

# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

## news & views

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TUFTS PROGRAM IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

## IR Program to Introduce Curriculum Reform

Written by Ashley Semler, as printed in the Tufts Daily, September 22, 2006

The International Relations (IR) program is preparing to launch an updated curriculum that will change the structure and requirements of the IR major.

The change, which has been in the works for over two years, was brought about by the IR Executive Committee (IREC), led by IR Program Director and Associate Political Science Professor Malik Mufti.

The new program decreases the IR core requirements from seven to five. Focused coursework within the student's area of interest, or concentration, will increase from four units to seven.

"We're tremendously excited by this curriculum reform," Mufti said, "and [we're] confident that it will further strengthen the quality and reputation of this flagship program at Tufts."

IREC's proposal was approved on May 10 by a unanimous faculty vote.

Dean of Undergraduate Education James Glaser said that the changes brought some coherence to a "far-flung" major that had lost much of its focus.

"Periodic change is necessary in academia," Glaser said.

The new program will incorporate culture, U.S. foreign policy, and seminar requirements into student concentrations. The goal of this new system is for students to focus on themes within their chosen concentrations and reach a deeper understanding of a specific aspect of international relations.

Many of the concentrations, which were formerly known as clusters, will also change. Regional and economic concentrations will remain, and new concentrations will replace the other clusters. The new concentrations include: Global Health, Nutrition and the Environment; International Security; the United States in World Affairs; and Identity and Ideology.

Despite overwhelming support from the faculty and administration, changing the IR curriculum was a long process. The IREC had to discuss its plans with the IR faculty and the departments that comprise the program, as well as the Director's Leadership Council, the student liaisons to the IREC, before deciding to take on the challenge.

The proposed changes were then submitted to the Arts and Sciences Curricula Committee and voted on by the entire Arts and Sciences faculty. "I tip my cap to Professor Mufti for this effort," Glaser said.

Although the faculty supports the updated program, some students are unclear about what the changes mean, and many others are completely unaware of their existence.

Kahran Singh, a freshman and prospective IR major, was not aware of the new IR program.

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## Summer Snapshot

By Hannah Jones (LA'07)

During the summer, ten students traveled through eight Southern African countries showing live World Cup soccer games as well as AIDS awareness videos along the way. We traveled by car with a projector, satellite dish, generator, retractable screen, and laptop computer so that we were able to show live coverage of the World Cup, even in remote areas. This is what we saw:



Tufts student Hannah Jones, along with friends, watching the France vs. Brazil match in Divundu, Namibia. Photo by Dominic Matthews



Some members of the team after a lively soccer game in a dry riverbed just outside Francistown, Botswana. Photo by Tiana Leakey



Members of the team setting up the satellite dish in Simamba, Zambia. Photo by Tiana Leakey

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# IR Program News from Abroad

## A Journey Into Central Asia: Anne E. Borghesani Winner Sarah Newton Shares Her Experience

By Sarah Newton (LA'07)



Exhilarated by the beauty of the Altai Mountains

Photo courtesy of Sarah Newton

Long fascinated by the development and political future of the post-Soviet republics, I set out to explore the region firsthand. After receiving the Anne E. Borghesani prize to undertake research in Kazakhstan, I arrived in Almaty at 4 am with only a hope that my arranged host family would be waiting for me. As I walked out of the airport security gates I was relieved to see a nice looking older woman holding a homemade sign bearing my name, NEWTON. Galia and her older son, John, greeted me with roses picked from their garden and took me home. The strange thing was that they kept calling me "Newton," I assumed they had a tradition of calling each other by their last names. It was three days before I realized they thought "Newton" was my first name.

