



Fall 2024 Project Menu

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Title	DipLab2413101
Project Name	EngageMENT Playbook: Tailored Interventions for Men (25-34) in HIV Programs
Office	Office of Research and Science
Bureau	Global AIDS Coordinator
Project Description	<p>This project would aim to consolidate and analyze the extensive literature emphasizing the importance of engaging men, particularly those aged 25 to 34 years, in HIV programs. Recognizing their pivotal role in ongoing HIV transmission and the challenges in supporting this demographic to stay on treatment, the project would seek to develop a playbook of potential interventions.</p> <p>The playbook, “EngageMENT Playbook,” would provide a compilation of the best evidence-based strategies categorized by the type of intervention—structural, behavioral, biomedical, etc.—that countries could adapt and pilot, tailored to where men are in their HIV continuum. This resource would serve as a tool for PEPFAR and its partner organizations to consider using to guide implementation of effective, targeted interventions aimed at reducing HIV transmission and supporting treatment adherence among this key demographic.</p>
Final Product Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EngageMENT Playbook: A structured guide containing a compilation of evidence-based intervention strategies, categorized by type and tailored to the specific stages of the HIV care continuum for men aged 25 to 34. • Implementation and Evaluation Guide: A set of guidelines for adapting, piloting, and evaluating the interventions within different country contexts and health systems.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology, Global Health</i>
Additional Information	N/A



Title	DipLab2413102
Project Name	Climate Shield: Strategizing PEPFAR's Response to Near-Term Climate Impacts in High HIV-Burden Countries
Office	Office of Research and Science
Bureau	Global AIDS Coordinator
Project Description	<p>This project would aim to conduct a comprehensive analysis to understand and forecast the near-term impacts of climate change on health systems in high HIV prevalence settings, particularly in the twenty African countries where PEPFAR operates.</p> <p>Recognizing the urgency to address shorter-term climate threats rather than focusing solely on long-term projections, the study would survey the potential impacts of climate factors including rising sea levels, increasing ambient temperatures, escalating food insecurity, and the heightened risk of vector-borne infections over the next decade.</p> <p>The project would involve synthesizing current climate and health data, any available predictive modeling, and stakeholder analysis to develop a prioritized list of strategies. These strategies would be aimed at equipping PEPFAR-supported countries to effectively respond to these imminent climate-related threats, thereby safeguarding the health systems that are crucial for managing the HIV burden. The initiative would place a significant emphasis on practical, actionable solutions that can be implemented within the next ten years, taking into account the unique socioeconomic and environmental contexts of the African regions in question.</p>
Final Product Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Response Framework: A prioritized list of strategies and an action plan for PEPFAR to support countries in responding to near-term climate threats, tailored to the specific needs and contexts of the African regions. • Policy Briefs and Recommendations: A brief aimed at PEPFAR policymakers and stakeholders, summarizing the key findings and suggesting concrete steps for immediate implementation.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations, Global Health</i>
Additional Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community engagement (e.g., online conversations with in-country PEPFAR stakeholders) would be a very useful component, with efforts made to understand and integrate local knowledge and practices in climate adaptation and health resilience. • A detailed appendix document outlining the findings of the climate impact survey, with a focus on the short-term horizon and its implications for health systems in high HIV burden countries, would be very desirable! • The requesting office is willing to navigate sourcing parts of the project to a variety of teams and facilitating a cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Title	DipLab2413103
Project Name	AI Catalyst: Envisioning the Future of PEPFAR's Clinical Services through Artificial Intelligence
Office	Office of Research and Science
Bureau	Global AIDS Coordinator
Project Description	<p>This project would aim to conduct an extensive scoping review to explore the potential roles that artificial intelligence (AI) could play in enhancing the clinical services under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) programs. The primary focus would be on examining how AI could revolutionize HIV testing, prevention strategies, and care and treatment programs. (Applicants should not focus on the role of AI in diagnostics (eg. CXR interpretation) or back-end data analytics for program improvement).</p> <p>The review would systematically identify, evaluate, and summarize the current AI applications in healthcare that are relevant to PEPFAR's goals and the specific challenges of HIV/AIDS management in resource-limited settings. It would assess the best use cases of AI, pinpointing areas where AI could lead to significant improvements in efficiency, accuracy, and patient outcomes. Furthermore, the project would critically analyze the limitations, ethical concerns, and the prerequisite scientific agenda, especially where the existing evidence base is limited or non-existent.</p> <p>The final deliverables would include a detailed report with actionable recommendations for integrating AI into PEPFAR's clinical services and a strategic framework for addressing the identified gaps through future research and program development.</p>
Final Product Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Framework: A 5 page roadmap for integrating AI into PEPFAR's clinical services, including short-term and long-term strategies, potential partnerships, implementation plans, and evaluation metrics, would be developed. • Comprehensive Report: (optional) A detailed document encompassing the scoping review findings, best use cases of AI in PEPFAR programs, limitations, ethical concerns, and a proposed science agenda for addressing the gaps would be prepared.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations, Global Health, Computer Science</i>
Additional Information	N/A

Title	DipLab2413104
Project Name	Resilience Matrix: Envisioning a Comprehensive Tool for Assessing Health System Resilience and Sustainability
Office	Office of Research and Science
Bureau	Global AIDS Coordinator
Project Description	<p>This project would aim to conduct a thorough review of the literature to identify and consolidate the diverse measures of health system resilience in the face of exogenous stressors and limited financial constraints. Recognizing the gap in current metrics, particularly concerning the measurement of a health system's resiliency to respond to health threats like pandemics and climate-related shocks, especially relevant to low-income countries currently receiving PEPFAR support, the project would seek to develop a dynamic, multivalent tool. The tool would ideally also factor in the potential role of donor financing in providing strategic support to enhance resiliency.</p> <p>The proposed tool termed the "Resilience Matrix,"; would integrate existing metrics and incorporate expert opinions to provide a robust and comprehensive assessment of health system resilience and sustainability. The project would involve a systematic review of the literature, stakeholder consultations to develop a beta version of a tool is adaptable, scalable, and sensitive to the nuances of different health systems and their unique challenges.</p>
Final Product Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature Review Document; A comprehensive synthesis of existing literature on health system resilience metrics, highlighting the gaps and needs for a comprehensive tool, would be prepared. • Resilience Matrix Tool; A dynamic, adaptable tool that provides a multivalent assessment of health system resilience and sustainability, complete with a user manual and guidelines for implementation, would be developed. • Policy and Practice Recommendations; A set of actionable recommendations for health system stakeholders, policymakers, and donors, outlining how the Resilience Matrix could be used to target health system strengthening and technical assistance effectively, would be formulated.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations, Global Health, International Development</i>
Additional Information	N/A

Title	DipLab2420201
Project Name	Advancing U.S.-Japan Educational Ties
Office	Public Affairs Section
Embassy	Japan
Bureau	East Asian and Pacific Affairs
Project Description	<p>2023 was a fantastic year for U.S.-Japan education cooperation. In May, on the margins of the G7 Leaders’ meeting in Hiroshima, the Secretary signed our first-ever Memorandum of Cooperation on education cooperation, creating an annual government-to-government education dialogue to expand student, faculty, and administrator mobility. As a result of the signing, on October 30-31, we held the first U.S.-Japan High Level Education Dialogue in Washington DC. At the same signing event in Hiroshima, IBM and Google announced new quantum computing partnerships with the Universities of Chicago and Tokyo, and Micron launched an 11-university “UPWARDS” network on semiconductor engineering. These three partnerships totaled more than \$210 million in new investment. And, for the first time in 50 years, the binational Fulbright Commission agreed to expand scholarships to include STEM fields.</p> <p>For the first time in decades, if ever, our education goals are aligned with the Government of Japan’s ambitious human capital development plans. Looking forward, PAS Tokyo seeks to strengthen our education cooperation at the high school, undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate levels, including expanding partnerships into additional strategic areas, such as AI, and expanding existing agreements to include additional partners such as the Republic of Korea and ASEAN members. Together, we will increase student mobility in both directions and find ways to both streamline and increase opportunities for students in Japan to pursue joint degrees.</p> <p>While PAS Tokyo has a good handle on higher education in Japan, we have little to no visibility on the U.S. side. We need research assistance to better understand the extent of Japan’s education presence in the United States in two specific areas. First, we know there are a few Japanese accredited degree programs in partnership with U.S. higher education institutions but would like a database that logs and details existing accredited degree programs in a comprehensive way. Second, we know there are a number of U.S. universities that have linkages with Japanese universities. Moving forward, we would benefit from a database that catalogs the existing linkages to which we can add future partnerships.</p> <p>We also welcome any insights from the university team(s) based on the findings.</p>
Final Product Format	Update-able, user-friendly database
Discipline/Expertise	International Relations, Education & Cultural Studies
Additional Information	<p>This project should be completed within one semester.</p> <p>Recent press release on education cooperation: https://jp.usembassy.gov/us-japan-launch-landmark-education-partnerships/</p>
Title	DipLab2420202

