

Spring 2025 Project Menu



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Project ID	187
Project Name	Strategic Planning and Microlearning
Office	Planning, Performance and Systems
Embassy	
Bureau	Foreign Assistance
Project Description	<p>We are looking to collaborate with academic partners to combine the diplomatic strategic planning approach with educational theory to create a more intuitive, graphical approach for on-demand microlessons that teach strategic planners the skills necessary to create and implement effective strategic plans.</p> <p>The State Department has hundreds of strategic plans to drive diplomatic efforts around the world. At the Embassy and Mission level, the people creating these plans often have little previous exposure to the strategic planning process and little opportunity for in-person instruction. These microlearning modules will help to make U.S. diplomatic and foreign assistance efforts more effective and strategic.</p>
Final Product Format	A set of 10 microlearning strategic planning lessons in an online, animated PowerPoint, or other commonly accessible format.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Education and Cultural Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Computer Science</i>
Additional Information	The 10 areas for the microlearning modules already have initial work aids. Specific microlearning scripts and videos would have to be developed. This project can span two semesters, if required.
Academic Level	Undergraduate

Project ID	188
Project Name	Data Driven Diplomacy: Strategic Planning Dashboard
Office	Planning, Performance and Systems
Embassy	
Bureau	Foreign Assistance
Project Description	<p>We are looking to collaborate with academic partners to more effectively use and display strategic planning data. Students will design an interactive dashboard that compiles data from several datasets using Power BI and then displays that information in an intuitive, graphical format. The dashboard must update automatically to reflect new data. The Department of State is transitioning to more data-driven diplomacy.</p> <p>This project asks academic partners to create an intuitive dashboard using Power BI that integrates multiple data sources. As part of this process, students will need to formulate data using SharePoint, Excel, Power Automate, and Power Apps to ensure that data is concise, easily updated, and automated. Students will then use this data to create reports that visualize trends and important information. Such reports may include but are not limited to strategy updates, training, and other strategy tracking metrics.</p> <p>Technological knowledge of Power BI and other Microsoft Power apps is essential to this project.</p>
Final Product Format	A Power BI dashboard on the Managing for Results website that automatically updates with data from multiple datasets.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Computer Science</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Information and Communication Technology</i>
Additional Information	Maybe developed in an academic environment, but must work in a State Department OpenNet operating environment.
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	189
Project Name	Effective Indicators for Diplomatic Engagement
Office	Planning, Performance and Systems
Embassy	
Bureau	Foreign Assistance
Project Description	Embassies around the world struggle to measure progress on diplomatic engagement efforts. A lack of objective data often hinders the assessments on certain strategic approaches and if those approaches need to be adjusted. While economic activity, development, or public diplomacy efforts often produce in objective data, it is more difficult to measure and assess the success of diplomatic engagements. This difficulty then extends into how to formulate effective strategic objectives and indicators in a measurable way. We are seeking the opportunity to collaborate with an academic partner to improve strategic objectives and indicators for diplomatic engagement efforts.
Final Product Format	A literature review of indicators for diplomatic efforts, a set of best practices, and a list of model objectives and indicators that missions could use as templates for their diplomatic efforts.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Political /Military Affairs</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Psychology</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid



Project ID	190
Project Name	Telling the U.S. Economic Impact Story in Southeast Asia
Office	Economic and Political Affairs
Embassy	Singapore
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>The United States is the top investor in many Southeast Asian countries and among the top trade partners for most economies in the region. American companies provide higher wages and greater career development opportunities than local and regional competitors and are widely viewed as employers of choice.</p> <p>Trade with the United States helps develop advanced industries. And U.S. FDI powers the sectors Southeast Asian governments most seek to grow. But public and elite perception undercount the U.S. contribution to the region’s economy. Media across the region routinely emphasize the centrality of the PRC in Southeast Asia’s economic development, though the data show a more nuanced picture.</p> <p>This project seeks a team of students with experience in data analytics and visualization, economics, graphic design, and/or communications, to provide a broad-ranging analysis of the United States’ economic impact in Singapore and beyond, in the form of compelling, easily digestible, and fun infographics, one-pagers, or digital visual-analytic products.</p>
Final Product Format	Compelling, easily digestible, and fun infographics, one-pagers, or digital visual-analytic products.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Statistics</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Graduate

Project ID	191
Project Name	Niger Online Disinformation Tracker (NODT)
Office	Embassy Niamey - Public Affairs Office
Embassy	Niger
Bureau	African Affairs
Project Description	<p>In the rapidly evolving digital landscape of Niger, the proliferation of disinformation poses a significant threat to democratic governance and stabilization. The Niger Online Disinformation Tracker (NODT) is a proposed online platform designed to equip stakeholders in Niger with the tools necessary to identify and counteract disinformation.</p> <p>This project seeks to harness low-cost and accessible technology to monitor and analyze digital media across Niger, offering real-time insights into the sources and spread of misleading content. By providing a centralized, accessible hub for data analysis, NODT aims to enhance the capacity of journalists, civil society, and government bodies to uphold information integrity and foster a well-informed public discourse.</p> <p>The project will entail the development of an intuitive interface that aggregates and visualizes data from a variety of online sources, using natural language processing and machine learning to track disinformation trends. We hope this project will create a robust analytical framework that can adapt to the unique challenges of Niger’s media environment. This project will not only advance efforts to counter disinformation but also engage a new generation of tech-savvy leaders in the fight against disinformation. NODT promises to be a critical resource for enhancing democratic engagement and countering the destabilizing effects of false information in Niger.</p>
Final Product Format	<p>The final product format for the Niger Online Disinformation Tracker (NODT) project could be envisioned as a comprehensive digital platform that includes the following components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interactive Dashboard: A user-friendly interface that displays real-time analytics, trends, and visualizations of disinformation campaigns across various media channels in Niger. This dashboard will allow users to quickly understand the scope and impact of false information circulating online. 2. Analytical Reports: Regularly updated reports that provide deeper insights into specific disinformation incidents, their origins, and the effectiveness of countermeasures. These reports can be used for briefing stakeholders and guiding policy decisions. 3. Training Module: An integrated component designed to educate users on identifying and countering disinformation. This module would include tutorials, best practices, and resources to enhance the skills of journalists, civil society members, and government officials. 4. Alert System: A notification feature that alerts users to sudden spikes in disinformation or emerging trends that require immediate attention. This format combines real-time data processing with educational resources and analytical reporting to create a dynamic tool that not only tracks but also combats the spread of disinformation in Niger.

Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Information and Communication Technology</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Communications</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Graduate



Project ID	192
Project Name	Surfing the Wave of Youth Pan-Africanism
Office	Political and Economic Section
Embassy	Burkina Faso
Bureau	Political Affairs
Project Description	<p>Due to a significant demographic boom, by the year 2100, Africa’s population is on track to triple to 4 billion - making it three times more populous than China today. Starting in the 1990s, China had its 30 years of explosive growth; India is now having its moment, but Africa will be next - and today’s African youth know it. African youth today are digitally connected and seek a new future for Africa based upon a modern conception of pan-Africanism.</p> <p>Youth pan-Africanism is poised to be - by a significant margin - the most transformative force in Africa today, in particular West Africa where it is enjoying a powerful renaissance. It is just a question of time before the old guard of West African leaders will be swept away, replaced by a younger generation that seeks to completely (and finally) shake off the shackles of colonialism and neo-colonialism, redefine Africa’s relations with the world based upon respect for sovereignty and dignity, and reshape African domestic politics around African solutions for African problems, African notions of democracy and human rights, and helping Africa stand on its own two feet. Sadly, the United States is not prepared for this wave. Its policy is stuck in old mindsets and defense of the old guard.</p> <p>Pan-Africanism today is currently largely being led by military regimes in the Sahel, in particular President Ibrahim Traore, the world’s youngest head of state and a self-styled reincarnation of revolutionary icon Thomas Sankara. While his rule has been repressive, he is nonetheless viewed as a charismatic revolutionary leader. As a result, the United States views pan-Africanism as a threat, something to be feared and resisted. To complicate matters worse, Russia and China alike are cynically trying to harness pan-Africanism to drive democratic interests out of West Africa.</p> <p>We are seeking a Diplomacy Lab partner to examine how the United States - not just the U.S. government, but all American society - should reposition itself to partner with the growing wave of youth pan-Africanism. Instead of viewing it as something to be feared, the United States should embrace it as a wave to be surfed to forge a new partnership between the youth of America and the youth of Africa. It can build upon long-standing U.S. traditions of pan-Africanist sentiments (Marcus Garvey, Malcolm X, etc.), and possibly build new partnerships between Burkinabe universities and HBCU in the United States, or at least U.S. programs that have strong Black and African Studies departments. We might also be able to partner with Black fraternities and sororities, such as Alpha Kappa Alpha.</p> <p>We want the Lab to come up with concrete proposals about how we can build (and fund) such partnerships so that youth pan-Africanism becomes a global phenomena, but is channeled in a way that is reflective of the democratic will of the people (not the current repressive, authoritarian bent that is discrediting the movement). We are looking for ideas that create real-deal cooperation with true pan-Africanist spirit of supporting Africa’s rise, African solutions to African problems, finally shaking off the paternalism/racism of past policy, to genuinely treat pan-Africanist youth and Africa with equal dignity.</p>

Final Product Format	We would like the Diplomacy Lab to produce a report with actionable items that guide U.S. policymakers how they can “surf the wave of pan-Africanism” helping channel it in a globally beneficial direction, consistent with U.S. democratic values. We are seeking both policy ideas and justifications, but more importantly, practical ideas (and funding ideas) for how to build partnerships between pan-Africanist youth in the United States and West Africa in general, but Burkina Faso in particular, including through universities in the two countries. By connecting pan-Africanist youth in the two countries, it not only can become a more global phenomena, but also can become a global force for good.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>African Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Youth Issues</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid



Project ID	193
Project Name	Preventing Violent Extremism in Uzbekistan
Office	Political-Economic Section
Embassy	Uzbekistan
Bureau	South and Central Asian Affairs
Project Description	<p>Uzbekistan is at a crossroads: a Post-Soviet style of governance that is staunchly secular combined with an exponentially growing population of devout, conservative Muslims. While culture clashes have been few, their likelihood increases every year as the government struggles to ensure the rights of a population whose religious practice was historically restrained first by the Soviets and then by autocrat Islam Karimov, while at the same time ensuring space for a plurality of voices, both secular and religious. Meanwhile, jihadist recruiters see in the growing religious population fertile ground for sowing extremist ideas, and while their attempts have so far in large part been unsuccessful, high-profile arrests of Central Asians in the U.S. and Europe and terrorist attacks perpetrated by Central Asians in Russia and elsewhere demonstrate a real risk of radicalization. Experts in preventing violent extremism (PVE) agree the government's restrictive law-enforcement-first approach will only alienate Uzbekistan's religious population and increase the risk.</p> <p>What is unclear is what approach might work given Uzbekistan's cultural and historical milieu, and this project would study secular governments with majority, or significant minority, Muslim populations who have "gotten it right" when it comes to PVE, so that Post can be better informed in its advocacy for a PVE approach that prevents radicalism while safeguarding religious freedom.</p> <p>Deliverable would be a research paper examining several countries' approaches and outcomes, with an analysis of how this approach might be applied to an Uzbekistani context.</p>
Final Product Format	Research paper examining several countries' approaches and outcomes, with an analysis of how this approach might be applied to an Uzbekistani context.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Counter Terrorism</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Religious Studies</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Graduate

Project ID	194
Project Name	Developing Case Studies on the Conduct of Diplomacy and Diplomatic Tradecraft
Office	The Office of the Historian
Embassy	
Bureau	Foreign Service Institute
Project Description	<p>The Senior Advisor for the Study of the Conduct of Diplomacy solicits academic input for the background research to support the drafting of the Policy Implementation Review "Promoting International Stability: Lessons Learned from U.S. Diplomacy in Thailand, Botswana, and Bolivia." (Cases include: Preparing for Thailand's 2003 Designation as a Major Non-NATO Ally; Convincing Botswana to Participate in the 2006 Peace Operations in the Sudan; and Enhancing Counterterrorism Cooperation with Bolivia.) A case study (for the purposes of this project) involves a diplomatic mission (almost always a bilateral embassy) trying to achieve something concrete over a definable period of time that can be judged to be a success or failure.</p> <p>While final research includes material not publicly available, much of the necessary work relies on open sources, e.g., memoirs, speeches, or interviews of key people who were active at the given times, oral histories (as collected by the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training and elsewhere), press releases, transcripts of press briefings (especially including background briefings), reports by U.S. government agencies (USAID, Congressional Research Service, et al), reports from NGOs in the relevant field, and academic articles.</p> <p>This project would be appropriate for graduate students of Diplomatic Studies, International Relations, or History.</p>
Final Product Format	Word document with relevant, fully footnoted background information (length would vary according to how much data is identified).
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Other</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	
Additional Information	<p>This project would be appropriate for graduate students of Diplomatic Studies, International Relations, or History. I would expect to share copies of previous completed reviews, additional information about where to find key materials, examples of the type of background information that would be useful, as well as hints on where to find key documentation were this project to be selected. I'd be happy to share purpose-built reading lists. This project could be modified to have the three case studies split among members of one academic team or between multiple institutions. For more information, contact: Dr. Cynthia R. Doell Senior Advisor for the Study of the Conduct of Diplomacy United States Department of State, Office of the Historian doellc@state.gov</p>
Academic Level	Graduate

Project ID	196
Project Name	Mapping Climate-Health Commitments in the Pacific Region
Office	Pacific Environment, Science, Technology and Health Hub
Embassy	Fiji
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>The inaugural Pan-Pacific Conference on Climate and Health seeks to establish a network of climate-health practitioners in the Pacific region. One of the initial tasks will be to establish what commitments have been made on climate-health impacts, assess progress against those commitments, and then identify short-term/long-term action items that can drive progress. The project will focus on collecting open source commitments from Pacific Island declarations, COP26 and COP28 (COP29?) commitments, regional commitments such as those from the Pacific Island Forum, and National Action Plans. The next stage will be liaising with Pacific Island governments, via the climate-health focal points participating in the climate-health practitioners network or as identified by the Pacific Island Government to produce a stock-take on progress. The final portion will be the responsibility of the Pacific Island climate-health practitioners network to identify the short-term and long-term action items that they can recommend to the Pacific Heads of Health. Partners would include Department of State/USAID, WHO, the Pacific Community, Pacific Island Health Officer Association, and other UN agencies.</p>
Final Product Format	Editable table of commitments. Flexibility in final form but will need to be accessible by Pacific Island countries for editing.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Global Health</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Climate Change</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	197
Project Name	Best Practices in Government Approaches to Global Civil Rights Movements and Militant Separatism
Office	U.S. Consulate General Karachi POL Unit
Embassy	Pakistan
Bureau	South and Central Asian Affairs
Project Description	<p>Introduction: Militant separatism and civil rights movements sometimes arise together, presenting a mixture of security and human rights challenges for governments and concerned stakeholders. This research project aims to draw lessons from several civil rights movements around the world, such as the Kurdish Rights Movement, the Catalan Independence Movement, the Tibetan Independence Movement, and Indigenous Rights Movements in the Americas, to articulate best practices to inform policy on security and civil rights issues.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leverage academic research on how governments around the world have approached civil rights movements advocating higher degrees of autonomy to inform government policy about similar ongoing challenges globally. - Leverage academic research on how governments have addressed supporting civil rights movements and combating militant separatism. - Analyze the strategies and outcomes of various global civil rights movements. - Analyze the strategies and outcomes of various militant separatist movements. - Identify common themes and successful tactics used by government and these movements. <p>Conclusion: This research project aims to provide valuable insights and practical recommendations for governments to best approach similar civil rights movements and combat militant separatism. It draws lessons from successful civil rights movements and counter terrorism engagement around the world. By fostering a deeper understanding and proposing actionable strategies, this project offers a framework for how governments could work with concerned stakeholders and what strategies such stakeholders could consider to address civil rights concerns while also ensuring security in the face of militant separatism.</p>
Final Product Format	Expected Outcomes: A comprehensive report detailing the lessons learned from global civil rights movements and militant separatist movements. A set of actionable recommendations for governments including best practices to engage similar civil rights movements and combat simultaneous militant separatism.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>History</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Democracy & Human Rights</i>
Additional Information	<p>Methodology</p> <p>Literature Review: Conduct a comprehensive review of academic articles, books, and reports on the selected global civil rights movements, militant separatist movements, and government approaches to all.</p> <p>Case Studies: Develop detailed case studies of the Kurdish Rights Movement, the Catalan Independence Movement, the Tibetan Independence Movement, Indigenous Rights Movements in the Americas, Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, and separatist groups in Burma.</p> <p>Interviews: Conduct interviews with various scholars and activists. Comparative</p>

