Welcome to the first installment of the College of International Studies newsletter — your source for regular department updates, college news stories and other news related to international education at OU. If there's something you'd like to see included in our next newsletter, email Maura McAndrew at mmcandrew@ou.edu.

Dean’s Corner

Meet the New Dean of CIS

This July, we were pleased to welcome Scott Fritzen as the new dean of the David L. Boren College of International Studies! Fritzen comes to OU from the Daniel J. Evans School of Public Policy & Governance at the University of Washington, where he served as director of international executive education and director of the global MPA. Fritzen also holds the position of OU associate provost for global engagement and the William Crowe, Jr. Chair in Geopolitics.

Visit Dean Scott Fritzen's website
Read the Dean's Welcome Letter
Read the Dean's Blog

The College of International Studies owes a huge debt of gratitude to our interim and associate deans, who have served the College throughout our transitional period. Mitchell Smith, who most recently served as interim dean, will continue in his role as associate dean for academic affairs. Rebecca Cruise will likewise continue to serve as associate dean for student services. Former interim dean Jill Irvine is now serving as interim senior vice president and provost of the OU-Norman campus, though she remains a member of
OU Thousands Strong Campaign: Donate Now!

International Student Pandemic Fund

This year's OU Thousands Strong fundraising campaign is dedicated to the International Student Pandemic Fund, which provides assistance to international students who have endured financial distress as a result of the pandemic and recent restrictive travel and immigration policies. We need your help to reach our goal!

Learn more and make a donation

Department Updates

International & Area Studies

Faculty in International & Area Studies have been busy, with three faculty publishing books in the past few months:

Manata Hashemi, *Coming of Age in Iran: Poverty and the Struggle for Dignity*

Waleed Mahdi, *Arab Americans in Film: From Hollywood and Egyptian Stereotypes to Self-Representation*

Afshin Marashi, *Exile and the Nation: The Parsi Community of India and the Making of Modern Iran*


Other recent publications:

- **Manata Hashemi** in *The Conversation*, "How Iran's Millennials are Grappling with Crippling US Sanctions"
- **Bo Kong** (with Kevin P. Gallagher) in *Energy Research and Social Science*, "Inadequate Demand and Reluctant Supply: The Limits of Chinese Official Development Finance for Foreign Renewable Power"
- **Natalie Letsa** in the *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, "The Mechanisms of Direct and Indirect Rule: Colonialism and Economic Development in Africa"
- **Michelle Morais de Sa e Silva** in *Human Rights Quarterly*, "Once Upon a Time, a Human Rights Ally: The State and Its Bureaucracy in Right-Wing Populist Brazil."
- Morais de Sa e Silva was also appointed as an associate editor of the *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis*.
- **Fabio de Sa e Silva** in the *Journal of Law and Society*, "From Car Wash to Bolsanomits Car Wash to Bolsonaro: Law and Lawyers in Brazil's Illiberal Turn (2014–2018)."
- **Joshua Landis** in *Foreign Affairs*, "The Pointless Cruelty of Trump's New Syria Sanctions."
- **Samer Shehata** in the *Guardian*, "The Real Reason Trump is Terrified of Losing the Presidency: Fear of Prosecution."
International Student Services

This has been a challenging year for international students, who have faced rapidly changing and often restrictive immigration policies as well as the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused travel difficulties and financial hardship. In July, International Student Services teamed with the Division of Student Affairs, the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and the Office of the Provost and Government Affairs to create the International Student Response Task Force. With input from a student advisory board, the task force advocates for international students at the university, working to coordinate and monitor university responses to issues affecting OU's international community, listen to student concerns and engage in regular dialogue on these issues.

In addition to the Task Force, International Programs has continued hosting regular international student events, mostly virtually, to support students and bring our international community together in this isolating time.

Visit the International Student Response Task Force website

Education Abroad

COVID-19 has also had an impact on our Education Abroad office. In the spring, EA staff went through the difficult process of bringing our study abroad students home early due to the pandemic, and eventually had to cancel programs in summer and fall 2020, as well as spring 2021, which will run programs to Taiwan and South Korea only. But this time of reset has been a productive one, with staff here in Norman as well as at our study centers, OU in Arezzo and OU in Puebla, developing new programs and innovative plans for safe study abroad in summer and fall 2021. For summer, OU in Arezzo has 15 programs scheduled and OU in Puebla has six, from CIS signature programs like Journey to Italy and Verano Poblano to major-specific experiences in fields like business, psychology and engineering. Though study abroad may look a little different in the coming year, our EA staff is striving to continue providing life-changing opportunities around the globe for OU students.