Project Name	Research Impacts of Coca Legalization: Bolivia, Peru, and Colombia
Office	International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Section
Embassy	Colombia
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	Research the impacts of legalization/decriminalization of the coca leaf (the precursor to cocaine) in Bolivia and Peru, as well as the potential outcomes legalization could have in Colombia. As the government of Colombia proposes policies to pilot commercial coca production, and Bolivia seeks to remove the coca leaf from international narcotics lists, it will be important to understand how wider coca legalization could impact the cocaine trade and drug trafficking to the United States. The research project should explore the actual or possible security and public health outcomes of coca liberalization policies in Bolivia, Peru, and Colombia. Research could be split among as many as three student teams (in which case each team would focus on one of three Andean countries mentioned).
Final Product Format	Our office would like to receive a short research paper (max 10 pages), including a one-page fact sheet or executive summary, outlining the impacts (or potential impacts) of coca legalization for each of these three countries: Bolivia, Peru, and Colombia.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations</i>
Additional Information	<p>Information on the International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Section (INL) of U.S. Embassy Bogota, Colombia: https://co.usembassy.gov/international-narcotics-and-law-enforcement-affairs-section-inl/</p> <p>Some articles about recent coca liberalization policies in the Andean countries:</p> <p>Colombia's Radical New Approach to Cocaine https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/10/30/colombia-cocaine-coca-industry-policy-war-drugs-gustavo-petro/</p> <p>"The political economy of a failed drug reform: Insights from Peru's main legal coca valley" https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0955395923000981</p> <p>"Bolivia Uses G77 Post to Put Coca Legalization on International Agenda": https://insightcrime.org/news/brief/bolivias-morales-uses-g77-post-to-put-coca-legalization-on-international-agenda/</p>

Title	DipLab2420502
Project Name	Facilitating (Energy) Adaptation in Africa
Office	Area Studies
Bureau	Foreign Service Institute
Project Description	A transition from traditional energy resources to renewable energy has the ability to close Africa’s energy access gap and advance socio-economic and human development across the continent. Affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy supports public service provisions, livelihood advancement, and agricultural efficiency, which can increase food security and industrial development. However, Africa has only received 2% of global renewable energy investments in the last two decades, with most investments only going to a select few countries. This project requires analysis of energy investments in Africa and creative thinking on proactive approaches the U.S. can take to best engage with the African continent to support the transition to sustainable energy and ultimately stronger socio-economic development.
Final Product Format	<p>Deliverables:</p> <p>§ Project participants should produce a final written report to include: (1) key case studies examined, and lessons drawn from them; (2) Recommend courses of action for how the U.S. can best engage with Sub-Saharan Africa to meet its needs and contribute to the transition to sustainable energy.</p> <p>§ Project participants should produce a final presentation of key findings and recommendations.</p> <p>Use of deliverables: The Foreign Service Institute provides area studies training to diplomats and other U.S. government foreign affairs specialists serving in Sub-Saharan Africa. Final products will be used in AF regional and sub-regional courses, as well as seminars addressing the energy sector in Sub-Saharan Africa.</p>
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations, Political Science, Economics and Development, Sociology, African Studies</i>
Additional Information	Africa's renewable energy transition has socio-economic benefits World Economic Forum (weforum.org)

Title	DipLab2420803
Project Name	Winning the Lottery of Hearts and Minds: Public Diplomacy for Social Behavioral Change
Office	Public Diplomacy Section
Embassy	Jamaica
Bureau	Western Hemisphere Affairs
Project Description	<p>Building bridges of communication is the main role of Public Diplomacy Sections who engage with foreign audiences through a variety of media to promote U.S. interests and mission goals. One of U.S. Embassy Kingston’s primary goals is to reduce crime and violence for a more safe, just, and secure Jamaica for both U.S citizens and Jamaicans. Specifically, the mission is working to curb participation in rampant, gang-organized financial scamming targeting U.S. citizens. One strategy being pursued is a social behavioral change media campaign targeting the Jamaican general public and at-risk youth to change the perception of financial scamming in Jamaica.</p> <p>This project investigates current best practices and examples of social behavior change campaigns. The student team will research recommendations from the field of public relations, communications, and marketing on how to best approach reaching target publics to change behavior on social issues, including but not limited to reducing crime, public health, environmental conservation, and civic engagement. Specific examples or case studies should be included, such as messages, advertisements, videos, etc. Bonus points if they focus on the topic of reducing crime, violence, or illegal activity! The goal of the project is to inform and shape the design and media products of our anti-financial scamming media campaign which is in the planning stages. Additional information on local context, audiences, and resources will be provided.</p>
Final Product Format	Report and presentation with an optional communication campaign plan on anti-financial scamming in Jamaica, if the project team specializes in communications/public relations/marketing.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations, Civil Society, Climate Change, Communications, Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement, Democracy & Human Rights, Economic & Finance Issues, Global Health, Human Rights, Information & Communication Technology, International Development, Marketing, Narcotics & Law Enforcement, Public-Private Partnerships, Psychology, Sociology, Trafficking in Persons, Western Hemisphere Studies, Youth Issues</i>
Additional Information	<p>This project directly impacts the U.S.-Jamaica bilateral relationship and real individuals: victims of financial scamming, at-risk youth who become involved in gangs, and the everyday Jamaican who may not know how financial scamming impacts them, directly and indirectly. Help us with this project to make real impact on a high priority issue in the Caribbean!</p> <p>Additional Information:</p> <p>Lottery Scams https://jm.usembassy.gov/lottery-scams</p> <p>Jamaican Lottery Scam American Greed CNBC Prime</p>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mqOqg_-o1ml

Jamaican lottery scams target elderly Americans
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UaqVL9yJVzM>

Just Hang Up - Scams Against Seniors, Part 1
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bc_n3n83ow0

Just Hang Up - Scams Against Seniors, Part 2
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uruDqnHxaRM>



Title	DipLab2420902
Project Name	Exploring Afghan SIV Resettlement: CARE Platforms to US
Office	Coordinator for Afghan Relocation Efforts (CARE)
Bureau	South and Central Asian Affairs
Project Description	<p>Objective: This project seeks to provide students with a unique opportunity to delve into the complexities of the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa program, facilitated through the Coordinator for Afghan Relocation Efforts (CARE). By following nine ASIV cases from their processing stages at Albania, ROB (Germany) and CARE Doha (Qatar) Platform to their resettlement in the United States (US), students will gain valuable insights into the challenges faced by applicants and the effectiveness of support systems. The findings will significantly contribute to enhancing CARE’s program and the resettlement experience for Afghan allies. Participating in this research project will be exceptionally beneficial for students, offering a unique opportunity to gain hands-on experience in navigating the intricacies of the State Department’s premier immigration program, with a specific emphasis on the resettlement phase. This involvement will foster a deeper understanding of international migration processes and provide valuable insights into policy challenges and solutions within the humanitarian efforts surrounding resettlement.</p> <p>Scope of Research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a comparative analysis and understanding of the procedural challenges and successes encountered by ASIV applicants during processing at CARE Platforms. • Documenting emotional, logistical, and bureaucratic challenges encountered by ASIV applicants during their resettlement journey in the US as indicators for future resettlement outcomes. • Analyzing the effectiveness of support systems provided by US agencies and NGOs involved in the ASIV program. • Explore outcomes of ASIV cases 3-6 months after resettlement in the US through a comparative lens, highlighting market differences based on their processing platform. <p>Implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with faculty-led team of students from diverse academic backgrounds across a university to form a research team. • Engage subject matter experts to advise and guide student researchers throughout the semester-long project. • Investigate dependencies, considering how, when and where the impact occurs post-resettlement. • Regular updates and guidance will be provided by the CARE lead proposing the project to ensure a valuable final product. <p>Expected Outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate comprehensive documentation of the ASIV application and resettlement process. • Provide insights into challenges and successes within the ASIV program, enabling informed recommendations for improvement.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct comparative analysis to illuminate the nuances and disparities in processing methodologies and applicant experiences between the CARE Platforms. This analysis aims to yield insights into the distinct strengths and weaknesses inherent in each platform, forming a foundational framework for pinpointing targeted improvements within the CARE program. • Present findings to the CARE Front Office and stakeholders, providing students with valuable exposure to the State Department and the CARE program with insights to support future goal setting and prioritization <p>Conclusion: This project aligns with Diplomacy Lab's vision of fostering innovative research on pressing policy issues. The study of CARE's program will not only offer students an immersive learning experience but will also contribute valuable insights to enhance the US resettlement program for Afghan allies.</p>
Final Product Format	The final product format should be a presentation with supporting data analysis.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations</i>
Additional Information	The CARE office is headquartered in Rosslyn, Virginia. Students will collaborate with CARE staff not only in Rosslyn but also at our overseas platforms in Albania, Germany, and Qatar, as well as with resettlement agencies in the US. The project is expected to conclude within four months. Travel to either the Rosslyn office or the State HQ (Harry S. Truman Building) may be necessary for the final presentation.