	<p>Analysis: Compare and contrast the strategies, challenges, and successes of these movements. References Academic articles, books, and reports on relevant rights movements and militant separatism. Case studies and literature on the Kurdish Rights Movement, the Catalan Independence Movement, the Tibetan Independence Movement, Indigenous Rights Movements in the Americas, the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, and separatist groups in Burma. Interviews with experts, activists, and scholars.</p> <p>Background on Comparable Movements:</p> <p>The Kurdish Rights Movement in Turkiye, Iraq, Syria, and Iran: The Kurdish movement seeks greater autonomy, cultural rights, and political representation for the Kurdish people across several countries.</p> <p>The Catalan Independence Movement in Spain: This movement advocates for the independence of Catalonia from Spain, emphasizing cultural identity, political autonomy, and economic control.</p> <p>The Tibetan Independence Movement in China: The Tibetan movement seeks greater autonomy or independence from China, focusing on cultural preservation, religious freedom, and political rights.</p> <p>The Indigenous Rights Movements in the Americas: Indigenous groups in countries like the United States, Canada, and Brazil advocate for land rights, cultural preservation, and political representation.</p> <p>The Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka: The Tamil Tigers, also known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), were a militant organization in Sri Lanka that sought to create an independent Tamil state and were involved in a prolonged civil war with the Sri Lankan government until their defeat in 2009.</p> <p>Separatist Groups in Burma: Burmese separatists, primarily represented by ethnic groups such as the Karen, Kachin, and Shan, seek autonomy or independence from Burma's central government due to long-standing ethnic, political, and economic grievances.</p> <p>These movements share common themes of seeking greater autonomy, preserving cultural identity, and achieving political and economic rights for marginalized groups, and have employed the use of violence verses non-violence to varying degrees.</p>
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	198
Project Name	Addressing the Escalating Air Quality Crisis in Karachi, the Fourth Most Polluted City in the World
Office	Section: POL-ECON (ECON Unit)
Embassy	Pakistan
Bureau	Economic and Business Affairs
Project Description	<p>The U.S. Consulate General in Karachi faces an invisible enemy - fine particulate air pollution (PM2.5). The Consulate has spurred public conversations on air quality in Pakistan. Karachi, Pakistan's largest city, is home to almost 30 million people and ranks as the 4th most polluted city in the world, with an average annual PM2.5 concentration of 56.4 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. The amount of PM2.5 in the air contributes to significant health problems and premature deaths.</p> <p>Karachi's pollution originates from vehicle emissions, industrial activities, agriculture, and natural dust storms. The high number of older vehicles and lax emission standards exacerbate air quality issues, while numerous factories emit pollutants without adequate filtration. Rapid development and the naturally arid climate further increase airborne dust particles.</p> <p>To address this, we have installed a sophisticated air quality monitor at the consulate, providing public data online. In 2022, the Consulate's Economic Unit led efforts to organize awareness seminars, engaging businesses, academics, the health sector, activists, and think tanks. The consulate also donated two low-cost air quality monitors to partner organizations to encourage dialogue. In 2023, we hosted policy roundtables, inviting the provincial government and connecting them with the private sector, particularly low-cost sensor manufacturers, to explore solutions. However, the problem persists, and we are now at a crossroads, asking, "What is next?" How can we best utilize our resources and connections to mitigate air pollution?</p>
Final Product Format	We request an action plan (presentation or a 4-page option memo) to identify low-hanging fruits and tangible deliverables on air quality in Karachi.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Global Health</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Climate Change</i>
Additional Information	Below are some of the links, depicting gravity of the problem, https://snip.state.gov/rov https://www.iqair.com/us/pakistan/sindh/karachi https://www.iqair.com/us/newsroom/5-most-polluted-major-cities-in-world-2023 https://pk.usembassy.gov/air-quality-data/
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	199
Project Name	Using Digital Technology to Combat Technology-Facilitated Human Trafficking: Methods and Strategies
Office	Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons
Embassy	
Bureau	Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights
Project Description	<p>In today’s rapidly evolving world, technology is often a double-edged sword. While technology has provided innovative solutions to preventing and addressing human trafficking, it has also prompted complex ethical questions and created new opportunities for criminals, including human traffickers, to be increasingly sophisticated in exploiting individuals for profit. Traffickers use technology to recruit, control, market and exploit vulnerable individuals while also evading detection. Traffickers do this, for example, by using the Internet to advertise and sell children online for sex, advertise false jobs on social media platforms that are actually human trafficking schemes, transfer cryptocurrency to other traffickers, and perpetuate online scam operations.</p> <p>At the same time, anti-trafficking stakeholders are using technological innovations to prevent human trafficking, protect victims, and prosecute traffickers. One way digital technology and human trafficking can intersect occurs when traffickers use online platforms to exploit victims. While not a novel phenomenon, renewed attention was brought to the issue because many people shifted their daily activities online at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, traffickers have continued to advance schemes to exploit individuals using digital tools to groom, deceive, control, and exploit victims.</p> <p>Increasingly, victims and survivors of human trafficking have shared that they first connected with their traffickers online. Some of these schemes lure individuals hundreds of miles away, including across borders, while others do not require them to leave their homes. Two prominent examples are the use of fraudulent job-recruitment websites by the operators of online scam centers to lure unsuspecting white-collar workers, and the use of fraudulent ads on Telegram and other messaging apps by labor and sex traffickers seeking to exploit vulnerable Ukrainian refugees fleeing from Russia’s full-scale invasion.</p> <p>While traffickers continue to refine and advance their use of digital technologies, anti-trafficking stakeholders must do the same. To advance efforts by governments and international organizations to combat technology-facilitated human trafficking, the TIP Office seeks a university partner with whom to engage in a consulting-style seminar, with the TIP Office in the role of the client. Our goal is to develop practical, widely applicable technological solutions and policy strategies to assist the TIP Office and multilateral organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to better focus our common efforts against technology-facilitated human trafficking. Students must first gain an understanding of human trafficking, including legal frameworks, vulnerability factors, prevention, and intervention strategies.</p> <p>The TIP Office will consult on the content of the trafficking-related curriculum and suggested readings, as well as meet with the class at least three times during the semester, but a faculty member versed in human trafficking is needed to take the lead. For the technology-focused portion of the curriculum, we envision that our university partner will provide a professor with expertise in big data and data-driven policy</p>

	<p>analysis to instruct students in the use of technological tools to detect actual signals in employment advertisements, ideally across multiple platforms. Based on the insights they gain into online recruitment mechanisms, the students should then develop policy recommendations to assist the TIP Office in holding persuasive engagements with foreign governments, platform providers, or other stakeholders who may be able to assist us in combating technology-facilitated human trafficking.</p> <p>As a pilot case, we suggest that students focus on advertisements potentially intending to exploit Ukrainian refugees in Europe. Russian and/or Ukrainian language skills, a translator, or a technological work-around will therefore be a necessary component of the engagement. Deliverables will include both a final, in-person presentation by the students at the TIP Office and a white paper. The presentation and paper should explain both the technology used and the students’ findings as to promising avenues for bilateral and/or multilateral engagements.</p> <p>In addition, the in-person presentation should cover the technological and linguistic methods used to detect fraudulent ads; the indicia of fraudulent ads; policy recommendations for the TIP Office to engage with foreign governments, platform providers, or other actors to suppress fraudulent recruitment mechanisms; and ideas for adapting the technological and linguistic methods developed in the course to other human trafficking situations.</p>
Final Product Format	<p>Deliverables will include both a white paper and a final, in-person presentation by the students at the TIP Office. The presentation and paper should explain the technology used and the students’ findings as to promising avenues for bilateral and/or multilateral engagements. In addition, the in-person presentation should cover the technological and linguistic methods used to detect fraudulent ads; the indicia of fraudulent ads; policy recommendations for the TIP Office to engage with foreign governments, platform providers, or other actors to suppress fraudulent recruitment mechanisms; and ideas for adapting the technological and linguistic methods developed in the course to other human trafficking situations.</p>
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<p><i>Information and Communication Technology</i></p>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<p><i>Trafficking in Persons</i></p>
Additional Information	<p>https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civilian-security-democracy-and-human-rights/office-to-monitor-and-combat-trafficking-in-persons/</p>
Academic Level	<p>Hybrid</p>

Project ID	200
Project Name	Proposal to Research Migrant Worker Remittance Flows to Uzbekistan and its Central Asian Neighbors
Office	Political/Economic Section, U.S. Embassy Tashkent
Embassy	
Bureau	South and Central Asian Affairs
Project Description	Although sources vary, annual remittances from migrant workers comprise approximately 12-15% of Uzbekistan's GDP making them a key economic driver for it and its neighbors. The objective of this proposed research project is to investigate and better understand the remittance flows to Uzbekistan from Uzbekistani migrant workers located in Russia and other countries. Uzbekistan's C5 neighbors (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan) also rely heavily on remittance flows. This research project will focus on identifying overall trends as well as analyzing the various channels and service providers, both formal and informal, through which these remittances are transferred. By examining the mechanisms used for remittance transfers, including banks, money transfer operators, and informal networks, the results of this research will shed light on the financial behaviors and preferences of Uzbekistani/Central Asian migrants. Key objectives include mapping the remittance landscape, identifying the most commonly used transfer channels, and assessing the regulatory environment affecting these transactions.
Final Product Format	A data analysis accompanied by a brief (3-5 pages) paper presenting the findings.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic Sanctions</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Graduate

Project ID	201
Project Name	Proposal to Research Chinese Investment in Uzbekistan and Central Asia
Office	Political/Economic Section
Embassy	Uzbekistan
Bureau	South and Central Asian Affairs
Project Description	In 2023, media reported that China had invested \$4 billion in Uzbekistan’s economy for the year, accounting for 45 percent of foreign direct investment. While local media may cover large investment announcements, many investments in Uzbekistan go unreported. The objective of this proposal is to better understand China’s economic influence in Uzbekistan and, to the extent possible, the other C5 countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan). Over a four-month period, the project team will conduct research to discover contract details such as project amount, duration, location, and sector of Chinese investments in Uzbekistan and its neighbors. The team will then use this data to create a geospatial product that clusters China’s investment data by location and value in Uzbekistan and the region. Examining China’s previous investments in Uzbekistan and Central Asia may also help determine future economic strategies China may have in the region.
Final Product Format	A geospatial product that clusters China’s investment data by location and value in Uzbekistan and the region accompanied by a brief (3-5 pages) paper analyzing Chinese investments in Uzbekistan/Central Asia to date and highlighting areas (either geographical or sectoral) of potential Chinese investor interest.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Other</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	202
Project Name	Proposal to Conduct a Mirror Analysis of Trade Data on Dual Use Battlefield Commodities
Office	Political/Economic Section, Embassy Tashkent
Embassy	Uzbekistan
Bureau	South and Central Asian Affairs
Project Description	As Russia’s unprovoked war on Ukraine continues into another year, the U.S. and like-minded partners are maintaining pressure to constrain the Russian military’s ability to resupply and repair its combat lines by limiting the imports of high value dual-use battlefield items (CHPL). Companies trafficking these items have circumvented sanctions and export controls by falsely reporting the partner country of the exported commodity in question. These companies indicate a secondary or tertiary country in the supply chain as the final destination for their product when the true end user country is Russia. When this happens, the recorded export data provided of that company’s government is significantly different compared to the recorded import data by the falsely labeled country. The objective of this diagnostic analysis is to first identify the countries that export CHPL commodities and conduct a comparative temporal analysis of trade data to assess what countries are likely involved in sanctions and export control circumvention. Although information on all countries involved would be of interest, the project should have a special focus on the C5 countries
Final Product Format	A diagnostic analysis to identify countries that may be platforms for circumventing U.S. and international export controls/financial sanctions on exporting dual-use battlefield items to Russia.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic Sanctions</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Graduate

Project ID	203
Project Name	Comparison of Stabilization and Conflict Prevention Activities
Office	Office of East Asia and Pacific, & South and Central Asia
Embassy	
Bureau	Conflict and Stabilization Operations
Project Description	<p>Compare objectives and implementation methods of the U.S. Global Fragility Act (GFA) and the U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability (SPCPS) with comparable efforts from other East Asia and Pacific (EAP) countries. Analysis must include the Republic of Korea and Japan but should expand to cover any other potential stabilization partners in the region. Evaluate the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Program goals and priorities 2) Alignment to national strategies/interests (e.g. national analogs to the U.S. National Security Strategy, Indo-Pacific Strategy, etc.) 3) Top country/region focus areas 4) Program attributes (e.g. funding, duration, ministry/department responsible for programming, implementing partners, cooperation with third parties - either nations or organizations, etc.) <p>Identify opportunities for bilateral or multilateral collaboration, and potential collaboration approaches.</p>
Final Product Format	1) Summary brief outlining the results, courses of action, and implementation methods. 2) Policy report of not to exceed 10-page (not including annexes/appendices) that summarizes findings, outlines courses of action and potential implementation methods. Annexes should include evaluation method, source list, sample of relevant data, summaries of each country reviewed program to combat global fragility.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Conflict, Stabilization & Reconstruction</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>East Asian Pacific Studies</i>
Additional Information	<p>The team may also consider include those in the international development concentration as well, as many countries also consider stabilization efforts international development efforts. It is recommended that the team schedule a kick off meeting with the Project Lead located within the Department of State, Office of Conflict Stabilization, Office of East Asia and Pacific, and Southern and Central Asia. This kick-off will allow the team to ask questions to guide and steer their efforts. Additionally, the Office of Conflict Stabilization, Office of East Asia and Pacific, and Southern and Central Asia will be available throughout the project to help the team identify resources, and provide guidance on the teams approach.</p> <p>Students will find the following links useful for their preliminary research: GFA law: https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/2116 2022 Prologue to US Strategy to Prevent Conflict & Promote Stability: https://www.state.gov/2022-prologue-to-the-united-states-strategy-to-prevent-conflict-and-promote-stability/ SPCPS Details and 10-year Strategies: https://www.state.gov/stability-strategy/ Department of State Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operation: https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civilian-security-democracy-and-human-rights/bureau-of-conflict-and-stabilization-operations/</p>

	<p>White House Fact Sheet: https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/03/24/fact-sheet-president-biden-submits-to-congress-10-year-plans-to-implement-the-u-s-strategy-to-prevent-conflict-and-promote-stability/</p> <p>OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/oecd-development-co-operation-peer-reviews_23097132</p> <p>OECD Development Co-operation Profiles: https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/479b1a72-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/5e331623-en&_csp_=b14d4f60505d057b456dd1730d8fcea3&itemIGO=oecd&itemContentType=chapter#chapter-d1e24710-169e3f801b</p>
Academic Level	Graduate



Project ID	205
Project Name	Determining Method of Engagement for Potential EXBS Partner Countries
Office	Office of Export Control Cooperation
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	This project will focus on exploring opportunities for engagement on strategic trade management, customs and port of entry operations, and border security for two potential new partner countries. Countries to be examined are Ethiopia and Bhutan, but others may be added in consultation with the project POCs. The project will entail using a provided method to assess a country's current export control system and provide nuanced recommendations for engagement based on open-source research.
Final Product Format	The final product should include a complete assessment of the potential countries using the provided EXBS method and any additional methodologies and recommendations for engagement based on open-source research regarding the regional environment and potential threats. The final product should be a presentation and a policy paper no longer than 20 pages. Research teams are strongly encouraged to use data visualizations and infographics where possible to support their research.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Arms Control/Non-Proliferation</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Other</i>
Additional Information	For more information on the EXBS program, please see: https://www.state.gov/export-control-and-related-border-security-program/
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	206
Project Name	Identifying Potential EXBS Partner Countries
Office	Export Control Cooperation
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	This project will focus on outlining criteria to be considered when the Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) program is deciding to engage a particular country. Criteria to engage may include proliferation risk, current strategic trade system status, strength of customs/port of entry operations and border security systems, and other issues related to export controls. The project POCs will provide information on the current method at the start of the project for the research team to validate. In consultation with the project POCs, research teams may test their criteria on a few countries that they would like to propose as potential new partners.
Final Product Format	The final product should include validation of the current partner criteria and recommendations for additional criteria. This information should be presented in a final presentation and submitted as a policy paper no longer than 20 pages. Research teams are strongly encouraged to use data visualizations and infographics where possible to support their research.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Arms Control/Non-Proliferation</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Additional Information	For more information on the EXBS program, please see: https://www.state.gov/export-control-and-related-border-security-program/
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	207
Project Name	Understanding AI and Strategic Trade
Office	Export Control Cooperation
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	This project will focus on exploring how artificial intelligence, or AI, interacts with strategic trade systems. This research should include broadly how AI is (or is not) controlled by national or regime control lists and how AI might impact the current strategic trade management, customs and port of entry operations, and border security systems in a given country. This can be done by looking at how specific countries or regions might control AI, how the multilateral export control regimes might control AI, harmful and beneficial uses of AI in export control systems, and any other area determined by the project POCs or research team as important.
Final Product Format	The final product should be a presentation and a policy paper no longer than 20 pages. Research teams are strongly encouraged to use data visualizations and infographics where possible to support their research.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Arms Control/Non-Proliferation</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Additional Information	For more information on the EXBS program, please see: https://www.state.gov/export-control-and-related-border-security-program/
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	208
Project Name	Proliferation Financing and Public-Private Partnerships
Office	Export Control Cooperation
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	This research project aims to explore and enhance the role of public-private partnerships in combating proliferation financing. The study will identify best practices from existing frameworks and successful case studies, while also investigating unexplored opportunities and innovative approaches to improve collaboration between the public and private sectors. By analyzing current challenges and proposing policy recommendations, the research seeks to provide actionable insights for policymakers and practitioners to effectively address proliferation financing.
Final Product Format	20-page research paper and presentation.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Arms Control/Non-Proliferation</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Additional Information	Online Resources and Databases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FATF's website for guidelines and recommendations. • The U.S. Department of the Treasury's website for updates and resources on proliferation financing. • To learn more about the EXBS Program, please visit: https://www.state.gov/export-control-and-related-border-security-program/
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	209
Project Name	Assessing Open-Source Analytical Tools to Identify Sanctions Evasion
Office	Export Control Cooperation
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>The purpose of this project is to identify and assess open-source software and analytical tools that present the best, most reliable, and most-cost effective options to map key supply chains and evasion pathways and enable U.S. allies and partners to develop analytical capabilities for sanctions evasion investigations and compliance management. ISN/ECC is interested in a broad examination of analytical tools, especially those outside of commercial markets, like academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, and other non-traditional groups, as well as new thinking on where such tools may reside that may provide the best, most cost-effective options for U.S. allies and partners.</p> <p>Following Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Russia has been subject to an expanded array of sanctions and export control restrictions from the United States, the European Union, and other entities. These wide-ranging economic restrictions target Russia’s financial, commercial, and public sectors, with a special emphasis on state-owned defense and energy companies. Through these mechanisms, the international community seeks to restrict Russia’s access to advanced technology and to disrupt Russia’s ability to produce and stockpile weapons. Russia, like other countries facing sanctions regimes, will inevitably try to adapt its acquisition modalities to obtain the components needed to sustain its war effort.</p> <p>There is increasing evidence of collaboration and cooperation between Russia and other state actors like Iran and North Korea. There is increasing evidence of Russia’s use of major transshipment points and distribution hubs. As reported by media and open-source analysis, components produced by non-Russian manufacturers have turned up in Russian, Iranian, and North Korean-produced missiles, vehicles, uncrewed systems, communications equipment, and precision, timing, and navigations systems used by Russia and recovered from the battlefield in Ukraine. Components range from older items found in legacy systems to recently manufactured components made by companies based in Europe and the United States found in current generation Russian weapons and equipment.</p> <p>The success of sanctions, export controls, and broader efforts to disrupt the flow of dual-use components to Russia depends greatly on the capacity of partner states to understand the complexity of Russia’s defense and energy supply chain and acquisition networks. Open-source information capable of being shared with and analyzed by U.S. allies and partners is increasingly important to shed light on Russia’s acquisition networks, disrupt those networks, and support sanctions and export control implementation and enforcement. Such information enables relevant national authorities, as well as the public, the press, and academia, to further investigate means and methods of sanctions and export control evasion and, where relevant, determine whether component flows violated sanctions. However, many current commercial open-source analytical tools are prohibitively expensive for U.S. allies and partners, especially those who may be targets for transshipment by Russia and other entities.</p>
Final Product Format	Research Paper (not more than 20 pages) and Options Memo

Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic Sanctions</i>
Additional Information	<p>For more information on the EXBS program, please see: https://www.state.gov/export-control-and-related-border-security-program/</p> <p>Common High Priority List (CHPL): U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Industry and Security (February 23, 2024)</p> <p>FinCEN & BIS Joint Notice: FinCEN and the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Bureau of Industry and Security Announce New Reporting Key Term and Highlight Red Flags Relating to Global Evasion of U.S. Export Controls (November 6, 2023)</p> <p>Alert: FinCEN and the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Bureau of Industry and Security Urge Increased Vigilance for Potential Russian and Belarusian Export Control Evasion Attempts (June 28, 2022).</p> <p>BIS frequently asked questions for exporters on the commodities and red flags identified in the June 28, 2022 FinCEN alert (August 16, 2022).</p> <p>Department of Commerce, Department of the Treasury, and Department of Justice Tri-Seal Compliance Note: Cracking Down on Third-Party Intermediaries Used to Evade Russia-Related Sanctions and Export Controls (March 2, 2023).</p> <p>Supplemental Alert: FinCEN and the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Bureau of Industry and Security Urge Continued Vigilance for Potential Russian Export Control Evasion Attempts on the highest priority nine HS codes (May 19, 2023).</p> <p>BIS guidance on these same nine highest-priority HS codes for exporters and re-exporters, including manufacturers, distributors, resellers, and freight forwarders (May 19, 2023).</p> <p>Department of Commerce, Department of Justice, Department of State, and Department of the Treasury guidance on items sought by Iran for the production of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), including to enable Russia’s brutal war against Ukraine (June 9, 2023).</p> <p>The guidance listed above was generated by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Industry and Security, and provides information on evasion trends and fact patterns and identifies transactional and behavioral red flags to assist financial institutions and exporters in identifying suspicious transactions relating to possible export control evasion or violations.</p>
Academic Level	Graduate

Project ID	210
Project Name	How do cities and states conduct international relations?
Office	Subnational Diplomacy Unit
Embassy	
Bureau	Economic, Growth, Energy and Environment
Project Description	Cities and states have played an especially important role not only in building the glue to our bilateral relationships, but also in international policy as a whole. Mayors and governors are on the frontlines of pandemics, climate change, democratic renewal, migration, and much more. As Secretary of State Anthony Blinken said at the 92nd Winter Meeting of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, "Pretty much everything that we are trying to do around the world for the United States, for our citizens, it actually starts in our cities, and that's something we can talk about." The Subnational Diplomacy Unit, run by Ambassador Nina Hachigian (former Deputy Mayor of Los Angeles), is interested in understanding trends and patterns in how U.S. cities and states structure their international relations operations. Which cities/states have official operations to help them with foreign policy, and how do they work? What gaps exist, and what are some gold standards that exist?
Final Product Format	We are interested in a report which provides results of interviews, surveys/data, and/or desk-based research. If there are case studies of certain cities or states to call out, tables with summary statistics (e.g. #/percent of states with international affairs offices/teams, # of identified cities with IA staff, etc.) these can be included throughout the report as appropriate. The team would also like an executive summary of the work which will be presented to the team at the end of the semester.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Other</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	
Additional Information	The Subnational Diplomacy Unit (SDU) will use this information to understand how best cities and states can be supported in their international affairs engagements. Resources include The Truman Center's "Mapping Multilevel Diplomacy": https://www.trumancenter.org/issues/us-city-state-diplomacy-map SDU-collected data on international affairs offices/staffing of U.S. cities and states Press highlights: https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-12-29/cities-are-transforming-us-foreign-policy https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/04/19/american-cities-states-local-foreign-policy-role-domestic-biden-s
Academic Level	Hybrid

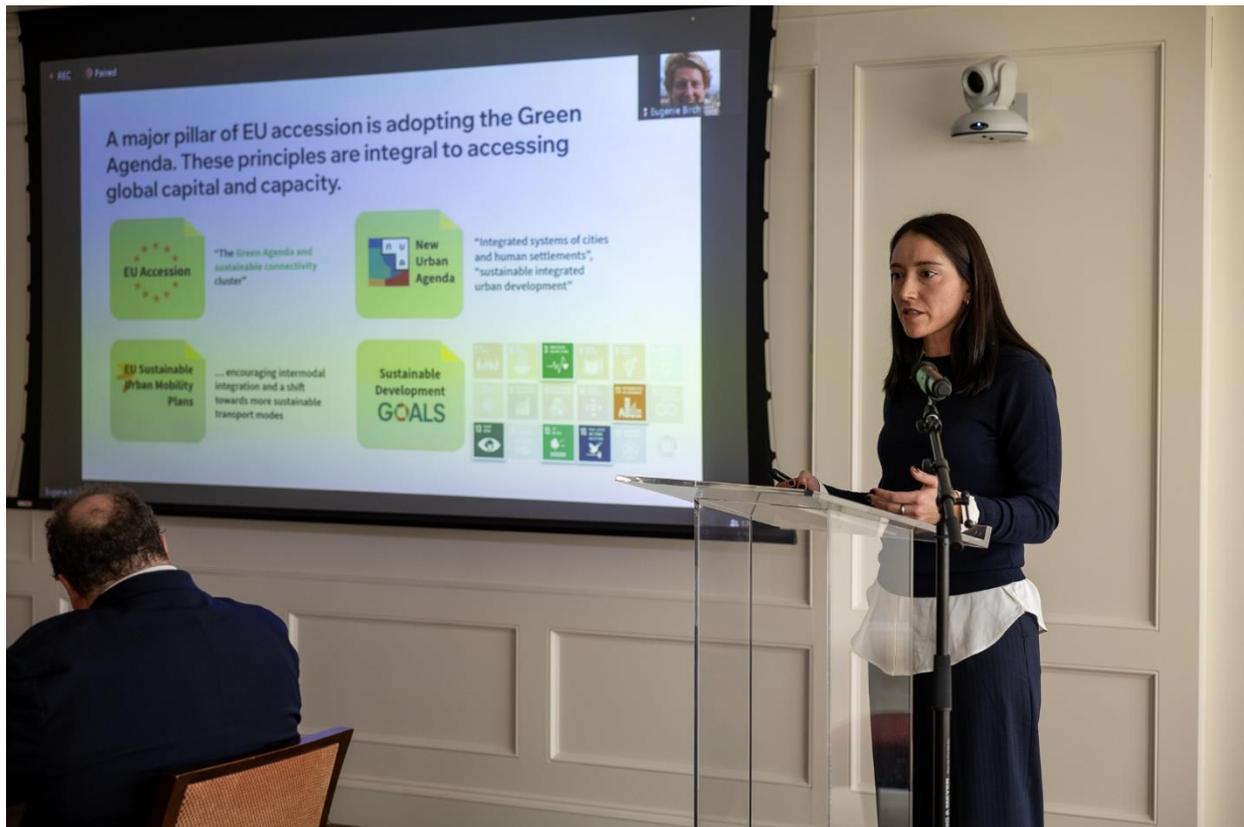
Project ID	211
Project Name	Ecosystem Restoration After Invasive Species Removal at the U.S.-Mexico Border
Office	U.S. Consulate Nuevo Laredo - Political-Economic Section
Embassy	Mexico
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	Invasive species plants on the Rio Grande are extremely water thirsty, crowd native vegetation, and conceal illegal activity on the riverbanks. The border cities of Laredo, Texas, and Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, have embarked on a joint effort to create a border binational park to promote ecosystem preservation and improve water and air quality on the border; the removal of invasive species is a preliminary step. After removal, the riverbanks will need restoration work and long-term conservation plans. This project would include recommendations to help Mexican partners identify best practices on ecosystem restoration specific to the U.S.-Mexico border at Texas and Tamaulipas. The best practices can include plant species native to the area, most suited to combat regrowth of invasive species, and equipped to promote ecosystem health.
Final Product Format	List of Recommendations & Best Practices
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Climate Change</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	212
Project Name	Analysis and Recommendations for U.S. Policy Towards Mexico
Office	The Office of Mexican Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	Western Hemisphere Affairs
Project Description	This project would make a clear-eyed assessment of U.S. foreign policy towards Mexico and make realistic recommendations for the next administration. This could include an assessment of policy successes and failures and recommended changes within the bounds of political realities and resource constraints. This project would offer an objective examination of U.S. policy towards Mexico and potentially surface creative new ideas for policymakers to advance U.S. interests with a key partner.
Final Product Format	A four-to-ten-page memo with analysis of current policy and proposed recommendations. The university team could deliver an accompanying presentation.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Other</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Western Hemisphere Studies</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	213
Project Name	North America's Digital Future: A Survey of Mexican Laws and Regulations Governing Cyber Security and Digital Policy
Office	Office of Mexican Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	Western Hemisphere Affairs
Project Description	North America's first female President, Claudia Sheinbaum, will take office October 1. She proposes to create a new Science and Technology Ministry, and a new agency to digitize federal government work nationwide. Her passion for technology presents an unprecedented opportunity for the United States to collaborate with Mexico on these important issues, and better align digital policy with our top goods trading partner. The Office of Mexican Affairs would like to work with a university team to conduct a general survey of existing Mexican laws governing cyber security and digital policy, and which agencies are responsible for carrying them out or enforcing them. With this knowledge, we will be able to more strategically engage with our Mexican partners.
Final Product Format	A one-page summary document covering key points, and a 10-15 page research paper discussing the topic in-depth.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Information and Communication Technology</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Law</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	214
Project Name	Assessing the Efficacy of PRC Investments in Mexico's Ports
Office	Office of Mexico Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	Western Hemisphere Affairs
Project Description	In light of the incoming Sheinbaum administration, WHA/Mexico is considering security sector policy and programming opportunities in Mexico with the goal of increasing U.S.-Mexico security sector coordination and - more generally - to increase the capacity of Mexico's security sector to prevent, address, and counter crime. To that end, WHA/Mexico would like to better understand the impact of Chinese investments in Mexico's ports to inform U.S. programming decisions (both to counter Chinese influence and most effectively spend U.S. government funds). Ideally, the project would shed light on the PRC's investments in port security (by Mexican state) and demonstrate the impact - positive and negative - at the state and local level.
Final Product Format	A presentation that demonstrates where/how much China is investing in Mexico's ports by State; a report that highlights successes and failures of China's port security investments; and a two-page memo with recommendations for U.S. investments to counter Chinese influence and/or seize opportunities for building the capacity of Mexico's port security entities.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	East Asian Pacific Studies
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	Western Hemisphere Studies
Additional Information	WHA/MEX will engage China analysts for their recommendations for particular states of focus based on U.S. policy priorities/national security interests. Once student teams are accepted, WHA/MEX would work to refine the project focus.
Academic Level	Graduate

Project ID	215
Project Name	Using Satellite Data to Inform Water Decisions in Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas
Office	U.S. Consulate General Nuevo Laredo Political-Economic Section
Embassy	Mexico
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	Water scarcity is a critical issue on the U.S.-Mexico border as the region continues to experience periods of prolonged droughts. The project proposes developing a technical application using satellite data to help monitor medium and long-term water resources, hydrological patterns, as well as water consumption patterns in the Mexican border city of Nuevo Laredo. In turn, the data would help better inform decision makers and consumers to predict water availability and water usage.
Final Product Format	Technical Application
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Water Security</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid



Project ID	216
Project Name	Developing Best Practices for Sustainable Development at U.S.-Mexico's Largest Port
Office	U.S. Consulate General Nuevo Laredo Political-Economic Section
Embassy	Mexico
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	Representing the top ports for Mexico and the United States, the border cities of Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, and Laredo, Texas, are experiencing steady growth as U.S.-Mexico trade continues to grow. In 2023, \$324 billion of goods passed through cities as Mexico surpassed China as the U.S.'s top trading partner. This project proposes developing a roadmap of best practices for sustainable development in the Nuevo Laredo-Laredo region to help policy and decision makers develop industrial policies that are both environmental and business friendly. Challenges include air quality and tractor trailer traffic (3 million trucks passed through the ports in 2023 and the trucks often sit for hours waiting to clear customs) and industrial park and maquiladora sustainable development. The roadmap could also identify and highlight current sustainable development practices that have been successful in the region.
Final Product Format	Research Document of Best Practices
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Other</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	217
Project Name	Modeling Indicators-Warnings to Anticipate and Prevent Conflict in the Maritime Domains
Office	East Asia Pacific & South and Central Asia
Embassy	
Bureau	Conflict and Stabilization Operations
Project Description	<p>Incidents and crises in the maritime domains are not new. However, they are becoming increasingly more frequent and riskier, particularly in the South and East China Seas and across the Taiwan Strait. It has largely stemmed from the sustained expansion by the People’s Republic of China (PRC) into these critical sea lanes of communication since 2000s. PRC’s growing national powers, extensive territorial claims, and a dearth of strategic trust among maritime coastal countries add more risk factors. CSO welcomes a partner university to develop an indicator-warning model to help U.S. government better anticipate potential conflict in the maritime domains.</p> <p>The project will entail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The maritime domains for this project are the South/East China Seas and the Taiwan Strait. - The literature review must assess indicators and warning from the previous conflicts that PRC was party to (see the suggested incidents below). - The model must have quantitative indicators of measurable data points to assess the likelihood of conflict, providing a more objective analysis compared to purely qualitative assessments akin to academic papers.
Final Product Format	<p>1: An Indicator-Warning Model: The partner university is encouraged to be creative and to design what the indicator-warning model entails. It can be analytic paper, a PowerPoint presentation, or a predictive analytics model (e.g. clustering, forecast, outliers, and time series).</p> <p>2: A Forecast Report: It should be within 5 pages. The report should be forward-leaning, recommending likely variables and/or emerging new indicators-warnings within the coming ten years’ timeframe.</p>
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>History</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Political /Military Affairs</i>
Additional Information	<p>The Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) seeks to anticipate, prevent, and respond to conflict that undermines U.S. national interests. In support of this mission, CSO works to create a shared understanding of conflict indicators and warnings and develop approaches to mitigate potential conflicts from occurring. A growing and serious challenge in conflict prevention is the increased incidents and crises in the maritime domains with the potential to result in serious armed conflicts. Warnings that signal an emerging conflict can include factors such as increased information influence campaigns, military mobilization, escalating warmongering rhetoric, secret backchannel communications, and many other indicators. To date, there are various analytical tools already available to provide early warning.</p> <p>See https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0169207023000018#b9.</p> <p>However, these tools are not specifically suitable for conducting an estimate of potential indicators for conflict in the maritime domains.</p>

	<p>Examples of past conflicts with PRC involvements are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Korean War of 1950-1953 - The Sino-India border armed conflict of 1962 in Aksai Chin - The Sino-Soviet border armed conflict of 1969 over Zhenbao/Damansky Island - The Sino-Vietnam sea battle of 1974 in Paracel Islands - The Sino-Vietnam border war of 1979 - The Taiwan Strait missile crisis of 1995-1996 <p>Quantitative indicators can include, but are not limited to, official statements, diplomatic demarche, application of code language, military leaves cancellation, mobilization of the reserve forces and militia, secret backchannel communications, good offices of a third country or neutral institutions, and many others. Working Definitions by U.S. State Department's AI-StateChat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conflict Indicators: "specific signs or measures used to identify and assess the presence, intensity, and potential escalation of conflict within a given context. These indicators can be quantitative or qualitative and may include factors such as political instability, economic disparities, social tensions, human rights violations, and the presence of armed groups. They help policymakers, analysts, and practitioners to monitor and evaluate the risk of conflict and to develop strategies for conflict prevention and resolution. - Early Warning: "refers to the process of identifying and communicating potential threats or risks in advance, allowing for timely and effective responses to prevent or mitigate adverse outcomes. It is used in various fields such as conflict prevention, natural disasters, and health crises. Examples include monitoring political instability to prevent conflict, using weather forecasts to predict hurricanes, and detecting disease outbreaks to prevent epidemics. - Early Response: "Early response refers to the timely and proactive actions taken to address emerging threats or crises before they escalate into more severe situations. This concept is often applied in various fields such as conflict prevention, disaster management, and public health. The goal of early response is to mitigate the impact of potential adverse events by implementing measures that can prevent or reduce harm.
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	218
Project Name	Maritime Cultural Protection and Onshore Preservation Impact for Communities
Office	Public Diplomacy, U.S. Embassy Jakarta
Embassy	Indonesia
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>The Sunda Strait off the northern coast of Java, Indonesia, is the final resting place for many World War II wartime ships, including the USS Houston. The wreck is also gravesite, where 625 Americans lost their lives. Through the Embassy Public Affairs and Political Sections, and in collaboration with the Department of Defense, U.S. Mission Indonesia is working to negotiate a Maritime Conservation Zone (MCZ) for the USS Houston shipwreck. Not only does the ship represent an important time in U.S. history, and the sacrifice of service members, its remains benefit the marine environment and, consequently, local fishing communities.</p> <p>In order to convince the Government of Indonesia (GOI) to declare the shipwreck a conservation zone, the Embassy needs answers to these fundamental questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How is the USS Houston part of Indonesia’s WWII history? 2. Why would it matter to Indonesian communities to designate the site as an MCZ? 3. What would the economic benefits to Indonesia be? 4. What would the environmental effects be? 5. Who are the stakeholders that might help the U.S. Mission prevail in getting the Indonesia government to declare the USS Houston an MCZ? 6. What opportunities might there be, or could we create, to engage either these stakeholders or the GOI in this endeavor? This analysis would serve as the basis for an action plan between the United States and Indonesia to ensure permanent protection for this important site.
Final Product Format	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A written report, including recommendations, chart of stakeholders, list of potential experts, and a general analysis of the impacts an MCZ could have. 2. A slideshow presentation to be adapted for use with stakeholders laying out the benefits of establishment of an MCZ. 3. At least three business plans/models that show financial benefit for shore communities through designation of an MCZ. <p>Note: The USS Houston should not be considered as a recreational or tourist dive site due to the depth, current, and overall conditions of its location. Technical dives requiring specialized skills and equipment can be considered but in very limited circumstances.</p>
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Law</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Oceans</i>
Additional Information	No Maximum Number of University Teams
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	219
Project Name	Advancing Interoperable Carbon Markets in ASEAN
Office	Economic
Embassy	U.S. Mission to ASEAN
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>The U.S. Mission to ASEAN is looking for a team of graduate students to conduct research and create one or more proposals for activities aimed at assisting ASEAN member states in developing high integrity and well-functioning carbon markets that are interoperable with one another and with global markets.</p> <p>Research may focus on the following topics to inform the development of activities to advance the stated goal above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overview of the current landscape of carbon markets in Southeast Asia, including the status of carbon tax and voluntary carbon trading. - Analysis of the challenges ASEAN member states face in building their own domestic carbon markets and interoperability of markets across the region. - Case studies of other carbon markets that may offer lessons for ASEAN. - Identify areas of needs where U.S. experience and expertise can support the development of credible and well-functioning carbon markets in ASEAN. Based on the research, we would welcome the team to exercise their creativity in designing one or more activities in support of advancing carbon markets in ASEAN. We encourage the team to focus on efforts to promote ASEAN-wide cooperation through ASEAN mechanisms instead of individual member states. Activities should be realistic, low-cost, and implemented with a budget under \$15,000. Examples of proposed activities may include, but not limited to: - Draft a report that provides recommendations to policymakers in ASEAN member states, clearly outlines the challenges to building carbon markets, and offers concrete, actionable steps countries can take to address these challenges. - Design workshops through which U.S. government or private sector experts can provide training to the ASEAN audience to address one or more specific challenges identified in your research. For example, on technical issues like verification or standards, on policy issues such as regulatory frameworks, or other identified needs. - Develop a proposal for a public event to raise public awareness about carbon trading, possibly targeting businesses, consumers, or other stakeholders.
Final Product Format	The final product for this project should include a summary of research and a detailed proposal of each activity (Note: There is no limit on the number of activities proposed. End Note), - including a budget. The proposal should include a timeline, as well as proposed partners, experts, targeted audience, etc.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Climate Change</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	
Additional Information	<p>This project aims to support ASEAN’s stated goal to facilitate and accelerate the development of carbon markets in the region, as outlined in the ASEAN Carbon Neutrality Strategy. U.S. capacity building and sharing of best practices can help ASEAN build interoperable robust carbon trading mechanisms, harmonize standards, and ensure the integrity and credibility of the carbon credit market to expedite cross-border trading.</p> <p>ASEAN holds out immense potential for generating carbon credits, given the region’s incredibly rich biodiversity and abundance of renewable energy sources such as hydro,</p>

