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Spring 2021

### Global Studies Initiative Faculty Report: Interdisciplinary Collaborations

Brooke Ferguson

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**Aims of Global Studies Initiative:** Parkland’s Global Studies Initiative promotes the addition to Parkland’s courses of instructional materials on global issues with a focus on the European Union, Russia, Eastern Europe, and Eurasia, and East Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific. Further, it aims to provide faculty with instructional design tools and aid them with the implementation of new course materials in the classroom.

### Global Studies Initiative Faculty Report: Interdisciplinary Collaborations

**Faculty Name:** Brooke Ferguson

**Courses Taught:** World Geography (GEO 140), Geography of Underdeveloped Areas (GEO 143), Physical Geography (GEO 101), Economic Geography (GEO 201)

**Please answer the following questions to complete this report:**

1. Please describe an assignment or class material covered in your course that teaches students about global issues or, better yet, teaches them about the areas of the world covered in this initiative: the European Union, Eastern Europe, Russia, Eurasia, East Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific. You can attach the assignment rubric, instructions, and/or syllabus or course schedule to this report if you wish. If you have no current materials or assignments dealing with global issues, describe an idea you have for a new assignment or course material you wish to adopt.

*A current weekly assignment for all my geography courses (hybrid and online) are weekly discussions, posted to Cobra discussion boards. Discussion topics cover current events in Europe, Russia, developed portions of Asia, and the Pacific. Content of the discussion board consists of a news article summary on the discussion topic. I will be updating this weekly assignment to incorporate a global perspective – literally! Students will be required to place a pin in a collaborative Google Earth map at the location which best approximates where their news story is from, and will include the summary as well as a location analysis (this links the place to the wider region and explores several themes in geography). The class map will then be discussed in our in-person session, with a focus on examining whether students can identify spatial themes or patterns with the news stories. The assignment instructions are copied to the end of this report.*

2. Parkland College faculty have developed six general learning outcomes to help students acquire essential skills, knowledge, and values that will serve them in their future careers. The Global Awareness and Ethical Reasoning outcome states that *students will demonstrate an understanding of global issues, gender and sexual orientation, multicultural perspectives, and/or the role of ethical core values in making personal, social, academic, and professional decisions.* Please reflect on how the assignment or materials you described in the previous question contributes to this learning outcome or could be modified to better fit this outcome.

*With this assignment, students will demonstrate an understanding of global issues; specific topics addressed include immigrants/refugees, territorial disputes, climate change, geopolitics, invasive species, and supranational organizations, among others.*

3. How do you think learning about global issues and other areas of the world benefits your students in your field of study or discipline?

*A large part of the discipline of geography involves understanding how place and physical environment impact human advantages and constraints where they live. Many of the global issues examined in class allow for expansion into discussion of larger themes which touch on this relationship, such as borders, wealth inequality among nations, natural resource distribution, and conflict.*

4. Do you believe your course could benefit from more interdisciplinary collaborations on global issues participating, for instance, in some of the collaborative teaching initiatives presented by your group in your joint report? Explain your answer.

*Absolutely. Geography is an extremely interdisciplinary field, so any collaboration in areas like art, economics, earth science, political science, music, and sociology would be beneficial. One group member discussed creating a video of her experiences in Eastern Europe under communism; this video could easily be shown to students as a part of our unit on either Europe or Russia and the former Soviet Union.*

***Thank you very much for participating in the Global Studies Initiative and completing this report!***

**Description and Objective:** Finding and summarizing news articles from reliable sources will provide a solid current events background for the semester. Connecting a current event to the place where it is happening and relating it to the region and adjacent locations will help improve spatial awareness and spatial analysis skills.

### **Relevant Learning Outcomes:**

General Learning Outcome 1 (GLO1) Critical Thinking and Information Literacy

General Learning Outcome 2 (GLO2) Global Awareness and Ethical Reasoning

Course Learning Outcome 2 (CLO2): Describe the elements of location: the geographic grid, time zones, maps and map scale.

Course Learning Outcome 3 (CLO3) Discuss the interface of humanity with the physical environment

Course Learning Outcome 7 (CLO7): Discuss regions based on physical and cultural current issues.

**Assessment:** Summaries will be due to weekly drop boxes on Cobra on Fridays at 11:59 pm. Each summary and Google Earth pin will be worth 20 points per week. There will be no assignments during exam weeks.

