ABOUT THE INDIA INITIATIVE

The India Initiative, founded in November 2015, builds on Georgetown University’s core strengths—academic excellence, location in Washington, DC, and Jesuit mission of service to the world—to advance research and teaching around India and world affairs and create a platform for high-level dialogue among American and Indian leaders from government, business, civil society, and the academy.

ABOUT GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Established in 1789, Georgetown is the oldest Catholic and Jesuit university in the United States. One of the world’s leading academic and research institutions, Georgetown enrolls more than 17,000 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students across nine schools. A global institution, Georgetown provides a unique educational experience that prepares the next generation of global citizens to lead and make a difference in the world. The university’s educational mission and international partnerships seek to advance the global common good.
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Georgetown University

INDIA INITIATIVE PROGRAMMING

Building a hub for conversation, research, and education on India and U.S.–India relations

India in Georgetown

• Curricular and extracurricular opportunities for students
• Hindi language and India-focused courses
• Event programming

Georgetown in India

• Student travel
• Supporting student and faculty research
• Fulbright and Critical Language Scholarship winners

Exchange of Ideas

• India Ideas Conference
• FICCI India-US Forum of Parliamentarians
• Georgetown Leadership Seminar
• Fulbright-Nehru Scholars
• International Visitor Leadership Program
• Indiaspora Philanthropy Conference
• US-India Knowledge Exchange
The India Initiative was begun in 2015 with the goal of making Georgetown University a premier hub for conversations about India and U.S.-India relations. While much remains to be done to fulfill the full scale of that ambition, we are humbled and encouraged by how far we have come in just a few years.

Over the past five years, the initiative brought over a hundred different events and speakers to campus, and the breadth of its programming widened. While political and policy discussions dominate, as befits our location in the capital of the United States, during the 2019-2020 academic year we also supported major cultural events featuring world-class musicians and dancers such as Carnatic vocalist T.M. Krishna, Sufi singer Zila Khan, and the ever-popular Georgetown tradition of Rangila. None of this would have been possible without the generous support of our donors or the logistical backing of our many partners on campus.

The most gratifying outcome of this collective effort on India is the engagement of our students. This year Georgetown had two Fulbright-Nehru fellows in India, and by year’s end another two students had won this prestigious post-graduate fellowship. Three recent graduates have taken full-time positions with IDInsight, a leading research organization in New Delhi, joining other young Hoyas who are hungry for the professional opportunities today’s India offers. This flow of people and ideas from the Hilltop to India is fueled by student trips organized by the Center for Social Justice, Research and Teaching’s MAGIS program; the McDonough School of Business’s Global Business Experience program; and the Walsh School of Foreign Service’s Centennial Lab initiative. In fall 2019, Sara Rotenberg (NHS’20) and Kyra Kocis (SFS’20), both of whom have spent considerable time in India over the past two years on university-sponsored global experiences, won Rhodes and Marshall scholarships respectively. Our students and graduates are the best advertisements for the value of a Georgetown education, and this sustained, multifaceted engagement with India is being reciprocated by rising enrollment of Indian students in Georgetown’s world-renowned undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs.

We hope you share our pride and excitement as you read about our inspiring faculty, students, and guests in this annual report. The terrible COVID-19 pandemic requires that we pause our activities, but the foundation laid over these past five years will support renewed investment when the time is right in the hopefully near future. Until that happy time, we wish you and yours good health.

Sincerely,

Irfan Nooruddin
Director
Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani Professor of Indian Politics
Georgetown has long served as an international convening power in Washington, DC—attracting leaders from a variety of industries and disciplines for constructive discourse. Drawing on this strength, the India Initiative invites leading academics, industry practitioners, and policy experts to engage in dialogue with the Georgetown community. India Initiative events raise awareness in political and scholarly communities as well as among the broader public about pressing issues facing India. The India Initiative strives to make Indian culture accessible to the Georgetown community by engaging with leading artists, performers, religious leaders, and intellectuals to host Indian cultural events and discussions.
NATIONALISM IN GANDHI’S INDIA
OCTOBER 23, 2019
To mark the 150th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi’s birth, the India Initiative hosted Rajmohan Gandhi to speak about his grandfather’s legacy in an era of nationalism. Gandhi spoke of the Mahatma’s dream for India and the challenges in India’s current sociopolitical landscape. He called for people to make changes in their own communities, emphasized the importance of learning from past struggles for liberty, and spoke about building solidarity between communities.