	<p>solar and geothermal. ASEAN Member States are at varying levels of implementing their national carbon strategies. Although some ASEAN member countries have implemented their own individual carbon trading initiatives, a unified timeline or a collective commitment of carbon trading implementation across the region have not yet been attempted. The estimated carbon offsets produced in Southeast Asia could stimulate activity worth \$10 billion annually by 2030. Implementing carbon market is crucial for ASEAN to remain globally competitive.</p>
Academic Level	Graduate



Project ID	220
Project Name	Where Are All the Americans? Barriers to U.S. Students Studying Abroad in India
Office	Public Diplomacy Section, U.S. Embassy New Delhi
Embassy	India
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>Project Context: Why do so few American students study abroad in India? At the U.S. Mission to India, we frequently ask ourselves this question. While student mobility between India and the United States has become a cornerstone of one of the U.S.'s most important bilateral relationships, there is a significant imbalance. Hundreds of thousands of Indian students pursue education in the United States, but only a few thousand American students study in India. This disparity creates an imbalance in our people-to-people ties, hindering the deeper mutual understanding essential for leveraging this critical relationship in the decades to come. This project aims to explore the underlying reasons American students are not choosing India as a study abroad destination and to identify the factors influencing their decisions.</p> <p>Scope and Purpose: The primary goal of this project is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of American students' perceptions and choices regarding studying abroad in India. This project will identify the barriers, apprehensions, and motivations affecting decisions about India as a study abroad destination for both American students and U.S. institutions offering these programs. It will address several key questions: Why are American students not selecting India as a study abroad destination? What role do academic offerings, cultural perceptions, safety concerns, and logistical challenges play in their decision-making process? What factors motivated the U.S. students who did choose to study in India? What could encourage more U.S. students to consider and ultimately select India as their study destination?</p> <p>Potential Impact: By understanding the current barriers and motivations, this project will provide insights that the U.S. Mission to India can use to develop targeted strategies to attract more American students to India. The findings will be instrumental in shaping policies, partnerships, and programs that can address existing gaps and promote India as a viable and attractive destination for U.S. study abroad programs. Greater numbers of U.S. students studying India will lay the foundation for deeper understanding of India by future American leaders and policymakers.</p>
Final Product Format	The final product for this project will be a report that summarizes barriers to U.S. study abroad from an individual (student) and institutional (university) perspective and makes recommendations to address these barriers. The form of investigation could be through surveys, case studies, interviews, or focus groups. The final report should share the analysis of data collected through the project team's selected methods.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Education and Cultural Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Youth Issues</i>
Additional Information	We are flexible on the academic level of the team undertaking this project.
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	221
Project Name	Promoting Peace Through Business: Connecting Colombian Farmers in Former Coca Areas to U.S. Markets
Office	Economic Section
Embassy	Columbia
Bureau	Western Hemisphere Affairs
Project Description	<p>This project entails analyzing U.S. market opportunities for a set of 5-10 Colombian agricultural products, whether as primary commodities or inputs to higher value-add products, that are being grown as an alternative to coca. Coca, as the primary input to cocaine, fuels violence and environmental destruction: narcotraffickers set up clandestine labs in the forests to make cocaine, polluting the environment through the use of products like cement, gasoline, and precursor chemicals used in the production of cocaine. Coca production itself is a driver of deforestation in Colombia. Colombia is the top producer of cocaine flowing to the United States, accounting for 97 percent of all cocaine seized in the United States.</p> <p>The current administration of president Gustavo Petro is striving to help coca growers transition to licit crops whose return on investment can compete with the prices they receive for growing coca. As the United States has a free trade agreement with Colombia and robust trade in agriculture, the government of Colombia is seeking market opportunities for these alternative crops.</p> <p>This project will assess whether export opportunities to the United States exist by examining the current market in the United States (including supply chain, price, and buyers) and estimating whether Colombia’s products could be competitive. Or, if a product that the United States does not yet import, whether there is market potential for that product.</p>
Final Product Format	Combination research paper and data analysis
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Development</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Graduate

Project ID	222
Project Name	Unhappy Isles: Climate Crisis, Pacific Islanders, and US (and PRC?) Efforts to Turn the Tide
Office	Office of East Asian & Pacific South & Central Asian Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	Conflict and Stabilization Operations
Project Description	<p>Imagine that the Pacific Island Countries (PICs) are dissatisfied with U.S. actions to address the climate crisis, which PICs cite as their top foreign policy priority, seeing it as an existential threat to their ways of living, their homes, and even their lands themselves. Seeing itself as a climate leader, the United States recognizes this situation and has taken what it believes to be significant steps and directed many millions of dollars the confront this challenge. In this hypothetical scenario - but applying real-world information, thoughtful analysis, and artful prose, what is the explanation for this disconnect? Is it:</p> <p>a) because the USG has failed to message the depth and breadth of its actions and commitments?</p> <p>b) because the USG has not dedicated or designated sufficient funding (or funds cannot be accessed easily) for PIC governments/Pacific Islanders?</p> <p>c) because USG actions and commitments are insufficient and have been ineffective at improving the quality of life or prospects for the future for Pacific Islanders?</p> <p>d) because of other reasons or some combination of the above? REQUEST: Select three or more Pacific Island Countries.</p> <p>Conduct case studies:</p> <p>1) to determine the reason(s) PICs are dissatisfied with U.S. action to combat the climate crisis in this “hypothetical” situation, and</p> <p>2) to recommend actions the U.S. government could take so that PICs see the United States as a responsible actor, reliable partner, and global leader in combatting the climate crisis.</p> <p>Countries for possible case studies include: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. Results from this project will inform USG Pacific policy and guide our office as we expand activities to the Pacific region. Case studies and recommendations may incorporate analysis of government policies, statements by elected and appointed officials, media reporting, and public opinion; qualitative surveys of social media and Open Source materials; review of economic data, academic papers, and think tank reports, presentations, and conferences; and any other compelling information which helps to identify the issue(s), explain the cause(s), and recommend solutions.</p> <p>Optional Addendum: As an additional case study, investigate to what extent the People’s Republic of China engages in climate-related activities in the Pacific. How do U.S. and PRC climate-related actions and funding in the Pacific compare? Do PIC governments and citizens hold the PRC and PRC-related companies accountable for their climate-combatting efforts or lack thereof? Relying on Chinese-language sources, PRC government statements and data, and PRC strategic documents to contextualize these findings would be highly prized! This, too, will inform USG actions in the Pacific, funding for programs, and potential collaboration with the PRC.</p>

Final Product Format	Please present your findings and recommendations as a paper of no more than 20 pages inclusive of a two-page executive summary. Please include sources in an annex with links when possible. A visual presentation is welcome but not required.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Climate Change</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>East Asian Pacific Studies</i>
Additional Information	<p>The United States Government recognizes broadly the challenges presented by the climate crisis, and it has committed and taken steps domestically and internationally to reduce emissions to levels in line with keeping a 1.5-degree Celsius limit to warming within reach. It also has made financing available for developing countries and climate adaptation efforts.</p> <p>The Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) is charged with leading the formulation and implementation of U.S. conflict prevention strategies, policies, and programs (https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civilian-security-democracy-and-human-rights/bureau-of-conflict-and-stabilization-operations/). It is the State Department’s lead implementer of the U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability (https://www.state.gov/stability-strategy/) and works to reduce fragility, strengthen democratic institutions, and increase social cohesion to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives.</p> <p>The Office of East Asian & Pacific South & Central Asian Affairs seeks to enable effective, efficient responses to national security priorities in the East Asia & Pacific (EAP) and South & Central Asia (SCA) regions. Team Pacific leads our efforts with Pacific Island Countries.</p> <p>Reference & Strategy Documents: The Climate Crisis: Working Together for Future Generations: https://www.state.gov/policy-issues/climate-crisis/ 2022 Indo-Pacific Strategy: https://www.state.gov/indo-pacific-strategy/ and https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/U.S.-Indo-Pacific-Strategy.pdf Fact Sheet: https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/02/11/fact-sheet-indo-pacific-strategy-of-the-united-states/ 2022/09 PICL: U.S. Engagement in the Pacific Islands: 2022 Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders: https://www.state.gov/u-s-engagement-in-the-pacific-islands-2022-pacific-islands-conference-of-leaders/ 2022/09 U.S.-PIC Summit: U.S.-Pacific Island Country Summit: https://www.state.gov/u-s-pacific-islands-country-summit/ 2022/09 FACT SHEET: Roadmap for a 21st-Century U.S.-Pacific Island Partnership https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/09/29/fact-sheet-roadmap-for-a-21st-century-u-s-pacific-island-partnership/ 2023/05 U.S.-PIF Dialogue: U.S.-Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Dialogue in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea: https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/05/22/u-s-pacific-islands-forum-leaders-dialogue-in-port-moresby-papua-new-guinea/ 2023/05 U.S.-PIF Dialogue: U.S.-Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Dialogue in Papua New Guinea - Fact Sheet: https://www.state.gov/u-s-pacific-islands-forum-leaders-dialogue-in-papua-new-guinea/ 2023/09 U.S.-PIF Summit: U.S.-Pacific Island Forum Leader’s Summit: https://www.state.gov/u-s-pacific-island-forum-leaders-summit/ 2023/09</p>

	<p>FACT SHEET: Enhancing the U.S.-Pacific Islands Partnership: https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/09/25/fact-sheet-enhancing-the-u-s-pacific-islands-partnership/ 2024/08</p> <p>FACT SHEET: Following Through on the U.S.-Pacific Islands Partnership 53rd Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Leaders Meeting in Nuku’Alofa, Tonga August 26-30, 2024 https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/08/27/fact-sheet-following-through-on-the-u-s-pacific-islands-partnership-53rd-pacific-islands-forum-pif-leaders-meeting-in-nukualofa-tonga-august-26-30-2024/</p>
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	223
Project Name	Every Drop Counts: The Case for Modernizing Central Asia's Water Infrastructure"
Office	Regional Environment, Science, Technology, and Health Office for Central Asia
Embassy	Kazakhstan
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	Central Asian countries are confronting an escalating water scarcity crisis exacerbated by climate change, aging infrastructure, lack of regional water cooperation, and rising demand. This crisis jeopardizes agricultural productivity, economic stability, and the health of millions who rely on increasingly limited water resources. Agriculture, a critical sector for many Central Asian economies, depends heavily on irrigation, yet Soviet-era irrigation and canal systems waste up to 40% of the water intended for crops. In a region where every drop counts, Central Asian countries must make the most of the water they have. This project aims to conduct a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis of modernizing the irrigation and canal infrastructure in Central Asia. By exploring the economic, environmental, and human health costs of inaction, this study will underscore the importance of timely investment in infrastructure upgrades. The findings will offer decision-makers a clear understanding of how modernizing irrigation systems can help mitigate future water crises, promote sustainability, and ensure the region's resilience in the face of growing water scarcity.
Final Product Format	1) A virtual presentation to review methodology and key findings, and 2) a corresponding policy brief, including an overview of the problem, key findings, and recommendations.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Water Security</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	
Additional Information	
Academic Level	

Project ID	224
Project Name	Disrupting the Pacific: Factors of Instability and Future U.S. Engagement
Office	Office of East Asian & Pacific South & Central Asian Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	Conflict and Stabilization Operations
Project Description	<p>REQUEST: What are the primary drivers of instability and conflict in the Pacific?</p> <p>Select three or more countries. Conduct case studies and determine the three most significant factors which create or exacerbate instability, tension, conflict, and/or violence.</p> <p>Countries for possible case studies include: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Palau, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.</p> <p>While we are not requesting one group/class to conduct case studies for all the PICs, we do hope eventually to have one case study completed for each PIC. Consider not only international issues and national policies but also factors which impact communities and even families. Think broadly and take into account political and economic factors as well as cultural, demographical, geographical, historical, religious, technological, and other relevant concerns. Your findings will guide our office in determining how best to expand activities to the Pacific region, both in terms of which countries to support with strategic interventions and how best to contribute positively for greater stability. In recent years, the Indo-Pacific region broadly and the “Blue Pacific” region more narrowly have garnered more attention and taken a more prominent position in U.S. strategy and foreign relations.</p> <p>Accordingly, the value of effective diplomatic engagement; the importance of understanding local context and cultural implications; and the need to maximize limited time, funding, and human resources continues to grow, as all are essential for strengthening ties and increasing influence. The Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) takes a strategic view to its work, seeking to formulate and implement policies and programs which prevent conflict, reduce fragility, strengthen democratic institutions, and increase social cohesion to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives. Pacific Island Countries face myriad challenges, from the climate crisis and frequent natural disasters to ineffective governance and insufficient economic opportunities. Combined with demographic challenges, culture clashes, and the impact of modern media, social networking apps, mis- and disinformation, various PICs at times have experienced significant levels of economic deprivation; gender-based violence; petty, violent, and transnational crime; political turmoil, including military coup d’etat; and other destabilizing changes and events.</p>
Final Product Format	For each country case study, please present a paper of no more than 15 pages inclusive of a one-to-two-page executive summary. Please include sources in an annex with links when possible. Visual representations of analytical data are welcome but not required. A visual presentation combining the findings of all the case studies is welcome but not required.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>East Asian Pacific Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Development</i>

	<p>The Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) is charged with leading the formulation and implementation of U.S. conflict prevention strategies, policies, and programs (https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civilian-security-democracy-and-human-rights/bureau-of-conflict-and-stabilization-operations/). It is the State Department’s lead implementer of the U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability (https://www.state.gov/stability-strategy/) and works to reduce fragility, strengthen democratic institutions, and increase social cohesion to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives.</p> <p>The Office of East Asian & Pacific South & Central Asian Affairs seeks to enable effective, efficient responses to national security priorities in the East Asia & Pacific (EAP) and South & Central Asia (SCA) regions. Team Pacific leads our efforts with Pacific Island Countries.</p> <p>Reference & Strategy Documents: The United States is engaged in efforts to prevent conflict and promote stability in Papua New Guinea. https://www.state.gov/united-states-strategy-to-prevent-conflict-and-promote-stability-country-and-regional-plans/. The 10-Year Plan for Papua New Guinea may inform your efforts, as it includes an assessment of the key factors of instability there: https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/The-U.S.-Strategy-to-Prevent-Conflict-and-Promote-Stability-10-Year-Plan-for-Papua-New-Guinea-Accessible-3.29.2024-1.pdf 2022 Indo-Pacific Strategy: https://www.state.gov/indo-pacific-strategy/ and https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/U.S.-Indo-Pacific-Strategy.pdf Fact Sheet: https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/02/11/fact-sheet-indo-pacific-strategy-of-the-united-states/</p>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	225
Project Name	“Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them” or Combatting Disinformation in the Pacific
Office	Office of East Asian & Pacific South & Central Asian Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	Conflict and Stabilization Operations
Project Description	<p>U.S. policies and activities in the Pacific are subject to both planned and reactive disinformation campaigns, which at times are orchestrated by foreign powers and other times spontaneously driven locally. Current efforts to combat disinformation focus on media literacy and pre-bunking, time-intensive analytical approaches which must be enacted before disinformation spreads, and fact-checking, which is deployed after disinformation is identified. Research into disinformation and propaganda notes the tendency of effective attacks conveying emotional messaging, sparking feelings of anger, fear, or disgust, which are aided by speed, repetition, and/or an attempted convergence towards confirmation bias. This apparent misalignment of defensive tactics puts the U.S. government into positions in which it must perpetually anticipate propaganda and angles of disinformation attacks, attempting to pre-bunk them or spending significant time and resources fact-checking and developing factual responses to these emotive, unpredictable, and effective adversarial campaigns. Research</p> <p>Questions: Does current research offer tools, tactics, or lessons learned on how best to respond to the emotional nature of disinformation and/or propaganda? If so, what can the United States do to prevent, defend against, and repel disinformation campaigns in Pacific Island Countries?</p> <p>Your findings will guide our public affairs and messaging efforts as we work to combat disinformation in the Pacific.</p> <p>Optional Additional Request: Using what you have learned, please select a Pacific Island Country and evaluate U.S. bilateral engagement with that information environment. Develop specific recommendations on countering disinformation and propaganda about U.S. activities, policies, and principles there. Countries for this optional additional request could be: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Palau, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. While we are not requesting one group/class review all these countries, we do hope eventually to have specific recommendations tailored to each country.</p>
Final Product Format	Please present a paper of no more than 20 pages inclusive of a two-page executive summary. Please include sources in an annex with links when possible. A final presentation is welcome but not required. If the optional additional request for a country analysis is conducted, please develop a paper of 10 pages or less with a one-page executive summary inclusive of recommendations.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Communications</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>East Asian Pacific Studies</i>
Additional Information	The Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) is charged with leading the formulation and implementation of U.S. conflict prevention strategies, policies, and programs (https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civilian-security-democracy-and-human-rights/bureau-of-conflict-and-stabilization-operations/). It is the State Department’s lead implementer of the U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and

	<p>Promote Stability (https://www.state.gov/stability-strategy/) and works to reduce fragility, strengthen democratic institutions, and increase social cohesion to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives.</p> <p>The Office of East Asian & Pacific South & Central Asian Affairs seeks to enable effective, efficient responses to national security priorities in the East Asia & Pacific (EAP) and South & Central Asia (SCA) regions. Team Pacific leads our efforts with Pacific Island Countries.</p> <p>References & Strategy Documents: Disarming Disinformation: Our Shared Responsibility https://www.state.gov/disarming-disinformation/ 2022 Indo-Pacific Strategy: https://www.state.gov/indo-pacific-strategy/ and https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/U.S.-Indo-Pacific-Strategy.pdf Fact Sheet: https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/02/11/fact-sheet-indo-pacific-strategy-of-the-united-states/</p>
Academic Level	Hybrid