Visit the Education Abroad website

Study Center Snapshot: OU in Arezzo

On November 25, our Italian Study Center OU in Arezzo hosted a virtual showcase in honor of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, featuring visual art and performances related to the theme "Stop Gender-Based Violence." Participating artists represented both the OU and Arezzo communities, with many submissions from students at Vittoria Colonna high school in Arezzo. The showcase highlighted an important issue through art, and also served to reinforce the strong ties between OUA and the surrounding community. Bravissimo to all involved! (Left: a work by Sara Ciucci of Vittoria Colonna)

Watch the virtual showcase

CIS People
Faculty Spotlight: Waleed Mahdi

The subject of our recent Faculty Spotlight feature is Waleed Mahdi, assistant professor of US-Arab cultural politics, who just published his first book, *Arab Americans in Film: From Hollywood and Egyptian Stereotypes to Self-Representation.*

Read the full profile in CIS Snapshot

Staff Spotlight: Merla Davis

After over a decade in CIS, our managerial associate Merla Davis is retiring. She has facilitated study abroad scholarships for countless students and has made the college a better, more welcoming place for all. We thank her and she will be missed!

Student Spotlight: Tatenda Dzvimbo

Tatenda Dzvimbo has been named the College of International Studies Outstanding Senior for 2020. Originally from Harare, Zimbabwe, Dzvimbo is majoring in international development and economics (accelerated master's). She is founder and president of the African Women's League, student adviser for the International Advisory Committee, and international student representative on the Norman Mayor's Student Roundtable, as well as a member of the Integrity Council, the International Student Response Task Force and the Withrow Leadership Scholars Program. We are proud of and grateful for our Outstanding Senior's many contributions to the international community at OU!

Recent CIS Stories

Ambassador Edward J. Perkins Passes Away at 92

Ambassador Edward J. Perkins worked as ambassador to Liberia and South Africa, director general of the Foreign Service and US Representative to the UN Security Council in the 1980s and '90s. He came to OU in 1996, and here he served as the first executive director of the International Programs Center, which later became the College of International Studies. Those who knew Ambassador Perkins will remember him for his warmth, enthusiasm for life and wonderful stories.

Read the *New York Times* obituary

CIS Professor Jonathan Stalling Awarded Chinese Patent for Interlanguage Algorithm
Jonathan Stalling was awarded a Chinese patent for his invention of an algorithm that uses Chinese characters to encode English speech sounds without disruptive effects using a 1,500-year-old Chinese linguistic method known as “fan-qie” (扇棋).

Read the story

Yan Lianke Wins 2021 Newman Prize for Chinese Literature

An international jury has selected the Chinese novelist Yan Lianke as the winner of the seventh Newman Prize for Chinese Literature, which is sponsored by the Institute for US-China Issues in the College of International Studies.

Read the story

CIS Professor Fabio de Sa e Silva Elected to Law and Society Association Board of Trustees

Fabio de Sa e Silva, assistant professor of international studies and Wick Cary Professor of Brazil Studies, was one of eight individuals elected to the Law and Society Association’s Board of Trustees Class of 2023.

Read the story

International Student Reporters Tackle Big Issues for the Oklahoma Daily

During this uncertain year, OU’s student-run newspaper Oklahoma Daily (OU Daily) has played a crucial role in shining a spotlight on international student issues. Sophomore reporters Marien López-Medina from Managua, Nicaragua, and Gabriela Tumani, from São Paulo, Brazil, have been key in amplifying the voices of international students in their reporting.

Read the story

OU Team Helps Raise Awareness of Mass Incarceration in Rio de Janeiro

Former OU in Rio director Caren Addis, IAS faculty Fabio de Sá e Silva and Michelle de Sá e Silva, and the NGO Associação Mais Vida were awarded a seed grant from the Small Grants Program at the US Consulate in Rio de Janeiro for a murals project on mass incarceration.

Read the story

OU Center for Peace & Development Awarded Carnegie Grant

The OU Center for Peace and Development, a research center within the College of International Studies, has received a $175,000 grant from the Carnegie Corp. of New York to support the center’s research mission and collaborative activities.

Read the story
Bo Kong was interviewed for an article in *The Wire China*, "China's Solar Push."

Joshua Landis was interviewed for features on *ABC National Radio*, *Alhurra*, *the Grayzone*, and *Al-Arabiya TV* and featured in articles in *Al-Jazeera*, *Voice of America* (second VOA article here), *the Antiwar blog*, *New Dehli Times*, *RT*, *the American Prospect*, *the Washington Diplomat*, *the Telegraph* and *the National Interest*.

Waleed Mahdi was interviewed for an ABC News feature, "Arab American Voters Could Play Important Role in Key Swing States."

Afshin Marashi gave an interview on his new book with Ajam Media Collective.

Samer Shehata was interviewed by NPR's daily news program "The World" for a story entitled, "Social Media Censorship in Egypt Targets Women on TikTok."

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