

PENN GLOBAL SEMINARS

Academic Year 2019-2020



PennGlobal
UNIVERSITY *of* PENNSYLVANIA

ABOUT PENN GLOBAL SEMINARS

Penn Global Seminars combine intensive semester-long undergraduate courses with a short-term travel component that is intended to deepen students' understanding of concepts discussed in the classroom. These courses are particularly advantageous to first- and second-year students, first-generation and low-income students, athletes, and students with particularly rigorous curricular requirements who cannot commit to a semester or year abroad.

In the 2019-2020 academic year, the Penn Global Seminars program maintained its substantial growth by executing 12 courses and serving 208 students. Several new program sites were added to the portfolio, including Costa Rica, Turkey, Japan, Zimbabwe, and Greece. For the second year in a row, students paid a flat fee of only \$950, which covered all aspects of their participation in a Global Seminar, including round-trip airfare, lodging, ground transportation, entry fees, and group meals. Building upon last year's successful collaboration with the Critical Writing Program, the Penn Global Seminars program grew the number of writing seminars to three and successfully targeted first- and second-year students for these opportunities. This academic year's portfolio also represented a diversification in course type, including pilots of both a hybrid language course and a Benjamin Franklin Seminar.

Penn Global Seminars are supported by the Ahmad Fund and contributions from the Provost's Office.

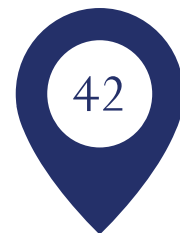


"The semester course allowed us to engage with the speakers and lecturers on a deep and meaningful level. We did not go in blindly—we had heard their stories, read their work, prepared questions in advance, and went in with genuine interest with everyone we met with. Both the class syllabus and the trip itinerary were beyond intentional. Every aspect of the trip felt like a seamless, physical extension to what we had learned in class."

Cassandra Jobman
Paris under the German Occupation
France, Fall 2019



Security and Anxiety at International Borders: Turkey and the USA in Global Perspective
Turkey, Fall 2019



The number of seminars offered since Spring 2016



The number of student participants since the program's inception

2019-2020 PARTICIPANTS AT A GLANCE

208

Penn students participated in twelve seminars

71%

Students who receive financial aid

24%

Students who identify as first-generation college students

47%

Participants who were first- and second-year students

55%

US participants who identify as students of color



Operations Strategy Practicum, Israel, Fall 2019



Field Studies in Tropical Biodiversity and Conservation, Costa Rica, Fall 2019



THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19

Penn Global Seminars, like many of Penn's global and domestic programs, faced significant challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Spring 2020 semester. Program staff followed the developments of the spread of the virus and growing travel restrictions closely, prioritizing the health, safety, and security of students and faculty. Ultimately, in accordance with CDC guidance, Penn Global made the difficult decision to cancel travel abroad for all seven spring seminars before their travel commenced. The on-campus component of each course was able to successfully transition to remote instruction following Penn's extended spring break. Students were refunded their program fee in full and any vaccines and medications purchased in preparation for travel were reimbursed.

Although the cancellation of these long-awaited travel experiences was devastating for PGS students, faculty leaders nevertheless found creative ways to infuse global elements into their virtual classroom. From interactive virtual reality tours of Kyoto and Tokyo to Skype conversations with experts abroad, students still had an opportunity to gain a meaningful global experience from their PGS course. Building upon these entrepreneurial efforts by spring PGS faculty, the program will continue to explore opportunities for leveraging virtual platforms and local site visits to continue the mission of Penn Global Seminars in the Fall 2020 semester.

LOOKING AHEAD

In order to meet the high demand for accessible, academically rigorous global programs, the Penn Global Seminars program will further expand in the 2020-2021 academic year. The portfolio will, for the first time since the program's inception, include upper-level, major-specific courses and language courses. Most of the seminars will remain open to all students, regardless of major or language background, and will continue to target first- and second-year students and students from majors underrepresented in education abroad. While Penn Global originally planned to execute a total of 20 courses during the 2020-2021 academic year, several of these courses will be modified or deferred to future academic years due to the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Highlights from the expanded Penn Global Seminars portfolio include:

- An increased number of Penn Global Seminars course offerings, allowing even more undergraduate students to participate in a meaningful global experience. The expansion will also allow faculty from previously untapped departments, such as History and Germanic Languages & Literatures, to develop courses unique to their discipline.
- Diversification of the program's regional engagement to include countries typically underrepresented in education abroad. In the coming academic year, the Penn Global Seminars will expand to new program sites around the world, including Argentina, Madagascar, Indonesia, New Zealand, Taiwan, and Australia.
- Partnership with the Penn Language Center to develop a new Malagasy language course featuring a virtual language exchange. Students will have abundant opportunities to improve their Malagasy skills over the course of the semester by corresponding with students in Madagascar by email, social media, and video chats.
- Multiple seminars that explore the intersectionality of environmental sustainability and indigenous rights. Courses to Australia, Indonesia, Argentina, Mongolia, and New Zealand will all focus on aspects of climate change, food and water security, land use, human rights, and self-determination.

"I gained so much more perspective on what it's like living in another country and got to see firsthand how the differences affect the citizens there. I think I was able to broaden my idea of how healthcare works in other locations, which is really important when working with patient populations from all over. I was able to enrich myself with the culture as well, which is something that words cannot even describe how valuable it is."

Ariana Nunez
Health and the Healthcare System in Chile
Chile, Fall 2019



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