

Bluefield State University approved to participate in US Department of State's Diplomacy Lab

Bluefield State University (BSU) is among 47 higher education institutions in the US that have been approved by the US Department of State to participate in its Diplomacy Lab public-private partnership.

Under the guidance of faculty experts, students participating in Diplomacy Lab explore real-world challenges identified by the US Department of State's domestic and global posts. The program allows the Department to tap into the intellectual power of U.S. academic institutions and directly involve students in the work of foreign policy.

In spring 2023, BSU's Elizabeth Walter's Environmental Science students will assess the United Arab Emirates' efforts in combatting climate change. As part of its curriculum, Elizabeth Walters' Environmental Science course has previously calculated the ecological deficit of the UAE to be 9.2 hectares/person based on data from the World-Wide Fund for Nature: Living Planet Report 2017 and Global Footprint Network 2018, in "Living in the Environment," Miller & Spoolman. 20th ed.

Bluefield State University's undergraduate environmental science researchers will explore targeted support for some of earth's most vulnerable ecosystems and increased use of renewable energy sources. "This is truly a timely topic for my students of Environmental Science to engage in," stated Elizabeth Walters. "My students will see the connection between their coursework and real-time threats to our environment not only in the USA, but elsewhere in the world. My students will be solution finders!"

Provost and Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs Dr. Ted A. Lewis, who also teaches political science, delightedly remarked: "Being accepted to participate in the US Department of State's Diplomacy Lab reflects how attuned our faculty are to real time challenges our nation faces and how their courses and Bluefield State University's degree programs prepare students to engage in applied research activities that provide solutions for contemporary challenges and problems locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. Coordinated by BSU's Office of International Initiatives Director Dr. Sudhakar R Jamkhandi, I hope to see Diplomacy Lab incorporated into degree programs offered by all four of our Schools."

"The Office of Global Partnerships at the U.S. Department of State," stated Director Bryan Gearhart, "is thrilled to welcome Bluefield State University, the first West Virginia institution to join the Diplomacy Lab network." This new partnership with BSU will ensure that DipLab continues to engage diverse voices and insight directly in the work of foreign policy today and in the future."

BSU faculty are requested to submit proposals for possible future Diplomacy Labs are requested to contact BSU's Office of International Initiatives at oii@bluefieldstate.edu or call 304-327-4036.



In BSU's inaugural Diplomacy Lab project in spring 2023, Elizabeth Walters's environment science students will investigate the environmental footprint of the oil and gas sectors of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for sharing with our embassy in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

REACH NEW HEIGHTS

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