

International Relations

news & views

Volume VII, Issue 2, Fall 2007

Tufts Program In International Relations

Active Citizenship and the Academy: An Unfolding Debate

The Devigne-Teichman debate of November 13th took up, and added energy to, Tufts' conversation about the role of active citizenship programming in the university.

Here, the debate's moderator, Oleg Svet, offers his thoughts on how the conversation can be advanced. For those who were unable to attend the debate in person, the IR Program will also shortly be posting video coverage on the IR website (<http://ase.tufts.edu/ir/>).

The Editors

The Debate Continues.....

By Oleg Svet, LA '08

On November 13, 2007, the IR Program, with the co-sponsorship of the Tisch College and the DLC, featured an exchange between Professor Robert Devigne, Chair of the Political Science Department, and Mr. Sherman Teichman, Director of the Institute for Global Leadership. The dialogue addressed the degree to which experiential learning and active citizenship should play a role in higher education at Tufts University.

In its aim to spark a campus-wide dialogue on this important topic, the event succeeded. The attendance of nearly 300 undergraduates, graduates, and members of the faculty and administration, virtually guaranteed post-dialogue talks. A front-page article, two opinion-editorials in the Tufts Daily, informal conversations as well as discussions in forums such as the IR Coffeehouse, all speak to the commitment and seriousness of members of the University in addressing

this topic. But for the dialogue to be profitable, exchanges must be based on solid, realistic grounds. This article tackles three important misperceptions that are either suggested implicitly or stated explicitly that must first be shed if Tufts is to come out strengthened.

Misperception 1: These programs already play an integral role in our higher education at the expense of core academic classes and in-class education.

The extent to which they play a role is dependent on student choices, but the programs themselves do not monopolize higher education at Tufts. The Tisch



Debate Audience in the Cabot Auditorium

Citizenship & Public Service Scholars Program requires the student to put in eight hours a week, while EPIIC has a cumulative five hours of week of in-class learning, in addition to homework and exams. Even cumulatively, these programs only make up a fraction of our time spent on campus. A student can participate in both and still do academically well. Several prominent examples come to mind. Mauricio Artiñano was a Tisch Scholar and an EPIIC student. Artiñano also graduated Summa Cum Laude and was named to USA Today's Academic All-America First Team. Sebastian Chaskel was enrolled in EPIIC, Tisch, and along with

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Panel of Fletcher Students at the U.N. Event

The UN: A First Hand View

By Esther Kim, LA '09

As part of a series of events to commemorate the 30th anniversary of International Relations at Tufts, on November 13th the Tufts IR Program hosted a panel on the UN. The panel featured four Fletcher students who have volunteered or interned at the United Nations in previous years. After a brief introduction of the panelists, each shared her personal experience of working at the U.N. The event culminated in an interactive Q&A session with the audience.

Kallissa Apostolidis, the first speaker, indicated her area of interest in negotiation and conflict resolution which motivated her to work at the United Nations Department of Political Affairs and Mediation Support Unit in New York City. After finishing her

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Svet article, continued from pg 1:

me, took one of our University's most intellectually rigorous classes, Western Political Thought, taught by Professor Devigne. Chaskel also double majored and graduated Magna Cum Laude. Neither of these programs, even if one partakes in both, come at the expense of our academic education.

Misperception 2: These programs are "out-of-the-classroom."

While it is true that the two programs value experiential learning, both are predicated on robust theoretical, "inside-of-the-classroom" education. In EPIIC, students spend most of their time reading texts and engaging in discussions with both academic experts and practitioners. If and when EPIIC students (and for that matter, IGL participants) decide to conduct research abroad, they are required to rigorously study the topic they are interested in addressing. In an IGL-trip to Turkey, my colleagues and I were mandated to read a carefully prepared compilation, several hundred pages-long, on the country's history and culture. Upon our return, each student wrote a paper, and some of our works were published in a student-run academic journal, NIMEP Insights. The Tisch program, meanwhile, stipulates that students first go through a semester-long academic seminar on active citizenship before being accepted to the Scholars program. And while in the program, Scholars are exposed to academicians with expertise in civic engagement who come to mandatory weekly meetings and Tisch-sponsored events. For other Tisch College internships and projects, such as Active Citizenship Summers and

Civic Engagement Fund, students need to indicate their academic preparation during the application process. Moreover, much of the Tisch College approach involves enabling faculty throughout the university to build active citizenship components directly into their existing academic courses. Scholarly and intellectual elements permeate both programs.