**Directions:** This is an ongoing weekly assignment which will require you to:

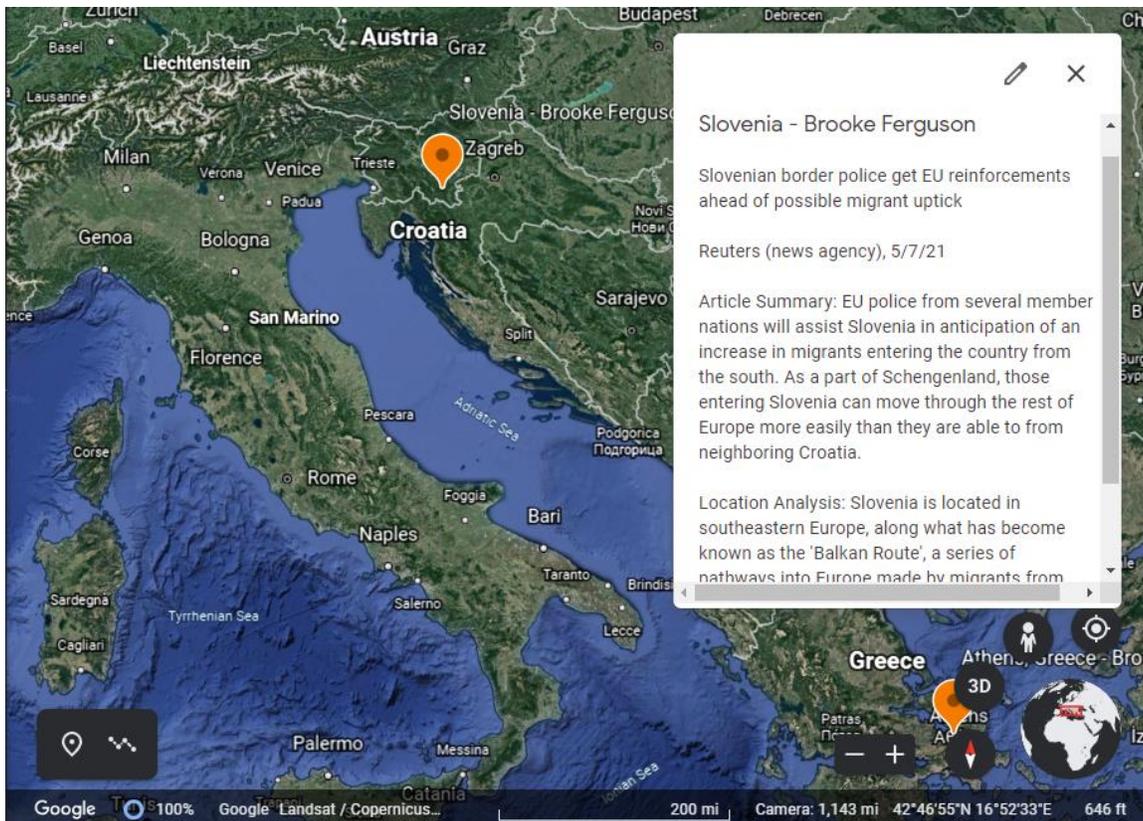
1) Find a news article on a current event (topic to be provided in class). We will discuss in class appropriate source types, and a guideline sheet will be provided. Generally, articles should come from news agencies, newspapers, magazines, or public broadcasters.

2) Summarize the article in at least 100 words. Make sure to hit the major points: WHERE, WHAT, WHO, WHEN and WHY. Next, provide a brief analysis of the location – can you make any connections between the place and the story? Does the region or proximity to other countries/cities provide important context to your article? Are there any physical features in the area which may also influence aspects of the story or topic as a whole?

3) Access the class map via Google Earth. At the beginning of the semester, you will need to create a Google account (this is a free account) or provide an email address to an existing Google account in

order to edit our collaborative map. Place a pin on a collaborative Google Earth map with your article summary and location analysis. The pin should be placed at a city or country mentioned in your article. The title of your pin should be the name of the city or country in your article followed by your name. Include the article title, publication name, type, and date of article on the first line (see example below). Change the default size of the pin to 'Large' and change the color (topics covered will have different colored pins). Your pin and summary should be added by Friday at 11:59pm for full credit.

[See these directions from Google Earth on how to edit a collaborative map](#)



4) Submit your summary and location analysis to a designated drop box on Cobra for grading by 11:59 pm on Fridays. On the following Monday, we will discuss as a group your articles as well as any evidence of spatial pattern among the pins (i.e., are the pins clustered in a particular area?)