint appointment in Digital Studies. Chris Crews joined us as visiting faculty for the year.

Fall 2018 was also time for Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) accreditation visit. We got busy with completing work related to Strategic Planning and Assessment.

In Winter despite some disruption with a historic week-long inclement weather campus closing we stayed on task with candidate interviews for a GSI tenure-track faculty position search as a result of our successful search Aaron Eddens will join us as Assistant Professor in Fall 2019.

Through the year, we worked on curriculum development and offered an array of rich programming for the university as detailed in this report. I wish to thank my faculty colleagues and program coordinators for diligently and consistently working to bring excellent global education to our students. I also deeply appreciate the support provided by the Brooks College Dean's office, and applaud Steeve Buckridge for his adept leadership as Director of the programs which culminated into AGS department.

Sincerely,

Vandana Pednekar-Magal, Ph.D.
Chair

AREA AND GLOBAL STUDIES ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY AND STAFF

Chair

Vandana Pednekar-Magal (AGS/COM)

Faculty

Tracy Flemming (100% AGS)

Jack Mangala (2/3 AGS, 1/3 PLS)

Andy Schlewitz (2/3 AGS, 1/3 PLS)

Gamal Gasim (2/3 AGS, 1/3 PLS)

Kayla Wheeler (2/3 AGS, 1/3 Digital Studies)

Richard Yidana (2/3 AGS, 1/3 SOC)

Meghan Cai (1/3 AGS, 2/3 MLL)

Jeremy Robinson (1/3 AGS, 2/3 MLL)

Yan Liang (1/3 AGS, 2/3 MLL)

Chris Crews (Visiting faculty for 2018-19)

Full-time Staff

Stacy Borr – Full-time Professional Support Staff | 40 hours per week

Student Workers

Ashley Bogin – Part-time Student Worker| hours vary

Emily Ellis – Part-time Student Worker| hours vary

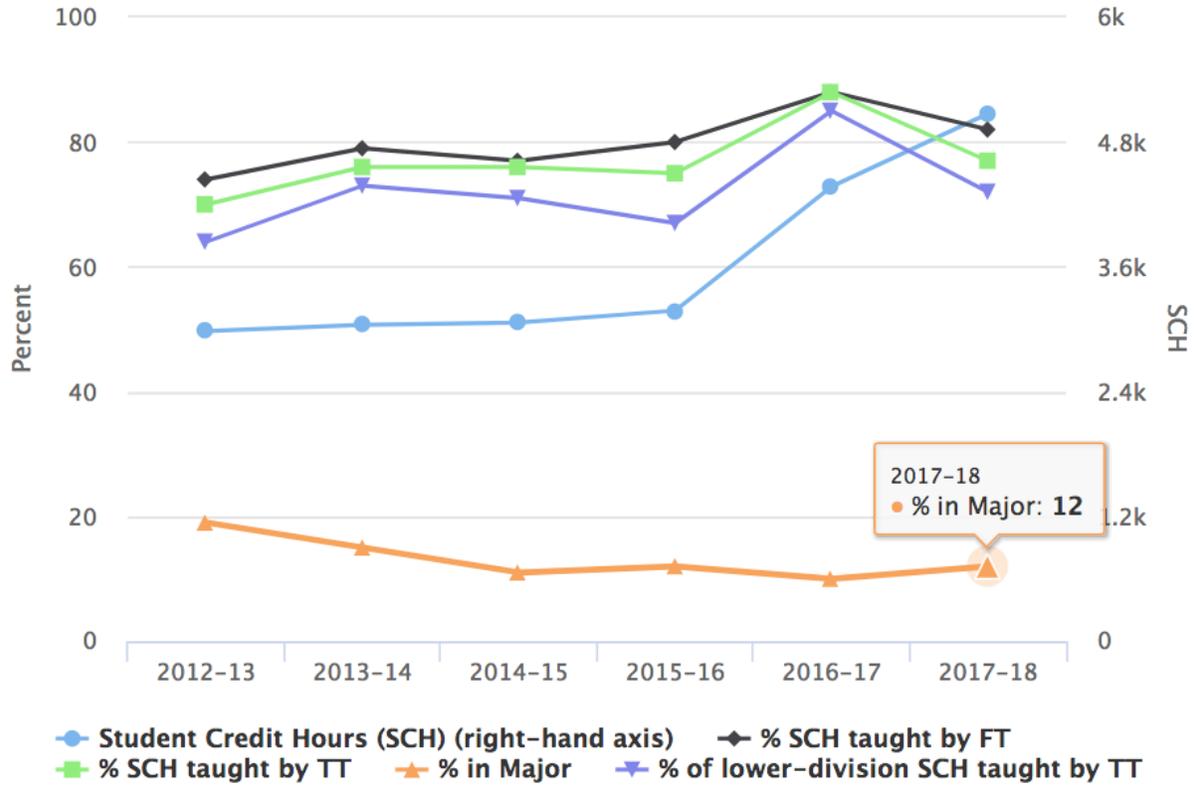
Ayla Gonzalez – Part-time Student Worker| hours vary

Ashley Green – Part-time Student Worker| hours vary

Isabella Kroczaleski – Part-time Student Worker| hours vary

Steven Whitehead – Part-time Student Worker| hours vary

AREA AND GLOBAL STUDIES STUDENT CREDIT HOURS



SOURCE: INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

AFRICAN/AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES (AAA) MINOR

AAA ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY

Coordinator (2018-2019)

Ayana Weekley

Faculty

Tracy Flemming (only full-time in AAA)

Louis Moore (History)

Sherry Johnson (ENG)

Jack Mangala (2/3 AGS, 1/3 PLS)

Ayana Weekley (WGS)

