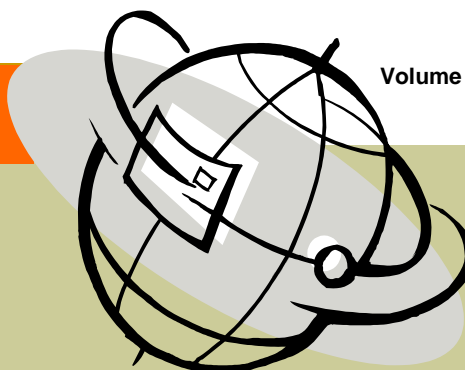


# IR Matters!



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Greetings, IR majors, alumni, colleagues, and friends!

With the conclusion of the Fall 2020 semester, a turbulent year is also coming to an end. 2020 will surely be remembered as a year of great anxiety, great loss, and great expectations. If there is any silver lining during the pandemic, it is the recognition that we are all resilient and can do better individually and collectively in the face of grave challenges.

Many of us have become accustomed to the new modes of learning and teaching. In the process, we've learned some new skills and new technologies, and adapted to new life styles. We are all growing and becoming better persons. We realize that no matter where we are and how busy we may be, the priority is to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe and healthy. It is clear the deadly virus can be controlled if we follow certain protocols. We must adapt and change fast.

For International Relations majors, probably we have also gained some deeper understanding of many of the concepts and issues we study every day, such as global governance, human security, great power politics, health crisis, international political economy, NGOs, political leadership, etc.

Due to the changed academic calendar for the Fall 2020 semester, we did not have the fall break as we would usually enjoy so as to rewind and recharge ourselves. At the suggestion of Professor Emek Uçarer, the IR Department held a bonf-IR-e party for our majors at the fire pit on October 13 shortly after we passed the mid-point of the semester. The students and faculty who attended apparently had a great time with much laughter and fun, aided by marshmallows and a competitive game of Kahoot!

Looking ahead, I hope that the year 2021 will bring us some good news, especially the availability of effective vaccines to combat the COVID-19 virus so that we can gradually return to our normal lives. We will not take things for granted, but we will never underestimate our abilities and resilience.

In May 2021, 27 of our IR seniors will be graduating. We wish them great success in their final semester here in the spring and good luck as they embark on their new endeavors.

In this issue, two current IR seniors, Grace Chung and Avery Blasko, who spent the Fall 2019 semester in Granada, Spain, share their exciting study abroad experiences with us. Their reflections on cultural immersion, volunteering, and seeking common interest amid adverse political climate are insightful and inspiring.

Stephen Bessasparis, Class of 2014, is a military intelligence officer with the U.S. Army. He wrote to us from Joint Base Lewis-McChord near Seattle, Washington about his career after receiving his BA in International Relations. Students may find his advice on how to make full use of their time at Bucknell very helpful.

Prof. Larrabure researches and teaches long waves in political economy. For this issue, he penned some preliminary findings of his students' research. Given this was an election year, we thought you might find a short piece I wrote on the prospects of US-China relations interesting.



This issue marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our newsletter. We've enjoyed putting it together as a vehicle that connects us to our IR friends. We would greatly appreciate any feedback you might have and certainly look forward to shining light on IR matters and our collective achievements. Please send us your news and your ideas for stories.

My colleagues join me in wishing everyone a restful holiday season and a prosperous and HEALTHY 2021!

Zhiqun Zhu  
Professor and Chair

## A New Long Wave? Preliminary Findings from Student Research

### *Long Waves*

*From the steam engine, to electronics, to most recently the digital revolution of the 1990s, these technologies have restructured broad sectors of the global economy, bringing forth a new period of sustained growth and employment, as well as a realignment of global political forces.*

*Manuel Larrabure,  
Assistant Professor  
of International  
Relations*

In “Late Capitalism”, published in 1972, Ernest Mandel develops a theory of “long waves of accumulation”. Unlike traditional theories of the 7 to 10 year business cycle, his theory of long waves attempts to explain 50 year cycles of accumulation. From the steam engine, to electronics, to most recently the digital revolution of the 1990s, these technologies have restructured broad sectors of the global economy, bringing forth a new period of sustained growth and employment, as well as a realignment of global political forces. However, the transition to a new cycle of accumulation is never straightforward. Indeed, it is often fraught with conflict, crisis, and uncertainty. Since the 2008 economic crisis, this is exactly what the world has been experiencing, as the wave that began in the 1990s comes to an end, while we await a new one that has not yet fully developed.

