Global Studies Major Senior Capstone: Individual Research in Globalization

General program information

The Global Studies major is designed for highly motivated students who wish to complete their required studies by conducting their own independent research on the issue of globalization, done under the guidance of a faculty advisor. A capstone project is required of all Global Studies majors and is intended to be quite substantial in its scholarship—The default form will be a written work, between 30-50 pages of original writing, double spaced (40-60 pages including title page, bibliography, appendices, etc.). Students are asked to work closely with faculty mentors who will guide them through the various phases of their research. Students interested in pursuing alternative formats (e.g. video, multi-media) should consult with DUS, and seek advisors who can guide them appropriately.

Students should prepare for the Global Studies thesis by completing coursework in research methods such as ANTH 410, ANTH 325 or equivalent, ideally prior to undertaking experiential learning or study abroad experiences. Students should plan to register for the Global Studies Advanced Seminar (ANTH 415) in the fall semester of their junior or senior year, and sign up for ANTH 485 Global Studies Capstone Seminar in the Spring semester of senior year.

Research topic

The research topic of the senior thesis is of the student's choosing, but should clearly relate to one or more of the core thematic pillars of globalization such as transnational culture, technology and media, migration and refugees, global governance, international markets, development and humanitarianism, global health etc. The senior thesis can be an expansion and re-working of an earlier research paper written for another course, but it must contain substantial original new work. Ideally, students will identify the research topic and begin research in their Junior year, and will submit a research proposal prior to enrolling in ANTH 485 Global Studies Capstone Seminar.

Academic mentorship

Students are required to find a faculty mentor (or mentors), who can come from any department at USC. Students should supply the faculty mentor with a written research proposal, which should include sufficient detail so that a determination of the scope and appropriateness of the research topic can be made. Students should seek a mentor who works in their region or theoretical area of research. Ideally, this will be a faculty member they have done coursework with but this is not a formal requirement.

Honors Program in Global Studies

To be considered for Honors in Global Studies, students need a cumulative GPA of 3.5 GPA both in the university as a whole, and in the courses that qualify for the Global Studies major (a USC honors requirement); and complete an Honors Thesis that is certified by its two faculty readers in Global Studies or Anthropology as of honors level, as reflected in a grade of A- or better overall in ANTH 485. If the grade is lower than that, the student will receive credit for a Senior Thesis. The honors thesis should be about 40-60 pages long (50-70 pages

including title page, bibliography, appendices, etc.), but the quality of the argument and supporting materials is more important than the length.

Funding for undergraduate research

Funding for undergraduate research: Students are encouraged to apply for SOAR (for the academic year) and SURF (for summer funding, https://dornsife.usc.edu/surf-shure/) to help support the costs of their research for the thesis. Students wishing to conduct independent research can apply for the Provost's Undergrad Research Fellowships. https://undergrad.usc.edu/experience/research/undergrad_research/

IRB clearance

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is an independent ethics committee responsible for reviewing the methods of proposed projects to ensure that research is conducted ethically. Research involving library and archival sources does not require IRB clearance, and participant observation is also usually exempt from IRB clearance.

As a student you are not generally required to seek IRB approval unless you have plans to publish your research, or you are conducting research that has the potential to place your subjects at risk. If are unsure, contact the IRB Review office: https://oprs.usc.edu/irb-review/, or the OPRS Student Mentors: https://oprs.usc.edu/hspp/about/#studentmentor.

Thesis/Capstone submission deadline:

The full draft of the thesis project should be submitted by the end of March. It will be read by the thesis advisor and evaluated by the end of April.