

College, Globalization and Jobs: Why a global education is important for your future Department of Global Studies and Geography

Thomas Friedman and Michael Mandelbaum in their latest best-selling book, *“That Used to Be Us: How America Fell Behind in the World It Invented and How We Can Come Back”* (2011) argue that the **US is facing four major challenges:**

- The expansion of **globalization**, which has “put virtually every American job under pressure”;
- The **information technology revolution**, which “has changed the composition of work,” eliminated old jobs, made almost all work more complex, and “requires every American to be better educated than ever to secure and keep a well-paying job”;
- Third, the rising **national debt and annual deficits**, resulting from “our habit of not raising enough money through taxation to pay for what the federal government spends, and then borrowing to bridge the gap”;
- and the **threat of fossil fuels to the planet’s biosphere**, a “direct result of the growth that has come about through globalization and the adoption (especially in Asia) of free-market economics.”

Clearly the entire world of work and the challenges facing new university graduates is very different from those that **your parents faced** when they entered the job market. While a college degree does not guarantee an immediate job, it has been found that **those without a bachelors’ degree will on average earn substantially less than those with a degree:**

- A new report from the *Center on Education and the Workforce* at Georgetown University looks at average lifetime earnings and finds, that **those with a bachelor’s degree earn much more than high school graduates**, and that the premium has widened since 1999 to 84 percent from 75 percent.
- **Contrary to popular opinion** the *Report* argues that even if the country were to increase the number of bachelor’s degree holders by 20 million, the earnings premium for such a degree would still be 50 percent higher than for those with just a high school diploma.

Increasingly a bachelor’s degree is essential for entering the workforce, but simply getting a bachelor’s degree isn’t enough to guarantee a high paying job. **It turns out that what you study and the careers for which your major prepares you matter, too.**

As Steven Rattner, a former counselor to the secretary of the Treasury recently wrote in the *New York Times* (10/15/2011), “For the typical American, the past decade has been economically

brutal...While there are many culprits ... **globalization has had the greatest impact.**” This is where the great advantage of our Department comes into focus, as we provide students with **the broad understanding of global society that is necessary to compete within our global market place.** Furthermore, the **interdisciplinary** nature of our program is ideally suited to the requirements of our contemporary non-compartmentalized work environment.

This is something that the late **Steve Jobs** intuitively understood when designing **iTunes**. We are no longer in a world where pre-packaged ideas or albums are blindly consumed. We should all be able to mix and match; **creating our own playlists taking the best from whatever source,** be that *Beethoven* or *Green Day* and putting them together in a way that makes sense to us – and caters to our own interests.

Using the idea of **Playlists** as a metaphor, that is what we have done with the **Interdisciplinary Degree in Global Studies.** **This helps explain our popularity, growing from a handful of majors when we were established in 2008, to over 150 majors and minors this semester. This makes us one of the most popular majors in Social Sciences at Hofstra.**

Rather than Professors dictating what students have to study, and presuming to know what student’s diverse interests are, **we start with the idea that students should be able to pick and choose from any discipline that adds to their knowledge of global society.**

If you want to specialize in virtually any aspect of global society, we can accommodate those interests and let you build a program around them, be that:

- International business,
- Global transportation and logistics,
- Global economic and political changes,
- Global communication strategies,
- The changing world of work,
- Global Warming,
- Global Diseases,
- Global urban change and the role of cities and regions,
- Global culture and media,
- Regional studies, such as Asia, Latin America (or any other region),
- Human Rights issues,
- The spread of global music, food and dance,
- The problems facing children in a global world,
- Economic and political changes in global governance.

All majors have to take 4 required courses, apart from that you can build a program around your own interests. By doing so, you will have:

- Better grades, because students tend to do well in classes that they are interested in,
- Finished the degree within 4 years as you can take many of our classes to fulfill general university requirements,
- Freed up so much space in combining the major with university requirements, you will have much more **time for internships, study abroad, and a second major**,
- Come out with a much better understanding of the global challenges we face, and be able to either enter the work force or move into a graduate program in fields as diverse as law, urban planning, public policy, environmental studies, international business and government.