What are the political, economic and social conditions for a new long wave to develop? What are the likely new technologies that might drive it? How has the pandemic impacted the possible development of a new wave? What country or countries are likely to provide the political leadership for such a global transition? These are some of the key questions that I have been exploring in my research and with my students over the last two years in the course Globalization, a core course in the International Relations program. I have been lucky to work with a large group of students that found some of these questions engaging and have produced very impressive research projects on a number of relevant topics. Here are some of the preliminary findings (by thematic groups):

**Economics:** the global economic recovery that occurred between 2010 and 2019 can be characterized as “shallow”. Employment growth occurred largely in low wage sectors, and growth was largely fueled by a mix of Chinese demand for natural resources, and a commodities boom that lasted until 2014. With the end of the commodities boom in 2014, much of the global south spiraled into recession or outright crisis, while in the global north, particularly in the United States, growth was driven by speculative activity in the tech sector. Investment has remained low, as transnational corporations continue to hang on to cash at record levels. Meanwhile, inequality continues to accelerate. The pandemic has only exaggerated

these tendencies, as profitable outlets become concentrated in a few areas of the economy, with a relatively small number of mega corporations reaping the rewards.

**Politics:** the last decade or so has seen the growth of what is known as the “new authoritarianism”, that is, governments that are formally democratic, but nevertheless engage in highly authoritarian practices. Trump, Bolsonaro, and Modi are some of the key figures. The new authoritarians are creating *some* of the conditions for a new long wave to develop: the cheapening of labor, concentration of capital, increased social conflict (often involving attacks on minorities), and the hollowing out of regulatory frameworks (particularly as it relates to labor and the environment). However, the new authoritarianism has not been able to organize and direct investment with the level of coherence needed for a new 50 year period of accumulation. In fact, in this regard, it has done quite the opposite.

**Technology:** a number of new technologies have surfaced in the last decade that have the potential to revolutionize wide sectors of the economy. Artificial intelligence, quantum computing, next generation robotics, green technology, and bio technology are the leading candidates. However, investment into these areas, particularly in North America has been erratic, suggesting speculative activity. One exception is sustained Chinese investment in green technology, which has dramatically lowered the cost of solar panels and related parts. History suggests, it is typically not one but a cluster of technologies working in tandem that trigger a new wave of accumulation. Although we are beginning to see how these technologies can combine, advanced robotics with artificial intelligence, for example, this type of technology integration is still emerging, suggesting a new technological revolution will require still some years to fully unfold.

**Labor, social movements and culture:** how a new wave unfolds is profoundly shaped by how working populations react to the political, economic and technological changes during periods of transition. Evidence from labor and broader social movements suggests that we are living through a period of increased social contestation.

Black Lives Matter, #MeToo, green movements, free transit movements, and renewed labor unrest all point in the direction of cultural change. However, social unrest on its own is rarely able to have a significant impact, that is, unless it is able to articulate a clear political vision backed by political organization. Despite increased social mobilization, evidence suggests the organizational piece is still missing or at least lagging well behind. One particularly interesting case to follow is that of Chile. After a decade and a half of sustained social mobilizations, the country is currently undergoing a process of constitutional rewriting that could see the country move towards the direction of social justice and meaningful democracy. The outcome of this process could have significant ripples in Latin America and beyond.

From the above, we can begin to extract some more general conclusions. First, it seems a new long wave of

accumulation is still some years away. Although some conditions have been created in the last few years and exaggerated by the pandemic, some key conditions are still missing, notably leadership and vision from political and economic leaders. In this regard, the new authoritarians are a significant barrier. Second, so far it seems that a new long wave will not take the path of social justice and a green transition, but rather the path of financialized hi-tech. This is highly unfortunate as humanity is running out of time to make a decisive turn towards a sustainable economy. Third, the pandemic has massively concentrated capital in leading economic regions, particularly the United States and China. The United States and China are therefore well-placed, economically speaking, to lead a transition to a new long wave of accumulation, whatever shape it ends up taking.