Title	DipLab2420904
Project Name	Decoding Success: Exploring Organizational Health and Resource Utilization for Enhanced Section Effectiveness
Office	Organizational Learning Unit
Bureau	Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs
Project Description	<p>The Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs (R/PPR) at the U.S. Department of State provides long-term strategic planning and performance measurement capability for public diplomacy and public affairs programs around the world. It enables Department leadership to better advise on the allocation of public diplomacy and public affairs resources, to focus those resources on the most urgent national security objectives, and provide realistic measurement of public diplomacy's and public affairs' effectiveness.</p> <p>R/PPR is continually working to modernize public diplomacy by updating and adapting public diplomacy strategies and practices to align with contemporary challenges, technologies, and communication trends. While doing so, we wonder what elements are the key to success at the section level. This research project aims to explore the intricate relationships between organizational health, section effectiveness, and the allocation and utilization of assigned resources (money, people, training, etc), with the ultimate goal of understanding how these factors collectively contribute to overall section effectiveness. Furthermore, what elements are necessary to replicate effectiveness from one country to another. It is widely acknowledged that organizational health, the effectiveness of individual sections, and the judicious use of resources are critical components in achieving sustained success. However, there is a need for in-depth research to uncover the specific linkages and dependencies between these elements.</p> <p>The primary objective of this research is to investigate the correlation between organizational health, section effectiveness, and available resources. We aim to understand how these elements influence the performance and effectiveness of individual sections, and vice versa. It is also necessary to define "section effectiveness" and incorporate analysis of well-defined public diplomacy competencies (which will be provided), determining how these competencies influence overall effectiveness. We also welcome research and methodologies on how to evaluate these competencies independently at both an individual, section, and organizational level.</p> <p>Results of this research project can potentially serve to enhance and shape the future of public diplomacy sections across the globe. The data obtained could also play a critical role in ensuring adequate allocation and the effective use of limited resources across the Department of State.</p>
Final Product Format	We welcome a final product in the form of an applicable tool, index, survey, or research paper outlining a proposed solution. We are open to hearing other suggestions as well.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>Psychology, Statistics, Sociology, Organizational Health</i>
Additional Information	Additional information related to specific public diplomacy competencies and resources will be provided at the project kick off. We welcome this project taking more than one semester if needed.



Title	DipLab2420911
Project Name	TOP up the fight: TPT Outcomes among People Living with HIV
Office	Program Quality
Bureau	Bureau of Global Health Security and Diplomacy
Project Description	<p>Globally, tuberculosis (TB) remains one of the world’s deadliest infectious diseases and is the leading cause of death for people living with HIV—responsible for approximately one-third of all HIV-related deaths. The President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) has increased antiretroviral therapy (ART) uptake and scaled-up TB preventive therapy (TPT), thereby significantly contributing to reducing the global burden of TB among people living with HIV. In September 2023, PEPFAR launched an enhanced effort to fight TB. Over the next five years, we aim to detect two million TB cases and prevent at least 500,000 deaths.</p> <p>Studies have consistently shown that increased TPT coverage in people living with HIV significantly lowers TB incidence and TB-related mortality. This project aims to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between TPT coverage and TB incidence and mortality between 2018 and 2023, for selected PEPFAR-supported countries. Possible areas of analysis may include: tTPT initiation, TPT completion, number of new clients on ART, number of clients currently on ART, TPT coverage, TB treatment initiation, and mortality.</p>
Final Product Format	Open to discussion with team(s) selected for the project. Possible deliverables we have in mind include data correlation analysis and data summaries (with some graphical representations) for the operating units analyzed.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>Statistics, Global Health</i>
Additional Information	<p>Project most closely ties to: Epidemiology, public health, data analysis/statistics</p> <p>To explore more about the United Nation’s enhanced strategy to combat tuberculosis, visit https://www.who.int/activities/preparing-for-the-un-high-level-meeting-on-the-fight-against-tuberculosis--2023</p> <p>To learn more about the Bureau of Global Health Security and Diplomacy and PEPFAR please visit: https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/secretary-of-state/bureau-of-global-health-security-and-diplomacy/</p> <p>Explore the PEPFAR-TB initiative at: https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/PEPFAR-TB-Commitment_Implementation-Strategy.pdf.</p>

Title	DipLab2420912
Project Name	Improving Treatment for Greater Outcomes, Opportunities, and Diagnosis (IT for GOOD): Using AI Applications to Improve HIV Care and Treatment
Office	Program Quality
Bureau	Bureau of Global Health Security and Diplomacy
Project Description	A comprehensive review of the types of artificial intelligence (AI) applications being used globally in health care to improve outcomes in areas such as prevention, testing, diagnosis, treatment retention, and overall quality of care. This could be a comprehensive list (preferably with annotation) of AI technologies being developed/used in health care settings to improve care and treatment. It would be especially interesting to see a list of AI applications related to HIV care and treatment.
Final Product Format	Deliverable(s) to be determined upon conversation with select team(s)
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations, Global Health, Computer Science, Information & Communication Technology</i>
Additional Information	For more information about the Bureau of Global Health Security and Diplomacy, please see here: https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/secretary-of-state/bureau-of-global-health-security-and-diplomacy/



Title	DipLab2420915
Project Name	95-95-95, 10-10-10 and 30-80-60 Goals for Key Populations, A Number Soup
Office	Program Quality
Bureau	Bureau of Global Health Security and Diplomacy
Project Description	<p>The Bureau of Global Health Security and Diplomacy at the U.S. Department of State would like support from academia to analyze available survey data collected among key populations (KP), defined as, female sex workers, men who have sex with men, transgender women and people who inject drugs, to understand the progress among key populations towards the UNAIDS goals in as many of the 55 PEPFAR countries as data and time allow.</p> <p>The 95-95-95 goals measure knowledge of HIV status, treatment uptake, and viral load suppression among people living with HIV. The 10-10-10 goals measure the proportion of key populations who have experienced violence, stigma, and discrimination— important metrics of an enabling environment to access HIV services. The 30-80-60 goals assess the degree to which community-led or KP-led organizations are delivering services and implementing interventions for their communities. Host country governments and donors support surveys among the total population and key populations to measure progress towards the said goals and yet the geographic and age distributions of each key population may differ from the total population in each country. We would like support from an academic institution to make fair comparisons of progress towards the UNAIDS goals among KP and the total population to identify equity gaps and aid PEPFAR in directing resources towards the countries and populations to address the gaps in availability, accessibility and acceptability of HIV services in the countries where we work.</p>
Final Product Format	Open to discussion with team(s) selected for the project. Possible deliverables include data summaries (with some graphical representations) for the countries analyzed and a 30 to 40-minute summary presentation to office personnel.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>Global Health, Key Populations, Civil Society</i>
Additional Information	<p>To learn more about the Bureau of Global Health Security and Diplomacy and PEPFAR please visit: https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/secretary-of-state/bureau-of-global-health-security-and-diplomacy/</p> <p>To learn more about PEPFAR visit: https://www.state.gov/pepfar/</p>