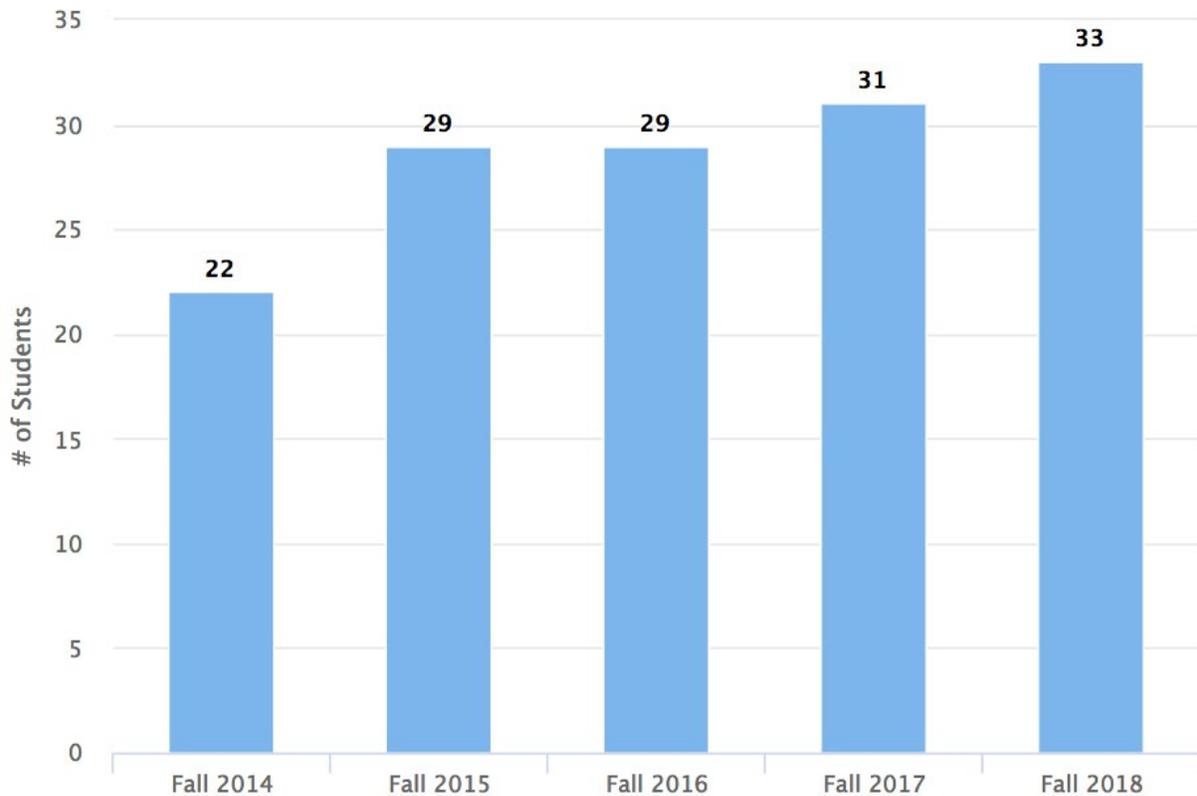
Richard Yidana (2/3 AGS, 1/3 SOC)

Kayla Wheeler (2/3 AAA, Digital Studies 1/3)

Regis Fox (ENG)

Rik Stevenson (AAA part-time)

AAA ENROLLMENT



SOURCE: INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

AAA PROGRAMMING

Programs we offered to the GVSU community:

- February 2019 -Najma Sharif came to campus for a talk titled, “Digital Activism: Black Muslim Youth in the Age of Surveillance.”
- March 2019 -Co-Sponsor for the WGS 40th Anniversary speaker- Mel Michelle Lewis. There were two events provided by Dr. Mel Lewis:
 - “Solutionary Acts: Mobilizing Intersectional [Afro] Futures” (student workshop)
 - “Cultivating Combahee/Living Lorde: Visionary Black Queer Feminist Liberatory Praxis in Action”
- March 2019 -Celebrating Ntozake Shange’s Life and Legacy: A Reading of Her Work, “For Colored Girls”
- March 2019 -Mid- Semester African/African American Studies Gathering.
- May 2019 -Steeve Buckridge led students to Namibia for Study Abroad

AAA FACULTY AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Kayla Wheeler secured a Catalyst grant from CSCE for her project, “Fashioning Black Islam: Race, Gender and Belonging in the Ummah.”

Ayana Weekley secured an Academic and Professional Enrichment (AEPF) grant from the Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship to take 5 students to the Purdue University “50 Years of Black Studies Conference.”

Jack Mangala earned Louvain Global College of Law Fellowship, Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium.

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR

AAA is looking forward to the leadership of its new coordinator, Dr. Kayla Wheeler. Prof. Wheeler has outlined a robust vision for the program which includes, among other things, developing close relationships with diverse communities, revamping the curriculum, and purposefully engaging with students through innovative curricular and extra-curricular activities.

EAST ASIAN STUDIES (EAS) MINOR

EAS ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY

Coordinator

Yan Liang

Faculty

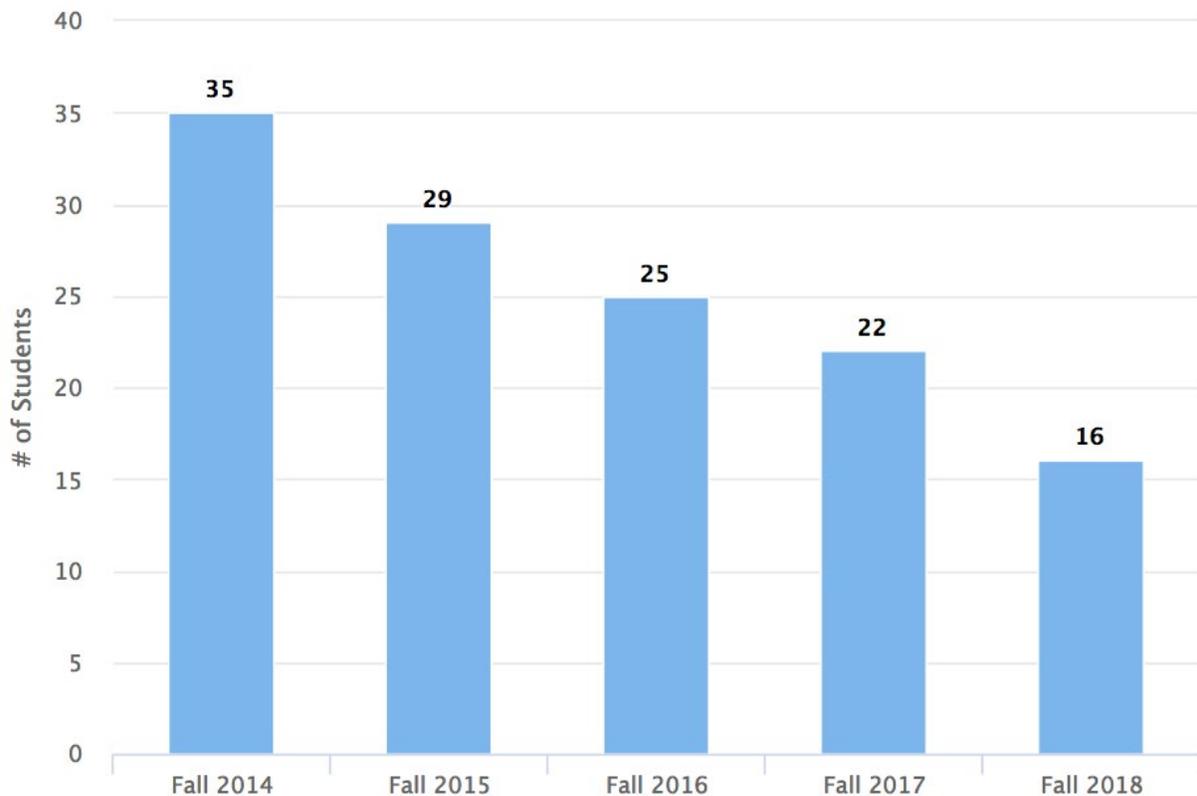
Jeremy Robinson (1/3 appointed in EAS) served as the MLL chair until Fall 2017. He continues to serve in the EAS program, but his teaching load in EAS is temporarily covered by Professor Yilin Liu, visiting faculty in the Chinese Program in MLL.

Meghan Cai (1/3 appointed in EAS) also assists with teaching EAS courses.