Prof. Manuel Larrabure

*The United States and China are well-placed, economically speaking, to lead a transition to a new long wave of accumulation, whatever shape it ends up taking.*

Prof. Manuel Larrabure

## Rocky Road Ahead for Biden on US-China Relations

Despite US President Donald Trump's refusal to concede, the 2020 US presidential election is over and former vice president Joe Biden has started the [presidential transition](#) formally. Many in Beijing, Washington and elsewhere hope the incoming Biden administration will bring US-China relations back from the cliff edge. But it may be wishful thinking that the new administration can easily buck the trend and reset the relationship.



Biden, who is to be inaugurated on 20 January 2021, faces [daunting domestic challenges](#), particularly an intractable COVID-19 pandemic and a faltering economy. He has invited scientists into his [transition team](#) to prepare for arduous work facing his administration. Cooperation with China may prove

essential for his success in tackling the pandemic and US economic woes. As global COVID-19 cases continue to surge, it is crucial for the two governments to work together to end this global health crisis soon.

One election will not erase all the underlying US-China frictions. China's rapid rise challenges US dominance on many fronts, from technology to global governance. From the US perspective, no matter who is in the White House, the United States needs to do everything possible to push back against China's challenge to its power, prestige and liberal values.

US politicians of all stripes seem to agree on one thing: the United States must [be tough on China](#). Many argue that attempts at engagement by previous US administrations have failed to transform China and that China now poses an enormous threat to US national interests.

The US-China relationship has been so severely impaired over the past few years that it is [beyond easy repair](#). All the red buttons in the relationship are turned on, from Taiwan to the South China Sea, and from trade to high-tech.

One must also be prepared for what a reckless Trump administration may do in its final days to the already damaged relationship. During a radio interview on 12 November, the outgoing US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo asserted that '[Taiwan](#) has not been a part of China', clearly crossing Beijing's redline. The Trump administration may well 'smash a pot to pieces just because it's cracked', leaving behind a mess for Biden

*"Many in Beijing, Washington and elsewhere hope the incoming Biden administration will bring US-China relations back from the cliff edge. But it may be wishful thinking that the new administration can easily buck the trend and reset the relationship."*

Prof. Zbiquan Zhu

*Leadership change in Washington provides an opportunity for some soul searching about the plunging relationship, but the road ahead remains rocky.*

*Prof. Zhu*

*You can also read Prof. Zhu's take on how [anti-Asian racism](#) is harming US interests.*

to clean up.

The two countries continue to suffer from mutual distrust due to their different political systems. Some US officials and members of Congress now frequently use 'the Chinese Communist Party' (CCP) to refer to China. The US government has renewed its attacks on the CCP and its political ideology. Yet the Chinese leadership, based on its touted '[four confidences](#)', has developed an inflated sense of confidence that the United States is declining and that China is moving to the center of the global political stage.

The Biden administration will likely make human rights a key issue, given the current situations in Xinjiang and Hong Kong. The Chinese government's inflexibility on what it considers sovereignty issues, such as Taiwan and Tibet, makes it difficult to compromise with the United States. While Biden may be less confrontational and will introduce a degree of stability in his China policy, it is premature to paint a rosy picture of the relationship for the next few years.

Many suggest that Biden may [return to multilateralism](#) and work with US allies and partners to address the China challenge. The recent signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership — the world's [largest free trade pact](#) that includes China and several US allies — suggests that such an approach may not work as countries move further away from the US economic orbit.

People-to-people exchanges form the bedrock of bilateral relations. Unfortunately, the Trump administration terminated the Fulbright and Peace

Corps programs in China and placed restrictions on Chinese scholars and students doing scientific research in the United States. The two countries have also been engaged in a race to the bottom to expel journalists and limit the operations of each other's media outlets.

US public opinion has turned against China, partly due to the pandemic in an election year and partly due to combative Chinese behavior. According to an October [Pew Research Center survey](#), US negative views of China jumped to 73 per cent. This is the highest unfavorable rating since former US president Richard Nixon's visit to China in 1972.

The problems in the bilateral relationship are also caused by power restructuring in the international system. Given China's economic size and its global investments, it is unrealistic to expect China to continue to keep a low profile in international affairs. The massive Belt and Road Initiative — China's effort to promote international development while projecting itself as a responsible power — is viewed with suspicion and alarm by the United States. The United States worries about being replaced by China as the world's pre-eminent power.