Title	DipLab2420916
Project Name	Tackle complex coding challenges! Design and build a customized software solution that will streamline operations and improve the experience of thousands of Foreign Service personnel annually.
Office	This is a joint proposal from three offices within the Foreign Service Institute, School of Language Studies: Dean’s Office, Foreign Service Programs; Language Testing and Assessment; and the Language Learning Consultation Service
Bureau	Foreign Service Institute
Project Description	<p>We are embarking on an exciting coding project aimed at developing a software application that will revolutionize how the Foreign Service Institute – the premier diplomatic training academy – manages online language training and assessment of student achievement for more than 5,000 Foreign Service personnel each year. We aim to launch a user-friendly application that helps program staff to design training schedules for 90 courses, match 3,000 students to instructors and learning coaches based on complex parameters, and streamline the scheduling and administration of hundreds of language proficiency assessments.</p> <p>This project will move us from manual to automated processes. The team will design, test, and implement algorithms to optimize staff scheduling, matching, and sorting. The final product will include an intuitive interface that enables managers to easily create, edit, and manage schedules, with the potential option for students to self-select their training or assessment and build their own schedules. Throughout the development process, we will focus on robustness, scalability, and reliability to ensure the application can handle the complexities of managing thousands of sensitive training records. By the end, you'll gain valuable experience in software development, algorithm design, user interface design, and project management. Plus, you will have contributed to building a practical tool with applications that extend well beyond the Foreign Service Institute. Get ready for a challenging and rewarding journey ahead!</p>
Final Product Format	The team will deliver an initial software solution that includes a scalable matching algorithm and intuitive interface to automate the currently manual processes of scheduling training and assessments for thousands of Foreign Service personnel annually.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>Information & Communication Technology, Education & Cultural Studies</i>
Additional Information	<p>Learn more about the Foreign Service Institute and the School of Language Studies at these links.</p> <p>https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-management/foreign-service-institute/ https://www.state.gov/foreign-language-training/</p>

Title	DipLab2420917
Project Name	Economic Valuation of Wildlife and Wild Spaces
Office	ECW
Bureau	Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs
Project Description	The IMF calculated the conservation value of forest elephants as \$1.75 million USD, in terms of the carbon value services each forest elephant provides. Economically valuing nature and wildlife in this way helps persuade countries debating the short and long-term benefits and opportunity costs in prioritizing investments in wildlife and forest conservation. Based on the studies initiated by the IMF, this project would aim to quantify the conservation value of iconic wildlife species. This project would be valuable for a team of conservation scientists and economics students who are also interested in environmental issues in helping to build persuasive economic arguments in the conservation space. The outcome of this research will allow our office to better cooperate with countries on maintaining protected spaces and prevent habitat loss for endangered and protected wildlife species.
Final Product Format	20- page research report
Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic & Finance Issues, Climate Change, Conservation</i>
Additional Information	n/a



Title	DipLab2420918
Project Name	Examining the Impact of Agriculture on Wildlife
Office	ECW
Bureau	Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs
Project Description	<p>According to UNEP, food systems globally are a primary driver of biodiversity loss, threatening 86% of species at the risk of extinction. The detrimental impact of agriculture on forests and other ecosystems has gained significant international attention. The loss of habitat can jeopardize the breeding, feeding, and nesting grounds of birds, mammals, insects, and microbial organisms, besides displacing numerous native plant species. However, UNEP notes that more detailed data on biodiversity impacts is lacking including on the cumulative effects on wildlife from agricultural practices – including fertilizer and pesticide use, energy consumption, land use and conversion, water management, monocropping, grazing, and extensive tilling. This project would explore what frameworks and research currently exist to assess the costs and benefits associated with food production and consumption, particularly in terms of biodiversity, wildlife, and species loss. The objective is to identify positive and negative practices, where possible; and to identify gaps or information needs not well addressed currently. A presentation of best practices, challenges, and opportunities to improve understanding of the impacts of agriculture on wildlife can inform foreign policy and other decision making to transform food systems to foster human-wildlife coexistence and prevent harm to endangered wildlife species.</p>
Final Product Format	20-page research report
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations, Food Security, Economic & Finance Issues, Economic Valuation, Conservation</i>
Additional Information	n/a

Title	DipLab2420919
Project Name	Fashion's Impact on Biodiversity Loss and Wildlife
Office	Office of Conservation and Water (ECW)
Bureau	Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs
Project Description	In this project, students will analyze the consequence and impacts of unsustainable apparel supply chains on wildlife. We are hoping to better understand the consequences on wildlife of direct use—like the use of endangered species and exotic animal skins and wildlife products in fashion products—and indirect links—such as deforestation and loss or degradation of habitat, and impacts on nontarget wildlife species,, e.g. from crops and production of textiles. Outcomes should include a research report that helps to better analyze and understand the direct and indirect links between fashion supply chains and wildlife populations; and a mapping of potential solutions, including ESG standards and voluntary and mandated commitments by apparel private sector stakeholders. This research will help inform dialogue with private sector and civil society on the apparel industry's impact on wildlife species and raise public awareness on this connection to promote wildlife-friendly consumer choices and behavior.
Final Product Format	Series of public dialogues with private sector and civil society.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>Public-Private Partnerships, Fashion</i>
Additional Information	



Title	DipLab2420921
Project Name	Growing Youth Engagement on Wildlife Conservation through Social Media
Office	Office of Conservation and Water
Bureau	Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs
Project Description	This project aims to grow the following of OES social media pages and accounts through new innovative, fresh messaging and creative social media campaigns to capture the attention of and engagement with the youth on wildlife conservation issues. This project will also help connect students with ECW's ongoing campaigns for demand reduction for traditional medicine that uses endangered wildlife species and for combating wildlife trafficking. The end goal for this project is to enhance engagement and public awareness of wildlife conservation and wildlife trafficking issues.
Final Product Format	5-page report analyzing engagement on OES social media accounts and best practices for enhancing engagement including an appendix with recommended social media posts/examples
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations, Marketing, Youth Issues, Communications, Information & Communication Technology</i>
Additional Information	N/A



Title	DipLab2420923
Project Name	Rethinking and Redesigning Youth HIV Programs: Behavioral Interventions to Directly Engage Adolescents and Young People (AYP) in HIV Prevention and Treatment Services
Office	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
Bureau	Global AIDS Coordinator
Project Description	<p>While youth account for a disproportionate number of new HIV infections, they are far less likely to be aware of their HIV status. This project will review the evidence from low- and middle-income countries to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Describe promising youth-designed and -led interventions, digital health opportunities, replicable social franchising models of care to deliver HIV prevention and care directly to youth where they live, work and play. · Identify evidence-based bio-behavioral and direct-to-client interventions proven to increase the uptake of HIV prevention and testing services, initiation and retention in care, and durable viral load suppression. · Catalogue behavioral interventions to address key gaps in HIV programming for adolescents and young people (15-24 years), with a goal of ensuring age/sex appropriate interventions. <p>The project will develop a strategy describing promising youth-led and youth-designed initiatives, catalogue evidence-based behavioral interventions, describe innovative direct-to-client models of care, and highlight social franchising models for adaptation among youth to delivery HIV prevention, testing, and treatment services.</p>
Final Product Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Strategy: This strategy will include evidence-based interventions and promising practices in the areas of 1) youth-led program design, 2) direct-to-client digital care models, 3) adaptable social franchising health models, 4) behavioral interventions to improve the uptake of HIV prevention, testing, and treatment services among youth (15-24 years). • Pathway to Scale: A structured set of guidance showing key steps to feasibly scale proposed interventions and innovative models of care. • Zotero Citation Library: This resource library will include scientific peer-review publications and items from grey literature, including PDFs, tags with key descriptors, and folders by intervention type/model, summarizing the current evidence base for innovative and effective youth-led and youth-centric HIV prevention, testing and treatment programs.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>Global Health, Youth Issues</i>
Additional Information	<p>While this expertise is not required, these are additional skills that would be helpful in this role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Health: Experience with digital health platforms using demand creation and direct-to-client approaches for health consultations, diagnostic, prevention and treatment services to reach specific population segments. • Social Franchising: Familiarity with social franchising models in health, lab, or pharmacy that have taken innovative services delivery models to scale, especially in

low- and middle-income countries.