EAS ENROLLMENT

In Fall 2018, EAS course enrollment was 65 in total, which included 31 students in EAS 201 01, 33 students in EAS 201 02, and 1 student in EAS 399. The EAS minor enrollment was 17.

In Winter 2019, EAS course enrollment was 87 in total, which included 33 students in EAS 201 01, 26 students in EAS 201 02, 10 students in EAS 301 01, 17 students in EAS 351 01, and 1 student in EAS 399. The EAS minor enrollment was 18.



SOURCE: INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

PROGRAMS/EVENTS ORGANIZED, HOSTED, OR CO-SPONSORED BY THE EAS PROGRAM

Faculty Meetings: EAS faculty had two meetings in Fall 2018, on September 28 and December 7; and two meetings in Winter 2019 on January 25 and April 5.

The EAS program organized and sponsored various academic and cultural events in 2018-19.

- EAS program organized the East Asia Student-Alumni Mixer on March 21, 2019. More than 40 students and alumni attended the event. The alumni panel had an interactive Skype session with a CHS alumnus in Chengdu and a Japanese language alumnus in the Grand Rapids area. Meghan Cai was the main organizer of the event. Jason Herlands, Yan Liang, and Jeremy Robinson attended the event and spoke to students.
- Hosted Professor Youlan Tao's guest lecture "The Reception of English Versions of the Analects of Confucius" on April 5, 2019. EAS faculty Peimin Ni was the contact for the lecture.
- Co-sponsored the Asian Authors/Topics Reception with the Asian Faculty and Staff Association. The reception was organized by EAS faculty Kin Ma on February 20, 2019. The reception showcased the publications by EAS and Asian faculty at GVSU in the period of 2016-19. Attached to this report is the list of publications compiled by Kin Ma for this reception. EAS faculty Patrick Shan, Peimin Ni, Craig Benjamin, Kim McKee, and Kin Ma presented their research and publications at the reception.
- Co-sponsored and helped planning 2019 Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Celebration, which included the Asian Lunar Year Celebration and the R.I.C.E. conference.
- Co-sponsored the Zen meditation event hosted by EAS faculty Yosay Wangdi on December 5, 2018.

NEW INITIATIVES/PROJECTS OVER THE PAST YEAR AND PROGRESS MADE

The EAS faculty have been making efforts to develop the EAS curriculum and increase the EAS minor enrollment in 2018-19. In the summer of 2018, the EAS program worked on a series of curriculum projects at the suggestion of the Dean's Office: Jason Herlands proposed EAS 245 Topics in East Asian Food Culture. The course is proposed as a General Education foundation course in Social and Behavioral Sciences. Meghan Cai proposed EAS 342 Women in East Asia. The course is proposed as a General Education course in World Perspective and Human Rights Issue. Jeremy Robinson submitted a proposal to change EAS 301 Masterpieces of East Asian Literature into EAS 210 Reading East Asia, a General Education foundation course in Philosophy and Literature. Yan Liang combed through the General Education catalogue and general catalogue to look for possibilities for future EAS courses and curriculum collaboration opportunities with other schools and departments at GVSU. The course proposals are currently with the Brooks College Curriculum Committee. We expect the new courses and the course change to be approved in the 2019-20 academic year.

In the winter semester of 2019, the EAS program revised the EAS promotional handout. The program description and course information were updated. Newly added were photos from study abroad programs in China and Japan and alumni quotes.

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS TO STUDENTS, FACULTY, STAFF, OR PROGRAMS

Kahrlee Kozan (Chinese Studies major) received the Excellence in the Discipline Award at the 2019 Student Awards Convocation.

Bethany Mazurek (Chinese Studies major and EAS minor) received a grant from the Fulbright U.S. Student Program to teach English in South Korea in 2019-20.

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR

The biggest challenge for the EAS program next year is to staff the EAS courses offered in 2019-20 and in the future. Three new General Education courses have been proposed for next year: EAS 245 Topics in East Asian Food Culture, EAS 342 Women in East Asia, and EAS 210 Reading East Asia. Now that the MLL Chinese visiting position was denied, the EAS program needs to consider hiring on its own for these courses and the existing EAS 201 sections.

2019-20 will be the end of the three-year term for the current EAS coordinator Yan Liang and a new coordinator needs to be selected.

Since Winter 2018, one section of EAS 201 each semester in 2018 and two sections in Winter 2019 have been taught by Professor Yilin Liu, visiting faculty in the Chinese Program in MLL. 2018-19 is the third year of Yilin Liu's visiting faculty appointment. MLL applied for a visiting position replacement who will teach a section of EAS 201 each semester, but the position was rejected by the Provost's Office in April 2019. In the coming 2019-20 academic year, the EAS program will have to use adjunct instructors for one section of EAS 201 each semester or cancel the sections if qualified instructors cannot be found.

GLOBAL STUDIES AND SOCIAL IMPACT (GSI) MAJOR

GSI OVERVIEW Andy Schlewitz, Coordinator

This is the second GSI annual report. We are a fairly new program, and I am its first coordinator (appointed in Fall, 2017). There were some challenges: the sudden, last minute departure of our first Tenure Track (TT) hire in GSI; the search for visiting replacement; another search for a TT hire; and the repeated absences of the GSI coordinator for health reasons. In spite of this, the number of GSI majors grew with notable speed, and enrollments in GSI courses remained healthy.

This report will provide information on the GSI administrative structure, core course offerings and enrollment, growth of number of majors, event programming, and future plans.

GSI ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY

GSI is housed in the department of Area and Global Studies (AGS), and therefore is ultimately under the purview of the AGS Chair. There is a GSI Coordinator and an Advisory Council. The Council includes all 2/3 and full time members of AGS, plus two outside faculty and staff. Stacy Borr, is the office coordinator for AGS/GSI, and the office's part-time student workers are: Ashley Green, Ashley Bogin, Steven Whitehead, Isabella Kroczaleski, Ayla Gonzalez, Emily Ellis, and Carter Gernaat. The office coordinator for General Education, Jennifer Cathey, also helped the GSI program on numerous occasions.

AGS Chair:

Vandana Pednekar-Magal (AGS, COM)

Coordinator

Andrew Schlewitz (AGS, PLS, LAS)

Advisory Council members:

Steeve Buckridge (AGS, HST)

Tracy Flemming (AGS, AAA)

Gamal Gasim (AGS PLS, MES)

Jack Mangala (AGS, PLS, AAA)

Kayla Wheeler (AGS, DS)

Richard Yidana (AGS, SOC, AAA)

Coeli Fitzpatrick (HNR, PHI, MES)

Emily Frigo (Library Liaison for AGS)

The new faculty member in GSI—Aaron Eddens—will join the Council in Fall 2019.

Due to the GSI coordinator’s inconsistent presence, there were no meetings to address the following pending decisions:

- Submission of revised GSI by-laws to the Dean’s office;
- A review of GSI core and elective courses (postponed until the hire of a TT member);
- Rethinking the meaning of “social impact,” that is, include a pragmatic approach to connecting global studies to post-graduation employment in the for-profit, non-profit, and public sectors (along with thinking in terms of the more aspirational versions of “social justice”).

