



UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME

ARTS AND LETTERS



2019

SENIOR THESIS PROJECTS

Study everything. Do anything.SM



2019 Senior Thesis Projects

Anne Marie Bonds

- Majors: International Economics (German) and Political Science
- Advisers: Taryn Dinkelman and Forrest Spence

State Immigrant Assimilation Programs in Germany

I examined the impact of state-specific immigrant assimilation laws in Germany. While Germany implemented federal integration laws in 2005, three German states, Baden-Württemberg, North Rhine Westphalia, and Berlin, implemented specific assimilation programs to target the needs of their immigrants. I studied the impact of these programs on immigrant poverty rate compared to states without these programs. With the Syrian refugee crisis beginning in 2015, immigrant assimilation has been a controversial yet important topic. Germany needs to find a way to include the massive influx of immigrants into its labor market, and I believe immigrant integration programs are crucial to bettering the economy in light of a migrant crisis.



2019 Senior Thesis Projects



Griffin Cannon

- Major: Political Science
- Certificate in International Security Studies
- Adviser: Eugene Gholz

Civil-Military Integration and Disintegration in the Indian Context

My project examines the integration between civilian ends and military means, specifically focusing on India. I chose this topic because I thought that writing a thesis would be an excellent opportunity to learn about a fascinating country I knew almost nothing about. I did, however, restrict it to a subject I was somewhat comfortable with.



2019 Senior Thesis Projects



Gianfranco Cesareo

- Majors: History and Political Science
- Minor: Italian
- Kellogg International Scholar
- Adviser: Richard Pierce

Fight the Power: The History of Hip-Hop Music as a Resistive Force

My thesis looks at the history of hip-hop music as a form of artistic expression, originating in urban black communities throughout the United States in the 1970s and '80s. I pay particular attention to socially and politically conscious hip-hop music, as well as the responses that the music received in mainstream American culture — from racial fear and hatred masquerading as moral concern to a begrudging and perhaps disingenuous acceptance to an acceptance on its own terms. I have been a big fan of hip-hop music since I first got an iPod in middle school. Part of the reason I chose this topic is that the issues raised by hip-hop and the debates surrounding it are still relevant today, in a country still very much plagued by racial inequalities and divisions. By looking at hip-hop from a historical perspective, I hope to shed light on the art form's importance.

Study everything. Do anything.SM



2019 Senior Thesis Projects



Caroline Christmann

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Arts and Letters Pre-Health
- Adviser: Claudia Anewalt Francis

Just What the Doctors Ordered: Improving Public Health Through Public Policy

My thesis explores the conditions under which public health recommendations become public policy at the state level. I examine the path to legislation for protections for breastfeeding mothers and for smoking bans and argue that expert communities must have strong, creative, and cohesive recommendations in order to convince the general public, and thus influence legislators to create stronger laws. Breastfeeding rates in the United States are low, and there are significant structural barriers in the forms of social stigma and hostile work environments. But legislatures have largely failed to enact the policies that would change these conditions. I want to understand how these conditions can be improved so that new mothers have more freedom and support in making their own decisions.

Study everything. Do anything.SM

**Meg Corscadden**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Constitutional Studies and Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (PPE)
- Adviser: Amitava Dutt

The Rise of Radical Parties in Greece

My thesis explores the collapse of Greece's traditional political party structure and the rise of the far-left party, SYRIZA, in recent parliamentary elections. My project also touches on broader topics including the radical right, the Great Recession, the refugee crisis in Europe, and the rise of radical parties across Europe. After studying abroad in Athens, I became interested in Greece's unique political situation. As a country harshly affected by both the Great Recession and the refugee crisis, Greece's voter shift toward the far left is unusual. Most countries in similar situations have seen a rise in the far right. Ultimately, I hope to contribute to the literature on non-traditional parties with my discussion on why Greece shifted to the left in a time of crisis.