Their home was what I had expected, a small Soviet-era apartment whose stairwells smelled of all the people who had lived there in the past fifty years. Hand woven rugs hung on most of the walls and my room was filled with volumes by Gogol and Pushkin. From the outset I was overwhelmed with Kazakh hospitality. Honestly, I don't think I ever had enough time between meals to become hungry. I was constantly told to kyshtete, (eat! eat!). Although I had planned to avoid meat and thereby, food poisoning while I was there, my plate was always heaped with meat and onion patties, steamed dumplings filled with meat, meat and potato soup, and big chunks of boiled meat. In the end I failed on both counts.

One weekend, John, whose newest occupation was escorting me everywhere on Galia's orders, took me on a long clamoring bus ride into the snowcapped Altai Mountains that the city is nestled below. High in the mountains sits the Soviet built skating rink, Medeo, where you can climb 1,500 stairs to the top of a dam meant to keep avalanches and mudslides at bay. Once we reached the top we ate the traditional shashlyk (skewered meat) at a cafe overlooking the city. Later that evening we went over to John's babushka, where I was served up a big cold glass of milk. Thirsty and hot I took a large swig and almost convulsed with shock at the taste. Apparently, it was fermented camel's milk which they said was kak piva...like beer. While it may be slightly alcoholic, it is nothing like beer. It tasted like milk mixed with vinegar that had been sitting out for several weeks, it was the only thing I couldn't finish while I was there.

I was in Kazakhstan in part to practice Russian and there are bound to be embarrassing mishaps on the road to learning a foreign language. For almost a week I went in search of a phone card to call home, but whenever I asked if a store sold phone cards I was surprised at the strange looks I received. I later realized that I had been politely asking for a "telephone potato, please." Potato, kartoshka, and card, kartocka, are apparently easy to confuse. And then there was the afternoon I had a craving for a Snickers bar which I spotted in the window of a street kiosk. When I asked the attendant if I could have one of the two Snickers bars I saw, she said "no, we don't have any." That morning I decided to be unusually assertive and not just wander away because of language difficulties, so I firmly insisted that she sell me one, please! Exasperated, the lady

Continue with *Kazakhstan* on page 7

# IR Program

# Tips for the IR Major

## Seniors

### GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

All Tufts students need to submit a degree sheet to Dowling Hall before they graduate. Be sure to complete the online degree sheet and major concentration form or forms (if a double major), and then submit it to the IR office (Cabot 605) by the following deadlines:

- Fri., Oct 6th- For students graduating in Feb. 2007
- Wed., Nov 8th- For students graduating in May 2007

Once approved by the IR Director, students can then submit their degree sheet to Dowling.

### IR MENTORS

We are looking for additional IR mentors (minimal time commitment). Please check out the IR website for more details on how to become an IR mentor, <http://ase.tufts.edu/ir/leadershipMentors.htm>.

## Juniors

### STAY CONNECTED TO TUFTS

We understand that many junior IR majors decide to study abroad their junior year but we wanted to remind these students to check your Tufts email and the IR website every once in awhile to stay connected. There may be announcements that pertain to you, including senior thesis, internship opportunities, etc.

### FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Thinking about traveling abroad? Need some funds? Check out our scholarship opportunities from the Anne E. Borghesani Memorial Prize, and the IR Research Scholarship, <http://ase.tufts.edu/ir/researchOpportunities.htm>. You can get funds to do an internship, a service project, a research project, or a study abroad program.

## Sophomores

### IR MAJOR SUPPLEMENTAL DECLARATION FORM

If you have not already done so, please come by Cabot 605 to complete the IR Supplemental Declaration Form. This form is important because it establishes a file for you here in IR where all of your IR-related documents can be kept safely together (ie. transfer of credit, language exemption, etc). The blue declaration/advisor forms submitted to Dowling do not provide substantive information nor are they transmitted to us.

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## Freshmen

### WELCOME TO THE IR PROGRAM!

### STOP BY THE IR OFFICE AND MEET THE STAFF!

Malik Mufti - Director  
Kirk Lange - Assistant Director  
Moira Connors - Program Administrator  
Elizabeth Gottlieb - Staff Assistant

### GET A HEAD START ON YOUR MAJOR

Be sure to pick up your IR major supplemental form in the IR Office (Cabot 605).