GSI CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

GSI core courses include GSI 201 - Introduction to Global Studies, GSI 202 - Introduction to Global History (cross-listed with HST), and GSI 495, Capstone (SWS). Maximum enrollment in 201 is 33 (25 in online version), for 202 the maximum is 15, and the capstone maximum varies according to how many seniors need it. Enrollment has dropped since last academic year, as one can see in the data below. GSI might have a conversation with HST about reducing number of sections, or promoting GSI 202. Note that this list does not include independent studies and internships, something we might add in the future.

Fall courses, 2017*	Fall courses, 2018
201-01 (Fitzpatrick) 29	201-01 (Fitzpatrick) 32
201-02 (Kaneti) 16	201-02 (Yidana) 21 <i>online</i>
201-03 (Yidana) 29	201-03 (Crews) 31
201-05 (Kaneti) 25	201-04 (Crews) 31
202-01 (Eaton) 11	202-01 (Eaton) 14
202-02 (Eaton) 11	202-02 (Huner) 12
202-03 (Huner) 12	202-03 (Peterson) 15
202-04 (Huner) 14	
	495-01 (Schlewitz) 5
Winter courses, 2018*	Winter courses, 2018
201-01 (Fitzpatrick) 33	201-01 (Fitzpatrick) 30
201-02 (Peterson) 32	201-02 (Yidana) 29
201-03 (Kaneti) 26	201-03 (Crews) 31
201-04 (Kaneti) 31	
	202-01 (Eaton) 12

202-01 (Kaneti) 10	202-02 (Eaton) 9
202-02 (Eaton) 12	202-03 (Peterson) 15
202-03 (Eaton) 14	202-04 (Crews) 12
	202-05 (Hambleton) 1 <i>Independent study for a graduating senior?</i>

Source: GVSU Banner/Class List

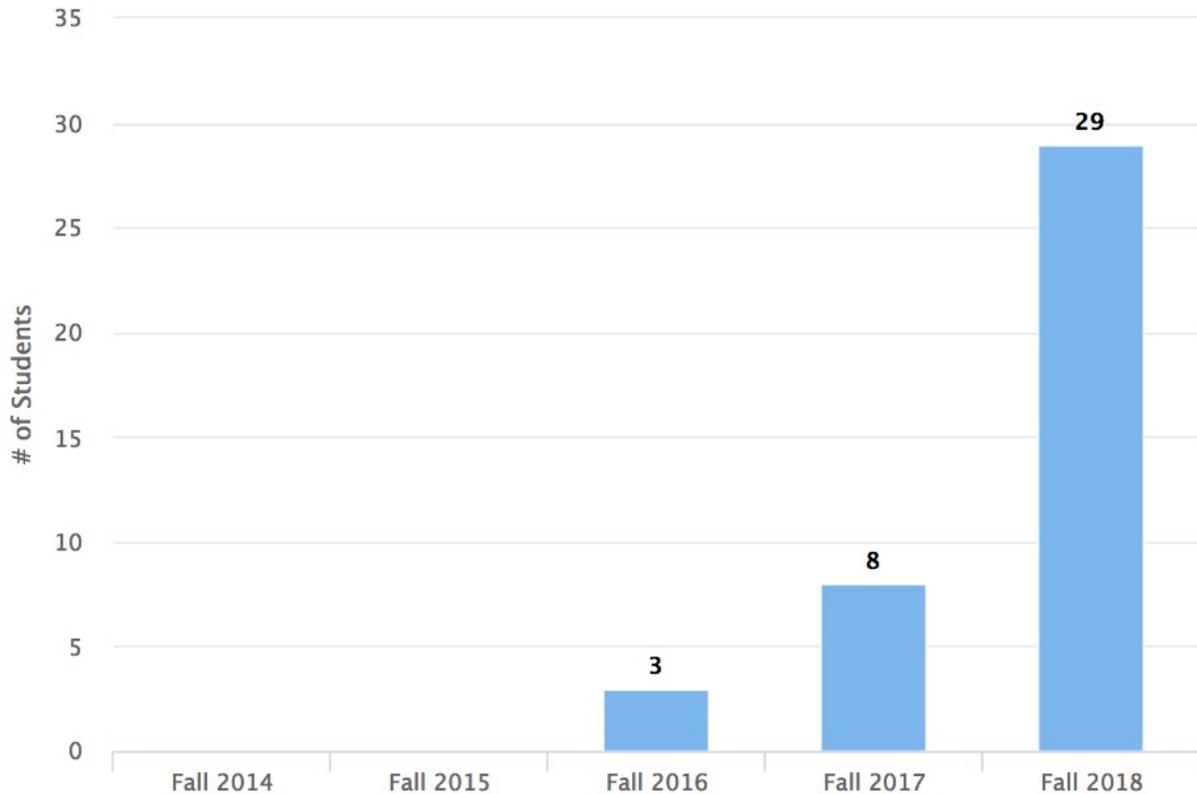
GSI MAJORS

We had five GSI majors in Winter 2017. As of May 2019, we have 37 (GSI does not offer a minor). I credit this rapid growth to the work of instructors of our core courses, particularly those of Marina Kaneti, our first designated GSI professor (2016-17), and Chris Crews, a visiting professor who filled in (2017-18) after her departure in the summer of 2017. Thanks also to Jennifer Jameslyn, the Brooks College academic advisor, who I know has directed students into the major, as well as the past AGS Director, Steeve Buckridge, AGS Chair, Vandana Pednekar-Magal.

By default, I was the advisor for these majors, though in early November 2018, the advisees were divided up evenly between AGS faculty (except for Kayla Wheeler, who was starting her first year in the unit, and Chris Crews, a visiting faculty member).

Chart 1 below tracks the growth of number of GSI majors over the past three years—from five in GSI’s inaugural semester to thirty-eight in the most recent semester. It is not surprising that there are relatively few freshmen signing up for the GSI major. Freshmen often move around in majors, and the number of sophomores suggests what we already know—experience with courses and instructors draw students into a particular major.

GSI MAJORS BY FALL ENROLLMENT



SOURCE: INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

We currently have nine seniors. Two have completed their GSI capstones; three more will do so in Winter 2019 (according to current registration numbers). Over the past three academic years, on average around two-thirds of GSI majors have been BA degree-seeking students. In the first year, the average cumulative GPA was in the B range, subsequently, as the number of majors has jumped up, the average GPA has been around B+ (Source: same as that of charts).

The GSI coordinator is responsible for approving equivalency requests for study abroad credits. According to my records, I approved equivalencies for four GSI majors. I do not know how many GSI students have studied abroad, or plan on it, or have taken, or intend to take, an alternative experiential learning course (an option in the major). These are data we may want to compile since it is relevant to curriculum oversight and development.

GSI CURRICULUM OVERSIGHT AND DEVELOPMENT

We introduced a new course to the curriculum, GSI 290 Changemakers! Introduction to Social Impact. It received final approval in January 2019. There was some work on another new GSI

course, Global Studies through Literature and Film, but this was put on hold this past year. We may return to it depending on the preferences of the Advisory Council.