- Behavioral Science: Knowledge of behavioral change theories and strategies, especially in the context of health, HIV, and youth engagement.
- Public Health and Epidemiology: Expertise in HIV program design using non-traditional models of service deliver



Title	DipLab2420924
Project Name	Advancing Mental Health Support in PEPFAR Countries
Office	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
Bureau	Global AIDS Coordinator
Project Description	<p>This project aims to:</p> <p>(1) Develop an analysis of the literature on global mental health care for people living with HIV, with a particular focus on PEPFAR countries.</p> <p>(2) Review successful mental health strategies and evidence-based tools proven effective globally, particularly in resource-limited HIV settings. Additionally, there will be an emphasis on strategies targeting youth aged 15-24.</p> <p>Individuals living with HIV often experience mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and other illnesses. These conditions can exacerbate HIV-related symptoms, compromise treatment adherence, and hinder viral suppression.</p> <p>Through this analysis, we seek to gain a deeper understanding of evidence-based global mental health strategies within PEPFAR countries, as well as examples of programs that have successfully integrated mental health into primary care systems.</p>
Final Product Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health Initiative: This initiative will include evidence-based interventions and promising practices in mental health to support people living with HIV to achieve their treatment goals. • Zotero Citation Library: This resource library will include scientific peer-review publications and items from grey literature, including PDFs, tags with key descriptors, and folders by intervention type/model, summarizing the current evidence base for innovative and effective mental health strategies that improve HIV outcomes.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>Global Health, International Development, Public Health</i>
Additional Information	<p>This project would best be undertaken over the course of a year.</p> <p>Related Research from our GHSD/PEPFAR: Prioritizing Mental Health in the HIV/AIDS Response https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37578071/ PEPFAR https://www.state.gov/where-we-work-pepfar/</p>

Title	DipLab2421301
Project Name	Countering disinformation and engaging with the Kichwa population in Ecuador on consular services
Office	Consular Affairs Office and Public Diplomacy Office
Bureau	Western Hemisphere Affairs
Project Description	<p>Background: As a result of Executive Order 13985 on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities, the National Security Council named inequity as a national security challenge. By rooting our foreign policy agenda in equity, it reinforces the U.S. global commitment to free trade, open markets, respect for human rights, and democracy. Mission Ecuador founded its Diversity and Inclusion Council in October 2020 and has taken steps to incorporate diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) principals in its internal management and hiring procedures. Mission Ecuador has thoroughly incorporated DEIA into its cultural, educational, sports, and English language programming. Gender and racial equity are part of the Mission’s talking points with the Government of Ecuador. Our law enforcement colleagues in the International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) agency and the Office of Security Cooperation (OSC) recently funded capacity building programs and created opportunities for Ecuadorian women in law enforcement (military and police). And when discrimination or exclusion of any marginalized population is noticed, our leadership has raised their concerns to foreign counterparts. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in Ecuador works with indigenous communities, particularly in the Amazon, to foster economic development in an environmentally sustainable way. Currently, the Consular Section is creating signage that includes Kichwa, along with English and Spanish, to create a more welcoming and inclusive environment to indigenous applicants in need of consular services. Nevertheless, more can be done to engage with diverse populations to clearly explain U.S. government policy objectives and programs, strengthen the bilateral relationship, and demonstrate the benefits of this relationship to everyday Ecuadorians.</p> <p>Project: Due to funding and staffing limitations, we have been unable to conduct effective consular outreach to the Kichwa speaking population in Ecuador. The indigenous population in Ecuador accounts for approximately 1.1 million people, and approximately 80,000 of those speak Kichwa. Most Kichwa speakers live in the Amazon, but 60.3% of the Andean Kichwa live in six provinces of the Central-Northern Sierra (Mountains). The purpose of this project is to create a Kichwa language communications and outreach strategy with corresponding Kichwa outreach materials that clearly explain the full breadth of consular services (non-immigrant visas, immigrant visas, and American citizen services). We would like for the communications strategy to also promote our anti-fraud messages to help dispel misinformation/disinformation on consular services and immigration programs like the Safe Mobility Offices, Temporary Protected Status, and Family Reunification processes. Traditional outreach (i.e. media interviews; posting on Mission Ecuador’s social media platforms; presentations at universities; presentations at our American Spaces in Guayaquil, Quito, Loja, and Cuenca; and engaging with Governors, Prefects, and Mayors) have not resulted in accurate information being shared with this key population. The mis/disinformation, coupled with rising insecurity and economic instability, has resulted in one of the largest outbound migration waves Ecuador has experienced. Ecuador is currently the second leading country in irregular migration flows through the Darien Gap and</p>

	<p>northward toward the U.S.-Mexico border. While our limited resources may not be able to stop this migration flow, we can do a better job of communicating accurate information on consular services and legal paths of migration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficacy of outreach platforms: In Ecuador we use many different tools for community outreach – social media platforms, in-person outreach engagements, and traditional media like television and radio. We are just starting to experiment with content creators and influencers. We would like students to investigate the efficacy of these platforms. For example, what level of penetration do the different platforms have with different cultural, ethnic, and linguistic groups (particularly Kichwa)? • Inclusion of new technologies: Were we to include new technology in materials at the consular window (i.e. QR codes for various language options for Wilberforce materials, refusal letters in Kichwa, instructions for picking up approved passports and visas etc.) would this improve user experience? Can we measure that? Are there comparative examples that could be explored from within the Western Hemisphere where indigenous languages have been used effectively (including in the United States)? • Barriers to access: What are the primary barriers to access for information? Is language the biggest issue? Are we able to develop a qualitative tool to understand the barriers to accessing consular appointments and resources? • Community engagement and combatting misinformation: Travel agencies provide all manner of information, both correct and wildly inaccurate. How can we combat misinformation spread through travel agencies and social media accounts? Can we develop a “spot” in Kichwa for Instagram that says the only official source for information on visas and travel to the United States is travel.state.gov, and that travel agencies’ primary goal is to earn profit? A challenge we have is that U.S. government institutions cannot use TikTok, even though this is a rapidly growing application. How can we reach TikTok users with our messages?
<p>Final Product Format</p>	<p>We are aware that creating a Kichwa language communications and outreach strategy and corresponding outreach materials, as well as addressing the efficacy of outreach platforms, inclusion of new technologies, barriers to access, and community engagement and combatting misinformation is a lot to ask! If participating universities can address at least one of these challenges, we would be grateful and willing to work with you on solutions.</p> <p>Here are some additional options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A concise Kichwa communications strategy (5 pages or less). • A short report on how to incorporate new technologies and overcome barriers to access and misinformation. • A QR code that could link to Wilberforce materials in Kichwa, Spanish, and English. • Kichwa anti-fraud pamphlets. • Effective Kichwa and Spanish social media posts, with recommendations on the best platforms. • Possible radio spot for pre-literate populations.
<p>Discipline/Expertise</p>	<p><i>International Relations, History, Latin American Studies, Communications</i></p>
<p>Additional Information</p>	<p>The William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act is a crucial legislation aimed at combating human trafficking. It builds upon the Trafficking Victims</p>

Protection Act of 2000 and strengthens global efforts to combat trafficking, protect victims, and hold perpetrators accountable. The Act expands pre-existing law enforcement authority and criminal proscriptions in this area, both internationally and domestically. All applicants traveling to the United States to work are required to read and understand their rights as provided in the Wilberforce Act. Currently, this information is provided only in English and Spanish.

Wilberforce PDF Link:

[https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/visas/LegalRightsandProtections/Wilberforce/Documents/Wilberforce-ENG-100116%20\(9\).pdf](https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/visas/LegalRightsandProtections/Wilberforce/Documents/Wilberforce-ENG-100116%20(9).pdf)

Wilberforce video link:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/temporary-workers.html%23ExternalPopup>



Title	DipLab2421302
Project Name	Analyzing Impact of PRC Exchange Students and Research Collaboration on Republic of Korea Higher Education
Office	Public Diplomacy
Embassy	Korea
Bureau	East Asian and Pacific Affairs
Project Description	<p>Thanks to its openness and high academic standards, the Republic of Korea (ROK) has become a magnet for exchange students from the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in recent years. By some counts, Chinese students make up nearly a third of the total foreign student population in the ROK each year, while research exchanges and state-sponsored cultural programs at Confucius Centers are increasingly prevalent on many Korean campuses. The magnitude of this exchange and heavy PRC state involvement in research cooperation presents challenges for ROK schools looking to make the most of international collaboration while maintaining high academic standards and research independence.</p> <p>To explore these trends, the U.S. Embassy in Seoul seeks Diplomacy Lab partners to investigate and make policy recommendations on the challenges posed by increasing academic exchange with the PRC. Specific topics of research should include: an analysis of overall international student populations and trends (including future growth predictions); the concentration of Chinese students at ROK institutions by topic and region; trends in research partnerships between ROK post-graduates, professors, and their Chinese counterparts; and an analysis of on-campus PRC-sponsored activities (eg: Confucius Centers). This research should then be synthesized into a report and policy brief to be presented to the Embassy and ROK officials with recommendations on strategies to best manage this increased cooperation. These recommendations should be based on original research and/or case studies from other countries that successfully managed rapid growth in their international education sectors. This project would be best suited to students enrolled in international relations, East Asian studies, cross-cultural communication, MPP or public-policy focused data science programs.</p>
Final Product Format	This research should be synthesized into a policy brief to be presented to the Embassy and ROK officials regarding the opportunities and challenges from increased international academic and research cooperation.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations</i>
Additional Information	A successful project will analyze data on cross-border research, study abroad students, and third country investment (eg: Confucius Centers). To prepare, we recommend interested groups look at data on joint research in online journals, as well as data on international student mobility from the Open Doors Report for comparison with U.S. schools as well as data from the ROK’s Ministry of Education and National Institute for International Education (NIIED).