2019 Senior Thesis Projects



Joe Crowley

- Majors: English and Political Science
- Minor: Education, Schooling, and Society (ESS)
- Adviser: Margaret Doody

Conceptions of Dreaming in 17th-Century Literature

Dreams have provoked fascination across cultures and eras. Coming from the subconscious, they often import aspects of our everyday lives, and have the power to suggest taking actions or halting our actions. In varying circumstances, dreams have been conceived of as threatening and lifegiving, divinely inspired and self-created, liberating and constraining. Given this wide variety, my research seeks to better understand how dreams are used in literature. An awareness of dreaming is crucial to a cultural literacy that encompasses the world in which we wake and sleep. Aside from exploring wonderful literature that is often overlooked, my thesis draws attention to a construct that stretches across time and location.



2019 Senior Thesis Projects



Dominique Estes

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Constitutional Studies
- Adviser: Sotirios Barber

Principled Property Acquisition with John Locke: Proving that the Second Treatise on Government Supports Government Welfare Programs and the Administrative State

My thesis argues that John Locke's theory of property has traditionally been interpreted incorrectly by conservatives as a defense of unlimited property acquisition. I argue that Locke's conception of the right to property is actually consistent with the thought of progressive liberals like Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and his work provides support for government welfare programs and the modern administrative state. I have maintained a firm belief in two ideas throughout my undergraduate career — natural rights and progressive economic policies. Because my professors have frequently implied that the two are incompatible, I wanted to resolve my own cognitive dissonance through this project.

**Cole Folwell**

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Business Economics
- Adviser: Susan Rosato

Chicago's Public Pension Crisis: Exploring Political Decision-Making and Externalities Associated With Pension Underfunding

Many cities and states in America are struggling to fund their public pension plans. The origins of public pension underfunding can be traced back decades. My thesis focuses on the city of Chicago's public pensions and investigates the political decision-making around pensions as well as the externalities associated with pension underfunding. This project combines my interest in financial markets, politics, and law. I have been following the issue for several years and wanted to explore Chicago's public pensions more in depth.

**Mateo Garcia-Novelli**

- Majors: Economics and Political Science
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Adviser: Kirsten Cornelson

Skin Tone, Wages, and Education: Why Differences Between Hispanic-Americans Lead to Different Labor Market Outcomes

I analyzed whether Hispanic-Americans with darker skin tones receive different wages than their lighter-skinned peers. I found that darker skin tone does not predict lower wages once employed — in fact, it may predict higher wages. However, darker skin tone does predict lower levels of education, so efforts to minimize the effects of skin tone should be concentrated in early childhood and teenage years. As a white Hispanic-American, I rarely feel discriminated against or profiled. Therefore, I have always been interested in the drivers of discrimination — are darker-skinned Hispanic-Americans treated differently than their lighter-skinned counterparts? After a particularly fascinating Labor Economics class on discrimination theory while I was studying abroad at Oxford last year, I realized I could turn this interest into an area of study.

Study everything. Do anything.SM

**Nicholas Grandpre**

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Business Economics
- Certificate in International Security Studies
- Adviser: Eugene Gholz

The Credibility of Great Power Retrenchment

My thesis evaluates the end of alliances in international politics, where there are many “patron-client” relationships. I studied how a client-state responds when its patron-state, usually a great power, withdraws either a portion of its deployed forces or the entirety of its promise to act as the client-state’s security guarantor. I chose this topic because I wanted to study the implications of a U.S. military withdrawal from East Asia. Recently, there has been a renewed debate in international relations literature and the foreign policy community about what role alliances ought to play in American foreign policy. How our current allies in East Asia would likely respond to a U.S. withdrawal has important implications for the viability of restraint as a grand strategy.

Traveled to London with funding from the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program.

Study everything. Do anything.SM

**John Grogan**

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Philosophy
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Hesburgh-Yusko Scholar
- Adviser: Geoffrey Layman

The Rise of the 'Nones' in the U.S. Catholic Church: Political Causes and Consequences

My project aims to provide a greater understanding of the factors that lead people to leave Catholicism, with a particular emphasis on political factors. Existing research indicates that political differences with one's church can lead to an increased likelihood of disassociating with that church. I tested this theory through online surveys that focus on individuals described as "ex-Catholics." I have always been interested in the intersection between religion and politics. It has been widely thought that religion influences political beliefs, but new research indicates that politics can also influence religious identification. I think this reality is an unfortunate consequence of our highly polarized society, and I wanted to see just how salient politics had become in driving people away from the Church.