No Liberal Arts major is intrinsically better in terms of providing knowledge, but **an interdisciplinary major in Global Studies will maximize your cost-effectiveness and your competitiveness (see Table 1)**. This is particularly the case when you combine Global Studies with a traditional discipline. That is why so many of our majors combine Global Studies with **Geography**, Economics, Political Science, History, English, Sociology and even Biology, Drama, Communications and so forth.

Geography in particular has become a much more sought after major by employers and its growth is linked to both globalization and the use of **Geographical Information Systems (GIS)**. The Department of Labor has tagged Geospatial Technologies as a “**High Growth Industry**” estimating that in the next ten years the profession will experience a growth of over 330,000 geospatial professionals. Our Geography major allows students to take up to three classes from outside of the Department, primarily in the natural sciences (such as geology). The program also is designed to complement the major in Global Studies, allowing students to easily pursue a double major.

From Fall 2012, our Department will begin offering courses in a new interdisciplinary major – **Sustainability Studies**. This program will build on our existing strengths, while focusing on themes of sustainable development **within a local and global context**. Students will complete a series of intro courses, electives, and a year-long sustainability theory and studio course that is a service-learning course within a local community. The program **gives students real-world experiences to prepare them for the job market or graduate school**. **Green jobs is one of the fastest growing job sectors, with currently 2.7 million jobs in the U.S.** Job opportunities

include, environmental planning, sustainability management, energy, water, food, manufacturing, services, local government and community development.

Table 1. Mid-Career Median Pay for holders of a Bachelor’s Degree for selected majors:

	MID-CAREER MEDIAN PAY
Computer Science (CS)	\$97,900
International Business	\$83,700
Global & International Studies	\$72,000
Biology	\$71,900
Environmental Science	\$71,200
History	\$69,000
Geography	\$66,700
Anthropology	\$63,200
Psychology	\$61,300
Sociology	\$60,500
Criminal Justice	\$58,900
Fine Arts	\$58,600
Education	\$54,700
Multimedia and Web Design	\$53,900
Religious Studies	\$49,700
Elementary Education	\$44,000

Methodology: This chart is based upon PayScale Salary Survey data for full-time employees in the United States who possess a Bachelor's degree and no higher degrees and have majored in the subjects listed above. <http://www.payscale.com/best-colleges/degrees.asp>

Some key Advantages of the Department of Global Studies and Geography

- *We combine three growing areas of employment, **Global Studies, Sustainability Studies** (green jobs) **and geography** (geospatial technology, GIS),*
- *We let students build a program around their own interests,*
- *We help students find internships and give credits for these internships,*
- *We offer a **semester length study abroad program in Europe** (“**The European Odyssey**”),*
- *We offer **summer programs in Italy and Spain,***
- *We provide excellent advisement and work with students to get them through the program as quickly and cost-effectively as possible,*
- *We try and hire our students to **work within the Department,***
- *We try and employ as many of our majors as **Peer Teachers** as possible,*
- *We have an excellent faculty who are **globally recognized experts** in their fields,*
- *We have an **active student club**, “**Get Global,**” and Facebook site,*
- *We work hard to have as many of our majors graduate with department honors as possible.*
- *We (with Economics) have a competitive award for the best written honors dissertation (**Tenenbaum Award**) and will have a combination merit/need based annual Department award from 2012 (**Inaba Scholarship**).*
- *We are in the process of formalizing various exchange programs with **Chinese Universities.***

Strategies for being competitive during a poor job market

- *Choose a desirable major,*
- *Double (or triple) major,*
- *Do well in your classes,*
- *Do internships,*
- *Try and study abroad,*
- *Learn foreign languages,*
- *Get constant Advisement (Can't stress this enough),*
- *Maximize all your opportunities – volunteer, look for work in Departments,*
- *Join student clubs and network,*
- *Find a faculty mentor,*
- *Ask questions.*
- *Make yourself standout!*

We look forward to meeting with you to discuss your options.

For more information see our website:
WWW.HOFSTRA.EDU/GEOGRAPHY

YOU CAN ALSO CONTACT THE CHAIR OR OUR FACULTY MEMBERS AT ANY TIME IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS: CHAIR: Professor Grant Saff, EMAIL: Grant.Saff@Hofstra.Edu

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If you need to speak to a University Advisor about your options, please contact our specialized advisor:

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