Rajmohan Gandhi is a professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He has previously worked as a visiting professor at Michigan State University, the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, and the Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar. He has also served as a member of parliament in the Rajya Sabha (upper house). He is the author of a number of books including Modern South India: A History from the 17th Century to Our Times (2018), Why Gandhi Still Matters: An Appraisal of the Mahatma’s Legacy (2017), and Understanding India’s Founding Fathers (2016).

NEW KINGS OF THE WORLD
SEPTEMBER 30, 2019
In her book New Kings of the World: Dispatches from Bollywood, Dizi, and K-Pop (2019), Fatima Bhutto explores the rise of non-Western global media. Bhutto discussed the values and stories conveyed in Bollywood films, dizi (Turkish soap operas), and South Korean pop music, and she described how they are eclipsing American soft power abroad.

Fatima Bhutto is an acclaimed poet and writer. Her books include the family memoir Songs of Blood and Sword (2015), The Shadow of the Crescent Moon (2014), and The Runaways (2019). Bhutto grew up in Syria and Pakistan and is niece to former Pakistani prime minister Benazir Bhutto and granddaughter of former Pakistani prime minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto.

WOMEN OF BOMBAY FILM FESTIVAL
MARCH 1, 2020
In partnership with the Embassy of India Student Hub, the India Initiative hosted a film festival with screenings centered on advancing female voices and stories and promoting the theme of women’s empowerment. The film festival focused on the insights of the women of Bombay, capturing the fusion of traditions and cultures from the city’s long history.
EVENTS

ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT UNDER UNCERTAINTY
SEPTEMBER 25, 2019
Duvvuri Subbarao, a former governor of the Reserve Bank of India, finance secretary, and World Bank lead economist, discussed emerging economy perspectives on central banking and his experiences leading the Reserve Bank of India during the 2008 global economic crisis.

Duvvuri Subbarao was the twenty-second governor of the Reserve Bank of India (2008-2013) and previously served as the finance secretary to the Government of India and secretary to the Prime Minister’s Economic Advisory Council. He also held a career as an Indian Administrative Service officer, worked as a lead economist for the World Bank, and authored the book *Who Moved My Interest Rate?* (2016).

BANGLADESH AFTER RANA PLAZA
FEBRUARY 11, 2020
In partnership with the South Asian Policy & Research Initiative, the India Initiative hosted Dr. Sanchita Banerjee Saxena for a discussion about the strategies employed to police the garment industry and solutions to improve the sector. Saxena is the editor and contributor of *Labor, Global Supply Chains, and the Garment Industry in South Asia: Bangladesh after Rana Plaza*, a collection of essays about the aftermath of the 2013 Rana Plaza collapse. She argued that the emphasis on monitoring and compliance has neglected larger issues with the global supply chain, including the extreme pressures suppliers face to quickly produce large quantities of goods at the lowest possible price.

Sanchita Banerjee Saxena is director of the Subir and Malini Chowdhury Center for Bangladesh Studies and the executive director of the Institute for South Asia Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Saxena is the editor and contributor of *Labor, Global Supply Chains, and the Garment Industry in South Asia: Bangladesh after Rana Plaza* and author of *Made in Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Sri Lanka: The Labor Behind the Global Garments and Textiles Industries* (2014).

FATEFUL TRIANGLE
FEBRUARY 13, 2020
Together the Asian Studies Program and the India Initiative co-hosted an event featuring Dr. Tanvi Madan on U.S. and Indian perceptions and policies towards China. The conversation drew from her book *Fateful Triangle: How China Shaped US-India Relations During the Cold War* (2020), which examines the triangular relationship between the countries from 1949 to 1979 to offer insights for policymakers into potential regional and global implications.