Received funding from the Rooney Center for the Study of American Democracy.

Study everything. Do anything.SM

**Prathm Juneja**

- Majors: Political Science and Computer Science
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Adviser: David Campbell

Interstate Voter Registration Crosscheck Program and its Impact on Voter Turnout

The procedures of voter roll maintenance for states have changed drastically over the past two decades. States are now collaborating on registration and roll maintenance through various agreements, most notably through Crosscheck. In my thesis, I study whether Crosscheck use in a given state affects voter turnout rates, and if so, in which demographics. Despite membership from 28 states, limited academic work has been done on Crosscheck and its impact on elections. In fact, only one scholarly piece exists on the Crosscheck program itself, and it focuses solely on its algorithmic failures and false-positive rate. Given that Crosscheck plays a fairly large role in many states' voting policies, I hope my thesis is a meaningful contribution to the academic and public policy worlds.

Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.

Study everything. Do anything.SM



2019 Senior Thesis Projects



Colleen Keegan

- Majors: Economics and Political Science
- Adviser: Andrew Gould

Euromphiles in the Emerald Isle: EU Sentiment in Post-Crisis Ireland, 2008-2019

As Ireland experienced the most severe economic downturn of any of the 36 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development member-states, populist ideology should be booming throughout the ranks of Irish society. Why is it, then, that despite experiencing a cruel recession and bearing the brunt of the uncertainty surrounding the fulfillment of Brexit, Ireland continues to stand as a font of optimism in the European project? Having a mother who immigrated to the United States from Ireland, I have strong connections to the Irish experience. Growing up, I spent every summer in County Kerry with my family, and I watched as the 2008 recession ravaged the Irish economy and its people. I was fascinated by the intricacies of the banking crisis, and I couldn't help but question how EU sentiment has remained so markedly strong, despite such recent pain.

Traveled to Dublin, Ireland, with funding from the Nanovic Institute for European Studies.

Study everything. Do anything.™



Anne Kost

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Business Economics
- Adviser: Joshua Kaplan

From World War II to Brexit: Patterns in Immigration Attitudes and Populist Influences in the UK

In this thesis, I explore the evolution of immigration attitudes since World War II in the United Kingdom. In particular, I outline the trend of populist rhetoric accessing the cultural and economic fears associated with immigration and the discrepancy between the negative perceptions of immigration in the UK and the actual consequences. I chose this topic after witnessing the diversity in London and hearing about the radical decision via referendum to leave the European Union in 2016. I'm interested in the trend of Western democratic states reverting to xenophobic sentiment toward immigrants, especially Muslim immigrants, even in the face of research showing immigration can actually be a boon.

**Kate Lederer**

- Majors: Economics and Political Science
- Adviser: Susan Rosato

Coalition of the Developing: Expanding Regional Integration on the African Continent

My project explores a striking empirical puzzle surrounding trade and development in Africa today: Despite the inconsistent or indeterminate performance of regional trade arrangements across the continent, a number of states continue to push for the deepening of regional economic integration. My project explores the factors that have influenced certain types of states to participate in the expansion of regional integration schemes, particularly by analyzing state ratification of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement. I have always had an interest in international trade and the dynamics of the international political economy. After taking a class on globalization in Africa, I was struck by the ongoing development efforts across the continent, particularly those having to do with trade integration, and wanted to learn more.

Conducted research in London with funding from the Kennedy Scholars Program.

Study everything. Do anything.SM



2019 Senior Thesis Projects



Matthew Marsland

- Majors: Political Science and Russian
- Adviser: Patrick Deneen

The Illiberal Roots of the American Political Tradition

My thesis uncovers the illiberal roots of the American political tradition and reveals the origins of a flawed understanding of the United States as a “proposition nation.” The idea of America as a proposition nation has always been suspect to me. The purpose of my thesis was to examine the true political character of the American founding and to establish whether this nation was conceived by its founders to be the application of liberal political theory, or if their project was a deliberation on the optimal government of a particular nation.