Rising US populism and growing Chinese assertiveness have become major forces pushing the two countries toward a collision course. Leadership change in Washington provides an opportunity for some soul searching about the plunging relationship, but the road ahead remains rocky.

*Professor Zhiqun Zhu*

*This article first appeared in the East Asian Forum on November 26, 2020.*

## After Bucknell: Military Intelligence Captain Stephen Bessasparis '14 Reflects

Hello again Bucknell! Thank you, Professor Zhu, for the honor of reaching back to this amazing community. I appreciate the opportunity to share how Bucknell and my International Relations studies were critical to my academic and professional development.

I realized my passion for International Relations during my freshman year through the Global Residential College. The tight-knit community of the school's most dedicated freshmen was the perfect space to develop my interests, leading to my decision to specialize in the East Asian and Foreign Policy / Diplomacy concentrations.

In subsequent semesters, I was influenced by Professor Mitchell's rigorous IR Theory instruction, the East Asian Studies department and their expertise in Chinese language, history, and culture, and Professor Zhu's regional political expertise, excellent capstone seminar, and continuous mentorship and support. Bucknell's strength is the faculty's dedication to its students, and I've carried their lessons through my post-Bucknell career.

This is most true now during my service as a U.S. Army Military Intelligence Officer stationed at Joint Base Lewis-McChord near Seattle, WA.

## Stephen Bessasparis, Cont'd



Photo courtesy of Captain Stephen Bessasparis '14

My unit is aligned with the Indo-Pacific Command, encompassing most of the East, South, and South East Asian regions. We stand ready to deploy in support of building partnerships between the United States and our allies, deterring aggression, and maintaining stability as the region continues to develop. I lead teams of analysts in monitoring regional events, assessing their impact to the United States, and providing recommendations to commanders to drive decisions. Think of it like doing research projects on current events as they occur, and our analysis affects organizations of over 4500 Soldiers. It is incredibly rewarding to not only leverage my IR skills every day, but also to work with dedicated and knowledgeable intelligence professionals. Leading Soldiers is a privilege, and I am grateful my Bucknell education helps me try to be the kind of leader these Soldiers deserve.

I rely on my IR background to drive our analysis. IR theory frames our understanding of complex situations, and military leaders naturally tend to take a Realism-based approach to international conflict. While there is nothing inherently wrong with this approach, my IR education has been critical to acknowledging the assumptions we make and, when appropriate, draw on alternative theories to deepen our understanding of regional events. Not only does this help avoid organizational groupthink, but it also contextualizes the role our military plays during peacetime. For example, this past summer our unit was assigned to deploy to The Philippines and conduct military exercises with the Philippine Army. The hard power context was clear, but was not our primary mission. More important was working with our Department of State counterparts to build relationships with the people and leaders of The

Philippines and strengthen the U.S.-Philippine partnership. My Bucknell IR experience was invaluable to understanding this type of mission, and I used multiple IR theories to communicate the complex nature of our mission to our Soldiers.

Furthermore, my East Asian and Foreign Policy / Diplomacy specialization allows my team and I to contextualize current events and provide situational awareness to our leaders. Not only can we understand the “so what” of an event, but we can predict the second and third order effects to each actor involved. The intricacies of the South China Sea are a good example. My unit monitors this situation closely, and it is important for my commanders to understand why various actors are pursuing certain goals and partnerships. Two countries may appear hostile when discussing territorial disputes, but later warmly cooperate to reducing trade barriers and conduct pandemic relief. The U.S. response to a situation must take into account these overlapping interests. The Indo-Pacific is one of the most complex regions on the planet, and I credit Bucknell’s International Relations and East Asian Studies departments with giving me the tools I need to communicate its nuances to decision-makers.

An alumnus’ statement is not complete without advice to current students. If your career path will follow a similar arc as mine, these recommendations may help:

First, lean into your regional and thematic concentrations to find your preferred level of specialization. I sometimes work with generalists who know the broad strokes of a specific situation, but do not understand a few details that end up completely changing our final assessment. The devil is in the details. My regional focus gives me subject matter expertise in our unit’s area of responsibility, increasing the accuracy of my assessments giving me the credibility needed to make my voice heard. Find your specialty, become an expert, and go to where your expertise is needed.