Misperception 3: These programs aim to monopolize higher education and shift the University institutions from intellectual learning to experiential learning and active citizenship.

This is a misperception on two counts. The first is the idea that this is all new, that the IGL and Tisch are complicit in the birth of student activism. This is obviously not true. The history of student participation in political affairs and civic engagement is long and is not peculiar to this generation, Tufts or even the United States. From the civil rights era to Vietnam, from Latin America to the Middle East, students in academic institutions across time and space have often felt a need to apply their learning to the real world, to make a positive impact. Rather than engendering these impulses or promoting these sentiments, I would argue that the IGL and the Tisch College actually provide an outlet through which sensible activism and social change, as opposed to insincere, unproductive or misguided efforts, can take place.

The second point within this misperception is that the University is shifting towards active citizenship or experiential learning, diverting students

funds used to Tisch and the IGL at the expense of academic disciplines. In my view, this notion, which sounds like a conspiracy, is unfounded. EPIIC students and Tisch scholars make up about a hundred students each year (a small fraction of the total population) and both programs receive their funding outside of Tufts, from private donors, not our tuition. They do try to reach out a greater student population in order to provide opportunities for those who are interested. They organize and sponsor conferences, talks, and organizations that are open to the entire student body. Rather than viewing them as institutions diverting funds, they should be looked at as resources "for those who want to use it to add depth to their education," as Laura Zachary pointed out in a recent Tufts' Daily op-ed. Both the IGL and Tisch can and do add, not subtract, to higher education.

Do these programs want to exchange ideas of how to better higher education at Tufts? Of course. They themselves were interested in this dialogue: Tisch College's Dean Rob Hollister and Associate Dean Nancy Wilson encouraged me to have this event, while Mr. Teichman participated in it willingly. None of the parties involved are afraid of self-reflection, for they know it will only make them better. If there was one common thread among all the parties involved is that they are committed to their students. The end-goal of discussions should therefore be the improvement of higher education at Tufts, not the demise of programs that seek to enrich student experience.

"The United States and the Middle East: What Comes Next After Iraq"

Sponsored by the Fares Center for Eastern Mediterranean Studies

March 27th - 28th, Cabot Intercultural Center

"The United States and the Middle East: What Comes Next After Iraq" - A Student Colloquium

Sponsored by the Tufts Program in International Relations

Saturday, March 29th, 9am - 12pm in Cabot Auditorium

Participatory Research: Canadian Mining in El Salvador and the Local Opposition Movement

By Hannah Flamm, LA '09
Borghesani Prize Winner

I remember first learning about the mines on a mountain in the middle of the night. I would have been asleep but for the deep hum of something I could not identify. "What's that?" I asked. "Oh, those are the machines. They're looking for gold."

That was back in 2005. Many people knew then, as they have for decades, that their communities in the northern zone of El Salvador are settled atop gold and silver deposits because mines were operational there until the 1950s. But a couple of years ago, few people had any reason to believe the mines would be reopened in their lifetime—or what that might mean for them.

Since the 1990s, Canadian and US companies have been exploring the Salvadoran earth for veins of the precious metals and exploring the country's legal and political processes to open mines. The companies expect profits for themselves and proclaim they will bring development to El Salvador by providing employment and in other ways boosting the local and national economy. Today, the companies have largely completed the exploration phase of their work, where they study what areas are profitable to mine and prove they have the required financial capacity and environmental precautions in place. They are awaiting the government's permission to begin the exploitation (extraction) phase.

Meanwhile, a coalition of communities, local and international organizations, and the national Catholic Church have formed a movement opposed to mining.

Their concerns are environmental, economic, social, and health-related. El Salvador has a dense population in a small territory (about 6 million people in 20,000 square kilometers), making it nearly impossible to mine far from where people live. Moreover, El Salvador arguably has the worst environmental degradation (with severe deforestation and high levels of water contamination and water shortage) of all the Central American countries—and it is the only country without mining at this point. The groups opposed to mining have formed a coherent enough force to help stall the process of granting the companies exploitation concessions, yet



El Salvador Landscape

they hardly form a unified movement. Some groups argue that mining would be acceptable if 50% of the foreign companies' profits were to stay in El Salvador instead of 2%. Others argue that mining would be unacceptable no matter the extent of the royalties, taxes, social programs, and local employment generated by the mines because the risk of cyanide in drinking water—and the loss of land people recently fought a civil war to keep—are not worth any economic gain.