Postponed as well was a thorough review of the GSI curriculum, including but not limited to an evaluation of core courses (How well are they matching GSI programmatic goals? How well do they prepare for electives and the capstone?); an assessment of the global learning intended and accomplished in the various GSI electives; and a reconsideration, if necessary, of the courses included in the area and thematic clusters. Finally, we should assess the efficacy of the statistic course option for BS majors (in place of the language requirement).

GSI EVENT PROGRAMMING

- Feb 11, 2019: Danny Postel, Assistant Director of Middle East and North African Studies at Northwestern University, presentation titled, ‘Myth of Ancient Sectarian Hatred: What’s really driving conflict in the Middle East today.’ Lecture attended by faculty and students from AGS/MES, Political Science, School of Communications.
- September 29, 2019: Gearing Global: Reception for AGS and International Students during Shakespeare Festival
- GSI cosponsored two events, an AAA guest speaker Najma Sharif (\$500) and the Grand Rapids Latin American Film Festival (\$450). GSI also supported meet & greet meetings and food for GSI 201 students (\$430).

GSI FUTURE PLANS

The following are on this coming year’s agenda:

Administration

- Finalize by-laws for GSI.
- Continue to work on building an institutional identity for GSI through programming events, and more consistent Council meetings.
- Build bridges to the Grand Rapids community through visits to area schools, and agencies that work in global fields (e.g., through class field trips, guest speakers to classes or events, coordinator meetings with personnel working in global education and outreach).

Curriculum

- Design clearer criteria for ascertaining the global nature of GSI core and elective courses.
- Thorough curriculum and program review

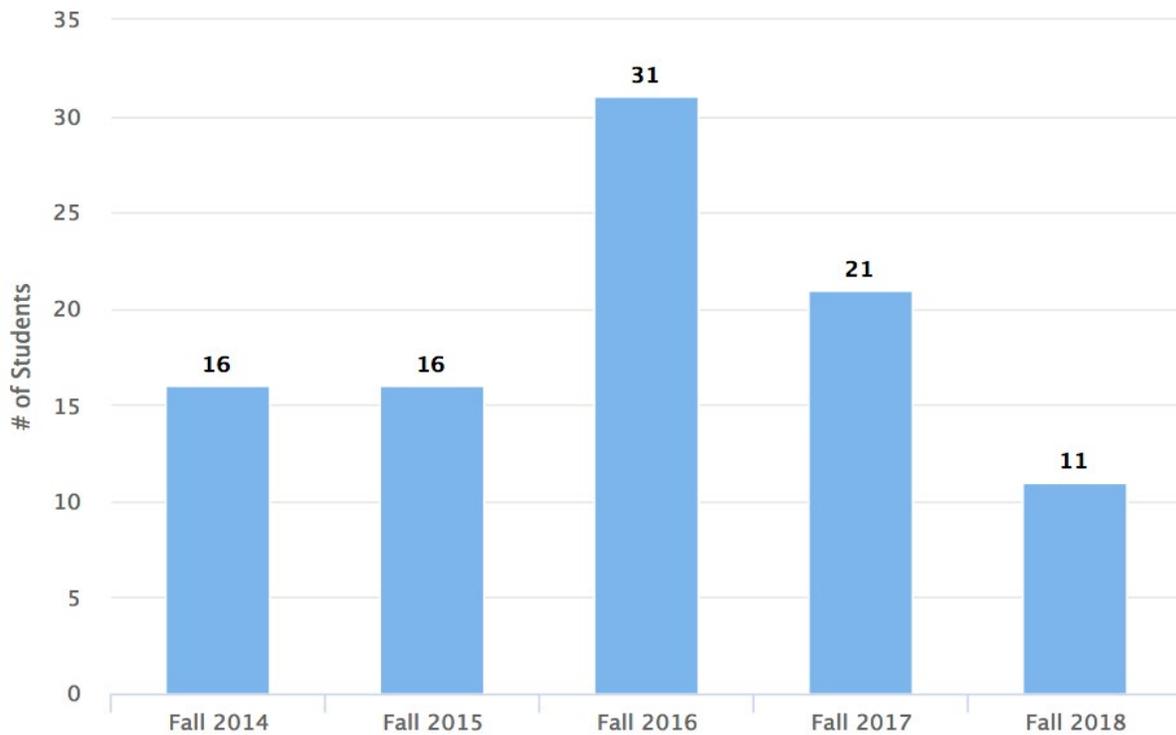
LATIN AMERICAN AND LATINO/A STUDIES (LAS) MINOR

LAS ENROLLMENT AND MINORS

Latin American and Latino/Latina Studies 2018-2019

LAS Enrollment and Minors

Semester	Course	Enrollment
Fall 2018	LAS 210-1	17
Fall 2018	LAS 220-1	31
Fall 2018	LAS 372-1	9 LAS minors
Fall 2018	LAS 376-1	5 LAS minors
Winter 2019	LAS 210-1	23
Winter 2019	LAS 320-1	10
Winter 2019	LAS 374-1	9 LAS minors
Winter 2019	LAS 378-1	5 LAS minors



SOURCE: INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

Most students in LAS courses were seeking to fulfill a Gen Ed requirement. However, the number of LAS minors in LAS 372 and LAS 374 is a good sign and reflects the program's growth.

There were 30 minors enrolled at the beginning of Fall 2018 and 41 minors at the end of Winter 2019 (as of April 29). LAS continues to attract students from a variety of majors, including the health sciences – something the minor was unable to do in the past. This is the result of one-on-one contact with the students in LAS 210, classes cross-listed with LAS, and the Honors College. I also invite students who show an aptitude or interest in Latin American studies to lunch with guest speakers or with LAS faculty. This year I began looking at rosters for Spanish classes that count for the minor (SPA 304, 305, 306, 311, 312, and 313) to identify potential recruits and sent personalized e-mails to students. Although time consuming (32 e-mails were sent in Fall and 8 in Winter), it proved to be an effective strategy, as it resulted in several students adding the minor or the certificate. In addition, the creation of the Latino Studies Certificate has generated interest in the minor. Students who want to pursue the certificate register for the minor, since the university has no way of tracking students pursuing any of the certificate programs. As the faculty advisor for the Latino Student Union (LSU), I work closely with members and attend meetings at the beginning and end of the year for which I provide food and talk to students about the minor and certificate. In getting to know the students I create opportunities for partnership with LSU that is instrumental to LAS event programming.

Unfortunately, LAS 325 was cancelled over the summer due to low enrollment - there were only 4 students enrolled. I did everything possible to avoid cancellation of the class. For example, I had flyers made with an electronic copy sent to the person teaching the class (Mike Huner), sent e-mails to SPA, PLS, IR, LAS and HRT minors promoting the class, and worked with Jen Jameslyn (Brooks College Advisor) and Matt Boelkins (Freshman Orientation Coordinator) to publicize the course.

On the bright side, LAS 378 was offered in Winter 2019. This is the first time the class has been offered in many years, and now it is no longer in danger of being dropped from the catalogue.