Second, become comfortable with intellectual conflict and proficient in debate and persuasion. Your ideas will always compete against others for dominance. Good analysis poorly presented will usually lose to bad analysis convincingly argued. I have seen operations involving thousands of Soldiers fail because extremely intelligent officers could not change the minds of the right people.

*“My East Asian and Foreign Policy / Diplomacy specialization allows my team and I to contextualize current events and provide situational awareness to our leaders. Not only can we understand the “so what” of an event, but we can predict the second and third order effects to each actor involved.”*

*Captain Stephen Bessasparis '14*

*Advice to students:*

*First, lean into your regional and thematic concentrations to find your preferred level of specialization.*

*Second, become comfortable with intellectual conflict and proficient in debate and persuasion.*

*Third, discover your own personal leadership and followership styles.*

*Last, but certainly not least, learn from your professors at every opportunity.*

*Captain Bessasparis '14*

*Thank you, Class of 2020, for the Bucknell Fire Pit! We'll continue to put it to good use.*

Take this time at school to find groups of students with different ideas, values, and perspectives from your own. Practice intellectually sparring with each other, challenge their ideas and have your own challenged in turn, and learn these valuable skills while the stakes are still low.

Third, discover your own personal leadership and followership styles. Nearly every position you will have after school will involve these skills. Your style is unique to you and is best discovered through experience. Find roles in organizations at Bucknell where you rely on and are relied upon by others, where you have to build and maintain working relationships over time, and where you work together as a team to achieve something greater than any individual could do. ROTC was that organization for me (freshmen and sophomores can join with no obligation to military service), but Bucknell has countless opportunities for every type of person and interest.

Last, but certainly not least, learn from your professors at every opportunity. They are some of the smartest people you will ever meet, with an indefatigable dedication to teaching and mentoring

undergraduates. I have not found another group like them since, and not a month goes by without wanting to spend a few more minutes chatting with my old professors. Ask questions in class, go to office hours, do all that stuff you've been told to do while at college; I promise you will not regret it.

Thank you again to Professor Zhu and the Bucknell International Relations department for this opportunity. If you wish to contact me, you can email me at [stephen.bessasparis@gmail.com](mailto:stephen.bessasparis@gmail.com).

Stephen Bessasparis is a Military Intelligence Captain currently serving as the Battalion Intelligence Officer for 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment, 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington State. He previously served as an Infantry Officer at Fort Drum, New York, and deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Freedom's Sentinel in 2015-2016. He graduated from Bucknell University in 2014 with a BA in International Relations with concentrations in East Asia and Foreign Policy and Diplomacy, with a minor in Philosophy.

*Stephen Bessasparis  
Captain, Military Intelligence  
Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA  
Bucknell University '14, BA International Relations*

## Bonf-IR-e!



*Bucknell Fire Pit, Gift of the Class of 2020*

When the Class of 2020 settled on a fire pit as a class gift, I'm sure they thought of it as a place to gather and kick back with friends. I imagine they did not imagine that it would become not just a place of gathering, but also of much-needed community (socially distanced, of course!) at the height of a pandemic. The new fire pit, located near the Bucknell farm got a lot of use this semester, including becoming an outdoor space where classes were held.

Normally, we develop opportunities to socialize with our students outside of classes during the semester.

The pandemic made in-person socializing challenging. Given the circumstances, the fire pit proved to be a safe (not to mention fun!) outdoor space to bring faculty and students together. It was a much-needed opportunity to check in with each other, and talk about how we were coping with the unusual semester. We made s'mores, sipped our hot chocolates, and gazed into the dancing fire. It was refreshing to be in each other's company and to affirm that we were making the best of a challenging time and still learning and growing.

The pandemic accentuates the things that we take for granted: for example, being able to shoot the breeze in hallways with our colleagues and students, popping into classrooms and offices for a quick hello, seeing each other in person outside of classrooms and Zoom sessions. Our bonf-IR-e was an opportunity to reclaim a little bit of that community. We played an IR-themed Kahoot! In the glow of the fire (thanks to Professors Larrabure and Jozwiak for starting it and keeping it going). It was a lot of fun. Bri Kropinak '21 and Lielt Endeshaw '22 walked away with our prizes. Congratulations!

Want to test your knowledge? The next page has a sample of a few of the Kahoot! questions. You'll find the answers on p. 9. Good luck!

