Diplomacy Lab

The Purpose
Launched by Secretary Kerry in 2013, the Diplomacy Lab is a public-private partnership that enables the State Department to "course-source" research and innovation related to foreign policy challenges by harnessing the efforts of students and faculty experts at universities across the country.

The Priorities
The partnership addresses two key priorities:
- Secretary of State John Kerry's commitment to engage the American people in the work of the State Department
- The need to broaden the Department's research base in response to a proliferation of complex global challenges.

The Partnership
By establishing partnerships between the Department and U.S. universities, the Diplomacy Lab provides students with a mechanism to participate in the work of the Department while allowing policymakers to tap into an underutilized reservoir of intellectual capacity.

Students participating in the Diplomacy Lab under the guidance of faculty experts explore real-world challenges identified by Department offices. The program offers Department offices the opportunity to receive practical research related to their issues, while also contributing to the Secretary's public diplomacy goals.

The Lab
University Partners: Partner universities recruit student teams to undertake Diplomacy Lab projects and faculty members to guide the teams.

Project Identification: The Secretary's Office of Global Partnerships (S/GP) will solicit project requests from offices across the Department.

Coursework: Of the various projects submitted to the Lab, each university's Diplomacy Lab teams will select the projects where they believe they can add the most value, given the specific expertise of the students and the faculty leading each team. After being connected with the relevant Department office's point-of-contact, professors will guide students in developing a final product that accomplishes the goals outlined by the Department. The project's working-level Department POC will coordinate the project with the faculty member, and will also engage with students during the semester via video-conferences or tele-conferences to provide feedback and guidance.

Final Product: Students' final work products are submitted to the corresponding office and S/GP for review. During a final video/teleconference, students make their final presentation, and the office's POC explains how the project's results were useful, provides feedback on the product, and previews how the results will inform the policymaking process. Offices may invite their student teams to conduct an in-person briefing with Department stakeholders.

Contact Us
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