LAS ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY, AND STAFF

The LAS structure consists of a Coordinator, an Executive Committee (EC), and Advisory Committee (AC). The EC is comprised of the Coordinator, the lone full-time LAS appointment, and other interested faculty and staff members. Prior to the beginning of the fall semester, the Coordinator issues a call for nominations; faculty and staff wanting to serve on the EC submitted a statement of interest. At the first meeting of the fall semester, the AC reviewed nominations and approved the appointment of faculty and staff interested in serving on the EC, with the

membership consisting of the Coordinator and faculty/staff who are willing to serve. There is no limit on the number of EC members. This year we had the largest number of EC members, representing a variety of disciplines. That so many people wanted to serve on the EC suggests there is greater and/or renewed interest by faculty in the program.

The EC met at the start of the fall and winter semester and at the end of the winter semester. With so many demands on our time, I avoid scheduling meeting unless it is necessary. In lieu of meeting, the Coordinator sent out updates via e-mail. The EC received updates about LAS programming and the budget, discussed and approved programming initiatives and requests for co-sponsorships, and discussed ways to recruit students for LAS courses and the LAS minor.

The AC includes members of the EC and any other faculty or staff who are interested in LAS affairs. It meets once a semester and its function has basically been the same as that of the EC—discuss, deliberate, and approve programming initiatives and recruitment strategies.

LAS Coordinator

David Stark

LAS Executive Committee

David Stark (HST)

Adriana Almanza (Admissions)

Elizabeth Gansen (MLL)

Jennifer González (HST)

Mayra Fortes (MLL)

Jim Penn (GPY)

Luis Rodríguez Cortés (MLL)

Nora Salas (HST)

Médar Serrata (MLL)

Keith Watts (MLL)

John Webber (GEO)

Michael Wroblewski (ANT)

LAS Advisory Committee

Jim Penn (GPY)

Doris Penn (Records/Administration)

Andrew Schlewitz (LAS/PLS)

Mayra Fortes (MLL)

Michael Huner (HST)

Michael Wroblewski (ANT)

Paola (Mirta) León (Social Work)

Salvador López (Admission office)

Adriana Almanza (Admission office)

Raul Ysasi (Education)

Dennis Malaret (SOC)

Henry Matthews (Art Gallery)

David Stark (HST/LAS Coordinator)

Médar Serrata (MLL))

Zulema Moret (MLL)

Luis Rodríguez Cortés (MLL)

Christopher Shaffer (ANT)

Christian Trefftz (CSI)

Nora Salas (HST)

Salvador López Arias (Social Work)

Joel Stillerman (SOC)

Melba Vélez Ortiz (COM)

Keith Watts (MLL)

John Webber

Elizabeth Gansen (MLL)

Michael Scantlebury (HTM)

Jeff Kelly Lowenstein (COM)

Faculty and staff participation in LAS is inconsistent, especially in the AC. Of the twenty-six faculty formally listed as members of the AC, perhaps eight are active. As has been the case since my arrival to GVSU in Fall 1999, LAS faces a structural problem: it depends heavily on faculty who already have obligations to their home departments, and some of these departments have chairs who recognize work of their faculty in the LAS area program. The LAS Coordinator wrote letters that summarized the EC member's contributions to the program to their department chair. This letter became part of the EC member's Faculty Activity Report and hopefully factored into their annual salary evaluation.

LAS CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Several curricular changes were implemented. GPY 352 Geography of Latin America (3 credits) was cross-listed with the LAS. We are still working to have GPY 361 People, Environment, and Development in the Amazon (3 credits) cross-listed with LAS. This has been in the works for two years and the person who was supposed to be working on this has not followed through and thus the delay. I worked with Rich Hiskes, Coordinator of Human Rights (HRT) minor, to have LAS 325 cross-listed with HRT, since there are no human rights courses with a Latin American emphasis. LAS/HRT 325 was added to Core Category A of the Human Rights Minor. These changes should boost enrollment in GPY 352 and LAS 325.

Thanks to Jim Penn for working on GPY 352.

LAS PROGRAMMING

Following is a list of LAS programming events:

- September 6 (Thursday) Presentation by Morgan Schmidt (Geographer and Post-Doctoral Researcher at the National Museum and Researcher at the Emilio Goeldi Museum, in

Belém, Brazil) “The Creation of Anthropic Soils and Forests by Ancient Amazonians”, KC 2263, 4:00-5:15pm.

- There were 104 people in attendance. Morgan met with students from Jim Penn’s GPY 362 Farmers, Crops and Our Challenging Agricultural World class. LAS co-sponsored the presentation with Geography and Sustainable Planning. Thanks to Jim Penn for organizing and facilitating Morgan’s visit.
- September 27 (Thursday) Screening of *Sonar en otro idioma/I Dream in Another Language*, Eberhard Auditorium, 6:00-8:00pm.
 - There were 55 people in attendance. Thanks to Luis Rodríguez Cortés for helping to organize the event.
- October 18 (Thursday) Presentation by Rolena Adorno (Sterling Professor of Spanish at Yale University) “What Does Columbus Day Mean Now? Or Why Hispanic Heritage Month Matters”, Cook DeWitt Auditorium, 3:00-4:15pm.
 - There were 150 people in attendance. Rolena met with faculty and staff over lunch – thanks to OMA for the food. The *Lanthorn* published an article about the presentation. Co-sponsored by OMA as part of Hispanic Heritage Celebration. Thanks to Elizabeth Gansen for helping to organize the presentation.
- October 24 (Wednesday) Performance by Sacramento Knoxx (rapper, artist, and activist), Cook DeWitt Auditorium, 6:00-7:15pm.
 - There were 120 people in attendance. This event was part of Grand Valley’s Hispanic Heritage Celebration and sponsored by OMA.
- November 1 (Thursday) Day of the Dead Celebration/Celebración para Día de los Muertos, Niemeyer Lobby, 6:00-8:00pm.
 - There were 300+ people in attendance, making this the best attended celebration since its inception seven years ago. Food was catered by El Granjero and *ranchera* music performed by Gabe Estrada, which made this a true celebration. Students shared their *Día de los Muertos* experiences – very touching. The *Lanthorn* published an article about the event. Co-sponsored by the Latino Student Union and OMA. Thanks to Mayra Fortes for helping to organize the event.
- November 14 (Wednesday) WaZoBia Drumming Ensemble, Holton Hooker Multipurpose Room, 1:00-3:00pm.
 - There were 57 people in attendance. Co-sponsored by AAA.
- November 29 (Thursday) Celebrating 50 Years of the Young Lords with an introduction by Jacqueline Lazu (Professor of Spanish at DePaul University), a screening of the documentary on the early years of the Young Lords created by Médar Serrata (MLL) and David Schultz (LRC), and the founder of the Young Lords - José "Cha Cha" Jimenez - sharing his experiences with the movement. Mary Idema Pew Library Multi-Purpose Room, 3:00-4:15pm.
 - There were 82 people in attendance. Thanks to Médar for helping to organize the event.