1. The filling of this dam caused a lengthening of the Earth's day by 0.06 ms & shifted the Earth's pole position by 2 cm.
2. English, Spanish, French, and Chinese are 4 of the 6 official languages of the United Nations. What are the other two?
3. Enacted in 1994, this removed Mexican federal subsidies for small farmers & the constitutional right to collective land.
4. This is the only South American country to have English as its official language.
5. You can find the Nile river in this country.
6. This is Africa's (and the world's) newest country.
7. We identify the UN, and its blue helmets, with this. Yet, this is a function that is not specified in the Charter.
8. Developed by Joseph Nye of Harvard University, this notion describes the ability to convince without coercion.
9. Selling a large quantity of a product at a low price to a developing country to flood the market.
10. During WWI this secret agreement divided the lands of the Ottoman Empire in the Middle East between Britain and France.
11. This 20th century revolutionary leader famously said: "Women can hold up half the sky."
12. This international court in the Hague is designed to prosecute individuals for the international crimes of genocide.
13. More than 50 of the world's largest 100 economies are these types of entities.
14. What two countries are engaged in a conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh right now?
15. Possibly the best example of "celebrity diplomacy," this famous singer regularly consults with global leaders.

Thank you, Class of 2020, for your thoughtful gift!  
We've put it to great use.

Professor Emek Uçarer

*Do you know the answer?*

*The filling of this dam caused a lengthening of the Earth's day by 0.06 ms & shifted the Earth's pole position by 2 cm.*

*(Answers on p. 9)*

## Study Abroad Chronicles: Grace Chung '21 and Avery Blasko '21 in Spain

During the fall 2019 semester of our junior year, we studied abroad in Granada, Spain through Bucknell en España. The semester before going abroad, we were both international relations majors, enrolled in the Theories of International Relations course, and sat two seats apart but had never talked to each other. After returning from abroad, we sat right next to each other in our Globalization course and are now co-writing a piece for the IR newsletter. To give a bit of background, Granada is an Andalusian city in Southern Spain characterized by its grand Moorish architecture and Muslim influences. Among its historic and cultural sites, it is renowned for its formidable Alhambra palace that is reminiscent of its Islamic history prior to the Catholic invasion of the Spanish peninsula. Additionally, Granada translates to pomegranate, which is the heraldic symbol of the city. It is easy to spot this bright pink symbol decorated throughout the city on trees, street and shop signs, local pottery and ceramic tiles. Our experiences abroad exposed us to a different way of life and values. It introduced us to individuals from all over the world and allowed us to experience an actual Spanish lifestyle through our host families. Our school, the Centro de Lenguas Modernas at the Universidad de Granada, held courses on Spanish and European history and politics, gave us opportunities to learn subjects more in depth than we ever had, and were taught exclusively in Spanish.



Avery and Grace at the Real Alcázar de Sevilla  
(Royal Alcázar of Seville)  
Avery Blasko '21 (3<sup>rd</sup> from left) and Grace Chung '21 (2<sup>nd</sup> from right)

We also went on several excursions to cultural sites such as the Antequera Dolmens Site and the Historic Centre of Córdoba to experience more of Spain's long and rich historical culture. This experience demonstrated the importance of studying abroad by having to converse daily in a foreign language and overcome the challenges of adapting to the way of life in a different country, but eventually helped us gain a greater understanding of the world we occupy and the people around us.

*This experience demonstrated the importance of studying abroad by having to converse daily in a foreign language and overcome the challenges of adapting to the way of life in a different country, but eventually helped us gain a greater understanding of the world we occupy and the people around us.*

*Avery Blasko '21  
&  
Grace Chung '21*

**Grace:** While abroad, I volunteered in the Personas Sin Hogar (People Without Homes) division of the local non-profit organization Solidarios para el Desarrollo (Solidarity for Development) whose mission is to fight against social exclusion. As a volunteer, I walked around the city with a group, sat down and conversed with the homeless, and served them food and water. One night, I met Jose.



The Alhambra, Granada, Spain

Jose and I instantly connected as we both grew up in California. In the next few weeks, he shared his life story with me. Jose grew up in San Francisco and dreamt of attending college for singing. His dream came true and he was accepted to a local college. However, his dream was abruptly confronted by reality as he discovered that he was an undocumented immigrant living in the country. His parents had also neglected to inform him that he was actually born in Nicaragua. After growing up in California for 20 years, identifying as a Hispanic-American and only knowing life as it is in America, ICE agents knocked on his door one day and promptly deported him to his parent's homeland. Listening to his story, I was devastated and felt utterly powerless over his situation. Although I had the privilege of being born in the U.S., it was not a choice but yet, it determined the circumstances of my upbringing. Jose and I were both California natives but our lives had transpired differently. My relationship and experience with Jose further inspired me to advocate for those who are marginalized in society and defenseless to inequity in their own communities.