2019 Senior Thesis Projects

Jade Martinez

- Majors: History and Political Science
- Balfour-Hesburgh Scholar
- Adviser: Emily Remus

The Jane Collective

The Jane Collective, an underground abortion clinic, provided women in the Chicago area with low-cost, safe, and illegal abortions between 1969 to 1973. My research looks into the reasons that the women working in the collective were able to perform more than 11,000 safe abortions in the years leading up to the *Roe v. Wade* decision.

Traveled to Chicago with funding from the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program and the Flatley Center for Undergraduate Scholarly Engagement.

Study everything. Do anything.SM



Lucas Masin-Moyer

- Majors: American Studies and Political Science
- Adviser: Korey Garibaldi

'Heritage of a Small Village': The African Diaspora and Black Cultural Diplomacy in the Long 21st Century

I studied how African American artists have represented Africa in their work throughout American history and how the transition of Africa from a negative to a positive symbol reflects changing conceptions of the African diaspora and African American politics. A chapter of my thesis is dedicated to Kendrick Lamar's album *To Pimp a Butterfly*, which served as my gateway to this topic and shows how African American artists are conceptualizing Africa.



2019 Senior Thesis Projects



Sean McFeely

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Sustainability and Hesburgh Program in Public Service
- Certificate in International Security Studies
- Adviser: Dan Lindley

Overcoming Oil: Can the United States Leverage Its Import Power to Liberalize Petroleum-Exporting Countries?

The United States purchases petroleum from a number of undemocratic, authoritarian governments. I argue that it is possible for the United States to leverage that market share to generate liberalizing reforms in target countries, but not without serious economic, political, strategic, and humanitarian consequences. I chose this topic because I was interested in connecting my interests in national security and sustainability.

Study everything. Do anything.™

**Monica Montgomery**

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Peace Studies
- Certificate in International Security Studies
- Adviser: Eugene Gholz

Sources of Strategic Systems: The Origins and Politics of U.S. Nuclear Weapons Programs

My thesis seeks to answer the question, “Why did the United States launch each of its major investments in strategic nuclear weapons systems?” Through historical case studies of three major programs — the hydrogen bomb, the Polaris submarine-launched ballistic missile, and the B-1B Lancer bomber — I explored the influence of external threats and domestic politics on the development of the U.S. strategic nuclear program. I became interested in nuclear policy after attending a conference on nuclear disarmament at the Vatican in 2017. I spent last summer interning at the Arms Control Association in Washington, D.C., which works on nuclear arms control and nonproliferation issues. Writing a senior thesis on the U.S. nuclear weapons program was the logical next step.



Emma Morrison

- Majors: Political Science and History
- Certificate in International Security Studies
- Adviser: Michael Desch

Between a Bloc and a Hard Place: A Study of Cold War Neutrality and Its Modern Applications in Europe

My thesis is an exploration of neutrality in international relations policy. I sought to determine under what conditions neutrality is an effective security strategy for small states, using the cases of three of the four Cold War neutrals — Austria, Finland, and Sweden. To conclude, I applied the lessons learned from these cases to modern day Europe, specifically looking at the possibility of neutrality for Ukraine.



2019 Senior Thesis Projects



Mary Ninneman

- Majors: Political Science and History
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Adviser: Mariana Candido

Human Trafficking in the Heartland

My thesis explores human trafficking, specifically in Nebraska. I examine the history of Nebraska's laws, resolutions, enforcement strategies, and educational programming to discover how the fight to combat human trafficking has changed over time. I had the opportunity to travel to Thailand the summer after my freshman year, and the group I was with worked with victims of human trafficking. After encountering the issue there, I realized that human trafficking was closer than Thailand — it was in my community as well. This took my research home to Nebraska.

Traveled to Omaha and Lincoln, Nebraska, with funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.

