Bachelor of Philosophy Sample Plan of Studies
Majors: Africana Studies, Anthropology, and Political Science

My studies at Pitt have been devoted to a holistic approach to global politics and the effects of the “free” market in the global north and south. To this end my majors have become Africana Studies, Anthropology, and Political Science, each addressing an independent but related focus of understanding the way American culture has influenced the world and how the world has reacted to those forces. Because I was not content in only listening to those voices that choose to express themselves in English, I have participated in the Less Commonly Taught Languages Department’s Kiswahili classes, gaining enough vocabulary to reference documents in Swahili, which as been suggested as a unifying language for the Greater Horn of Africa. Through Anthropology and Political Science I have been exposed to a broad range of structures and theories for understanding global systems, especially governments, education and international economics. At times this has posted challenges, requiring that I step back from my own economic philosophies and learn to understand the opinions of those who believe in the complete opposite. The interdisciplinary structure of Africana Studies has helped me to adopt these multiple lenses, interpreting inequality through poetry with Dr. Penny and Dr. Brutis and by means of psychoanalysis with Dr. Lillie. The expressions I was introduced to in these courses would have been incomplete had they not been coupled with anthropology courses, such as Dr. Benjamin’s language and culture, which an understanding in the expression and analysis of cultures.

Yet, taking all of these classes would have been pointless without a vehicle to express them to the larger public. This has been addressed in two ways. First through economic and statistical courses which allows me to organize data in a coherent matter. Secondly, through my role as a varsity debater in the William Pitt Debating I have improved my ability to present to a variety of audiences, not only the specialized world of academic policy debate but also a continuum from intellectuals to elementary school students. This ability was strained in the most unexpected of classes. Last semester I completed introduction to global studies, a course consisting largely of freshman, yet addressing issues on which I hold strong political views. I was pressed with not sounding demeaning or using specialized analogies which function well in the debate world but are archaic everywhere else. At first the process was agonizingly slow, with my opinions ignored in class discussion for a failure to explain them in a cohesive, unpacked manner. Yet, with the assistance of Dr. Hastings I was able to express myself in this new sphere, providing a fulfilling experience for myself and hopefully a few of my classmates.

This course of study has proven intellectually rewarding, forcing more attention than anticipated, but also yielding higher results. The combination of these focuses are creating another intending focus, addressing how these global systems are effecting the environment, and how to better use the multiple lenses I have been exposed to interpret and correct these damages. That study, however will have to wait until grad school.