Project ID	226
Project Name	Money and Democracy: How Changing Currency Regimes Impacts Political Stability
Office	Economic Section
Embassy	Nigeria
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>Nigeria is in the throes of its worst economic crisis in decades, with inflation above 30% and food inflation at a staggering 40%, pushing millions more into extreme poverty. While the recent and ongoing crisis can be attributed to a combination of macroeconomic, structural, and governance factors, the new administration’s decision to float the local currency (naira) after years of an overvalued peg, has amplified spiraling negative effects. A depreciating currency has made imports exponentially expensive, causing domestic production to decrease, thereby further fueling prices, worsening inflation, which in turn causes further currency depreciation in a negative economic spiral.</p> <p>Against this backdrop, political tensions have risen with persistent rumors of possible debilitating nation-wide strikes and protests against the government. This decision, to change currency regimes, lift capital-controls, and allow the naira to float freely to eliminate distortions in the currency market, was recognized by international actors as a crucial long-term action to attract foreign direct investments which had been falling in recent years.</p> <p>However, critical questions arise regarding the political fallout of the short-term negative ramifications of floating the naira. What will be the impact on the reelection prospects of President Tinubu, and will he reap the long-term benefits of changing currency regimes? Will socio-political tensions force the administration to backstep on this decision? Will new political-economic coalitions form to protest worsening economic conditions? Is there a risk of an unplanned transition of power? To answer these questions, U.S. Mission Nigeria welcomes a historical study of other democracies in the last 50 years who have undergone a shift from a pegged or managed-peg currency to a free float. How has this shift impacted their political stability?</p> <p>Better understanding how the tradeoffs associated with changing currency regimes panned out and affected ruling parties will allow Mission Nigeria to “look around the corner” and prescribe more effective policy recommendations to help Africa’s largest democracy.</p>
Final Product Format	Ideally, a 20-page research paper but we welcome other formats if the researching team(s) believes they would better capture the context and outcomes of other historical examples.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Democracy & Human Rights</i>
Additional Information	We would classify the discipline/expertise of this project as "Political Economy". For academic level, while we are open we would like to prioritize Post graduate or senior-year undergraduate.
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	227
Project Name	Invisible Lines: Mapping the Impact of Cocaine on Belgian Society
Office	Political and Economic Section
Embassy	Belgium
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>Belgium is facing a critical challenge as the flow of cocaine through Europe, particularly via the port of Antwerp, has surged to unprecedented levels. In 2023, authorities seized a record 116 tons of cocaine at the port, solidifying Antwerp’s position as the primary gateway for cocaine into Europe and accounting for 40 percent of cocaine seizures at European ports. This surge in cocaine supply has the potential to pose substantial threats to Belgian society, including in the public health sector, increased burdens on law enforcement, and the erosion of the rule of law due to heightened risks of corruption and criminal infiltration across various sectors. Communities and schools are also vulnerable to drug-related violence and addiction, which threaten to undermine the potential for Belgian society to achieve its full future potential. The scale and unknown long-term effects of this problem make it a consequential area of study for researchers interested in the intersections of public policy, societal impact, and crime prevention.</p> <p>This project seeks to investigate the multifaceted effects of the increased cocaine supply on Belgian society, providing a comprehensive analysis that can guide policymakers, law enforcement, and public health officials. Researchers will explore the impact on public health systems, the challenges faced by law enforcement, and the broader societal implications, including the risks of increased corruption and threats to the rule of law. By uncovering the specific effects within Belgium, this research will offer valuable insights into the wider implications of rising illicit drug supplies throughout Europe, helping to inform strategies that can be implemented both locally and across the continent.</p> <p>This project offers an opportunity to play an important role in addressing one of Belgium's most pressing challenges, ultimately making a significant impact on policy and practice in the fight against international drug trafficking.</p>
Final Product Format	A research paper would probably be the most useful final product. This could include data analysis, if relevant data is uncovered, and could easily be adapted into a presentation. An options memo would also be welcomed if there are clear recommendations that flow from the findings, though the research should not be driven by the goal of offering specific recommendations.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Narcotics and Law Enforcement</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>European and Eurasian Studies</i>
Additional Information	<p>There is plenty of information online about the problem of increased cocaine flows through Belgium.</p> <p>Some background reading/resources: https://www.brusselstimes.com/belgium/1137319/no-such-thing-as-fair-trade-cocaine-says-belgiums-national-drugs-commissioner https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/world-drug-report-2024.html The UNODC provides comprehensive reports and data on global drug trafficking trends, including detailed information on cocaine flows into Europe. This is an essential source</p>

	for understanding the broader context and global patterns in drug trafficking. https://www.euda.europa.eu/publications-database_en?f%5B0%5D=publication_type%3A404 EUDA (European Union Drugs Agency, formerly known as EMCDDA): European Drug Report
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	228
Project Name	Strategy for Abolition of Burma's 1982 Citizenship Law
Office	Global Criminal Justice
Embassy	
Bureau	Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights
Project Description	In April 2024, the People’s Assembly organized by the National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC) of Burma voted to abolish the 1982 Citizenship Law. The Commission established for this purpose has developed a draft strategy and is now seeking inputs and recommendations from experts towards its finalization. The 1982 Citizenship Law was enacted shortly after the mass returns of Rohingya who fled in 1978 and sets forth three categories of citizenship: citizenship, associate citizenship, and naturalized citizenship. Rohingya were permitted to reside in Burma, but Burmese authorities have considered most Rohingya "resident foreigners," rather than citizens. The deprivation of full citizenship rights has contributed to other violations Rohingya have experienced, including restrictions on freedom of movement, limited access to education, and forced evictions from land and property.
Final Product Format	Research paper on models of citizenship (jure sanguinis, jus soli), right to nationality/against statelessness, including how other societies have integrated formerly marginalized communities, and potential drafting of new language to input into NUCC strategy; Expert workshop, with validation of the NUCC’s final strategy.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Democracy & Human Rights</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Law</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Graduate

Project ID	229
Project Name	Relationship between Transitional Justice and Past Injustices in U.S. Overseas Territories
Office	Global Criminal Justice
Embassy	
Bureau	Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights
Project Description	During the age of “New Imperialism” in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the United States endeavored to expand its sovereign territory to counter European influence and expand its resource streams. Territories like the Philippines, Hawaii were all subject to cultural erasure, political repression, and, in some cases, slavery. This research paper should examine instances of U.S. overseas imperialism, resultant human rights abuses, and failures to address violations committed against indigenous populations. Researchers will use examples of measures undertaken by former imperial powers to reconcile colonial wrongdoings (ex. Truth and Reconciliation Commission established in Canada in 2015 to address the legacy of Indian Residential Schools; Parliamentary Commission in Belgium to review the country’s colonialism in Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi). The goal of this research project is to outline actionable steps for the U.S. to adopt transitional justice mechanisms in former overseas territories.
Final Product Format	Research paper with literature review (case studies) and policy recommendations
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Democracy & Human Rights</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Western Hemisphere Studies</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Undergraduate

Project ID	230
Project Name	The Return of Property as a Transitional Justice Measure
Office	Global Criminal Justice
Embassy	
Bureau	Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights
Project Description	<p>Many circumstances in which transitional justice measures are pursued have seen acts of displacement, ethnic cleansing, and deportation. The result is that victim communities lose access to their immovable real property (and other forms of personal property). If not destroyed, their homes may be appropriated by perpetrators, members of other communities, or innocent third parties. Restitution may be difficult when the state in question has non-existent or incomplete property records or registration systems. How have societies that have implemented a transitional justice program addressed the imperative of returning such property to their original owners? How have they dealt with innocent/bona fide occupants versus usurpers?</p>
Final Product Format	Research paper with comparative case studies.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Law</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Democracy & Human Rights</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Graduate

Project ID	231
Project Name	Keeping an Eye Out: Monitoring Independent Russian Media in Lithuania
Office	Press
Embassy	Lithuania
Bureau	Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs
Project Description	<p>More than 100 prominent independent Russian journalists who were forced to leave Russia have settled in Lithuania and continue their work from there. The U.S. Embassy in Lithuania is keeping good working relations with independent Russian journalists while trying to assist them in their work, in developing their professional capacities, and in establishing contacts and cooperation with Russian-speaking minorities in Lithuania.</p> <p>The pool of Russian journalists in Lithuania is with highly different priorities and interests. Some are keen to settle in Lithuania for a long period of time; some are interested in returning to Russia as soon as possible. Journalists in exile also are very mobile - some have changed their places of residence among various European countries several times. But the vast majority actively implement their main professional responsibility: to provide objective impartial information to the public and society in Russia, a noble endeavor given the instability in their own lives.</p> <p>In order to provide more effective assistance for Russian journalists in Lithuania, the Press Team at the U.S. Embassy in Vilnius would like to receive Diplomacy Lab assistance in monitoring independent Russian media outlets produced in Lithuania. Monitoring will include radio and TV broadcasts, Youtube and other social media platforms, and written materials available online. The Embassy will provide the concrete list of monitored subjects and topics.</p> <p>Monitoring activity should result in providing monthly monitoring report which should cover the following topics: How Russian war in Ukraine is reported? Are these reports based on international law and universal human rights concept? How often Russian war in Ukraine is reported through Russian nationalistic or “patriotic” concept? How Western world and its values are reflected among Russian journalists in exile? How often and in which words do they describe their current well-being in Lithuania or somewhere else in the West? How U.S. Presidential elections are being reflected by Russian journalists in exile in Lithuania?</p>
Final Product Format	A presentation and a PowerPoint we can refer back to with analysis that would be easy to present to other groups in the Embassy.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Communications</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Information and Communication Technology</i>
Additional Information	<p>We understand that this group would need a command of the Russian language, social media, and press. Upon meeting with the group, we will brief them on the types of issues that often crop up in the realm of information manipulation or disinformation.</p> <p>https://time.com/6155060/lithuania-russia-fighting-disinformation-ukraine/ https://www.disinfo.eu/publications/disinformation-landscape-in-lithuania/ https://www.france24.com/en/europe/20240316-a-fight-for-your-way-of-life-lithuania-s-culture-minister-on-russian-disinformation</p>
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	232
Project Name	Teasing out Multilateral Sentiments and Strengthening the NPT Regime with Artificial Intelligence
Office	MNSA - Multilateral Nuclear and Security Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>International multilateral forums, both those that are part of the United Nations system and others, serve as formal mechanisms for diverse groups of countries to work to make shared progress on global challenges, including nuclear nonproliferation. Bodies dedicated to upholding and advancing the global nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament regime primarily include meetings of the review process of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), UN First Committee (UNFC), and the UN Security Council (UNSC). National statements published in these bodies, as well as statements delivered on behalf of likeminded, regional, or cross-regional groups (e.g., the G77, the Non-Aligned Movement, ASEAN, the EU, and the New Agenda Coalition) highlight areas of consensus and contention on issues discussed.</p> <p>The wealth of data contained in these statements forms a web of international policy positions that can reveal how nations’ positions evolve over time, and help policymakers understand where collaboration may be possible in the future. Successfully tracking and analyzing these narratives is challenging. It requires national delegations to parse the text of a given statement to identify key sentiments that may vary depending on the forum and the context of the statement. This interpretation of the text must then be correlated against the positions of fellow parties to identify motifs and trends that may indicate shifting priorities and relational structures when examined over time. Increasingly, these interpretations must further be correlated among forums to identify countries’ tendencies across the multilateral system. Doing so is directly correlated with our ability to effectively counter negative trends and advance U.S. positions.</p> <p>This project seeks to build a tool that can analyze the evolution of narratives on key issues within the nonproliferation regime. Though the ideal tool could be applied to issues more broadly, one example that could be used as a test case would be to examine evolving positions on the “peaceful uses” of nuclear science and technology and provide guidance, so as to offer insight to U.S. delegations to multilateral forums in support of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and the global nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament regime. (In recent years the PRC has advanced a narrative that purports to build support for the “peaceful uses” of science and technology for development purposes but is actually an attack on the multilateral export control regimes including the Nuclear Suppliers Group.) Such a tool should draw on publicly available data from 2019 to the present from a select subset of multilateral forums and conferences including the NPT Review Conferences, the UNFC and UNSC, and IAEA conferences and use modern data science tools (e.g., large language models and automated video-to-text transcription) to extract insights on national and multinational sentiments centered around “peaceful uses” and export control regimes.</p> <p>Once verifying the ability of this tool to identify well-understood sentiments shared between key countries, the project will attempt to use the tool to either: (1) identify new as-yet-unidentified insights in these select forums and</p>

	(2) the existence of similar sentiments in further afield multilateral forums (e.g., UN Human Rights Council). If technically viable, this tool could be packaged in a user-friendly form to actively support U.S. multilateral delegations at forums.
Final Product Format	<p>This project would produce two deliverables that rely on a data analysis to extract correlated sentiments from publicly available national statements, working papers, and multilateral resolutions in UN and other forums.</p> <p>(1) Demonstration: To validate the viability of the data analysis, produce a short report that demonstrates the ability to automate the identification of well-understood sentiments on “unilateral coercive measures” and export controls.</p> <p>(2) Tool: A tool that can be used to produce updated insights and extrapolated insights in real time to augment the engagement of U.S. delegations in these same multilateral forums.</p>
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Computer Science</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Data Science/Artificial Intelligence</i>
Additional Information	<p>As this is a data science project with a directed goal, this project has the potential to be approached using the “Kaggle” approach (https://www.kaggle.com/) in which multiple teams approach the same project in competition for a defined period. At the conclusion of this period, the results and outcomes are ranked and, if coordinated appropriately, could be integrated to produce a single final tool to integrate the strengths of each team. As such, we envision that this project could accommodate more than one team but not more than five teams given bandwidth of office advisors.</p> <p>Additional Information - NPT PrepCom: https://meetings.unoda.org/npt-/treaty-on-the-non-proliferation-of-nuclear-weapons-preparatory-committee-for-the-eleventh-review-conference-second-session-2024</p> <p>PRC Peaceful Uses Resolution: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3944826?v=pdf</p> <p>Reaching Critical Will’s Disarmament For a database: https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/disarmament-fora</p>
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	233
Project Name	Identifying Malign Interference by the Russian Orthodox Church in Africa
Office	Office of International Religious Freedom
Embassy	
Bureau	
Project Description	<p>The Patriarchate of Alexandria and all Africa has a history of two thousand years in Egypt and in Africa and has the spiritual jurisdiction over Orthodox Christians throughout the African continent. After the Patriarch of Alexandria opposed Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the Kremlin-aligned Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) started targeting Orthodox Christian communities across the African continent. The ROC is interfering with the Patriarchate of Alexandria's jurisdiction, and seeking to gain more influence in Africa, by establishing new ROC African Exarchate churches. The ROC is focused on attracting priests to join the ROC's new African Exarchate through various methods.</p> <p>The Office of International Religious Freedom is seeking a partner to help deepen the Department's understanding of the actions the ROC is taking in Africa. Specifically, we seek to understand the methods the ROC is using to gain influence in Africa, to attract priests and parishioners away from Alexandria Patriarchate-aligned churches, as well as the degree to which the ROC is succeeding. Our office's interest is primarily in the religious nature of the ROC's actions, but - if applicable - we would also welcome information related to the intersection of ROC actions with broader political and economic actions by the Russian government on the African continent. This information will help the United States better meet its goal of protecting freedom of religion or belief for all individuals.</p>
Final Product Format	Presentation and Written Report
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Religious Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>African Studies</i>
Additional Information	The Office of International Religious Freedom (J/IRF) promotes universal respect for freedom of religion or belief for all as a core objective of U.S. foreign policy. We monitor religiously motivated abuses, harassment, and discrimination worldwide, and recommend, develop, and implement policies and programs to address these concerns. The Office publishes the annual International Religious Freedom Report, a critical tool for advancing human rights, democracy, and national security, providing a comprehensive review of religious freedom conditions in nearly 200 countries and territories. J/IRF is led by the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, who is appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate.
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	234
Project Name	Complementing Regulations - Developing Food Regulatory Infrastructure to Facilitate Access to Nuclear Science and Technology in Support of the Global Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime
Office	MNSA - Multilateral Nuclear and Security Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>With 828 million people hungry and over 3.1 billion lacking healthy diets, urgent transformation of global agrifood systems is needed. At the same time, agrifood systems account for 30% of global greenhouse gas emissions, including through unnecessary inefficiencies like food loss and waste, highlighting the need for sustainable practices that leverage advanced science and technology approaches, notably the peaceful application of nuclear energy, science and technology.</p> <p>One non-power applications of nuclear technologies that has recently received increased attention from developing countries is the use of machine-based irradiation technologies for the post-harvest processing and sterilization of food. Sometimes referred to as “cold pasteurization” the exposure of food to ionizing radiation (e.g., electron beams or x rays) can kill insect pests, fungi, or other microbials to extend shelf-life and thereby reduce food loss and waste, improve food safety, and facilitate the export of foods. This approach can be used in place of chemical-based processes that use toxic chemicals (e.g., methyl bromide) that are harmful to consumers if not thoroughly removed and are damaging to the environment. Moreover, the implementation of systems using machine-based production of radiation in place of high-risk radioactive sources (e.g. Cobalt-60) promotes the development of capacity and nuclear infrastructure that is safer and more secure. This approach is strongly supported by the United States Government through an array of programs. Moreover, these irradiation systems can be implemented in a multi-use way such that the same facility can be used to process not only food products but also to sterilize medical products and augment industrial processes like plastics recycling. This creates a more sustainable business model because it creates demand for operation that is not solely dependent on harvest times.</p> <p>One of the primary challenges developing countries have for cold pasteurization of foods is the inadequate regulatory frameworks to support the development of capacity and infrastructure. The need to develop the appropriate set of laws and regulations by the competent national authority responsible for nuclear science and technology is critical. However, developing these laws and regulations is not sufficient by itself. Countries should seek to create an appropriate enabling environment to encourage the sustainable adoption of this technology into food systems by the private sector. Doing so requires an array of regulations, namely those implemented by Ministries responsible for food and agriculture.</p> <p>The Codex Alimentarius, a collection of internationally recognized standards, codes of practice, and other recommendations published by the Food and Agriculture Organization, has developed guidelines to effectively apply the irradiation technology to improve food safety, together with guidance on the labelling of irradiated foods. At the same time, as part of its commitment to make progress on the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the United States supports partners to build capacity on the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies through its support to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and through other bilateral and multilateral activities. However, it is left to governments to determine their own approach to the use of food irradiation.</p>