### IR MENTORS

Contact an IR Mentor to get a student perspective on the IR Major! Go to <http://ase.tufts.edu/ir/leadershipMentors.htm> for more information.

## LOOKING FOR AN INTERNSHIP?

The IR Program updates its web page each semester to include real internship opportunities in Boston, nationally, and internationally. <http://ase.tufts.edu/ir/internshipsListings.htm>



# IR Program Focus: IR Alumni

## Eye on International Development

By Rebecca Ullman (LA'03)

My interest in international development projects began on a bus ride near the city of Tulear in southern Madagascar. I was studying abroad for the semester and we were on our way to visit a fishing village on the tip of a long, thin peninsula. On the bus, I read a report written by a previous student who had visited the village and described what I would learn to be a classic development flaw. The village's primary export, shrimp, had been deemed a health hazard because it was processed on a dock that was not sanitary. Engineers and professionals arrived and built a new dock nearly a mile away from the village, spending at least twice the village's annual GDP.

Shrimp exporting resumed, but a visit to the village nearly two years later found the dock in pristine condition, primarily because it had never been used by the shrimpers. The experts failed to ask the shrimpers if they would be willing to add a mile walk to an already long day at sea.

Instead of using the dock, the shrimpers decided to clean the shrimp and load them on to the transporting boats while still at sea. While it seemed a victory for local problem solving, it was heartbreaking to visit the villages and see what was not there- antibiotics, running water, teachers, books. Instead, the unused dock sat in the collective consciousness- a tribute to waste and what could have been.

I used my education in International Relations at Tufts to fulfill my interests, which were broad and diverse. I took political science, peace studies, cultural studies, history and child development, and then I suffered through international economics. It was all interesting and relevant to a globalized world, but I didn't really 'see' myself in my studies until I read that paper. I wanted to work on projects like that, and



Counterpart International recipients in Tajikistan  
Photo courtesy of Rebecca Ullman

do them right. It was problem solving, it was history, it was culture, it was economics. It was a way to be involved internationally and to work for something greater than profit.

After graduation and a couple internships, my job search took me online where I found many organizations doing the work in which I hoped to become involved. I was fortunate to find a position with the Washington, DC-based non-profit Counterpart International, where I have spent two years working in humanitarian assistance and learning a lot about international development in general.

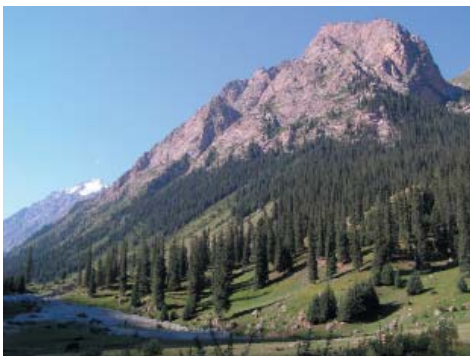
International development as an industry has its roots in the Congressional Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, which separated money spent abroad into two major categories- military aid and non-military economic assistance. As mandated in the Act, President John F. Kennedy established the U.S. Agency for International Development

(USAID), through which non-military economic assistance would be administered.

Forty-six years later, the result of the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act is a burgeoning industry made up of organizations, both for- and non-profit, whose work it is to compete for funding from USAID and similar organizations such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and Asian Development Bank. It is a competitive, jargon-filled line of work where it is not uncommon to have interns with master's degrees, but it is also incredibly interesting and stimulating. When I arrive at the office each morning, I deal with the effects of trade policy, international diplomacy, U.S. foreign policy, and cultural interaction. And at the end of the day, I leave hoping that my work made an impact somewhere like the village in southern Madagascar.