- February 12 (Tuesday), Presentation by Lindsey Rosa and Laura Oteto "Families Torn Apart: U.S. Immigration and Latin America"; KC 2204; 10:00-11:15.
 - There were 73 people in attendance. Co-sponsored by HRT.
- February 25, (Monday), Presentation by Patricia Richards (Professor of Sociology and Women's Studies at the University of Georgia) "Systemic Racism, Decolonization, and the Life Histories of Mapuche Women Elders"; KC 2263; 3:00-4:15pm.
 - There were 135 people in attendance.
- March 20 (Wednesday) Presentation by Aviva Chomsky (Professor of History and the Coordinator of Latin American, Latino and Caribbean Studies at Salem State University); "Cuba: Why the Revolution Still Matters"; Mary Idema Pew Library Multipurpose Room; 3:00-4:15pm.
 - There were 154 people in attendance. Aviva met with my HST/LAS 374 Revolutions in the Americas class. Co-sponsored by HST.
- March 23 (Saturday), Field Trip to Detroit Institute of Art (DIA).
 - There were 25 students who went. Laker Familia also took students to the DIA, where the two groups met and had guided tours of the museum.
- April 4 (Thursday), Screening of Marcos Colón's *Beyond Fordlandia: An Environmental Account of Henry Ford's Adventure in the Amazon*; KC 2263; 1:00-3:00pm. Co-sponsored by the English Department, Environmental Studies, and Area and Global Studies.
 - There were 40 people in attendance. Thanks to Brian Deyo (ENG) for helping to organize the event.
- April 5-7 (Friday-Sunday), Ninth Grand Rapids Latin American Film Festival; Wealthy Street Theatre. Two film directors (Nelson Carlo de los Santos Arias from the Dominican Republic and Daresha Kyi from the U.S.), eight independently produced feature films, five short films, a children's film festival (featuring an animated children's film and puppet shows on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning) with students from Jason Yancey's SPA 350 Spanish Laboratory Theatre class writing scripts, making puppets, and performing puppet shows.
 - There were 1,368 people who attended the three-day film festival.
 - Nelson visited with approximately 90 film/video majors from three combined classes (Modes of Media Production and two sections of Media Production 1 plus miscellaneous others. All FVP majors and faculty as well as the campus community were invited. He spoke about his production process, the importance of combined theory and practice, and showed some clips. The students were very attentive and asked lots of questions. Nelson also had lunch with faculty and students.
 - Co-sponsored by CLAS, Padnos International Center, and the following departments Film and Video Production, Modern Languages and Literatures, Political Science, and Sociology. Partner institutions include Aquinas College, Calvin College, Davenport University, and Hope College. There was extensive press coverage of the GRLAFF, with television interviews on local stations (WOOD, WZZM, and Fox), radio interviews on 93.3 FM La Poderosa, and articles in the Eastown Community Association Newsletter, GR|MAG, Gsync, Grand Rapids Business Journal, Holland

Sentinel, GR Growth, and Women's LifeStyle Magazine. Also, the Lanthorn published two articles on the film festival.

- April 8 (Monday), Presentation by Daresha Kyi "The Power of Familial Rejection and Acceptance: A Conversation with Film Director Daresha Kyi"; KC 2263; 1:30-2:45. Daresha met with students in Jae Brasiliere's WGS 350 Foundations of Feminism class.
 - There were 50 people in attendance
- April 12 (Friday), Casino and Rueda Workshop, Niemeyer Multi-Purpose Room, 1:00-2:50pm. Students from David and Médar's HNR 280/281 Latin American Civilization and Culture class participated.
 - There were 41 people in attendance. Co-sponsored by the Honor's College.

Recap: 7 Fall events attended by 868 people; 8 Winter events attended by 1,886 people. A total of 2,754 people attended LAS events. By way of comparison, there were 3,299 people who attended LAS events in 2017-2018 and 2,776 people who attended LAS events in 2016-2017. In part the decrease is due to lower attendance at the film festival and fewer Hispanic Heritage Celebration events in the fall. Also, LAS did not participate in the Cesar Chavez celebration this year – the organizing committee never met. In no way does the decrease in people attending LAS events diminish or detract from the time and effort put forth by faculty and staff in putting together a culturally, historically, and socially relevant slate of activities and events that benefits students, faculty and staff, and members of the greater West Michigan community.

The LAS budget ended with a surplus of approximately \$32, barring any unforeseen expenses. The GRLAFF budget also has a surplus, which will be used for next year's film festival in lieu of expected budget cuts.

LAS STUDENT SUCCESS

Several LAS students presented their research at the Student Scholars Day on April 10. Kendra García presented "Who Is a Mexican? Afro-Mexicans Reclaim their Place within the Nation-State" and Johnny Hufford presented "U.S. Involvement in Guatemala's Dirty War".

This has been another successful year for LAS. All of this is made possible by a small, but highly motivated cohort of LAS faculty and thanks to the Area Studies Office Coordinator Stacy Borr, who goes above and beyond in making sure that everything runs smoothly – LAS wouldn't be what it is without her!

MIDDLE EAST STUDIES MINOR (MES)

ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY AND STAFF

Coordinator

Majd Al-Mallah, Professor of Modern Languages and Literatures

Faculty

David Alvarez, Professor of English

Sigrid Danielson, Associate Professor of Art

Daniel Demuth, Associate Professor of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

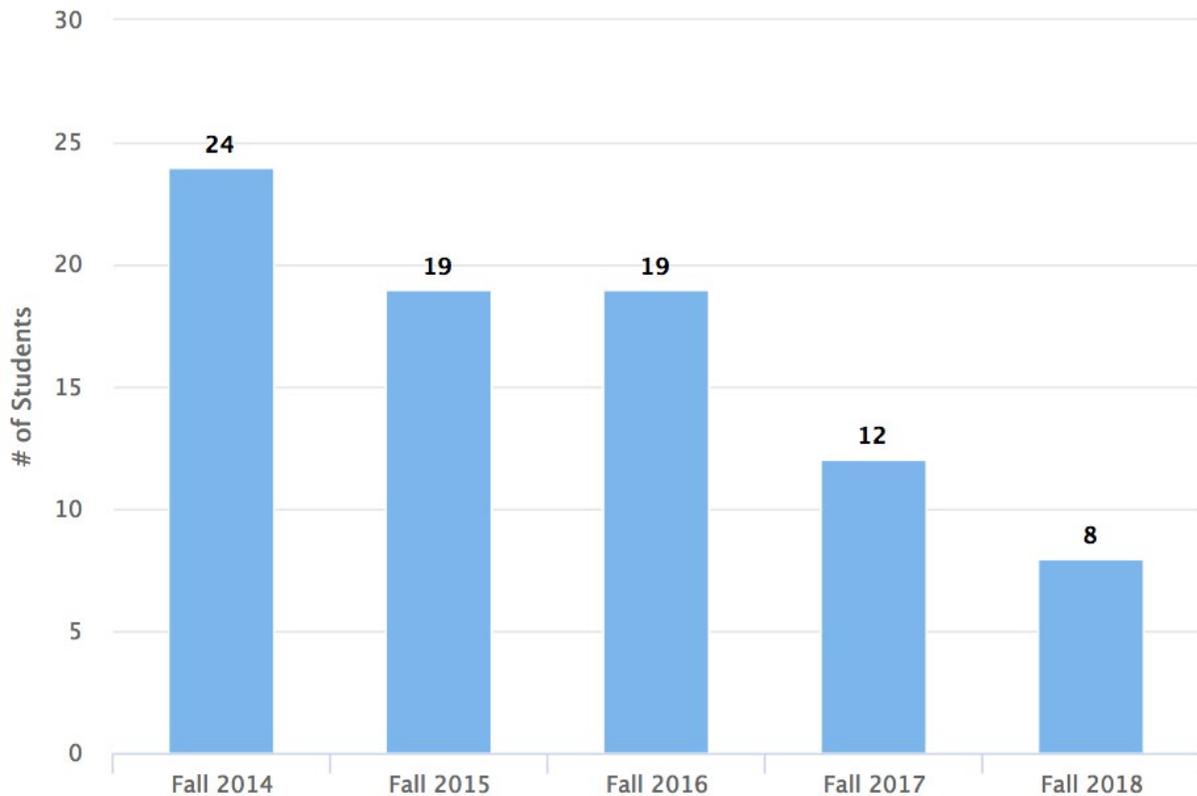
Gamal Gasim, Associate Professor of Middle East Studies and Political Science