Tanvi Madan is the director of the India Project and senior fellow in the Project on International Order and Strategy in the Foreign Policy Program at the Brookings Institution.
TOP LEFT
Tanvi Madan and Arzan Tarapore discuss historical research and the U.S.-India relationship during the Cold War.

TOP RIGHT
Duvvuri Subbarao speaks about the 2008 financial crisis.

BOTTOM
Sanchita Saxena addresses labor conditions in Bangladesh’s garment industry.
**CULTURAL EVENTS**

**KALPANA**  
**SEPTEMBER 21, 2019**

As part of her debut solo tour in the United States, Bijayini Satpathy performed *Kalpana*, weaving together narrative and non-narrative imagery through Odissi dance. Odissi is an ancient dance form that originated in the eastern Indian state of Orissa more than 2,000 years ago. In *Kalpana*, Satpathy combined lithe movement and an expressive face with skill and athleticism. Satpathy is one of the foremost practitioners of Odissi dance, best known for her role as the lead dancer of the Nrityagram Dance Ensemble. She has been awarded numerous distinctions throughout her career, including the Sanskriti Award, Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar, Nritya Choodamani, and the Mahari Award.

**RANGILA**  
**NOVEMBER 22-23, 2019**

In the spirit of inclusivity and cultural exchange, Georgetown University’s South Asian Society seeks to raise awareness of South Asian culture and issues through dialogue, academic panels, and charity events. Rangila, the largest event of the fall semester, has aimed to fulfil these goals for 25 years. Rangila is the largest charity showcase on the eastern seaboard, with over 500 students participating each year. In 2019 Rangila featured 15 South Asian fusion dances, and all proceeds from the show benefited Anwesha: The Quest, a nonprofit organization that supports children with disabilities in Kolkata, India, using creative art therapies to help students develop cognitive and mobility skills.

**PENN MASALA**  
**FEBRUARY 21, 2020**

The India Initiative and Georgetown University’s South Asian Society partnered with South Asian student associations and dance groups from American and George Washington Universities for a cultural showcase featuring performances from Georgetown University Jawani, Georgetown Guzaarish, the George Washington University Bhangra team, and George Washington University Naach. The student dance groups performed alongside Penn Masala, the first a capella group focused on South Asian and Western musical fusion. Proceeds from the event were donated to Spandana Society, an NGO that works with disadvantaged youth in Hyderabad, India.
RIGHT
Odissi dancer Bijayini Satpathy and Moushmi Joshi.

BOTTOM
Georgetown students participating in Rangila.
The India Initiative is committed to expanding educational opportunities for students. In addition to bringing practitioners and experts on Indian politics, industry, and culture to campus, the initiative promotes innovative cross-cultural travel, issue-focused travel, and academic research. The initiative supports project-based experiential learning through the India Innovation Studio and facilitates student research on India in topics ranging from transportation infrastructure and urban development to women’s empowerment.
BUILDING CONSTITUENCIES FOR A GENDER-EQUITABLE WORLD

The Business for Impact team at the Georgetown University McDonough School of Business is working with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation on a new effort: Building Constituencies for a Gender-Equitable World. Business for Impact supports the foundation by leveraging social marketing and movement strategy expertise to conduct formative research on gender equity in India and other countries around the world. The Business for Impact team will also develop strategic recommendations to inform future investments and programs aimed at enhancing girls’ and women’s self-determination.

US-INDIA WOMEN’S ALLIANCE

The India Initiative is proud to be part of the U.S.-India Alliance for Women’s Economic Empowerment, a public-private partnership to accelerate the growth of women-owned and -operated businesses and women’s workforce participation in India by increasing access to finance, mentoring, and technical assistance. Members include the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development, Georgetown University, George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health, and the U.S.-India Strategic Partnership Forum.