My motivation behind investigating what has become a stagnant and politicized debate had more to do with knowing people whose lives and

livelihoods might be affected, for better or worse, by the mining operations than it had to do with a passion for the earth sciences. The questions guiding my research, then, were: under what conditions and in what ways, if any, could mining benefit El Salvador? If the mines open, how might the potential harms of mining be mitigated or compensated for? And, critically, who gets to decide what happens with the mines—and what information and interests do these decision-making entities have?

Yet what I learned in the interviews—between rides on exhaust-sputtering, multi-colored public buses, between thirty-cent coffee and ice cream stops, between hour-long hikes through corn fields or up mountains to reach the more isolated subsistence farming villages—was not neat, straight-forward answers to these questions. Instead, I wound up with more, harder-to-answer questions. For example:

- What if the people closest to the proposed mine sites, with most at stake in terms of the potential environmental, health, and economic effects of mining, are, of all the players in this debate, the least interested in whether or not the mines open, the least informed about the potential consequences of the mines opening, and the least politically powerful if they did want to voice their opinion? What if no one is acting to protect the ability of future generations to live in these areas?

- What if the national Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources cannot afford to conduct a comprehensive, independent study on the economic and environmental effects of mining? What is the likelihood that a competent, strong regulatory agency specifically for metallic mining develop in El Salvador if there is no

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Reflections on Human Rights Research in Chile

By Ben Gabin, LA '08
IR Research Scholar

I was able to delve into the complexities involved with human rights issues during my first semester of my studies abroad in Santiago, Chile. Because of the knowledge of Professor Peter Winn, I had a basic understanding of the torture, disappearances, and killings that occurred in Chile during the dictatorship and the historical context in which they took place. Through my internship with a human rights NGO, I came into contact with the case of a woman named Lumi Videla Moya who was tortured and killed by Pinochet's secret police. Her tragic story captivated me and prompted me to study it further. Unfortunately, I was unable to research her story due to time constraints.

Because of the IR Research Scholars grant, I was able to extend my time

in Santiago and carry out research on this prominent female member of an important leftist political movement. Through my research, I was able to reconstruct the story of the final few months of her life, in addition to her family's ensuing struggle for truth and justice. I was then able to use these findings to illustrate larger trends within Chile such as human rights abuse and the challenges with transitional justice in Chile's restored democracy.

This opportunity was thoroughly enriching. On a broad level, it gave me a better understanding of societal and international relations. Internally, it took me on a carpet ride of the full emotional spectrum--disheartening me when I learned of the lengths that people will go to maintain the status quo, and filling me with hope when I learned of the strengths that individuals can exhibit when faced with adversity. Upholding a conviction at all times can be difficult; Lumi did it despite brutal



Ben Gabin participating in a traditional Andean ritual of blessing and peace.

physical and psychological torture. Her strength as a mother, wife, and social advocate is truly inspirational. Without a doubt, the most important lesson from my experience is that the dream for social justice is one that transcends national borders. This is something that I will never forget.

My International Research Experience in Paris

By Rebecca Rice, LA '08
IR Research Scholar

Thanks to the IR Research Scholars Program I was fortunate enough to spend the past summer living in the 5th arrondissement in Paris researching French immigration and integration policy. It was a wonderful opportunity to explore these issues at a great time in French politics overlapping with the electoral campaign that ended with the election of President Nicolas Sarkozy. The topic is très, très chaud (very, very hot!) and one that was discussed in the French press on a daily basis.

Because the subject is sometimes sensitive, my expectations going into the summer were that French people would be hesitant to talk about immigration and integration issues. However, I

learned that people were more inclined to share their opinions because they wanted the French perspective to be well understood by me as an American student simply wanting to learn more. As long as I kept my interview questions appropriate and displayed a certain level of knowledge, my reception was always positive. And most importantly, the



Rebecca Rice at Notre Dame in Paris

majority of people I interacted with all wanted me to understand the many aspects that go into discussion of these issues and they were very eager to talk through it all with me.

Going into the summer I had just finished a semester with the Tufts-in-Paris program and through my classes with Tufts I met a professor who gave me guidance with my project. As a professor at the Political Science Institute of Paris and an active member of Réseau Education Sans Frontières, Professor Germanangue frequently informed me of different events in the Paris area pertaining to immigration issues. Throughout the course of the summer I went to several, one of which was a rally to support the sans papier (undocumented) community in Paris. There are always many rallies and protests going on in the city but this one was of particular interest to me as

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Scholarship Opportunities

The IR Program offers two research scholarships that enable students to travel, intern, volunteer, and/or perform research abroad. Research can greatly enhance your experience at Tufts, challenging you to critically apply what you have learned as you explore 'real-world' questions in the field of international relations.