Chad Lingwood, Associate Professor of History

Muaz Redzic, Adjunct Professor of Middle East Studies

Mark Schwartz, Professor of Anthropology

MES ENROLLMENT:



SOURCE: INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

The year was a year of transition as a result of the resignation of the previous Coordinator who left for another position. As a result, this was a year to get our house in order by holding regular meetings, ensuring classes are running smoothly, and requesting a replacement position that will be housed in Modern Languages and Literature but that will also support the Middle East Studies

Program. In addition, we are currently working on putting together a Mission, Vision, Values statement, which is intended to provide articulation and direction for what we do as a program and what we envision doing in the future.

MES PROGRAMMING

The Middle East Studies Program has a special relationship with the World Affairs Council of West Michigan. This year, we supported a series of talks that the World Affairs Council brought with a theme on the Arabian Peninsula titled “Shifting Sands in the Arabian Peninsula.” This was a series that ran throughout the semester in Fall 2018. In addition, because of the good relationship we’ve built with them, we had the opportunity to host well-known journalist Rania Abouzeid (who is based in Beirut) to come and talk to one of our MES classes. The World Affairs Council had a lecture organized for Rania Abouzeid at Aquinas College in March and we had the opportunity to get Rania to talk to our Honors group in the Middle East Beyond the Headlines course. The students enjoyed this opportunity and Rania did as well. It was one of those rare opportunities to have an intimate Q/A session with an important journalist who is based in the heart of the Arab World. Consequently, we will certainly continue to foster a good relationship with the World Affairs Council, based on mutual support and facilitating opportunities for the GVSU and broader West Michigan communities.

One of the most important aspects of the program is our involvement with the National Council on U.S. Arab Relations (non-profit organization based in Washington DC). The history of our engagement with this organization is worth noting as it goes back to more than three decades when we first started to participate in the Michigan Model Arab League. For the past two decades (22 years to be exact), GVSU has hosted the Michigan Model Arab League Conference, which brings together several universities and colleges from Michigan (and on occasion from nearby states). This year’s 2019 conference was a great success. It marked an increase in countries and universities that participated compared to last year. Last year, we had 13 of the Arab League countries represented and this year we had 16 countries. This represents a 23% increase from last year. Dr. Dalia Fahmy was our featured keynote speaker for the Model opening ceremony. In addition, Dr. Fahmy presented a lecture for the campus community as well as an interview with WGVU Radio. One of the new features of the program this year was to bring a cultural program into the Model Conference. We hosted Arab American Comedian Amer Zahr on Friday evening of the conference and he was very well received by the students and faculty. He provided a thought-provoking comedy show that everyone enjoyed. Another improvement was the decision to line up a full secretariat for next year by selecting all officers for the 2020 Michigan Model. In previous years, the Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General were selected but not the chairs of the committees. This often left us with trying to figure all of this out in the lead-up to the conference. At times, that was very stressful. In fact, this year, it took a great deal of work and effort to reconstruct who was even selected for the Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General. With a more deliberate process of selecting all the officers, we should have a much better set-up leading up to the conference next year.

MES ACHIEVEMENTS

One of the major achievements this year was that we were able to participate in the National Model Arab League after losing our spot the year before. This action alone took a great deal of negotiation with the National Council as we were initially given an observer state status, but we were eventually able to have a regular member status and represented the country of Iraq during the National Model Conference that was held in Washington DC in early April 2019. We had a full delegation of 11 students who represented Iraq on all of the councils. One of the highlights was the delegation's visit to the Iraqi Embassy in Washington DC, where we met with three diplomats who were on the embassy staff. The students had an opportunity to ask questions and have a real feel for how diplomats work. We even had a drop-in (albeit for a few minutes) from the Iraqi Ambassador who wanted to greet the group and say hello. The rest of the time in DC, the students worked through a grueling three days of intense work in committees, collaborating with other students from a variety of universities across the nation. It was an invaluable learning experience for our students. The National Council also organizes featured speakers for the faculty advisors, so those are always opportunities to network and connect with colleagues.

In terms of numbers of minors, the MES program has experienced a drop in numbers from 24 in Fall 2014 to 8 in Fall 2018. That's clearly a significant drop in the number of students who are pursuing a minor degree. However, and while it's important to serve students who are pursuing a minor and we will continue to do so, our main goal as a program has been and continues to be serving the larger student body through offering general education courses and through campus programming and contributing to the internationalization of the university. In those areas, our numbers have actually increased rather than decreased. In fact, as outlined above, the Michigan Model Arab League Conference has experienced an increase in numbers this year compared to last year [I don't have precise data for the previous years, but will continue to track it from now on]. In terms of taking students to the National Model, we obviously had a 100% increase from last year since we did not participate at all in 2018. And finally, our number of students taking our MES classes has been stable and, in fact, very strong. In the past five years, from Fall 2014 to Spring/Summer 2019, we have served 1669 students who took classes with an MES designation. That's a major and significant contribution to the service of the university and our student body at large. So in terms of students in seats, there has been a significant overall contribution. If we look at spring/summer, the MES program has also contributed to offering online sections that are desirable to students. We are currently offering 3 sections of MES 201 in spring/summer sessions that are fairly full.

MES LOOKING AHEAD

Moving forward, our work to define the program's Mission, Vision, and Values should help provide direction for where the program goes in light of new developments. While the drop of the students who are declaring a minor is noticeable, many programs in the social sciences and humanities have also experienced similar trends within academia at large. But our areas of strength are clearly aligned with the university direction and focus on ensuring good enrollments in the classes and also on being a part of the liberal education focus within the general education program. In addition, we continue to serve the campus community through programming and we continue to host the Model Arab League, which is one of the most unique experiential learning opportunities for our students at GV but also for our broader Michigan student population.