	<p>This discretion can lead to broad variations that either support or hinder adoption of this useful technology. For example, in some countries the post processing of radiation is considered a “treatment” (e.g., Canada) while in others it is considered an “additive” (i.e. United States) and further variation in the required and/or permitted energy radiation dosage can vary based on the product that is being irradiated.</p> <p>This project aims to explore the connection between the adoption of radiation technologies and the pertinent food and agriculture regulations that exist or are under consideration. After performing a survey of select existing countries’ food systems and nuclear capacity, the project will provide recommendations for framing model food and agriculture regulations that countries embarking on a program to explore and adopt these technologies should consider.</p>
Final Product Format	<p>The deliverable for this project will consist of two parts</p> <p>(1) Research Paper: A short research paper that provides a survey of existing food irradiation regulations from countries around the world and a synthesis of how these regulations have either promoted or hindered the adoption of machine-based radiation technologies.</p> <p>(2) Policy/Regulatory Recommendations: A draft set of regulations, supported by the research paper, that could be used as a basis for a developing country wishing to embark upon the adoption of food irradiation.</p>
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Food Security</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Other</i>
Additional Information	<p>In reference to Principle Discipline/Expertise where marked "other" - MNSA is seeking a background in Regulation and Trade as well.</p> <p>In reference to Academic Level: Graduate level, ideally those involved in policy work at the interface of food systems and economics. It could be helpful to engage those in departments of physics to engage cross-cutting expertise for certain aspects of the project.</p> <p>Additional Information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) NPT @ State: https://snip.state.gov/roa 2) NPT Pillar III: https://snip.state.gov/roc 3) IAEA support on Peaceful Uses: https://snip.state.gov/rod 4) Sustained Dialogue on Peaceful Uses: https://snip.state.gov/rof 5) Codex Alimentarius: https://snip.state.gov/rog 6) Examples from around the world: 7) USA - https://snip.state.gov/roh 8) Canada - https://snip.state.gov/roi 9) European Union - https://snip.state.gov/roj 10) Mexico - https://snip.state.gov/rok
Academic Level	Graduate

Project ID	235
Project Name	C5+Universities: Practical Policies for U.S.-Central Asian Engagement
Office	Office of Central Asian Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	South and Central Asian Affairs
Project Description	<p>The C5+1 is the regional diplomatic platform for the United States plus the five Central Asian countries: Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The five Central Asian countries and the United States are committed to delivering regional solutions to global challenges through the C5+1 diplomatic platform. Since its inception in 2015, C5+1 cooperation has strengthened Central Asia’s economic ties and business environment, enhanced energy development, mitigated environmental challenges, addressed security threats, expanded people-to-people connections, and advocated for women’s economic empowerment. The C5+1 Presidential Summit on September 19, 2023, affirmed the increasing importance of the C5+1 platform in addressing regional solutions and facilitating U.S.-Central Asian relations.</p> <p>Toward this end, the Central Asia Office of the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs is seeking insights from the next generation of researchers on how to best address some of the most pressing regional issues through the C5+1 platform. For each topic, student groups will produce a five-page policy report with actionable recommendations and present their findings in a 15-minute briefing to State Department officials. The contributions provided by student groups on each of these topics will directly inform U.S. efforts to deliver regional solutions to global challenges in its partnerships with Central Asian states.</p> <p>The topics for this year include the following:</p> <p>Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) - How can the United States best promote cooperation among Central Asian partner governments in addressing drivers of violent extremism through the C5+1 platform?</p> <p>Gender-Based Violence - How can the United States best address drivers of gender-based violence (GBV) within the region in cooperation with Central Asian partner governments through the C5+1 platform?</p> <p>Trafficking in Persons - How can the United States better prevent, detect, and address Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and protect victims of trafficking through the C5+1 platform?</p> <p>Cyber - How can the United States engage effectively with Central Asian states to support an open, free, independent, reliable, and secure regional cyber landscape?</p> <p>Disaster Risk Management and Response - How can the United States best promote regional cooperation in Central Asia to improve disaster risk management and response capabilities through the C5+1 platform?</p>
Final Product Format	Five-page policy report from each team, plus a 15-minute briefing to State Department officials followed by a brief Q&A.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>South/Central Asian Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	

Additional Information	For more information about C5+1: https://www.state.gov/c51-diplomatic-platform/ https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/09/21/c51-leaders-joint-statement/
Academic Level	Graduate



Project ID	236
Project Name	Attracting and Retaining Highly Skilled Foreign Workers and Investors - Analyzing the U.S. economic and diplomatic impact of domestic renewal for H-1B and other skilled worker and investor visas
Office	Remote Processing Division
Embassy	
Bureau	Consular Affairs
Project Description	<p>In 2024, for the first time in two decades, the Department of State adjudicated domestic visa renewals for certain H-1B visa applicants. Domestic renewal makes it possible for H-1B workers to renew their visas without traveling outside the United States, a process that decreases worker productivity and creates uncertainty for workers, families, and employers over whether the worker will be allowed to return to the United States.</p> <p>The pilot, announced by President Biden in a June 2023 visit to India, was enthusiastically welcomed by the Indian government and prominently featured in President Biden’s October 2023 Executive Order on the Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence. The pilot concluded on May 30 and was huge success, with participant satisfaction exceeding 90%. One large tech company estimated the renewal pilot saved them \$10,000 per participating employee.</p> <p>The Department of State is now working to implement a full domestic renewal program, covering a range of visa categories for skilled workers and foreign investors, starting in 2025. This project would analyze the economic and diplomatic impact of expanding domestic renewal of visas for skilled workers and foreign investors based on visa category.</p> <p>The highest volume categories of visas eligible for domestic renewal - H-1B (skilled workers), L (intracompany transfers), and E (treaty traders and investors) - each have differing impacts to the U.S. economy, and implementing domestic renewal for these categories affects our bilateral relationship with the countries whose nationals most frequently receive these visas. The Department is also authorized to domestically renew P, O, and I work visas, but has less information on the value of prioritizing those categories for implementation.</p> <p>The Department would like to know for which of the six categories listed above would domestic visa renewal have the biggest impact and in what way (Economic value to the United States? Job creation for Americans? Company profit? Employee morale? Increased innovation? Bilateral relationship? Something else?)</p> <p>The analysis would inform the Department’s decisions on which categories to implement domestic renewal for first and in what order. The analysis may also be featured in White House policy conversations, the Department’s public outreach materials, and publications announcing the domestic renewal program.</p>
Final Product Format	We are seeking a 10-20 page research paper that includes recommendations and an executive summary. We would also welcome a presentation of the team’s findings.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	Economic and Finance Issues
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	Political /Military Affairs

Additional Information	<p>This project will increase students' understanding of immigration regulations, the impact of skilled foreign workers and investors on the U.S. economy, and how visa issues impact the United States' bilateral relationships around the world. The academic level may be undergrad, graduate, or hybrid. The diplomacy aspect of the requested analysis would focus on how facilitating renewal of skilled worker and investor visa categories impacts the U.S. bilateral relationship with the workers' home countries. The most affected countries likely include India, Japan, China, and South Korea. Federal register notice announcing the pilot: https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/12/21/2023-28160/pilot-program-to-resume-renewal-of-h-1b-nonimmigrant-visas-in-the-united-states-for-certain</p>
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	237
Project Name	Holding Iranian-aligned militias accountable in the NEA Region
Office	Global Criminal Justice
Embassy	
Bureau	Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights
Project Description	Iran-aligned militias (often deemed the “Axis of Resistance” have proliferated in their numbers and strength over recent years, often filling power vacuums in weaker security states in the NEA region. While the U.S. and our allies have focused on impeding a resurgence of ISIS and holding their members accountable for crimes, Iranian-backed militia groups have also been responsible for a range of atrocity crimes either directly or by proxy throughout the NEA region, including the assassination of political actors, sectarian violence, largescale military attacks resulting in the indiscriminate attack on civilians/civilian objects, and targeted attacks on U.S. personnel and allies many of which may amount to acts of terrorism and potential core international crimes. This research paper should give an overview of the Iran-aligned proxy groups (i.e., their chain of command and operations across the region), the types of alleged atrocity crimes committed by them, existing or ongoing criminal accountability efforts, and other potential justice and accountability pathways that the USG could pursue or support.
Final Product Format	Research paper w/policy recommendations.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Democracy & Human Rights</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Graduate

Project ID	238
Project Name	Global Criminal Justice Rewards Program (GCJRP) Authorities Revisions
Office	Global Criminal Justice
Embassy	
Bureau	Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights
Project Description	Does 22 USC Â§ 2708 need to be rewritten to authorize/clarify the following, and if so, how should it be rewritten: To pay rewards for information that leads to the resolution of an open indictment, most relevantly if definitive information were brought forward that a designated fugitive was dead. This would contribute to international justice processes by allowing prosecutors to close files on cases that cannot proceed and preserve their investigatory and tracking resources. How might the statute be rewritten to allow for reward payments for such information?
Final Product Format	A paper assessing and analyzing options for a path forward.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Law</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Graduate

Project ID	239
Project Name	Investigating Global Human Rights Trends
Office	South Central Asia
Embassy	
Bureau	Democracy, Human Rights and Labor
Project Description	<p>1 - Investigate and report on some disturbing global human rights trends: --protections and abuses of marginalized communities (suggest focusing on East Asia); --protections and abuses of women (suggest focusing on sub-Saharan Africa); --protections and abuses of LGBTQI+ persons (suggest focusing on the Caribbean); --regulation of harmful digital and print content (including racial hatred) online and how this affects freedom of expression (suggest focusing on South and Central Asia); and --how governments are using advances in artificial intelligence to limit freedoms and violate human rights (suggest focusing on Eastern Europe).</p> <p>This will help us better understand these important global trends and how they are affecting the human rights of people in these regions. (NOTE: Given the single year focus of the annual Human Rights Reports, it can be challenging for us to monitor longer-term trends. END NOTE).</p> <p>2 - Research and analyze the impact of the Human Rights Reports (and recent historic trends) on human rights by major region of the world (i.e. Europe, East Asia, South and Central Asia, Middle East, Africa, Western Hemisphere). Report whether the Human Rights Report appears to have influenced governments or was used by civil society. This will help us understand the overall impact of the Human Rights Reports in different regions with an eye to determining whether we could do anything to increase their effectiveness.</p>
Final Product Format	Research paper summarizing major conclusions with appendices for sources and underlying data.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Democracy & Human Rights</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Civil Society</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Undergraduate

Project ID	240
Project Name	Integrating Iberian Partners into the United States Space Agenda
Office	U.S. Embassy Madrid
Embassy	Spain
Bureau	European and Eurasian Affairs
Project Description	Integrating Iberian Partners into the United States Space Agenda" is your chance to position Spain as a critical player in one of the most exciting and rapidly growing sectors - space exploration. As the U.S. accelerates its space initiatives, the need for strong, innovative international partnerships has never been greater. Spain, with its evolving space capabilities and strategic position in Europe and Latin America, has untapped potential to become a key partner in advancing U.S. space priorities. This project will explore how to build meaningful, mutually beneficial relationships between Spain's scientific and governmental institutions and the U.S. space program, creating opportunities for economic growth, technological innovation, and geopolitical influence. By supporting Spain's efforts to enhance its space presence in Latin America, this project aims to cultivate a more robust U.S.-Spain alliance within the evolving space landscape. It will further extend U.S. influence into new markets and regions, fostering collaboration across the Atlantic and into Latin America. By focusing on aligning Spain's unique strengths with U.S. space objectives, this project doesn't just benefit both countries - it sets the stage for broader international collaboration in space exploration, reinforcing a global commitment to shared innovation and progress.
Final Product Format	The final deliverable will be a 4-page options memo, laying out clear, actionable strategies for integrating Spain into U.S. space initiatives, particularly in Latin America. Additionally, we will provide a presentation to communicate these key recommendations and spark further discussion among students, faculty, and stakeholders.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Undergraduate

Project ID	241
Project Name	Youth-Driven Urban Planning: Enhancing Walkability and Green Spaces in the United States and Spain
Office	U.S. Embassy Madrid
Embassy	Spain
Bureau	European and Eurasian Affairs
Project Description	<p>With urban areas rapidly expanding, creating walkable environments, and incorporating green spaces are critical to improving public health, environmental sustainability, and quality of life. The United Nations projects that by 2050, 68% of the global population will live in urban settings, making it crucial to design these spaces with the needs and perspectives of future generations in mind.</p> <p>This project aligns with Spain’s emergence as a global leader in climate transition and digital innovation, fueled by the approximately 150 billion euros from the Next Generation EU recovery fund aimed at accelerating renewable energy and digital modernization. By leveraging this transformational infusion of funds, the United States can help Spain enhance urban planning processes that prioritize public health, thereby elevating Spain’s influence in promoting global health security, particular in Latin America.</p> <p>This project will engage youth voices in urban planning processes to explore how cities in the United States and Spain can integrate walkability and green spaces to foster inclusive growth. It will assess urban planning strategies in cities across both countries, identifying best practices that contribute to the development of environmentally sustainable, digitally innovative, and socially vibrant urban environments. Additionally, this initiative will highlight how such efforts can be instrumental in addressing shared climate objectives, while promoting infrastructure quality and health security, particularly in Latin America. By focusing on the next generation’s role in urban planning, this initiative will support Spain and the United States in advancing global climate leadership and fostering transatlantic cooperation that contributes to sustainable economic models, job creation, and increased Spanish investment in the U.S. economy.</p> <p>This project will foster greater climate leadership within the EU by showcasing successful youth-driven urban planning models that can inspire additional commitments from Latin American countries, aligning with the climate goals of the United States. It will also encourage Spanish investment in the United States, particularly under the IRA and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, by highlighting the benefits of sustainable urban planning and renewable energy projects. Furthermore, it aims to improve Spanish audiences’ understanding and favorable view of the IRA’s role in combating climate change through targeted communication and education campaigns involving youth advocates.</p>
Final Product Format	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comprehensive Report: A detailed report that compares urban planning strategies and highlights best practices for integrating youth perspectives in creating walkable and green cities. The report will include case studies, data analysis, and insights from youth participants. It will also address the impact of these strategies on public health, environmental sustainability, and quality of life. 2. Policy Recommendations: A set of actionable recommendations tailored for urban planners and policymakers in the United States and Spain to enhance walkability, green spaces, and youth engagement in urban planning. The policy recommendations will be

	<p>designed to be practical and implementable, offering clear guidelines and steps for cities to adopt.</p> <p>3. Youth Engagement Toolkit: A toolkit for cities to effectively involve young people in urban planning processes, including strategies for community engagement and participatory design. The toolkit will provide templates, checklists, and best practice examples to help cities create inclusive and effective youth engagement initiatives. It will also offer training materials for urban planners and community leaders on how to collaborate with youth groups.</p> <p>4. Public Awareness: Increased awareness of the importance of youth involvement in urban planning and the benefits of walkable, green cities for public health and environmental sustainability. This will be achieved through targeted communication campaigns, educational programs, and public events. The aim of this is to foster a broader understanding of how youth-driven urban planning can contribute to public health, environmental sustainability, and overall quality of life.</p>
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Climate Change</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Global Health</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Graduate

Project ID	242
Project Name	Addressing Impunity in Gender-based Violence
Office	Political Section
Embassy	Columbia
Bureau	Western Hemisphere Affairs
Project Description	<p>The project would inform U.S. Embassy Colombia engagement with the Colombian Congress on how to best address gender-based violence (GBV). The Colombian press regularly reports cases of femicide and GBV; however, the prosecution of and convictions of the perpetrators of these crimes are low. Participants would survey and assess the structures found in governments, worldwide, that effectively judicially respond to GBV through prosecutions and convictions and evaluate which of these structures could be accomplished through legislative action in Colombia.</p> <p>Key questions of the project would include: Are there any examples of locales, worldwide and at a federal, state, or even municipal level, that have effectively increased the number of prosecutions and convictions of perpetrators of GBV? How was this increase achieved? Did changes to legislation play a role? What best practices could Colombia adopt to increase prosecutions and convictions?</p>
Final Product Format	Negotiable but recommend a data analysis of identified success stories and the effective legislative changes along with presentation to recommend which legislative approaches might work for Colombia.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Gender Studies</i>
Additional Information	<p>Here is an example of one legislative effort put forward in the Colombian Congress to address GBV this past legislative session.</p> <p>https://www.elespectador.com/politica/trancon-legislativo-freno-proyecto-sobre-la-jurisdiccion-que-combatiria-impunidad-en-femicidios-noticias-hoy/</p>
Academic Level	Graduate

Project ID	243
Project Name	Collective Security for Surety: Understanding and Leveraging Non-Traditional Donor Efforts in Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE)
Office	Countering Violent Extremism (CVE)
Embassy	
Bureau	Counterterrorism
Project Description	<p>"When you think it's peace and safety, a sudden destruction / Collective security for surety, yeah!" - Bob Marley, "Rat Race" PROBLEM: Preventing and countering radicalization and recruitment by terrorists and violent extremists is now a permanent tool in the international civilian counterterrorism toolbox. The United States, Europe, and even UN agencies fund and manage much programming to address these issues. However, yawning gaps exist between these largely Western or Western-based donor efforts and those of non-Western donor actors.</p> <p>To develop a more comprehensive, coordinated, international "prevention architecture," the West needs to understand the rest. The world over - from Burkina Faso to Sri Lanka to New Zealand, from Western Europe to Canada and the U.S - is dealing with these threats - on and offline.</p> <p>IMPORTANCE: This project will be a major - and frankly unique - contribution to bridging this divide. Its authors will (virtually or hybrid) brief findings and recommendations to select Deputy Assistant Secretaries/Administrators from the State Department and USAID and the teams they oversee. They will do the same to a group of think tank officials and researchers. Their "deliverables" (described below) will be widely circulated among the same and other networks.</p> <p>SCOPE: "Non-traditional donors" refers to non-Western development funds and banks (e.g. Islamic Development Bank, Solidarity Fund, etc.), bilateral government ministries or agencies (e.g. Turkey), and foundations, charities, and NGOs (e.g. MBS Foundation, Dubai Cares, etc.). The project will entail online research and virtual meetings/interviews with relevant donors and other stakeholders. Teams will need to establish parameters for what constitutes P/CVE or P/CVE-relevant programs - versus not - and why. This office will advise project scope and facilitate engagements for teams. The Middle East/North Africa and West, Central, and East Africa are of particular interest as regions that receive such donor assistance - however, particular team interests and input will be strongly considered.</p>
Final Product Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Catalogue/tables of non-traditional donor support for P/CVE-relevant initiatives, programs, and activities in third countries - 5 page summary of findings/recommendations paper - addressing "How do we engage and leverage non-traditional donors in P/CVE efforts?" - PowerPoint presentation summarizing both
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Counter Terrorism</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Conflict, Stabilization & Reconstruction</i>
Additional Information	The Counterterrorism Bureau's CVE Office is responsible for the Department's international engagement on preventing/countering violent extremism, and created the international architecture that implements it to this day. The office possesses the requisite networks and contacts to make this project feasible for teams.