# Scholarship Information

## Anne E. Borghesani Memorial Prize



Mountains north of Barskoon (a village south east of Lake Issa-Kul)

Photo courtesy of 2005-2006 Borghesani winner Unaza Khan (LA'07)

This prize is awarded to second-semester sophomores and juniors who undertake a research project, internship, volunteer activity, or plan of study in any field involving international issues. Designed to foster the spirit of the award, the prize encourages personal growth and independence while increasing one's understanding of all peoples and encouraging a commitment to the world community. Second-semester sophomores and juniors from **ANY** department or major with a minimal GPA of 2.8 or above are eligible for the prize. Preference is given to U.S. citizens, but students of any nationality are urged to apply. Past projects include an internship in Russia working on TB, a trip to Barcelona to research Islamic Feminism, a volunteer activity with Habitat for Humanity in Kyrgyzstan, and a summer session at a language school in Morocco. For more information and an application, please visit <http://ase.tufts.edu/ir/researchOppBorghesani.htm>. Applications are due Friday, February 2, 2007 to the IR Office in Cabot 605.

## Elie Wiesel Prize in Ethics

This contest is open to full-time undergraduate juniors and seniors from an accredited college. In 3,000 to 4,000 words, students are encouraged to raise questions, single out issues and identify urgent ethical issues confronting them in today's complex world. The deadline typically falls on December 1. For more information, please visit <http://www.eliewiesel.org/>.

## Working for an NGO in Morocco

By Edita Zlatic (LA'07)

This summer I completed another interesting adventure. Thanks to the generous funding from the Borghesani family (<http://ase.tufts.edu/ir/researchOppBorghesani.htm>), I was able to travel to Morocco, study the Arabic language and engage in a unique opportunity of volunteering with a local NGO for eight weeks.

"The more things I have to do, the more things I get done" is my motto and some of you who know me will agree with it. In order to fulfill my Middle Eastern Studies Major language requirement, I had to take summer classes, and I figured I might as well do it in a traditional setting and explore the culture. Yet studying the Arabic language alone was not enough for me and since I am interested in development projects, especially rural development, I thought I could combine these two together and enrich my experience. I applied to ALIF – Arabic Language Institute

in Fez (<http://www.alif-fes.com/>), wrote a long e-mail stating what I was intending to do, and the coordinator Linda Bouchard Hart enthusiastically embraced my proposal.

Once things were put in motion (it took a little while – made me appreciate US punctuality) I was assigned to a local NGO - ADER - Agence pour la Dédensification et la Réhabilitation de la médina de Fès (<http://www.aderfes.ma>). I was given a unique opportunity of doing some actual construction work. I organized group of ALIF students to join me and so every afternoon after our classes we would go to our assigned projects. Projects included reconstructing and building homes for low-income people, help out with the office work (event planning, fundraising, applying for grants, etc.), and we had a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to help in the restoration of 400 year old Medresa Attarine – one of the oldest Islamic Schools in Morocco.

The ALIF institute organized extracurricular activities such as hiring a professional tour guide to acquaint us with the history and current challenges of the Old Medina (Old City of Fez build more than 400 years ago), a Gnaoua Music Festival in Essaouira, an extraordinary trip to the Sahara Desert where we got to ride on camels, hike up the dunes, and participate in Berbers' singing and dancing. The student body at ALIF was extremely diverse including high school seniors and graduate students to field specialists and military personnel. I met some incredible people, and I am planning to stay in contact with some for years to come. In addition, I met some amazing Moroccan young women who were working on women's and children's human rights. We were able to organize discussions between ALIF students and SACAL (Subul Assalam Center for Arabic Language) students (mainly Moroccan women) on different topics, including "improving communication between the USA

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# IR Program

# Student Leadership



2005-2006 DLC

## DIRECTOR'S LEADERSHIP COUNCIL (DLC)

The DLC is the first point of contact in the network between the administration, faculty, alumni, and IR majors. Already it has impacted the IR curriculum transformation, created an IR Honor Society chapter, assisted in the rebuilding the Model United Nations club, and started a successful debate series. Future projects are only limited by the imagination and energy of the DLC and the IR student body. The council encourages the participation of all IR students in its projects, through which it seeks to create a closer IR community. For more information, please contact Alex Liveris (Alexandra.Liveris@tufts.edu).