Title	DipLab2421401
Project Name	Developing Case Studies on Public-Private Partnerships
Office	The Office of Global Partnerships
Bureau	Economic Growth, Energy, and Environment
Project Description	<p>The Office of Global Partnerships (GP) is the U.S. government leader in private sector engagement. Since its inception in 2008, this approach has fueled our ability to work with over 1,600 partners and mobilize more than \$3.7 billion in public and private sector resource commitments that have enhanced the Department’s diplomacy and development outcomes. Harnessing the technology, markets, and resources of the private sector enables the Department to quickly advance U.S. foreign policy goals and objectives, while providing businesses and organizations with opportunities to create jobs, promote economic prosperity, and advance business ties and dialogues in specific regions. GP spearheads partnership development for Department of State priorities and provides tools for other offices and embassies to leverage creativity, innovation and core business resources of partners to achieve greater impact.</p> <p>GP has toolkit and training programs to equip our diplomats with the knowledge and skills that they need to effectively engage the private sector and create public-private partnerships. Case studies of existing Department-initiated partnerships form the backbone of these training materials. This project is intended to provide the GP with new and updated case studies that will provide fresh perspectives and understandings on partnership development and management. The student teams will need to interview GP staff and their partners to create case studies of existing Department of State partnerships.</p>
Final Product Format	A 2-3 page descriptive of the partnership and accompanying presentation that details how it was formed, why the partners wanted to work together, inputs from the partners, outcomes that were derived, an analysis of the partnership governance, and other key take-aways for training purposes. Based on students findings, we also would like to understand if another mechanism, like a grant or contract, would be a more efficient and impactful way to address the issue. These are intended to be jumping off points, and E/GP welcomes different approaches and questions to best evaluate and develop case studies about our partnerships.
Discipline/Expertise	Public-Private Partnerships
Additional Information	<p>For more information about the Office of Global Partnerships, visit: https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-economic-growth-energy-and-the-environment/office-of-global-partnerships/</p> <p>A list of active GP partnerships that we'd welcome case studies on can be found here: https://www.state.gov/key-topics-office-of-global-partnerships/ Note that this includes Diplomacy Lab itself!</p>

Title	DipLab2421501
Project Name	Migrant Worker Debt in Southeast Asia: The Problem of High Recruitment Fees
Office	Economic/Political Section
Embassy	Singapore
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>This project aims to gain a better understanding of the systems and transnational networks facilitating the problem of high “recruitment fees” or “agent fees” for migrant workers in the Southeast Asian countries of Singapore and Malaysia, an issue that also involves South Asian countries from which workers migrate, such as India and Bangladesh. Project participants will examine the interconnecting networks within and between five primary home countries – Bangladesh, Indonesia, India, Burma/Myanmar, and Philippines – and two primary destination countries – Singapore and Malaysia. They will also identify non-governmental organizations, governmental agencies, and other key players that can help curb the problem.</p> <p>Southeast Asian countries such as Singapore and Malaysia see high numbers of migrant workers in various industries, such as construction, maritime, and domestic work. For example, out of Singapore’s population of roughly 5.6 million, approximately one million are migrant workers. The fees migrant workers pay along the way – including so-called recruitment or agent fees, placement fees, fees for trainings, transport, and certificates - often result in months-long debt, making these low-wage workers vulnerable to exploitation and raising concerns of forced labor or trafficking in persons. Although some home and destination countries regulate the recruitment business, illegal recruitment remains a challenge. The networks that facilitate these high fees often elude destination countries’ law enforcement agencies, especially when they occur in migrant workers’ home countries and/or through informal communication channels. This project will start the critical work of identifying the systems and networks – both internal and transnational – that are creating and entrenching the problem, as well as the key agencies and entities that can help combat it. Concrete final products in the form of an analytic report with recommendations about how to address the problem; a comprehensive bibliography; and a chart of NGOs and agencies will inform regional U.S. embassies’ efforts to identify and suggest potential solutions to host government contacts and others.</p>
Final Product Format	1. Written research paper, including recommendations, chart of NGOs, and bibliography. 2. Presentation to Embassy staff
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations, Democracy & Human Rights, East Asian/Pacific Studies, Human Rights, South/Central Asian Studies, Trafficking in Persons, Labor, Migration, Law Enforcement</i>
Additional Information	Once the project is selected, we can discuss which home countries to focus on for Singapore and which for Malaysia.
Title	DipLab2421601
Project Name	“Cities Forward” Climate Risk Assessment
Office	Economic Policy and Summit Coordination

Bureau	Western Hemisphere Affairs
Project Description	<p>Climate Risk Assessment and Hazard Analysis for up to six of the following Cities Forward cities: Cali, Colombia; Cartagena, Colombia; Hermosillo, México; Mérida, México Renca, Chile; Montego Bay, Jamaica; Guatemala City, Guatemala; Fortaleza, Brazil; Rosario, Argentina; Freeport, The Bahamas</p> <p>Graduate level urban planning, climate science, or environmental management students would research and develop project-level climate hazard analysis and risk assessment approaches for up to six cities under the Cities Forward project. Relying on hazard assessment reports and other data provided, students will conduct science-oriented research, such as identifying and evaluating downscaled data and research relevant to climate exposures at project sites. Students will also be able to access an online tool to complete risk assessments for each of the targeted cities with local stakeholder inputs and participation. As a result, city leaders can use a new international standard for the preparation and implementation of climate adaptation projects.</p> <p><u>Background:</u> The project seeks to incorporate U.S. university researchers, students, and faculty knowledge and skills into an ongoing State Department initiative called Cities Forward. The Cities Forward program is a cooperative agreement between the U.S. State Department, ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), the Resilient Cities Catalyst, and the Institute of the Americas. The Cities Forward program has paired 12 cities from the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) with 12 U.S. cities.</p> <p>The goal of Cities Forward is to help participating cities solve urban challenges ranging from sustainability to inclusion to climate resiliency. Cities Forward helps participating cities connect to U.S. peers and develop sustainability action plans and implementation strategies to address local challenges. Project activities under the initiative include peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, capacity-building, multi-stakeholder action plan development, and plan finance and implementation activities. More information about Cities Forward can be found here: https://icleiusa.org/cities-forward/.</p> <p>This Diplomacy Lab project would support data analysis in up to six selected Cities Forward cities to help them meet their climate adaptation goals, including planning, financing, implementation, and monitoring of climate strategies. Additionally, this report would give city officials new data analysis that can contribute to their respective national government climate reporting under the UNFCCC. This cooperation can support reporting outcomes under the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP) for Climate Action announced at COP28 in Dubai.</p>
Final Product Format	Students and their advisors will draft reports of risk assessment findings and hazard analysis for each of the selected cities. The students and their faculty advisors will present their reports to State Department for review. If the final product meets the standards set out in the description above, the students and their faculty advisors will be invited to present their report, and/or PowerPoint presentation, and if they choose, a short video about their work, to leaders from each of the selected cities The presentation will be done either in person or virtually (or both) dependent upon availability of funding. There may be other opportunities for presentations in other international fora as well.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>Climate Change, Urban Planning, Environmental Studies</i>

Additional Information

Initial baseline information should be obtained through student’s research, including use of Google Earth and other tools to facilitate visualizations of urban geography and topography. For more information about the International Standard for Climate Adaptation Projects, see: [Climate Adaptation Standard — Resilient Cities Catalyst \(rcc.city\)](#) If desired, State Department can put students and their faculty advisors in touch with Cities Forward implementation partners to facilitate connections to relevant authorities in each of the targeted cities to develop knowledge and information sharing.