IR RESEARCH SCHOLARS AWARD

Application Deadline: Monday, February 11, 2008 by 4pm
in the International Relations Program Office (Cabot 605)

The IR Research Scholars Program supports original, high-quality undergraduate international research. Aimed at IR sophomores or juniors who anticipate producing an upper-level research paper in their senior year, whether for an IR thesis, directed research, conference submission or external essay competition, the scholarship will support a minimum of eight weeks of IR Core Faculty-mentored summer research for the gathering of materials and data.

Awards will be granted to both students and faculty mentors. The competitive program's goal is to support the development of faculty and student mentoring relationships and the advancement of strong international research skills critical to professional or academic goals.

Applications for both scholarships are available in the IR Office (Cabot 605) and on the IR website's Scholarship & Funding Opportunities page via the following link:
<http://ase.tufts.edu/ir/researchOpportunities.htm>

ANNE E. BORGHESANI MEMORIAL PRIZE

NEW Application Deadline: Monday, March 3, 2008 by 4pm
in the International Relations Program Office (Cabot 605)

This prize is awarded to second-semester sophomores and juniors who undertake a research project, an internship, a 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 ones 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.

Also available on the IR website's Scholarship & Funding Opportunities page (see link above) is a list of Tufts University Scholarships as well as additional funding opportunities.

IR Program News & Views

UN article, continued from pg 1:

internship at the U.N., she believed that the Fletcher School would be a perfect match for her interests. Keeping in contact with Fletcher professors and meeting with them regularly really helped her find the right direction in her studies and career.

Following the first speaker, Michelle Barsa spoke about her internship in U.N. peacekeeping operations in Khartoum, Sudan. She worked with a unit primarily concerned with humanitarian relief for the afflicted people in the war-torn region. In addition, she discussed her research on women's leadership and its impact in the region. She suggested those undergraduates who want to work at the U.N. in the future have at least four or five years of field work before they apply to work at the U.N.

Erin Freid [or Fried as below?], the third panelist, spoke about her internship in Banda Aceh, Indonesia as a "Recovery Coordinator," whose responsibilities were similar to Barsa's. Her job also included connecting U.N. agencies with local and international NGOs. Fried also discussed some of the setbacks of working in conflict areas like Banda Aceh. She explained, "The security program is great it protects you and keeps you at a distance, but this may inhibit you from doing some work in the field." Fried strongly encouraged taking a professional writing class either during or after college as it would be

extremely helpful in any career field.

The last speaker, Eleni Tsolaski, talked about her internship with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Nicosia, Cypress. She worked at the Protection Unit, a legal unit of the UNHCR, for Iraqi asylum seekers. Her particular interest was working for human rights and providing legal protection for refugees. Tsolaski also described her usual day as a U.N. intern.

"On the days that you aren't doing real work, forget the romantic ideals of being a U.N. intern and remember that you have to start somewhere," she said. She continued by giving advice on internship sites that undergraduates might want to seek if they are interested in working at the U.N., such as an NGO for refugees or a think tank.

After introducing their U.N. work, the panelists took questions, and gave advice to the audience largely comprised of International Relations majors. All four panelists strongly emphasized networking as the key to getting into the U.N. or other competitive internship sites. Professors are one of the most valuable resources available to students. Another recommendation entailed getting real-world experience before going onto graduate or law school.

Barsa explained, "Half of what we get out of our classes here is thinking about how what you are learning applies to what you did before. Without those points of reference, some, if not most, of what we're doing here would be just lost, wasted."

Developing skills and gaining fieldwork experience are very important before devoting oneself to years of intensive academic training. Undergraduates, according to the four panelists, should try hard to network wherever they go and apply to work at an organization they are highly interested in. Students should not feel discouraged even if they do not hear back from them. Taking initiative is also essential in taking much out of their experience whether as an intern or a volunteer.

The panel also discussed the downside of interning at the U.N. The U.N. contracts with interns only last from six months to one year, which means the interns will constantly have to find a different job if they do not get a renewal. U.N. volunteers are the lowest rank in the system and generally do not get paid. The three speakers were also unpaid, except for Fried who made a small stipend. The speakers, however, all agreed that their experience was valuable and greatly helped them with their studies at the Fletcher now.