Spring 2006 Induction Ceremony

## IR HONOR SOCIETY

Sigma Iota Rho, Beta Chi Chapter: This nationally recognized International Relations Honor Society aims to promote and reward scholarship and service among students and practitioners of international studies, international affairs, and global studies and to foster integrity and creative performance in the conduct of world affairs. The goal of the Honor Society is to create a productive atmosphere of international relations on campus, in the community, and in the world at large through activities and initiatives related to international affairs. Eligibility requirements include a 3.30 overall GPA, a 3.60 IR major GPA, two advanced level courses, and active leadership or interest in IR. Members are chosen twice per year through an application process administered through the IR Program office.

## TUFTS MODEL UNITED NATIONS

Tufts Model United Nations (MUN) is a student organization which attends conferences that simulate the United Nations. Delegates represent countries on pressing issues in our world today, whether it is North Korea, globalization, poverty, or global warming. At the conference, students write resolutions about current events, much like the real United Nations does. Tufts MUN will attend conferences throughout North America (Harvard, McGill, University of Pennsylvania) during the course of the year and has events planned on campus. Tufts will be holding mini conferences for students to practice their debate/negotiation skills, and hold various events throughout the course of the year. Our first event is going to be for United Nations Day on October 24th. If you are interested in Tufts Model United Nations or would like to be put on the mailing list for updates, please e-mail andreas.vindenes@tufts.edu.

## IR MENTORS

Recognizing that peer advice could be a valuable complement to formal faculty advising, the IR program created the IR mentor program to provide new or prospective IR majors with a resource for questions about the IR major. Created in collaboration with IR students in 2005, it is maintained through the IR website (<http://ase.tufts.edu/ir>). Students are encouraged to contact an IR mentor; please visit (<http://ase.tufts.edu/ir/leadershipmentors>) and review the numerous IR mentor profiles. Pick someone who matches your interests and email them directly. If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the IR Program office.

## Meet the IR Mentors

By Samantha Goldman (LA'08)

The class of '10 showed up in full force on Tuesday, September 26 for the first IR Mentors event of the semester. Eager to learn more about the intricacies of the interdisciplinary major, those first-year students were enthusiastic about all the opportunities that complement an IR major. Satiated with pizza, they appeared ready to soak in all the wisdom that the upperclassmen IR Mentors generously offered. After a brief introduction and welcome by the IR staff, the older and wiser Juniors and Seniors

spoke about their majors and study abroad experience; current and potential IR majors then mingled as the first years probed their elders for insights about potential concentrations, advisors, internships, and study abroad destinations. Older students also spoke about their leadership in other organizations such as Hemispheres, the Tufts University Journal of International Affairs, the New Initiative for Middle East Peace, a student think-tank focused on the Middle East, and in the Academic Resource Center as Writing

Fellows who help their fellow students with their writing; this was an attempt to encourage students to become more involved in IR related on-campus activities. As evidenced by the lingering conversations and dispensing of email addresses for future correspondences, this IR event was wildly successful in making the connection between IR majors and their younger peers and truly displaying all the opportunities that the IR department offers.



# IR Program News

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## IR Curriculum

Continued from page 1

major, was not aware of the new IR program. "I guess freshmen just don't know about the changes," he said. The IR program's Academic Planning Guide for 2006 still lists the old requirements for the major.

According to Mufti, the new curriculum has not yet been perfected and will not be put into universal effect until complete.

"We still have the task of refining one or two of the new concentrations and of assigning course listings for each of the new requirements," Mufti said. "That should take most of the semester."