Title	DipLab2031331
Project Name	Designing for Diplomacy: Net Zero Energy Building Design
Office	PDCS/DE/AD
Bureau	Overseas Buildings Operations
Project Description	<p>Zero-Energy design has emerged as an attainable goal for United States embassies and consulates around the world. Rapid progress in building systems design, energy capture and water conservation technologies, and passive site and building approaches can address the increasing challenges of global water scarcity and energy resource depletion. The Overseas Building Department Architectural Design Division invites graduate and undergraduate proposals from accredited schools of Architecture and Engineering for a net-zero, resilient embassy design studio.</p> <p>Proposals should include Studio level (I.e. 4th year, advanced graduate). Interdisciplinary initiatives and formal participation by other academic disciplines Studio course curriculum description, including studio structure and pedagogy Proposed design studio schedule Curriculum vitae of lead studio critic/professor</p> <p>OBO will work with the successful proposer to select an appropriate project program and site.</p>
Final Product Format	Course curriculum and final Student Project Presentation Booklet
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations, Architecture</i>
Additional Information	



Title	DipLab2331011
Project Name	Inventory of greenhouse gasses (GHG) in forestry and agriculture sectors of Kazakhstan
Office	Regional ESTH Office for Central Asia
Embassy	Kazakhstan
Bureau	Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs
Project Description	<p>The goal of this project is to study the U.S. experience in measuring and inventory of greenhouse gasses in agriculture and forestry to implement such practices in Kazakhstan and Central Asia. This project would help Kazakhstan's EcoMuseum and its partners in Central Asia develop and implement the necessary Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) system for such an inventory, as well as to determine which aspects are most applicable to countries in Central Asia. This could also further the implementation of Kazakhstan's nationally determined contributions on climate change.</p> <p>Although Kazakhstan has adopted legislation regulating greenhouse gas inventories, the legislation is not transparent. In Central Asia more broadly, almost no data are collected for monitoring, assessment and verification of greenhouse gasses, leaving GHG inventory incomplete.</p> <p>EcoMuseum and its partners hope the development of an MRV system in the forestry and other land use sectors would also help Kazakhstan or other Central Asian countries better address global sustainable development challenges as well as various international climate commitments.</p>
Final Product Format	Multiple teams can participate in this project. Expected deliverables are a presentation, report, and if appropriate, a round table discussion with local stakeholders on findings on the analysis of the monitoring system, assessment, and verification of data on greenhouse gas emissions in the forestry and agriculture sectors in the United States to implement such practices in Kazakhstan.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>Climate Change, Water Security, Food Security</i>
Additional Information	<p>Questions for the research team:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What legislation regulates the monitoring of emissions in the agricultural or forestry sectors? 2. Who is responsible for conducting this at sub-national levels? 3. What institutions or enterprises are required to report on greenhouse gas emissions, depending on the field of activity, volume of production or other factors? 4. Which methods or methodologies are used for calculating emissions from various sectors of forestry and agriculture? 5. How transparent is the inventory of information on emissions in different spheres of forestry and agriculture and in different regions of the country? How accessible is this information to experts or the public?

Title	DipLab2331513
Project Name	Moon Dust and the Impending Global Economic Collapse
Office	SAIT/Space Affairs
Bureau	Foreign Service Institute/ Oceans, Environment and International Science Affairs
Project Description	How will differing interpretations of the international legal requirements and developing best practices inform the utilization of space resources on the Moon and other celestial bodies?
Final Product Format	20-40 Page Research Paper
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations, Geology, Engineering, Law</i>
Additional Information	<p>The United States and People’s Republic of China are likely the next two states to send people to the Moon and seek to use lunar resources in-situ.</p> <p>Both states have ratified the same relevant international law but may have differing and conflicting interpretations of the legality and technical propriety of using water, regolith, unique locations, and other resources in their activities.</p> <p>Additional Guiding Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What precedents have been, and are likely to be established, by the actions of these two states by 2040? • How will potentially breakthrough technologies and resources shape outcomes? Such as peaks of eternal light, natural cave systems, helium-3, etc. • How will the terrestrial activities of the United States and PRC affect their lunar activities and vice versa? • How will non-binding instruments, like the Artemis Accords, evolve to shape action and legal interpretations?



Title	DipLab2331514
Project Name	Observatory on Organized Crime
Office	INL Ecuador
Embassy	Ecuador
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>INL works towards improving the response of the criminal justice system and the design of public politics, including legislative reforms Through the Observatory of Organized Crime INL will produce technical and analytical document and public policies proposal to improve GOE decision making.</p> <p>INL will continue to collect information on the needs of the institutions involved in the project. This will include i) analysis of statements based on a large representative sample, ii) analysis of the functioning of the criminal justice system, iii) think tanks and inter-agency technical sessions (i.e., cybercrime among other themes), and iv) identification of mechanisms oriented at legal strengthening against TOC (i.e., directives, resolutions, bills, litigation of strategic cases).</p>
Final Product Format	The Organized Crime Observatory will prepare specialized inputs to aid decision-making to improve current knowledge criminal justice (focused on organized crime, drug trafficking, money laundering) and the related dynamics and to develop a better institutional response against this problem. The report will analyze the legal and operational challenges that the criminal justice system and based on the findings, will develop technical tools that may consist of interpretive guides for related criminal offenses, operational action protocols or specialized investigation plans.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations, Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement, Sociology, Statistics</i>
Additional Information	<p>https://www.sentencingcouncil.vic.gov.au/</p> <p>INL would like that Ecuador has eventually a sentencing council for data analysis of sentencing.</p>

Title	DipLab2350501
Project Name	Urban Planning for Ukraine's Green Recovery
Office	Office of Environmental Quality
Bureau	Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs
Project Description	<p>The Russian war of aggression has significantly damaged many cities and completely levelled others in Ukraine. Planning for post-conflict reconstruction needs to begin now, even during ongoing conflict. Ukraine has excellent technical experts and scientists, but it lacks capacity in modern urban planning. Most of their critical infrastructure systems, including the built environment and basic urban services, were designed and built during the Soviet period, which was centrally planned and executed. Therefore, there is a need for urban planners who can integrate more modern nature-based solutions that combat pollution, filter air and water, and mitigate floods and heat within traditional infrastructure spaces. The Ukrainians are committed to building non-fossil fuel-based energy systems to power buildings, transportation, communications, and water purification and distribution. They need to develop capacity to retrofit historical or culturally significant buildings with LEED and WELL building certified remodeling, and they lack SITES certified landscape architects who can improve building siting for enhanced climate resilience.</p> <p>Ukrainian mayors know that they want to build back better, but they need to be able to envision their potential city of the future to coalesce citizen and international community support for that vision. Otherwise, the default may be to simply rebuild the environmentally unsustainable Soviet style city of the past, reliant on fossil fuels and carbon-emitting power generation. The task calls for an interdisciplinary university group led by urban planners and supported by architects, landscape architects, engineers, environmental scientists, and others. The group will propose or be assigned a Ukrainian city that has been damaged or destroyed and completely reimagine it as a beautiful, green, walkable, urban oasis, resilient to both natural and man-made shocks, but also respecting and celebrating its cultural heritage.</p>
Final Product Format	Students and their advisors will present a virtual 3-D rendering of the rebuilt sustainable city to State Department OES/ENV for review. If the final product meets the standard set out in the description above, the students and their faculty advisors will be invited to present their virtual renderings to the Ukrainian Embassy in Washington DC, and to representatives of the selected city. There may be other opportunities for presentations in other international fora as well.
Discipline/Expertise	Architecture , Energy Security , Climate Change , Urban Planning
Additional Information	Initial baseline city maps should be taken from publicly available remote sensing platforms such as Google Earth. Any significantly damaged or destroyed city may be selected, but preferably one that has not already received master-planning support from the international community. If desired, the State Department can help identify an appropriate city for re-envisioning.