	<p>For the best overviews of different kinds of P/CVE work, see: https://www.thegctf.org/About-us/GCTF-framework-documents</p> <p>Our office has a long history advising and supporting Diplomacy Lab teams - the students have always been satisfied with the level of our engagement, as well as autonomy, in doing past projects. We want teams to take the lead, be creative, and offer alternative ideas and views as they see fit.</p>
Academic Level	Hybrid



Project ID	244
Project Name	Whistleblower Protection: an Element of Protection and Not a Mechanism to Target Opposition
Office	International Narcotics and Law Enforcement
Embassy	Columbia
Bureau	Western Hemisphere Affairs
Project Description	<p>The United States promotes strengthening anti-corruption measures around the world. In Colombia, U.S. Embassy Bogota supports the Government of Colombia's initiative to create a Whistleblowers Protection Bill that would protect whistleblowers reporting corruption through legal mechanisms. It is difficult for individuals to speak out against corruption without legal backing or protection, especially against their employer or own government. A whistleblower protection law would ensure that individuals would be able to address corruption within the government and other sectors. The United States passed our first whistleblower protection law in 1979 and continues to update the legislation as necessary.</p> <p>Current opposition to whistleblower legislation in Colombia state that individuals could use this legislation to retaliate against employers or government agencies or officials. Additionally, there are questions surrounding which branch of government should anti-corruption entities belong to and how to ensure transparency and objectivity. This research project could focus on analyzing whistleblower protection legislation in the region, who oversees these policies, and how these entities engage with the courts, executive, and legislative branches.</p>
Final Product Format	Negotiable, but recommend a policy paper addressing key research questions.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Western Hemisphere Studies</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	245
Project Name	Unpopular: How Colombia’s Special Jurisdiction for Peace Can Court the Public
Office	Political Section
Embassy	Columbia
Bureau	Western Hemisphere Affairs
Project Description	<p>Colombia’s Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) is the justice component established by the 2016 Peace Accord that is responsible for overseeing cases involving crimes that occurred during Colombia’s armed conflict. The JEP focuses on transformative and restorative justice. The purpose of the JEP is to promote reconciliation, reparation, and non-repetition of these heinous crimes. To obtain this goal, the JEP allows those guilty of these crimes to admit to their culpability in exchange for sanctions that focus on restoring the communities the most affected by the violence (in lieu of prison). According to national polling, the JEP has a very high unfavourability rate and has lost support from the general public.</p> <p>This project would analyze JEP’s current media campaign (strength and weaknesses), assess social media responses to JEP hearings, decisions and announcements. The project could compare social media campaigns of countries that highly favor law enforcement and justice systems and This project could provide suggestions on how the JEP could better explain the work they are doing to promote peace and obtain justice. Students would develop a new social media campaign for the JEP to better address public concerns.</p>
Final Product Format	Students would develop a new social media campaign for the JEP to better address public concerns.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Conflict, Stabilization & Reconstruction</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Communications</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	246
Project Name	Local Governments' Access to Colombian Federal Government Resources
Office	Political Section
Embassy	Columbia
Bureau	Western Hemisphere Affairs
Project Description	<p>Subnational diplomacy is a U.S. foreign policy priority. This research project would focus on the distribution of federal resources and regional tax revenue to departments and territories within Colombia. How does the federal government decide how much funding a department will receive? Is the current distribution fair? How does the current distribution affect inequality in Colombia? How do municipalities request resources from the federal government? Many new mayors and governors are unaware of how to request and utilize resources that may be available at the federal level.</p> <p>This project could research the current laws and regulations and ascertain the gaps and challenges to requesting and distributing federal resources. This project would strengthen our subnational contacts coordination and cooperation with the federal government and could improve coordination of USG foreign assistance throughout the country.</p>
Final Product Format	Report
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Development</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	247
Project Name	Renewable Energy Infrastructure Expansion
Office	Economic Section
Embassy	Vietnam
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>Description: Develop a set of policy recommendations for the U.S. government to support the expansion of renewable energy infrastructure in Southern Vietnam, focusing on solar and wind energy.</p> <p>Activities: Conduct feasibility studies using existing data specific to Southern Vietnam, perform cost-benefit analysis, identify gaps and opportunities, and develop specific policy recommendations for U.S. engagement in promoting renewable energy infrastructure in the region.</p>
Final Product Format	A 3-5 page report, and a presentation (time zone permitting) about the team's process and findings
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Energy Security</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Climate Change</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Graduate

Project ID	248
Project Name	Thirty Years After Normalization: A Celebration of the U.S.-Vietnam relationship
Office	Public Diplomacy Section Hanoi
Embassy	Vietnam
Bureau	East Asian and Pacific Affairs
Project Description	This project seeks to identify and execute opportunities to reflect on and lift up lessons learned from U.S-Vietnamese efforts to overcome the legacies of war and build a strong bilateral relationship for other global issues and coincides with the 30th anniversary of U.S.-Vietnam relations and the 50th anniversary of the end of the war in Vietnam.
Final Product Format	The final product is an actionable plan for universities and other organizations around the country to reflect on the 30/50 anniversaries and key lessons learned from the Vietnam War and its aftermath as they relate to current U.S.-Vietnam relations, current political-security issues, and other conflict and stabilization efforts, particularly those focused on reconciliation.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>East Asian Pacific Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Communications</i>
Additional Information	The Vietnam War had significant domestic, regional and international implications. But fifty years since the end of the war in Vietnam and thirty years since the United States and Vietnam re-established relations, the future-focused orientation of a bilateral relationship that benefits both countries can't be denied. Yet, for many, the U.S.-Vietnam relationship is only seen through the lens of war. This project is a chance to reflect on the past and drive towards a more collaborative future. With many activities planned in Vietnam to celebrate the relationship, university teams in the United States have a chance to organize and execute events that engage a wide range of audiences in the United States and consider how lessons learned from Vietnam should be applied to addressing the legacies of war globally.
Academic Level	Undergraduate

Project ID	249
Project Name	Leveraging OSINT to Map PRC University Partnerships Globally
Office	Office of Cooperative Threat Reduction
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>The PRC leverages MOUs between Chinese and foreign universities and research partnerships as means to gain access to potentially dual-use research, data, technology, and equipment - particularly research, data, technology, and equipment relating to emerging technologies. Due to the public facing nature of these research partnerships, open-source data can be leveraged to map the PRC's network of MOUs and research partnerships. This project will leverage this open-source information to identify and document partnerships, joint laboratories, and MOUs between universities in the People's Republic of China (PRC) and other universities globally.</p> <p>The selected partner will utilize OSINT methods to gather information from publicly available sources such as university websites, academic publications, press releases, and databases in both English and Chinese to develop an excel document that has entries including: The name of the PRC university involved in the partnership; The name of the international university involved; The country where the partner university is located; The specific thematic area of research or collaboration; A risk ranking using a student developed technology risk methodology; and Any other relevant details pertaining to the partnership or collaboration.</p>
Final Product Format	An excel document of PRC university partnerships that has entries including: The name of the PRC university involved in the partnership; The name of the international university involved; The country where the partner university is located; The specific thematic area of research or collaboration; A risk ranking using a student developed technology risk methodology; and any other relevant details pertaining to the partnership or collaboration.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Arms Control/Non-Proliferation</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Other</i>
Additional Information	<p>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/</p> <p>Project team 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 availability.</p>
Academic Level	

Project ID	250
Project Name	Understanding the Biotechnology Start-Up Landscape in India in 2023,
Office	Office of Cooperative Threat Reduction
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>India’s bioeconomy is valued at \$137 billion and is expected to continue to grow in the coming years. The number of biotech startups has increased from 100 in 2015 to over 130,000 in 2024, making India the third-largest destination for biotechnology in Asia and one of the top 12 destinations worldwide. As this sector grows, there is growing concern about biosafety and biosecurity measures to ensure biotechnology advances safely and securely. Biosafety and biosecurity standards are important to promote international research collaborations, economic cooperation, and protect national security.</p> <p>ISN/CTR is seeking a team to create a dashboard for the biotechnology startups in India by identifying where geographically they are located, which sectors they fall into (biomanufacturing, energy/fuel, pharma, vaccine development, etc), where their financial support is coming from (international investment, VC funding, philanthropy, etc), and how the Indian government is supporting these startups (subsidies, financial incentives, etc). ISN/CTR seeks recommendations on priority startups or sectors to engage to enhance biosafety and biosecurity measures to protect sensitive biological research and expertise.</p> <p>In 2023, India’s bioeconomy is valued at \$137 billion and is expected to continue to grow in the coming years. The number of biotech startups has increased from 100 in 2015 to over 130,000 in 2024, making India the third-largest destination for biotechnology in Asia and one of the top 12 destinations worldwide. As this sector grows, there is growing concern about biosafety and biosecurity measures to ensure biotechnology advances safely and securely. Biosafety and biosecurity standards are important to promote international research collaborations, economic cooperation, and protect national security.</p> <p>ISN/CTR is seeking a team to create a dashboard for the biotechnology startups in India by identifying where geographically they are located, which sectors they fall into (biomanufacturing, energy/fuel, pharma, vaccine development, etc), where their financial support is coming from (international investment, VC funding, philanthropy, etc), and how the Indian government is supporting these startups (subsidies, financial incentives, etc). ISN/CTR seeks recommendations on priority startups or sectors to engage to enhance biosafety and biosecurity measures to protect sensitive biological research and expertise.</p>
Final Product Format	Report outlining methodology as well as executive summary and tiered recommendations. Dashboard/Excel sheet providing key information on startups. Presentation to DOS providing high level overview of results and recommendations.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Arms Control/Non-Proliferation</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>South/Central Asian Studies</i>
Additional Information	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/

	Project team 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 availability.
Academic Level	Hybrid



Project ID	251
Project Name	Campaign to Attract More International Students from the Middle East
Office	Public Affairs
Embassy	Qatar
Bureau	Near Eastern Affairs
Project Description	<p>Since the 2015-2016 academic year, Qatari student enrollment at higher education institutions in the United States has dropped by more than 75 percent and Qatari students continue to choose to study in the United Kingdom or remain in Doha to study at the six U.S. universities hosted by Education City. Our project aims to create a comprehensive marketing and outreach campaign to attract more international students from the Middle East, particularly those from Qatar, to study in the United States. This initiative is crucial as it not only fosters cultural exchange and mutual understanding but also strengthens diplomatic ties and enhances the global reputation of U.S. educational institutions. By increasing the number of Middle Eastern students in the United States, we can contribute to a more diverse and inclusive academic environment, enhance effective institutions and good governance in Qatar, and showcase the depth of the strong U.S.-Qatar bilateral relationships. The project will involve a comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing Qatari students' decision-making processes, including: • competing destinations (UK, Qatar) and perceived quality of education, costs, application processes, visa procedures, and post-graduation opportunities; • U.S. political, social, cultural, and religious; • U.S. institutions reputation, perception, and misconceptions; • Education agents and counselors; • And, student recruitment campaigns. Based on the analyses, the project should develop recommendations and targeted messaging strategies to effectively communicate the benefits of studying in the United States and address any concerns or misconceptions that affect students' decision-making process. Our goal is to create a compelling narrative and comprehensive campaign strategy that resonates with prospective students and their families, ultimately increasing the number of Middle Eastern students choosing the United States for their higher education.</p>
Final Product Format	A comprehensive report with a complementary presentation deck with the findings and a strategic marketing plan that outlines targeted messaging strategies.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Marketing</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Communications</i>
Additional Information	https://snip.state.gov/rol https://snip.state.gov/rom https://snip.state.gov/ron https://snip.state.gov/rop https://snip.state.gov/roq https://snip.state.gov/ror https://snip.state.gov/ros
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	252
Project Name	Evaluating the Perception of Al-Jazeera in the US: Pre- and Post-October 7th
Office	Public Affairs
Embassy	Qatar
Bureau	Near Eastern Affairs
Project Description	<p>The events on and after October 7, 2023, have intensified discussion around Al-Jazeera’s role and coverage of international news. This project seeks to explore how these events have impacted Al-Jazeera’s perception in the U.S. among the public and government, and how these perceptions influence each other, if at all. Research Question: How has the perception of Al-Jazeera in the United States evolved historically, and how has it changed in response to the escalation of the Israel/Hamas conflict on October 7th? Specifically, how does U.S. public perception of Al-Jazeera compare with the U.S. government’s stance on Al-Jazeera, and to what extent does public opinion influence governmental views or vice versa?</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Historical Analysis: Examine the historical popularity and perception of Al-Jazeera in the U.S. from its inception to the present, focusing on key events and shifts in public and governmental attitudes. 2. Impact Assessment: Survey U.S. public opinion on Al-Jazeera before and after October 7, 2023, using quantitative and qualitative methods. 3. Influence Evaluation: Assess whether U.S. public opinion influences government views on Al-Jazeera or if the government's stance shapes public perceptions. 4. Specify Methodology and Data Collection: Use primary and secondary sources to evaluate shifts in the perception of Al-Jazeera. <p>Analyze U.S. government statements, policy changes, and media regulations related to Al-Jazeera before and post-October 7. Conduct a comparative analysis of media coverage and public discourse surrounding Al-Jazeera in the aftermath of the events. Interview media experts, political analysts, and government officials to understand the impact of these perceptions. This project will help inform the U.S. governments interaction with Al Jazeera but also inform methods for outreach and media engagements.</p>
Final Product Format	A comprehensive report detailing the evolution of Al-Jazeera’s perception in the U.S. since October 7 and the interplay between public and governmental views. The report should also include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insights into the influence of public opinion and government attitudes on Al-Jazeera’s media presence and diplomatic relations. • Strategic recommendations for Al-Jazeera and policymakers on managing perceptions and improving engagement.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Communications</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Middle East/North African Studies</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	253
Project Name	Building Inclusive Community Safety Programs: Addressing Crime and Enhancing Security in Trinidad and Tobago's Diverse Communities
Office	Office of Political, Economic, and International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Issues
Embassy	Trinidad & Tobago
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>This project provides a unique opportunity for universities to address pressing security challenges through the lens of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA). Trinidad and Tobago is a vibrant, multicultural society, but many of its most crime-stricken neighborhoods face deep-rooted social inequalities. This project seeks to create safety programs that are not only effective but also inclusive programs that empower marginalized communities, engage underrepresented voices, and ensure equitable access to security and justice for all. Students will have the opportunity to conduct interdisciplinary research that blends criminology, public policy, and social justice principles.</p> <p>The project will focus on developing community-driven strategies that build trust among diverse stakeholders, including local leaders, youth, and marginalized groups often impacted by both crime and exclusion. Students will help design programs that reduce crime while addressing systemic inequalities, offering alternatives to gang influence, and creating accessible pathways to community-led safety. This project invites students to contribute to long-term stability and equity in Trinidad and Tobago by designing inclusive frameworks that prioritize the safety and well-being of all citizens, regardless of their background.</p> <p>Through this work, they will gain valuable experience in applying DEIA principles to foreign policy challenges while shaping more just, secure, and inclusive communities.</p>
Final Product Format	The final product will be a robust, actionable set of resources designed to empower both national policymakers and local community leaders, including a brief report, community-safety toolkit, a policy brief with recommendations, and a slide deck summarizing all the above. It will provide practical solutions for addressing crime, promoting DEIA, and enhancing community safety in Trinidad and Tobago's most vulnerable neighborhoods.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Sociology</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	254
Project Name	DPRK: Technological Solutions to Increase Access to Information
Office	Front Office
Embassy	
Bureau	East Asian and Pacific Affairs
Project Description	<p>The DPRK is one of the most repressive regimes in the world. Recent crackdowns on foreign media and a continuing rise in the number of public executions, including of youth, have heightened an environment of fear and repression. An informed citizenry, with unfettered access to information, is critical for responsive governance. The U.S. Department of State is committed to increasing the free flow of information into, out of, and within North Korea. How can we increase access to information within the DPRK? We are looking for innovative and creative ideas for delivery of content into North Korea. This project asks students to explore technical options for new content delivery mechanisms. Potential solutions include ideas for how to use technology (satellite, radio, bluetooth, Internet, etc.) to get information into an increasingly closed information environment. Solutions should consider the technical literacy of the North Korean people and restrictions with access in the country and evaluate potential costs, safety concerns, technological needs, and identify potential private sector partners.</p>
Final Product Format	Options memo and presentation of findings.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Computer Science</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Democracy & Human Rights</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	255
Project Name	DPRK Human Rights: Forced Labor and Supply Chain Due Diligence
Office	Front Office
Embassy	
Bureau	East Asian and Pacific Affairs
Project Description	<p>North Korea continues to exploit its citizens, including through forced labor, and divert resources from the country's people to advance its unlawful weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs. The regime's institutionalization of forced labor and use of quota systems, mobilization, and pattern of sending workers overseas raises a number of human rights concerns. Foreign companies are at risk of inadvertently sourcing goods and services from the DPRK in violation of U.S. sanctions, engaging in business transactions with foreign persons who may knowingly employ North Korean labor in violation of United Nations sanctions, and the presence of North Korean citizens or nationals in companies' overseas supply chains in general including labor that generates revenue for the DPRK government.</p> <p>This project entails researching specific sectors including hair products (false eyelashes, beards, and wigs), seafood, textiles, and minerals that may be made with North Korean forced labor, and identifying and investigating companies and individuals who are involved for potential U.S. sanctions designations. This research may be used by the U.S. Department of State and other federal agencies with regards to sanctions designations and enforcement of U.S. and UN sanctions and laws banning the import of goods made with North Korean forced labor (including Title III, the Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA), the UN Security Council Resolutions 2375 and 2397, and OFAC's North Korean Sanctions Regulations, 31 C.F.R Part 510.512-521).</p>
Final Product Format	A memo listing the entities and evidence and presentation of findings.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Democracy & Human Rights</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic Sanctions</i>
Additional Information	https://ofac.treasury.gov/sanctions-programs-and-country-information/north-korea-sanctions https://ofac.treasury.gov/media/7721/download?inline
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	256
Project Name	How the COVID-19 Pandemic Transformed Global Fiscal Transparency Standards
Office	Office of Monetary Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	Economic and Business Affairs
Project Description	<p>Fiscal transparency fuels global macroeconomic stability by fostering greater government accountability. It provides citizens with a window into public expenditures, equipping citizens with the information needed to hold their leadership accountable, and facilitating better-informed public debate. Strong fiscal transparency standards are crucial to effective public financial management, particularly for developing economies that struggle to access financial markets and lending. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, governments across the globe have faced unprecedented budget and financing challenges. In some cases, this has accelerated public spending on expedited timelines while lowering traditional fiscal oversight and review standards. At the same time, a variety of public and private stakeholders have been ramping up their support for financially distressed governments via capacity building programs to help improve budgeting practices and promote more transparency.</p> <p>This project will analyze fiscal transparency indicators over time to determine the impact of pandemic-related economic repercussions on global fiscal transparency standards. Additionally, the program will evaluate the impact of bilateral capacity building assistance as well as non-governmental organizations (NGO) and international financial institution (IFI) programming on fiscal transparency indicators in targeted countries. The assessment will leverage data from a variety of sources, including&#2358; the U.S. State Department's Fiscal Transparency Report; the International Budget Partnership's Open Budget Survey; the World Bank's Public Expenditure Framework Assessment; and the IMF's Fiscal Transparency Evaluation.</p> <p>To evaluate the impact of capacity building programs and assistance, the assessment will include a review of projects funded by State's Fiscal Transparency Innovation Fund, the World Bank's Open Budget initiatives, and other NGO/IFI fiscal transparency related initiatives. The project authors may choose to focus on a particular region, such as sub-Saharan Africa or the Levant and north Africa.</p>
Final Product Format	Policy Paper and/or Presentation thatश 1) Analyzes fiscal transparency trends during the period from 2019 to 2023; and 2) Assesses the impact of U.S. government, NGO, and IFI fiscal transparency-related programming across State's Fiscal Transparency Report indicators.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	
Additional Information	<p>Link to State Department's Fiscal Transparency Innovation Fund&#2358; https&#2358;://www.state.gov/fiscal-transparency-innovation-fund/ Link to World Bank's Open Budget Initiative&#2358; https&#2358;://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/boost-portal/related-initiatives Link to IMF's Fiscal Transparency Evaluation&#2358; https&#2358;://www.imf.org/en/Topics/fiscal-policies/fiscal-transparency%20Fiscal%20Transparency%20Evaluation Link to World Bank's Public Expenditure Framework Assessment&#2358; https&#2358;://www.pefa.org/</p>
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	257
Project Name	The Illicit Importation of Mexican Oil into the United States by Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs)
Office	Treasury Executive Office for Asset Forfeiture
Embassy	
Bureau	Department of the Treasury
Project Description	<p>Mexico struggles with internal corruption and low trust in institutions that has been exacerbated by transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) and greedy politicians. In the past decade, Mexican cartels have evolved from running illicit trade markets at the Southern border that connects the United States and Mexico, to mirroring terrorist groups and insurgencies. They employ military tactics and weaponry, torture, murder, kidnapping, and extortion. TCOs now operate in 30 of 32 states and transcend national boundaries through connections in the United States, China, Latin America, and beyond and manipulate politics and government by use of money and fear. They've also greatly diversified their portfolio since their inception and leave no venture untouched if it can make them money.</p> <p>Mexico's weak political system only worsens the TCO crisis as it has been described as "loyalty to the president, across all political and judicial institutions, in exchange for access to wealth and political power. Mexico is roughly the 14th richest nation in the world and holds the second-largest economy in Latin America, after Brazil. It's an oil rich country and one of the largest oil producers in the world. Yet, despite its regional and global influence, Mexico suffers with high income inequality as the country's wealth is concentrated at the top, leaving roughly half its population living in poverty. From 1938 until 2023, Mexico's petroleum was nationalized under the company, Petroleos Mexicanos (PEMEX), and despite crude petroleum being one their top exports, it has undergone a serious decline in recent years. In 2023, after 85 years of nationalization, Mexico allowed for private ownership of its petroleum in an effort to boost its economy, though it is still currently under majority ownership of the State. TCOs have also tapped into this enterprise with the assistance of political actors by setting up shell companies and illegally smuggling Mexican crude oil into the United States.</p>
Final Product Format	A 4-8 page research paper looking at how the illegal smuggling of Mexican oil by illicit actors into the U.S. contributes to money laundering efforts (specifically third-party ML) and the effect these efforts have on the integrity of the U.S. and global financial system as well as diplomatic relations between the United States and Mexico. Please provide recommendations on how governments (U.S. and foreign) and financial institutions (i.e. banks, etc.) can deter these efforts.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	Economic and Finance Issues
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	258
Project Name	Free Trade Zones in Gulf Cooperation Council Countries (GCC): Analyzing and Understanding the Trade-Offs of FTZs in the GCC
Office	Office of Terrorist Financing and Financial Crimes (TFFC)
Embassy	
Bureau	Department of the Treasury
Project Description	The research project should identify trade-offs in the rapid growth or presence of Free Trade Zones (FTZs) in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states. This could be done in three parts. First, the analysis should include a synopsis of the various FTZs in the region, the economic benefits that these FTZs provide, and identify the potential illicit finance risks. Second, the Treasury Department has identified FTZs as an anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) vulnerability in some jurisdictions and would like to better understand the current regulatory frameworks of FTZs in each GCC member state, potential AML/CFT deficiencies that can be identified in open-source information, and recommended corrective actions that could be implemented to close any AML/CFT loopholes while maintaining likely economic benefits. Financial Action Task Force (FATF) mutual evaluation reports could be a primary source of information for each jurisdiction where they are available, and may provide additional insights into vulnerabilities identified by FATF as well as recommended corrective actions. Third, a comparative analysis that identifies a potential non-GCC “model that effectively reaps the economic benefits of FTZs with sufficient regulatory oversight to preclude exploitation by malign actors, could be useful, but is not required.
Final Product Format	Ideally the final product would be a written analysis, augmented by an oral presentation on the research projects key findings.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Middle East/North African Studies</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Graduate

