
PROFILE

I am a highly-motivated professional and developing researcher in the field of international higher education with experience in program management, curriculum development, diversity and inclusion initiatives, intercultural training, and facilitation. I have worked domestically and internationally in a variety of roles, through which I have learned to be organized, diligent, collaborative, inclusive, and culturally-sensitive. I am currently pursuing a Ph.D. at the University of Maryland in International Education Policy.

EDUCATION

University of Maryland, College Park, MD *August 2016 - Present*
Ph.D. – International Education Policy
University of Maryland, College Park, MD *May 2014*
M.A. – International Education Policy
Seminar Paper: *Bilingual education and the empowerment of marginalized linguistic communities: A comparison of policy initiatives in the United States and Bolivia*
New York University, New York, NY *May 2008*
B.A. – Double Major in Psychology and Religious Studies

RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Education Abroad– University of Maryland *August 2018– Present*
Research Associate *College Park, MD*

- Create and implement initiatives for Education Abroad (EA) aimed at supporting and increasing the number of students from underrepresented populations in study abroad including students of color, LGBTQ students, and students with disabilities.
- Redesign trainings for faculty-led short-term study abroad programs to focus on supporting underrepresented students; restructure risk management training to focus on importance diversity and inclusion; redesign short-term assessment tools to focus on issues of diversity and inclusion; construct guide for designing inclusive study abroad programs.
- Principal investigator on research project looking at how to best support a cohort program of over 100 Black and Latino men to study abroad. Utilize qualitative and quantitative research tools to understand population's relationship to study abroad, perceived and faced barriers, and ways to enhance study abroad access and inclusion.
- Coordinate office-wide initiative to construct Education Abroad Principals of Assessment (EAPA) – criteria used to review and evaluate the over 400+ programs offered by Education Abroad; work collaboratively with university stakeholders to finalize assessment criteria that reflect EA's mission of inclusive excellence.

Office of Diversity and Inclusion – University of Maryland *August 2016 – August 2018*
Education and Training Specialist *College Park, MD*

- Coordinated the Words of Engagement Intergroup Dialogue Program, an academic program that trains students on discussing issues of social justice and identity (*e.g.* race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, etc.)
- Organized 8-9 intergroup dialogues every semester and summer, each consisting of 10-14 students (roughly 120 students per term); work with academic advising and student affairs community to market and recruit students across campus; process scheduling and registration of all students in dialogue.
- Designed and maintain curriculum for each of our dialogue themes; collaborated with dialogue facilitators to update syllabi, activities, and learning outcomes for each theme.
- Recruited facilitators to lead all dialogue courses; co-led a 2-day facilitator training semiannually on intergroup dialogue pedagogy and practice; provide debriefs and assessment sessions to inform facilitators of their progress.
- Provided guidance on diversity and inclusion initiatives to other offices around the University of Maryland campus; deliver trainings to on diversity and inclusion and issues of social identity (primarily race and gender) to campus stakeholders.

Contractor of ObxTek Inc. to Office of Academic Exchanges – U.S. Department of State
Program Coordinator (Secret Clearance)

May 2014 – July 2016
Washington, DC

- Worked on central operations in Office of Academic Exchanges, the office which sponsors and manages programs such as Fulbright, Global Undergraduate (UGRAD), and the Young African Leadership Initiative (YALI).

Central Coordination of Fulbright Pre-Departure Orientations for Outgoing U.S. Fulbright Participants

- Coordinated central logistics for six, 2-3 day regional Pre-Departure Orientations for U.S. Fulbright Students and Scholars; organized the review and selection of facilitators for additional two day workshops for Fulbright English Teaching Assistants for each of the six regional orientations.
- Held and run weekly meetings with representatives from each regional branch to coordinate principal tasks and responsibilities for orientations including building session content, recruiting speakers, and organizing meals; introduced new session at all orientations built on affinity groups and understanding identity abroad.
- Worked directly with cooperating organization to finalize all logistics concerning hotels, travel, and budget for each orientation; attended and monitored all orientations; managed any issue that occurred during events.

Diversity and Inclusion

- Led Office-wide Fulbright Diversity Working Group; designed Fulbright Diversity Survey and analyzed responses provided by the over 150 partner countries involved in program; maintained and updated Fulbright Best Practices in Diversity guidebook.
- Coordinated Department-wide Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex (LGBTI) Public Diplomacy Working Group; programed events and sessions to enhance inclusion of LGBTI exchange participants.

Education Abroad– University of Maryland
Program Manager and Advisor

July 2010 – August 2013
College Park, MD

- Managed partnership with Universities Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC); ensured that nearly 100-120 students each semester were properly registered, billed, and prepared for experience abroad with USAC.
- Coordinated study abroad programs in Spain and Israel, and provided advising to over 200 students per semester interested in study in Spain, Latin America, Germany, and Israel.
- Ran Education Abroad Peer Mentor program; responsible for the hiring, training, and supervising of eight student workers that served as general study abroad advisors for prospective students.

Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sport – Government of Spain
Language and Cultural Assistant

October 2008 – June 2010
Guadarrama, Spain; Granada Spain

- Worked for two years as Assistant English Teacher classes in a bilingual Spanish-English classroom on Mathematics, English Language, Science, and Technology alongside certified bilingual teachers.
- Led workshops on grammar and vocabulary for students and teachers preparing for English Language exams.