Title	DipLab2392612
Project Name	International Policy for Embodied Carbon
Office	Office of Design and Engineering
Bureau	Overseas Buildings Operations
Project Description	<p>This project focuses on researching international policy and regulatory guidance around embodied carbon emissions that considers the full lifecycle of our built environment; examples include zoning and land use, building ordinances, procurement, and financial policies amongst others. Embodied carbon, which accounts for the carbon emitted during the production, transportation, and assembly of building materials, might be often overlooked in the shadow of operational carbon and energy measures, but its environmental impact is undeniable; it will be responsible for half of the carbon footprint of new structures between now and 2050. Tackling the problem isn't just about reducing current carbon footprints, but also safeguarding the future of our cities, industries, and ecosystems.</p> <p>This work will assist the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) in understanding the global policy landscape and creating governing strategies for design and construction project processes, systems, and objectives. The core of this project is not just environmental, but also economic. Forward-thinking policy will spur innovation, create new markets and jobs in low-carbon materials and construction processes. With its global market presence, OBO wants to prioritize embodied carbon and signal our commitment to a greener future.</p>
Final Product Format	Research report and a final presentation with OBO stakeholders. The report should also include representational graphics as appropriate.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations, Climate Change, International Law, International Development, Architecture</i>
Additional Information	OBO currently organizes its global portfolio into 6 main regions, which should be the framework for organizing the research and policy information provided. There is also a report in progress regarding a roadmap for embodied carbon strategy at OBO which will be provided ahead of this effort.

Title	DipLab2392620
Project Name	Reducing carbon emissions in agricultural and forestry sectors of Kazakhstan
Office	Regional Environment, Science, Technology and Health Office, Embassy Astana
Embassy	Kazakhstan
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>The goal of this project is to study the U.S. experience in measuring and inventory of greenhouse gasses in agriculture and forestry to implement such practices in Kazakhstan and Central Asia. This project would help Kazakhstan's EcoMuseum and its partners in Central Asia develop and implement the necessary Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) system for such an inventory, as well as to determine which aspects are most applicable to countries in Central Asia. This could also further the implementation of Kazakhstan's nationally determined contributions on climate change.</p> <p>Although Kazakhstan has adopted legislation regulating greenhouse gas inventories, the legislation is not transparent. In Central Asia more broadly, almost no data are collected for monitoring, assessment and verification of greenhouse gasses, leaving GHG inventory incomplete.</p> <p>EcoMuseum and its partners hope the development of an MRV system in the forestry and other land use sectors would also help Kazakhstan or other Central Asian countries better address global sustainable development challenges as well as various international climate commitments.</p>
Final Product Format	Multiple teams can participate in this project. Expected deliverables are a presentation, report, and if appropriate, a round table discussion with local stakeholders on findings on the analysis of the monitoring system, assessment, and verification of data on greenhouse gas emissions in the forestry and agriculture sectors in the United States to implement such practices in Kazakhstan.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>Climate Change, Food Security, Water Security</i>
Additional Information	<p>Questions for the research team;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What legislation regulates the monitoring of emissions in the agricultural or forestry sectors? 2. Who is responsible for conducting this at sub-national levels? 3. What institutions or enterprises are required to report on greenhouse gas emissions, depending on the field of activity, volume of production or other factors? 4. Which methods or methodologies are used for calculating emissions from various sectors of forestry and agriculture? 5. How transparent is the inventory of information on emissions in different spheres of forestry and agriculture and in different regions of the country? How accessible is this information to experts or the public?

Title	DipLab2392621
Project Name	Serbia: Investigating Consumer Choices to Improve Energy Efficiency
Office	Economic Section
Embassy	Serbia
Bureau	Economic Growth, Energy, and Environment
Project Description	<p>Serbia is facing serious challenges in its energy sector. Overcoming them presents opportunities for a transition to a more efficient and greener economy. Policy makers and international development agencies are working to advance effective approaches that address the lack of incentives for investments in energy efficiency, inefficient use of existing energy resources, the low level of renewables in the country's energy mix, and the government's lack of capacity to design and implement energy efficiency strategies.</p> <p>Much of Serbia's energy transition can be framed as a "liberalization" of the energy sector, which includes key changes in the structure of state-owned energy companies and more focus on the role of competition to enhance efficiency. A sustainable energy path in Serbia, however, also requires consumer-level behavior changes - a challenging prospect in a middle-income country accustomed to subsidized energy, with few official incentives to adopt cleaner and more efficient technologies, and where coal mining directly employs 30,000 people.</p> <p>We propose forming a team that takes an innovative, research-based approach to investigate how changing energy consumer' mindsets in this post-Yugoslavia economy can contribute to the success of Serbia's energy transition. The outcome of the research will include recommended policy interventions that can facilitate positive outcomes in energy efficiency investment, given current social-economic conditions in Serbia. The team that undertakes this task can approach the challenge using a variety of methodologies, including literature reviews, thematic studies, experimental approaches, in-person interviews, and surveys.</p>
Final Product Format	A presentation to the U.S. Embassy Belgrade and USAID/Serbia, in addition to a 15-page written report (references are not included in the page count). If the university partner has full funding for travel, the partner is welcome to visit the country for a better understanding of the situation on the ground.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic & Finance Issues, Energy Security, European & Eurasian Studies, Science and Technology, Climate Change, Behavioral Economics, Post-Yugoslavia economy and culture, Survey and/or experiment design and implementation, Thematic analysis</i>
Additional Information	N/A

Title	DipLab2392635
Project Name	Critical and Emerging Technologies - Engaging Emerging Markets To Promote Secure Technology Development
Office	Cooperative Threat Reduction

Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>In 2022, the U.S. released an updated list of critical and emerging technologies (CETs) that can play an important role in our nation’s security. The list identifies CETs that have the greatest potential to further efforts to promote U.S. technological leadership, cooperate with allies and partners, and advance democratic values. Through international engagements with partners seeking to develop their CET capabilities, we can work to strengthen our diplomatic relationships while fostering an environment where CETs are developed safely, securely, and responsibly.</p> <p>To support these efforts, we are seeking recommendations for CET related organizations in emerging markets in low- and middle-income countries that we should engage with to promote research security and cybersecurity best practices. Identify and analyze sources such as research funding, VC investments, start-up company growth, etc. to determine which CETs are high priority for countries to invest in to develop their capabilities.</p>
Final Product Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report outlining methodology as well as executive summary and tiered recommendations. - Presentation to DOS providing high level overview of results and recommendations.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations, Arms Control/Non-proliferation, Public-Private Partnerships, Science and Technology</i>
Additional Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Office of Cooperative Threat Reduction Information: https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-arms-control-and-international-security-affairs/bureau-of-international-security-and-nonproliferation/office-of-cooperative-threat-reduction/ - Technologies for American Innovation and National Security: https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/news-updates/2022/02/07/technologies-for-american-innovation-and-national-security/ - Project team(s) will work with ISN/CTR to identify priority regions depending on level of bandwidth. This project can scaled up/down as needed to fit team(s) availability.

Title	DipLab2392641
Project Name	Turkiye's Contingent Liabilities from infrastructure spending
Office	Ankara
Bureau	European and Eurasian Affairs
Project Description	<p>Turkiye has a vast portfolio of modern infrastructure, much of it procured under the buy own operate transfer model.</p> <p>Although Turkiye's public finances appear relatively healthy, these projects could create large contingent liabilities that would need to be paid for using public funds. This project would analyze Turkiye's infrastructure portfolio and the scale of contingent liabilities from these projects.</p>
Final Product Format	15- page research report with one-page executive summary and attached excel models.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations, Economic & Finance Issues</i>
Additional Information	15- page research report with one-page executive summary and attached excel models.



Title	DipLab2392644
Project Name	Analysis of Austrian Civil Society Networks
Office	U.S. Embassy Vienna - Public Diplomacy Section
Embassy	Austria
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>Submit proposals for a comprehensive analysis of Austrian civil society networks. This project seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the structure, reach, and influence of Austrian civil society networks at both the federal and provincial levels. The primary objective is to identify and rank the most influential actors within the Austrian civil society sector. Specific insights into the relationships and dynamics among these individuals and institutions would benefit Embassy Vienna’s public diplomacy efforts.</p> <p>Identify key actors within Austrian civil society on both federal and provincial levels. Rank these actors based on their influence, outreach, and other relevant metrics. Analyze the interplay and relationships among these actors to understand the broader network dynamics.</p> <p>Consider further segmentation into sub-categories if it proves to be useful. Propose suggestions for public diplomacy outreach activities based on the analysis.</p>
Final Product Format	A PowerPoint presentation detailing the findings, including a ranked list of influential actors as well as a visual representation (e.g., a map) that illustrates the connections, hierarchies, and relationships among civil society actors. Ensure the visualization is user-friendly and can be easily interpreted by stakeholders without a background in network analysis.
Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Relations, Civil Society, European & Eurasian Studies</i>
Additional Information	General understanding of the Austrian political context would be desirable.