Project ID	259
Project Name	Identifying Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Trends
Office	Office of Strategic Policy - National Security Threats and Trends
Embassy	
Bureau	Department of the Treasury
Project Description	Criminals, fraudsters, and terrorists are continuously developing new ways to disguise transactions that support their illicit actions or launder their ill-gotten gains. This project aims to qualitatively track and analyze money laundering and terrorist financing prosecutions over the past 5-10 years to identify when certain products or sectors were exploited by criminal actors, in addition to cataloging the underlying predicate crime involved. Researchers will review indictments, manually or with automated techniques, to identify the specific methods utilized by perpetrators indicted under money laundering statutes (18 U.S.C. 1956, 1957, 1960, 1961; 31 U.S.C. 5313, 5316, 5322, 5324, 5331, 5332) or terrorist financing statutes (18 U.S.C. 2339A, 2339B, 2339C). Researchers would also tally the related or underlying predicate crime(s) related to the money laundering and terrorist financing statutes. The information can then be compared with the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network's (FinCEN) Suspicious Activity Report (SAR) Trend data to identify regional- and state-level trends.
Final Product Format	A 4-5 page policy memo identifying money laundering and terrorist financing trends by type and/or geography, with appendices for case examples, tables, and visuals. Appendixes should have the following breakdowns: o (1) For the ML or TF charge, the associated underlying predicate crime(s) charged (or dropped if able to determine) o (2) For the ML or TF charge, the product, sector, typology or trend utilized in line with AML/CFT Priorities and NRAs o (3) Heat maps or other visuals comparing ML/TF prosecutions with SAR data
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Counter Terrorism</i>
Additional Information	U.S. Treasury Money Laundering Policy Issue Page U.S. Treasury TFFC OSP Page FinCEN SARs Statistics Office of the U.S. Attorneys Annual Statistics Reports
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	260
Project Name	Corruption's Link to Migration in the Western Hemisphere
Office	Office of Intelligence and Analysis
Embassy	
Bureau	Department of the Treasury
Project Description	The goal of this research proposal is to understand the causal linkages between irregular migration to the United States and the role of corruption as a push factor for migration. Although we recognize that there is a key role played by corruption as a push factor for irregular migration throughout the region, we generally lack an understanding of what types and levels of corruption affect the desires to migration. For example, this includes corruption by local versus federal authorities, or the threats caused by administrative versus coercive corruption (e.g. bribes for permits versus required extortion payments). Our hope is to better develop the causal mechanisms at play. We expect that the research project would benefit from quantitative research on corruption indicators and the correlates with irregular migration. However, any article would also benefit from process tracing the interaction between exposure to corruption and individual decisions to migrate. Potential key jurisdictions of study would include Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Cuba, Haiti, Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador.
Final Product Format	A research article and the accompanying data, preferably with a presentation on the results.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Other</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	261
Project Name	Overview and Gap Analysis of Information Sharing between U.S. Government, International Partners, and the Private Sector in Response to Cryptocurrency Crimes
Office	Office of Foreign Assets Control
Embassy	
Bureau	Department of the Treasury
Project Description	<p>This project aims to examine the current status quo of information sharing between U.S. government and international / private sector partners regarding cryptocurrency enabled crimes. If applicable, it will also identify and propose solutions for gaps and weaknesses in this field. Current transnational crime collaboration occurs in a variety of ways, such as through mutual legal assistance treaties (MLATs), subpoenas to the private sector, bilateral nation-to-nation engagement, and engagement through multilateral organizations such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Egmont Group. However, due to the rapid and transnational nature and increasing prevalence of illicit cryptocurrency activities, legacy processes may need to be examined and adjusted.</p> <p>According to TRM Labs’s “The Illicit Crypto Economy report, illicit crypto volumes in 2023 totaled approximately \$34.9 billion. This figure represents a large international problem to U.S. and international law enforcement, especially as the illicit volume tied to hacks and scams are on pace to exceed 2023 levels. The rapid transnational nature of illicit cryptocurrency activities requires extensive information sharing between law enforcement, financial intelligence units, the private sector, and national governments.</p> <p>In this paper, I would examine information sharing in response to cryptocurrency-enabled crime in two scenarios. The first scenario covers “public knowledge crimes. These are instances in which, due to the public nature of the blockchain, the illicit activity is rapidly identified by law enforcement and the wider public. An example of such a scenario is a major hack, such as the DMM Market and WazirX hacks, during which the hackers stole crypto over \$500 million in aggregate. The second scenario covers “limited knowledge crimes. These are instances in which international and private sector partners will not know a crime has occurred until alerted by a victim or U.S. law enforcement. Crimes falling under this category include ransomware deployment and elder abuse scams.</p> <p>By analyzing these information sharing processes, I hope to provide insights on how the unique challenges and commonalities of both scenarios, compare best practices in each scenario, and provide recommendations for a wide variety of cryptocurrency crimes. To analyze the scope and effectiveness of information sharing, I would examine several relevant factors such as the timeliness of reporting and response, the presence of MLATs in countries connected to the illicit crypto economy, the general willingness of virtual asset service providers to cooperate with law enforcement, and mechanisms for information sharing within multilateral organizations such as FATF and the Egmont Group. I would gather information on these factors through key person interviews and public data aggregation and analysis.</p> <p>This research could be used to improve current information sharing protocols in the circumstances of cooperative interdiction, criminal indictments, and sanctions designations, leading to more frozen assets and more recoveries for victims.</p>
Final Product Format	Research paper which outlines the status quo of information sharing in the two categories described above, identifies gaps, and then makes relevant recommendations

Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Computer Science</i>
Additional Information	Sources: https://cointelegraph.com/news/crypto-hacks-surpass-1-2-billion-finance-redefined https://www.trmlabs.com/the-illicit-crypto-economy-report https://www.chainalysis.com/blog/2024-crypto-crime-mid-year-update-part-2/
Academic Level	Graduate



Project ID	262
Project Name	Forecasting the Trajectory of the Global Cross-Border Payment Landscape
Office	Office of Intelligence and Analysis
Embassy	
Bureau	Department of the Treasury
Project Description	This project will explore the global cross-border payment landscape and forecast how various payment categories - including banks, nonbank digital payment systems, nonbank wires, cryptocurrency, and stablecoins - will evolve through 2030. The goal is to better understand the trends in relative volume and value among the categories and how we anticipate these trends to evolve over this timeframe. The data informing this analysis will need to be drawn from a wide range of sources, including annual reports, central bank data, balance of payments data, and private sector studies.
Final Product Format	Written report / briefing
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Other</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	263
Project Name	Comparative Analysis of Artificial Intelligence Regulation and Supervision for Financial Institutions
Office	Office of Strategic Policy, Payments & Innovation Team
Embassy	
Bureau	Department of the Treasury
Project Description	<p>Legal frameworks for nascent artificial intelligence technologies are evolving rapidly, and can vary by jurisdiction. Relatedly, as artificial intelligence technologies advance, financial institutions seek opportunities to leverage this technology to combat fraud and illicit finance. This project will be a comparative analysis of laws, executive directives, regulations, and binding frameworks that are either in force or currently under legislative consideration that govern the use of artificial intelligence technologies and tools by financial institutions for anti-fraud and/or AML/CFT compliance.</p> <p>Researchers will review, compare, and summarize relevant laws, directives, rules and regulations both internationally (e.g. in the UK, EU, Canada, Australia, China, Brazil) and domestically; for example: Italy recently drafted legislation imposing greater penalties on money laundering crimes using AI. The analysis should focus on laws and regulations that specifically apply to financial institutions (including non-depository institutions, such as money services businesses, virtual asset exchanges, etc.)</p> <p>The end product should include discussion of the broader technology landscape of artificial intelligence tools in this space, and how jurisdictions are responding to the novel uses and potential risks of these tools.</p>
Final Product Format	A 4-5 page policy memo that comprehensively compares and contrasts the approaches to AI law and regulation that jurisdictions of importance (e.g. major economies, and major centers of AI technology development) are taking. The product should include an appendix table/Excel spreadsheet that identifies key areas of overlap and difference between compared laws and regulations.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	264
Project Name	Identifying State Requirements Relating to Company Formation and Trust Registration
Office	Office of Strategic Policy, Financial Transparency and Regulatory Policy
Embassy	
Bureau	Department of the Treasury
Project Description	<p>Illicit actors frequently use corporate structures such as shell and front companies to obfuscate their identities and launder their ill-gotten gains through the U.S. financial system. In the United States, the formation of legal entities is governed by state law; trusts are also created and administered under state law.</p> <p>This project aims to research and analyze state-level (including U.S. territories) requirements relating to corporate formation and trust registration to better understand what information is reported to secretaries of states and other similar offices, and if/how this information can be accessed by law enforcement and other relevant authorities in a timely manner to further their investigations.</p> <p>Researchers will research secretaries of state and other relevant state websites, identify information states make available about company formation and trust registration processes and requirements, and their respective reporting requirements - e.g., relating to proof of incorporation, legal form and status, addresses, basic regulating powers (e.g., memorandum & articles of association), list of directors, and shareholders.</p>
Final Product Format	<p>Tables detailing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Information states (including U.S. territories) make available about their respective company formation or trust registration processes and requirements (with links to relevant website for each state) o Information states require from legal entities and trusts at the time of formation or registration o States' requirements relating to updating and correcting previously reported information o Company and trust information that states make available to law enforcement and other authorities and interested parties o Company and trust information that states make publicly available (and whether it is available for free or for a fee)
Primary Discipline/Expertise	Economic and Finance Issues
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement
Additional Information	<p>â€¢ U.S. Treasury TFFC OSP Page â€¢ 2024 National Money Laundering Risk Assessment - see pages 53-58 on â€œLegal Entities and Arrangementsâ€</p> <p>â€¢ 2022 National Strategy for Combating Terrorist and Other Illicit Financing - see page 8 on Corporate Transparency Act and Beneficial Ownership</p>
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	265
Project Name	Analysis of the Remittance Economy, its Participants, and Sufficiency of Related Regulatory and Supervisory Regimes
Office	Financial Transparency and Regulatory Policy
Embassy	
Bureau	Department of the Treasury
Project Description	<p>Financial remittances are essential to economic support and the provision of humanitarian assistance in many developing countries. Despite remittances frequently surpassing official development assistance and foreign direct investment in remittance-receiving countries, these funds can be costly to send, and there remains anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) concerns about traditional remittance providers, such as money services businesses (MSBs). Rising costs and money laundering concerns have also caused banks to de-risk certain business relationships, affecting the provision of both humanitarian assistance and cross-border remittances.</p> <p>In this climate, there is renewed interest in how digital remittances can alleviate some of these concerns and modernize existing payment systems for remittances. This project will provide an analysis to better understand the remittance economy, key remittance corridors, and the adequacy of regulation and supervision to support the efficient and secure functioning of remittance flows.</p>
Final Product Format	<p>The research paper should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) data breakdown of remittances from the United States; b) the types of digital remittance payment systems, including virtual assets-based systems (e.g. cryptocurrency) and their growth in the last decade for both remittance and humanitarian transfers; c) the impact of digital remittances in the U.S. and global remittance market; d) if digital remittances have been successful in certain remittance corridors, regulatory and other factors that have enabled success; e) the adequacy of the current U.S. AML/CFT regulatory regime to address the use of digital, as well as virtual asset-based remittances; and f) policy recommendations for the U.S. context. Students are encouraged to reach out to public and private stakeholders for this project and think through negative unintended consequences of potential policy recommendations. <p>Students are encouraged to utilize and consult with World Bank’s KNOMAD, RemitStat and RemitScope team and other open data sources to help bring greater methodological precision to their analysis.</p>
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Computer Science</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	266
Project Name	Social Justice as a Measure of Economic Impact: Recommendations in Adopting A-4 Circular Best Practices
Office	Financial Crimes Enforcement Network
Embassy	
Bureau	Department of the Treasury
Project Description	The project would entail reviewing both the changes in requirements between the Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) circulars A-4 2003 and 2023 with respect to social justice considerations and the history of regulatory impact analyses (RIAs) in the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network’s (FinCEN) rulemakings to identify potential deficiencies and prepare recommendations of actionable changes additions FinCEN could make to improve its analyses with respect to A-4 2023 circular recommended best practices.
Final Product Format	Executive Summary Memorandum to the Director
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	267
Project Name	Assessment of the Effectiveness of Financial Channels in Facilitating Humanitarian Activities and Protecting Against Sanctions Evasion
Office	Office of Terrorist Financing and Financial Crimes
Embassy	
Bureau	Department of the Treasury
Project Description	This project would look at different models of financial channels that have emerged in recent decades as mechanisms to ensure that funds of sanctioned parties are restricted and used solely for humanitarian activities. Prominent examples include the 2015 Joint Plan of Action (JPOA) and the 2020 Swiss Humanitarian Trade Arrangement humanitarian channels established to ensure Iranian oil revenues were used solely for humanitarian activities, the 2022 Swiss Fund for the Afghan People, and the 2016 North Korea United Nations-supervised banking channel. Have these channels been effective in ensuring that funds of sanctioned parties are restricted to humanitarian purposes and not nefarious aims? Have they been effective in facilitating the delivery of humanitarian goods to sanctioned jurisdictions? What factors have impacted whether a channel is successful or not? The project would evaluate different case studies and draw out conclusions and lessons learned for policymakers.
Final Product Format	Report with case studies and lessons learned
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic Sanctions</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Hybrid

Project ID	268
Project Name	DPRK Human Rights Abuses: Data, Documentation, and Accountability
Office	Front Office
Embassy	
Bureau	East Asian and Pacific Affairs
Project Description	The human rights situation in the DPRK is deplorable and deteriorating. The 2014 report of the Commission of Inquiry (COI) on Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) found that "systematic, widespread and gross human rights violations have been and are being committed by the DPRK. In many instances, the violations found entailed crimes against humanity. This project asks students to look at publicly available data and reporting detailing human rights abuses and violations being committed by the Kim Jong-Un regime, including through direct engagements with North Korean refugees or escapees living in local communities in the United States, and use the data to share the stories of victims and survivors. These documentation and evidence preservation efforts could be the basis of future accountability processes, including truth-telling and memorialization efforts.
Final Product Format	Final product could include videos, animations, comic strips, images, or written work using data to document DPRK human rights abuses.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Human Rights</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Other</i>
Additional Information	
Academic Level	Undergraduate

Title	269
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.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	Urban Planning
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	Climate Change
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	270
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.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Food Security</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>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?