**Avery:** During the first month of our program, I was lucky enough to live with not only my Spanish host mother, Mati, but also a German student who was participating in the *Intensivo* program offered by the Centro. While I loved my classes on the European Union and Spanish history, I learned just as much from conversations with both of them. Mati spoke absolutely no English and Ramiin, my host brother,

spoke only German and English. Ramiin's Spanish abilities were very limited, so I often had to translate between the two of them. We had very stimulating conversations about politics, culture, and relations between Europeans of different countries that I could not have experienced otherwise. This experience not only allowed my Spanish skills to improve from translating, but it also allowed me to see deep into the thoughts of two people from very different backgrounds and cultures.

The connection between Mati, Ramiin, and myself also grew strong through music. I am a piano performance major, and luckily my host mother had a piano in her home. We often sat around the piano while I played classical pieces that I have learned in my studies and Ramiin played and taught us German folk songs. I hold these moments close because even after heated debates about politics and culture we were able to come together and enjoy the music. This is especially something I have used in my understanding of international relations and the current political climates, as I now know that no matter how tense the situation, it can be resolved using mediums that everyone can relate to.

**Avery and Grace:** With the amazing help and support from Marguerite Santorine in the Office of Global & Off-Campus Education, Fátima Correa, the Coordinator for Bucknell en España, and our host families Manuela and Mati, we were able to experience the benefits of studying abroad and we hope that everyone takes advantage of this opportunity. It was one of the most formative experiences of our lives that will definitely stay with us in our lives beyond Bucknell.

*Avery Blasko '21 & Grace Chung '21*



El Balcón de Europa (Balcony of Europe), Nerja, Spain  
*Avery Blasko '21 (2<sup>nd</sup> from left)  
 and Grace Chung '21 (1<sup>st</sup> from right)*  
 Photo credit: Fátima Correa Flores



## *Kahoot! Answers:*

1. The Three Gorges Dam
2. Arabic and Russian
3. NAFTA
4. Guyana
5. Egypt
6. South Sudan
7. Peacekeeping
8. Soft power
9. Dumping
10. Sykes-Picot
11. Mao Zedong
12. International Criminal Court
13. Multinational Corporations
14. Armenia and Azerbaijan
15. Bono

## IR Faculty News

**Professor Uçarer** worked on some projects with Presidential Fellow Madison Rugh '24. Together, we explored Turkey's efforts to use migration as leverage against the European Union, border-control measures implemented by various European Union countries in response to the pandemic, and the populist rhetoric of the far right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party in Germany.

**Professor Zhu** published three scholarly articles in the fall. "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Israel and US-China Strategic Rivalry" appeared in *Journal of Peace and War Studies* (October 2020); "Three Levels of U.S.-China Strategic Rivalry" was included in the Fall/Winter 2020 issue of *Brown Journal of World Affairs* (Brown University); and "China-Middle East Relations: New Developments, New Challenges" was published in the October-December 2020 issue of *East Asian Policy* (National University of Singapore).

## Alumni News

In this section, we highlight news from our alumni. Let us know what you are doing by sending us an email to [international-relations@bucknell.edu](mailto:international-relations@bucknell.edu). We would also welcome short submissions on projects or perspectives.

We did not get any news from our alumni for this issue but can't wait to hear from you!

## Of Note: Campus News and Events



### A Successful Semester, On Campus

Together, we made it. Amid a worsening nationwide pandemic that's forced many colleges and universities to shift to fully remote education, Bucknell completed its fall semester classes on Friday, Nov. 20, offering in-person instruction to students on campus.



Wishing you a  
healthy and happy  
2021!

Bucknell IR



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### We're on the Web!

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projects or perspectives*

*The **IR Matters!**  
newsletter highlights  
events and people in  
the Bucknell IR  
community. The  
publication appears  
once a semester and  
welcomes feedback  
and submissions from  
students, alumni, and  
faculty.*