MAGIS: INDIA

The Alternative Breaks Program run by Georgetown’s Center for Social Justice Research, Teaching and Service is designed to bring Georgetown community members together to foster intersectional solidarity and inspire lasting commitments to service and social justice through direct service, immersion, and reflection. Magis: India, a collaborative trip between the Office of Campus Ministry and the Center for Social Justice, focuses on public health care and its accessibility for marginalized people. During a December 2019 trip to Delhi, participants explored the cultural and societal factors within the health care system. Participants were encouraged to examine health care access in India and to consider how their own identities fit into the power dynamics of accessibility, both in India and in Washington, DC.
RHODES SCHOLARSHIP

Sara Rotenberg (NHS’20) was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship. The Georgetown senior joins the 26 Rhodes scholars produced by the university, including President Bill Clinton (SFS’68), and is the first to earn this achievement from the School of Nursing & Health Studies. She will use the Rhodes to pursue an M.Phil. in evidence-based social intervention and policy evaluation at the University of Oxford.

Rotenberg is an alumna of the India Innovation Studio course, where she worked on a report on irrigation and governance reform for the World Bank. She spent a semester in Delhi working with the World Health Organization for her global health research practicum. Rotenberg has undertaken independent research in India on transit systems and accessibility and developed a transportable, collapsible stool for people with mobility challenges.

MARSHALL SCHOLARSHIP

Kyra Kocis (SFS’20) was awarded a Marshall Scholarship. She plans to study social research methods and urban planning in the United Kingdom. She is an alumna of the India Innovation Studio course, where she studied water and sanitation issues. Kocis has undertaken independent research on the social ramifications of technological modernization in the block printed textiles industry in Jaipur, and she has also researched Mumbai’s Slum Rehabilitation Authority.

Kocis worked as a research assistant for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation’s “Strengthening State Capacity to Deliver Public Goods for Health, Bihar, India” project, as a consultant for the World Bank’s Solutions and Innovations in Procurement Team, and as a summer intern at the Atlantic Council’s South Asia Center. Having witnessed the unintended consequences of urban policies designed to promote economic growth and technological modernization, Kocis hopes to one day become a practitioner of international urban policy.
STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

MIA CAMPBELL
Mia Campbell (C’18) was awarded a Fulbright-Nehru Fellowship to research youth mental health education in India. Her Fulbright research will continue an interest in mental health developed during her time at Georgetown. Campbell, who majored in biology of global health and minored in women’s and gender studies, focused her senior thesis on mental health curriculum in middle schools. This research included a global comparison of mental health curriculum content and a pilot of a micro narrative survey process. The lack of available data on youth mental health in Asia inspired Campbell to apply for a Fulbright to India. She will be working to create a survey tool that will collect micro narratives on respondents’ experiences and understanding of mental health.

FULBRIGHT-NEHRU FELLOWSHIPS

JAKOB BURNHAM
Jakob Burnham, a fourth year Ph.D. student at Georgetown University, has been awarded the Fulbright-Nehru research grant to continue his doctoral research on the history of French colonialism in India. Building on previous archival research in France, Burnham will travel to Tamil Nadu and Bengal to visit the National Archives of India Records Centre in Puducherry and other archives. He will research the ideas of race, caste, and gender in the context of the French invasion of the Indian subcontinent. Burnham will conduct research in both French and Tamil, furthering research into imperialism and seventeenth century social realities.
In addition to providing educational opportunities to students for curricular and experiential learning, the India Initiative is committed to supporting faculty efforts in discovering and communicating knowledge about India and its role in world affairs. The initiative draws on the deep and broad expertise found throughout the university. Scholars across Georgetown’s nine schools explore multidisciplinary issues related to India, and the faculty collaborations with institutions on the Indian subcontinent are increasing.
RAJESH VEEARAGHAVAN
SUPPORTING DELHI’S COVID-19 RESPONSE

The Urban Spatial Observatory—an interdisciplinary research group with faculty, students, and researchers from Georgetown University, Brown University, Center for Policy Research, Hyderabad Urban Lab, and the Indian Institute for Human Settlements—adapted research to support Delhi’s COVID-19 response efforts. Datasets on public services were used to create accessible maps of open night shelters, temporary shelters for migrant workers, ration shops to buy groceries at subsidized rates, and more than 400 schools functioning as hunger relief centers.