Flamm article, continued from pg 3:

sizeable mining sector in the country yet? What are the implications of a foreign, private corporation having more power, flexibility, and resources than a national government?

- What type of choice is a community making by accepting the social initiatives the mining companies offer when these initiatives are providing basic services that no one else is providing? To what are such communities really expressing consent by accepting the companies' offers? What does the ability of these companies to provide such services—

because they're not already provided—say about the capacity and will of local government?

Ultimately, as I write my research paper and continue to follow the Salvadoran newspaper headlines regarding progress (and lack thereof) on the mining debate, I am left considering the juxtapositions and inequalities of power in this world. In this world where one individual, say a North American mining company CEO, can choose to spend \$28 million in five years to locate the best veins of gold and silver underground; and

another individual, say a woman in a village sitting one hundred meters above those best veins, is "asking God that the mining doesn't come here." This world where the CEO has the ability—and the duty to his shareholders—to pull his company out of El Salvador whenever his prospects of profiting become unacceptably low; and where the rural villager—with a duty to her ten children—would explain to you that "people say the company will take the gold and leave us poor, but I say take the gold or leave it, we will still be poor."

Diplomat in Residence, Deborah E. Graze, will be hosting the following events during the Spring 2008 semester:

**Information Session: Introduction to the State Department
January 30th at 7pm, Cabot (Asean) Auditorium**

Want to get PAID to learn a foreign language? Travel the world? Experience other cultures? Want the Government to PAY OFF your student loans while serving your country overseas? Come to the State Department Information Session and learn how!

Presentation will include information on career tracks and specialties within the Foreign Service including, but not limited to, Foreign Service Officer career tracks (Consular, Public Diplomacy, Management, Political, Economics); Specialists (healthcare, security, office managers); career tracks/opportunities available inside the State Department and outside the Foreign Service; myths/misperceptions about working in the Foreign Service.

**Brown Bag Lunch Series, hosted by the Diplomat in Residence
February 15th, 12 - 1pm in Cabot 108B**

Topic of Discussion: Changes in the Practice of Diplomacy Over the Last 25 years

Keep posted for two additional lunch dates in March and April!

Future possible topics for discussion include: regional focus (based on Ms. Graze's personal experiences); world conflicts; potential lunch discussions with British, Italian, or other country's Boston-based Consul Generals.

We want to hear from you – after you come to the information session, tell us what topics you would like to explore in a smaller setting.

Rice article, continued from pg 4:

it demonstrated how much support the immigrant community has within the French population despite the election of a very conservative president like Monsieur Sarkozy.

In addition to attending events such as the rally described above, I set up interviews in the second month to gather first hand French perspective on immigration and integration policy. The interviews were by far the most challenging part of my research project,

as making contacts and formulating questions took both patience and perseverance. It was well worth the effort. I had the opportunity to talk with the assistant director of La Ligue Internationale Contre le Racisme et L'Antisémitisme (The International League against Racism and Anti-Semitism) and attend a round table discussion with the Syndicat des Avocats de France. These interviews and talks, in conjunction with the rallies and theatrical pieces I saw, enabled me to

contextualize French immigration and integration policies. The opportunity to work independently on a research project of my own construction in Paris was an incredible one that I will never forget! It broadened and enriched my Tufts-in-Paris horizons. I was also able to begin to comprehend the delicacy and complexity of issues that are of significant importance to 21st century France and that have implications for other countries as well.

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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 from students and faculty.

Issue as Muse 2008: A Night of International Artistic Inspiration
Saturday, February 2nd, 7:30pm, Cohen Auditorium
Presented by The Tufts Program in International Relations DLC

Central American Integration: A Catalyst for Human Development?
Dr. Jorge Nowalski, International Center for Sustainable Human Development, Costa Rica
Monday, February 4th, 6pm, Mugar 200, The Fletcher School

Annual Fletcher Networking Night
Tuesday, February 5th, 6:30 - 8pm, Hall of Flags, Cabot Center

IR Majors Week Event
Monday, February 25th, 12 - 1pm, Cabot 702

Careers in International Relations - Alumni Panel
March 5th, 6:30 - 8pm, Dowling 745
Co-sponsored by Office of Career Services and IR Program

Don't miss Special Event Announcements on pgs 2 and 7!