RELEVANT TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Intergroup Dialogue on U.S. Identity in a Global Context *University of Maryland, Spring 2019- Present*

Blended learning course (online and in-person components) for Engineering students from the University of Maryland studying abroad in Madrid, Spain. Course utilizes intergroup dialogue pedagogy to hold conversations on the relationship between social identities and experiences of privilege and oppression abroad. The course places a critical eye on the concept of U.S. identity to support students in thinking about how their experiences in the United States has influenced how they interact and think about communities and nations globally.

Global Service in the Dominican Republic, Global Communities Program, University of Maryland,
(January 2018- Present)

Study Abroad course focused on social justice and service-learning in Santiago, Dominican Republic. Over the course of 11 days abroad, students engage in a community service project with a local Dominican NGO, complete written reflections of their experiences, participate in intergroup dialogues focused on social identity in the Dominican Republic and the United States, and work to strengthen their understanding and ability to see issues of social inequality on a global scale. Students also interrogate how their sense of identity evolves throughout their experience abroad.

Experiential Learning in Global Communities, *Global Communities Program, University of Maryland, Spring 2018*
Online course that students take while completing community service projects either domestically or abroad. Through readings and discussion boards, students reflect on their definitions of community service, explore the social conditions and inequalities that create a need for service, and further develop critical thinking skills to engage in global issues.

The Student in the University- Global Communities, *Global Communities, University of Maryland (Fall 2016-Present)*
First-semester seminar to support new students to the university and the Global Communities Living Learning program. Activities and coursework focus on the transition to college life, the impact of social identity, social justice education, and global citizenship.

Intergroup Dialogue Facilitation *Words of Engagement Intergroup Dialogue Program, University of Maryland (Spring 2014 – Present)*

Intergroup dialogue courses focus on discussions of a particular social identity (e.g., race gender, class, etc.). Facilitators work with students to think critically as to how the identities we carry impact our lived experiences of privilege and oppression, and those around us. In this program I have facilitated dialogues on gender, immigration, sexuality, religious bias, and nationality.

PRESENTATIONS

Gombin-Sperling, J., Pichardo, J. & Ferreira, R. (2019) *Grounding Our Experiences: Introducing Social Justice Frameworks into International Service-Learning Programs*. American College Personnel Association Annual Conference, Boston, MA. ([Also presented as webinar](#))

Gombin-Sperling, J. & Baker, M.B. (2018) *English in Cuba: Exploring the dimensions of Cuban English teachers' relationships to English and of their pedagogical practices*. Comparative and International Education Society Annual Conference, Mexico City, MX

Gombin-Sperling, J. (2018) *Unpacking Biases: The Impact of intergroup dialogue in International Education*. 18th Annual Graduate Student Research Conference, Washington, DC.

Gombin-Sperling, J. (2017) *International graduate students' experiences with English and the impact of globalization*. 2nd Annual NAFSA Research Symposium, Washington, D.C.

Le, H., **Gombin-Sperling, J.**, Baker, M.B., Le, H., DeCoster, B., & Reedy, T. (2017). *Who watches the watchmen if not each other? Collective reflections on the generation of knowledge about Cuba*. Comparative and International Education Symposium. Arlington, VA.

Gombin-Sperling, J. (2017). *The things we carry: Unpacking the impact of bias in student advising*. 22nd Annual Undergraduate Studies Advising Conference, University of Maryland, College Park, MD.

Gombin-Sperling, J. Kurtz, K. (2015). *Building organizational infrastructure for supporting LGBTQ inclusion in international education programming*, Somewhere Over the Rainbow Conference, College Park, MD.

Shaeffer, A. & Gombin-Sperling, J (2015). *Contemporary educational exchange: Institutional, organizational, and governmental perspectives*. International Management Institute Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.

Gombin-Sperling, J. (2015). *Bilingual education and the empowerment of marginalized linguistic communities: A comparison of policy initiatives in the United States and Bolivia*. Comparative and International Education Society International Conference, Washington, D.C.

PUBLICATIONS

Gombin-Sperling, J. (2020) "The development of students' understandings of social identity, inequality, and service during a critical international service-learning program in the Dominican Republic." *Journal of Comparative and International Higher Education*.

Gombin-Sperling, J.R., & Baker-Robbins, M.J. "English in Cuba: Reflections on a study of Cuban English teachers' and students' relationship to English." In *Attending to the Complexity of Identity and Interaction in Language Education (Multilingual Matters, forthcoming, 2020)*.

Le, H., **Gombin-Sperling, J.**, DeCoster, B. & Reedy, T. (2020) "Continuing the conversation: Towards a model of collective critical reflection in CIE research," Chapter in *Interrogating and Innovating Comparative and International Education: Decolonizing Practices for Inclusive, Safe Spaces*

Gombin-Sperling, J. (2018). *International graduate students' experiences with English and the impact of globalization*. *NAFSA Research Symposium Series*. Washington, D.C.

AWARDS

- Recipient: University of Maryland Social Justice Day Ward; April 2019
- Recipient: Exceptional Service Award; U.S. Department of State; June 2016
- Recipient: University of Maryland's LGBTQ Equity Center Pride Award; May 2014

RELEVANT SKILLS

Software and Programs: Microsoft Office Suite, SPSS, R Studio

Languages: English – first language; Spanish – Professional oral and written proficiency