During the beginning of the lockdown, many night shelters for the homeless were also serving as hunger relief centers. The shelters, particularly those near bus and railway stations, were quickly overcrowded. To maintain social distancing, the Urban Spatial Observatory researchers worked with Delhi officials to identify alternate locations for additional shelters and coordinated with the government to establish new hunger relief centers nearby.

Rajesh Veeraraghavan, an assistant professor in the Science, Technology, and International Affairs program in the School of Foreign Service and member of the India Initiative faculty committee, and other Urban Spatial Observatory members including Hridbijoy Chakraborty, Bob Bell, and Georgetown graduates Shubhada Varde (G’19) and Sky Colloredo-Mansfeld (SFS’19)—a Fulbright-Nehru Research Fellow—also worked with the Delhi Disaster Management Authority to design an internal map and protocol for helpline operators, who were trained to use the map to identify food request locations and connect people to their nearest relief center. Operators could also flag nearby public facilities where additional relief centers could be added. Throughout this process researchers identified and mapped 650 relief centers, helping citizens, relief volunteers, social workers, and government officials get access to reliable information on their mobile phones.
Climate Change and the Nation State: The Case for Nationalism in a Warming World

Discussing risk of sea level rise and flooding in Bangladesh, continuing drought in northern India, and water stress and scarcity throughout India and Pakistan, Dr. Anatol Lieven’s new book *Climate Change and the Nation State: The Case for Nationalism in a Warming World* (2020) examines climate change, including the particular threats to South Asian states and societies. Lieven, a professor of government at Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service in Qatar, speaks about rising temperatures which could threaten agriculture across South Asia, drastically reducing crop yields and making outside work impossible for much of the year. Climate change is also likely to produce huge movements of people which could threaten political stability within South Asia. Lieven points to climate-induced political instability and migration as a wider effect of climate change that will impact the whole world.
GLOBAL CLASSROOM: CROSS-CAMPUS COURSES

Using the Global Classroom RPX telepresence technology, Georgetown professors are able to teach classes to students in DC and Doha simultaneously. Indian Ocean Ethnography, taught by professor Rogaia Abusharaf, focused on contextualizing study of Africa and the Gulf within a broader context of the Indian Ocean region. The course analyzed the historical roots that influence both the long- and the short-term contemporary events of policy shifts, economic flows, and political transformations. Considering the interconnectedness of Indian Ocean societies provided students with new ways of understanding how geography, ethnography, social history, and migration interact with great social and economic change.

In his cross-campus course Post-Colonial Novel: Indian Ocean, professor Coilin Parsons discussed a series of novels on Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Egypt, Indonesia, India, and the waters that lie between them. Focusing on the connections between the cosmopolitan Indian Ocean and legacies of empires, students considered forced and voluntary migration, travel, and global trade. Through the history of slave transports, movements of migrant workers, and trade between East Africa and West Asia, the course analyzed the historical regional economy and culture of the Indian Ocean as a precursor to modern globalization.

SELECT 2019-2020 COURSES ON INDIA

ANTH 185
GLOBAL SOUTH ASIA

ASST-001/021
INTRODUCTORY AND INTERMEDIATE HINDI

CULP 293
POLITICAL THEATRE IN INDIA

ECON 355
ECONOMICS OF SOUTH ASIA

ENGL 638
READING THE INDIAN OCEAN

GOVT 228
INDIA/PAKISTAN: DOMESTIC POLITICS

HIST 420
INDIAN OCEAN: EMPIRES/DIASPORAS

INAF 311/312
INDIA INNOVATION STUDIO

SEST 573
SECURITY ISSUES IN SOUTH ASIA

THEO 059
PHILOSOPHIES OF INDIA