Study everything. Do anything.SM

**Mackenzie Nolan**

- Majors: Political Science and Arabic
- Minor: Business Economics
- Certificate in International Security Studies
- Kellogg International Scholar
- Adviser: George Lopez

Too Much Vinegar, Not Enough Honey: Bittersweet Sanctions Policy

My research focuses on economic sanctions policy in Iran from 2006 to the present. In analyzing both multilateral and unilateral sanctions, I sought to determine how the changing coercive power of sanctions would affect the target's behavior and willingness to comply with the imposer's foreign policy objectives. Economic sanctions have become the United States' foreign policy tool of choice. Therefore, I wanted to better understand their effectiveness, especially regarding policy objectives such as nuclear nonproliferation. The long history of U.S. sanctions on Iran provided a ripe case study for exploring this topic and contributing to the current political and academic debate.

Study everything. Do anything.™



2019 Senior Thesis Projects



Lethabo Ntini

- Majors: Economics and Political Science
- Kellogg International Scholar
- Adviser: Amitava Dutt

The Intersection of Race, Geography, and Inequality in South Africa

My thesis uses empirical evidence to explore how the intersectionality between race and geography has played a role in increasing intra-racial inequality in the black population of South Africa. This informs why cross-country inequality continues to rise despite the decrease in interracial inequality. As a South African, it has always been my desire to understand how democracy failed to empower all South Africans equally. If we recognize that complex identities exist across all groups, we can better tailor policies that acknowledge that in South Africa, race does not function in isolation from other factors that drive economic disparities.

Traveled to South Africa with funding from the Kellogg Institute for International Studies.

Study everything. Do anything.SM



2019 Senior Thesis Projects



Maria Palazzolo

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Business Economics and Constitutional Studies
- Hesburgh-Yusko Scholar
- Adviser: David Campbell

The Relationship Between Political ID, Children, and Parents

The impact of the “age of the internet” and political partisanship on the political socialization of children is unclear. No widely accepted answer explains how these factors affect the development of political identity. Attempting to solve this puzzle, I conducted surveys of 5th, 8th, and 12th graders and their parents in my hometown of Springfield, Illinois. Through these surveys, I evaluated the power of parental political transmission in the 21st century. This project began with me wanting to learn how and why I thought the way I did concerning politics. On a larger scale, however, I believe it is important to understand young citizens’ political development, as they become our nation’s decision makers.

Traveled to Springfield, Illinois, with funding from a Strake Grant through the Department of Political Science.

Study everything. Do anything.SM



2019 Senior Thesis Projects



Joseph Raabe

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Hesburgh Program in Public Service and Studio Art
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Adviser: Geoffrey Layman

Religion and the Democratic Party

My research centers on the role of religion in politics, particularly on faith-based political persuasion and its role in the American political landscape. So often, we see religion used as a divisive force in politics, and I am greatly concerned about the polarization of the electorate along religious lines. I wanted to learn whether religion could be used constructively to persuade potential voters to adopt more bipartisan policy positions.

Study everything. Do anything.SM



2019 Senior Thesis Projects



Meredith Soward

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Hesburgh Program in Public Service and Sustainability
- Hesburgh-Yusko Scholar
- Adviser: Samuel Miller

Addressing Plastic Waste on Notre Dame's Campus

This capstone analyzes sources of single-use plastic waste on Notre Dame's campus and proposes recommendations for decreasing and eliminating plastic bottles, bags, cutlery, and takeout containers. Key locations include North Dining Hall Grab N Go, Cafe de Grasta, Duncan Student Center, and the Notre Dame Bookstore. I began developing recommendations for decreasing plastic waste on campus in my junior year through a Social Factors and Sustainability course. I wanted to carry this project to completion and hopefully see tangible changes on Notre Dame's campus.

Study everything. Do anything.SM



2019 Senior Thesis Projects



Beth Vander Hoek

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Peace Studies
- Certificate in International Security Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Adviser: Sebastian Rosato

Longevity of the Liberal International Order

Many scholars and policymakers today fear that the liberal order is failing. In my thesis, I investigate whether the current liberal international order can survive. I argue that because orders rise and fall based on the balance of power, the current order will survive as long as the United States remains the sole great power. I became interested in this topic after listening to a lecture at Notre Dame by political scientist John Mearsheimer regarding the impending fall of the current order. While he argued that the current order will fall due to the inherent problems of liberalism and its institutions, I believe that the order will only fall if or when the balance of power changes —i.e., if the U.S. loses enough relative power and loses its great power status.

