

I.S.F. Statement of Purpose: Globalization and Development

I'm fascinated with the concept of globalization, especially the way that Western ideas and culture have a tendency to abrogate the native practices of a region. Within the Interdisciplinary Studies Field Major, I'm interested in exploring the ideas of globalization and development, especially as they relate to the interplay between modernization and traditional culture. I'd like to delve more closely into these topics and look at them from the perspectives of gender, religion and immigration, respectively. When discussing the impact of globalization, gender issues are an interesting representation of conflict inherent in the intersection of the modern world and traditional gender roles. The path, spread and decline of religion is another method of measuring the effects of global development. And finally, immigration is perhaps the most dramatic and visceral intersection of culture and modernization, on an individual level, but also at the level of the state. A comparison of first and third world lifestyles and a study of their intersection is what this major aims to achieve.

The core concentration classes pull from a variety of disciplines within the College of Letters and Sciences. Political Science figures heavily, as do Geography, Development Studies, Women's Studies, Anthropology and Sociology. Drawing from so many different departments will allow me the opportunity to address the issue from a cross-disciplinary perspective. Courses such as *The History of Development and Underdevelopment* and *Global Poverty* are necessary classes concerning the condition of the third world. Gender issues that emerge with globalization will be encompassed by courses on *Women, Poverty and Globalization* or *Transnational Feminism*, whereas religion will be addressed by a course on *Sociology and Religion*. Immigration issues between the first and third world will be discussed by the classes *The Southern Border and Immigration, Citizenship and the State*. Other courses, designed to give background and context to the issues are *International Relations*,

The concept that I'm interested in pursuing for my senior thesis is an analysis of Indian immigration to the United States (namely California), looking closely at issues of gender and religion. My intention is to chart the social and cultural effects of immigration on individuals by conducting interviews as well as doing library research and looking at contemporary articles and writers. It will be interesting to see how much of their homeland culture that Indians hold onto, and what is shed, across first and second generation immigrants.

I plan to study abroad this fall in New Delhi and in Bangkok during the spring semester. An education abroad experience in India will help me develop ideas for my thesis as well as allow me to interview non-immigrant Indians for a contrasting perspective. Clearly, learning Hindi will be an asset in conducting interviews as well as facilitating a fulfilling travel experience. I currently speak Spanish and French, and by the time I graduate, I hope to have at least a cursory knowledge of Hindi and Thai as well.

After Berkeley, my intention is to join the Peace Corps for two years and aid in the development of a third world country (maybe Morocco), probably by teaching English. Flexibility, discipline and quick acquisition of languages learned during my studies at Berkeley will be essential to my participation in this program. After that, although I'm not sure yet on details, I'd like to work with an N.G.O. somewhere in the developing world. As evidenced by my choice of major, I'm concerned with problems that the third world faces, and participating in I.S.F. will aid my understanding of the issues.

Drawing from the plethora of academic programs within the College of Letters and Sciences and developing my own educational program affords me the academic freedom and creativity I need to thrive at Berkeley. I relish the challenge of assimilating the diverse departmental perspectives and topics and writing my own senior thesis. Studying this coursework will prepare me for the future as well as enabling my growth as a student and as a person.