The class of 2010 will have the choice to either stay with the original IR program or to join the new program, according to Mufti.

"Students don't need to worry about finding out in midstream that their requirements have changed," Mufti said. "All students who began under the old guidelines will be allowed to complete their majors under those same old guidelines if they like."

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## Kazakhstan

Continued from page 2

unwrapped the Snickers bar to reveal a block of Styrofoam. Oops...

During my second week there my host family and I adventured an hour outside of the city to a small village known as Esik where Galia's colleague lives with her family. We all piled into two aging cars and drove to a mountain lake which almost bridged the southern border between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The beautiful gazebos and sanatoria that once served as a vacation spot for the Communist elite were all falling into disrepair but it was easy to imagine the place in its heyday.

Later that evening we dined at a local restaurant where we discarded our shoes and sat on brightly colored cushions at long, low tables. The food was a spicy mix of noodles called lagman, and meat. It was what we would recognize as lo mien and speaks to the city's proximity to China. The outdoor cafe was situated around a dance floor where all manner of older women dressed in their finest shimmied and shook to the song "My Humps."

I tried to hide my amusement knowing they had no idea what they were dancing to.

To celebrate the 4th of July, I hosted a fried chicken dinner complete with garlic mashed potatoes, biscuits and iced tea. Everyone loved the "American tradition" of fried chicken but the iced tea was just confusing... The grandmother kept asking if I wanted to heat it up. For Kazakhs who love their tea dangerously hot, I don't think iced tea will be catching on anytime soon.

It would be easy to develop an addictive passion for this part of the world. My host family was ethnically Kazakh and although they are products of their Soviet past and speak Russian more easily than Kazakh, they have retained remnants of their heritage as nomads on the vast Steppe. The biggest meal of the day is typically around 10 or 11 at night, a nomadic tradition that Galia said is meant to "make you sleep well." Tea is served in wide low cups without handles, which allows tea to cool off quickly in the hot summers here.

Food such as the national dish, bishmargak, (long flat pasta, meat, potatoes, fried onions and bouillon on the side to sip) is placed on the table in one large dish to which you help yourself. Everyone shares the same dish and eats their share from where they are seated. From traditional medicine (including a piece of frozen chicken tied to my head when I banged it on the cabinet) to the habit of speaking quite loudly (explained as being a result of the habit of yelling on the steppe because of such long distances), the culture there is absolutely fascinating.

Kazakhstan is a mysterious and wonderful place full of exotic history ranging from nomadic kingdoms, traders traveling the Silk Road, and Stalin's "resettlement" programs. The people are warm and beautiful, and still untainted by tourism. Central Asia has an aura of magic calling travelers back for another stint of intoxicating travel allowing you to lose yourself in the experience of those who have been there before you. I too have fallen under its spell and am eager to return.

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## Morocco

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and the Arab world". We learned a lot about perceptions during these discussions.


Lastly, after our school and volunteering programs ended, one of my new friends and

I decided to climb Mt. Toubkal, the highest peak in North Africa at 13,500ft.

My summer was filled with incredible experiences and I would encourage anyone

who is interested in doing some volunteer work while studying abroad and is short on funding, to consult the above mentioned IR webpage.

TUFTS' PROGRAM IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
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*The IR News & Views  
newsletter highlights events  
and people in the Tufts IR  
community and provides  
selected information  
about the larger Boston  
community. The  
publication appears twice  
a semester and welcomes  
feedback and submissions*

# Announcements

## IR EVENTS CALENDAR

Did you know you can view all the upcoming events on the IR Calendar? It is located at the bottom of the IR home page ("Events Calendar") or at <http://localendar.com/public/irprogram>

## IR E-LIST

Want information on all the upcoming IR events at Tufts and in the Boston area? Want to hear about internship and scholarship opportunities? Join the IR e-list if you haven't already. Go to <http://ase.tufts.edu/ir/contactElist.aspx> to join!