Study everything. Do anything.SM

**Sabrina Victor**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Business Economics and Latino Studies
- Adviser: Karen Richman

Afro-Caribbean Mobilization for Andrew Gillum

My thesis explores the factors that influence how Afro-Caribbeans vote. I consider theories of race and ethnicity and the role of immigrant electoral politics in American society. I apply this analysis to explain why Afro-Caribbean citizens supported Andrew Gillum in Florida's recent gubernatorial election and explore the components of his campaign strategy that helped effectively mobilize and win the support of this increasingly formidable voter demographic. In American society, race is very exaggerated — so much so that all black people are labeled as “poor, Baptist, and Democrat.” The heterogeneity of the American black population is ignored by mainstream society. Racist stereotyping makes people blind to different Afro ethnicities, especially Afro-Caribbean immigrants. As a result of American racial categorization, Afro-Caribbeans are categorized as typical “black” voters, and there is a lack of data, scholarship, and literature on their voting behavior.

Study everything. Do anything.SM



2019 Senior Thesis Projects



Nicole Waddick

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: International Development Studies
- Adviser: Jaimie Bleck

Navigating Realities: Street-Level Bureaucrats and School Access for Undocumented Students in the Dominican Republic

My thesis examines the the variation in school access for undocumented students in the Dominican Republic. Despite laws mandating the right to education for all students, there are reports of exclusion at all levels of the education system. I analyzed 81 interviews with individuals in the education system and discovered the critical role of street-level bureaucrats and their relationships with students. I conducted research in the Dominican Republic the last two summers and was struck by the power of documentation in determining access to basic public services. I wanted to use my thesis to raise awareness of these challenges and examine the ways that the undocumented can experience higher levels of inclusion in the challenging institutional constraints of the Dominican education system.

Traveled to the Dominican Republic with funding from the Kellogg Institute for International Studies.

Study everything. Do anything.SM



2019 Senior Thesis Projects



Zoe Walker

- Majors: Political Science and English
- Doan Scholar
- Adviser: Dianne Pinderhughes

Tuned-In and Turned Off: How Media Modulates Group Consciousness

My project uses a survey experiment to explore how exposure to media shapes political group consciousness. I chose this project because I am interested in studying the role that media plays in shaping political behavior and opinions.

Received funding from the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program, the Flatley Center for Undergraduate Scholarly Engagement, and the Strake Senior Thesis Grant from the Department of Political Science.

Study everything. Do anything.SM

**Jenna Wilson**

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Hesburgh Program in Public Service
- Adviser: David Campbell

A Study of Voting Motivation and Behavior

Currently, there are two competing theories of voter motivation. The first, which I term “following the herd,” argues that people are more likely to vote when many people have already voted. The second, which I term “tipping the balance,” argues that people are more likely to vote when few have. I designed an original survey experiment to test these theories. In my Introduction to Public Policy class, we read *Nudge* by Richard Thaler, who states that if political parties want more people to vote, they should stop lamenting the number of people who don’t. This ran counter to other research I had encountered at Notre Dame. I wondered if such a critically acclaimed academic could be wrong — and decided to test his theory myself.



2019 Senior Thesis Projects



Christa Zubic

- Majors: International Economics (Arabic) and Political Science
- Advisers: Zachary Stangebye and Denise Della Rossa

Barriers to Successful Water Shortage Policies in Jordan

Water scarcity policies in Jordan are characterized by their variety and scale. This meta-study evaluates the policies' success and summarizes the supply and demand issues behind Jordan's water shortage problems. My paper constructs a picture of the barriers to water shortage policy success by examining policy implementation, Jordanian citizens' economic ability to support these policies, and the Jordanian National Water Strategy. This topic was an interesting culmination of my studies in Arabic and economics. In researching and writing this paper, I learned more about Jordan and the effects of its unique economy and culture.