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## Political Science major thrives on learning different cultures

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## Political Science major thrives on learning different cultures

Tegist Worku '17 wants to be a diplomat and she is on the right course.

The [Political Science](#) major has returned from Dominican's partner school in Poitiers, France ESCEM as a [Dominican Semester Abroad](#) student after utilizing a [Barowsky School of Business](#) Travel Stipend during the spring. Tegist took that opportunity to travel to Turkey to learn more about its history, traditions, and concerns.

In the summer of 2015, Tegist received a [Paul Findley Fellowship](#) while interning in Washington D.C. at the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations. She has her eyes set on applying for a two-year internship with the U.S. State Department Foreign Service Program.

"I was always interested in other people's culture and at the same time I have a longing to help people grow from the position that they are in," says Tegist, who emigrated from Ethiopia when she was seven years old.

Tegist, who is also studying for a minor in [Business Administration](#), joined the [Black Student Union](#), [Campus Ministry](#), [Global Ambassadors](#) and the [Debate Team](#) at Dominican.

"The teachers at Dominican are very welcoming and they encourage you to be involved," says Tegist, past president of the BSU club.

In 2014, Alison Howard, chair of the [Department of Political Science and International Studies](#), shared the opportunity to intern in D.C. for 10 weeks at the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations with her students. Tegist took the opportunity to apply for the competitive internship that led to an extraordinary life and learning experience.

Gigi Gokcek, associate professor in the Dept. of Political Science and International Studies, wrote a letter of recommendation for the NCUSAR internship for Tegist, who was a student in Gokcek's Politics of the Middle East class during the 2015 spring semester.

"It was clear to me that she had a sincere desire to know everything about the political systems of other countries. Every day she sat in the front of class asking poignant questions about political culture, non-democratic governments, societies, and economies of the countries we covered," Gokcek says. "She is quite serious in her desire to build bridges between different cultures and ethnicities ... She wants to become a global citizen and a career diplomat, who can play a vital role in changing people's perceptions of those who are foreign."

In Washington, D.C., the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations placed Tegist in the Syrian American Medical Society where she conducted research as well as updated facts and figures related to the conflict in Syria. The internship also consisted of biweekly seminars from professionals within the Foreign Service and foreign policy sector along with site visits to places such the National Counter-Terrorism Center, Islamic Center, Saudi Arabian and Bahrain Embassies and the State Department.

"I could summarize the experience by saying it was great, but that wouldn't do it justice," Tegist says.

Tegist's goal now is to pursue a career in diplomacy as a way to develop cross-cultural communication and peace between the West and countries in a developing world. She is interested in returning to Ethiopia and other African countries someday to help its leaders and citizens.

"Many developing countries rely on outside help to get basic needs, but it is difficult for these countries to grow because they cannot adequately educate their people," Tegist says. "That's one of the biggest reasons I chose to major in Political Science, I want to help people be self-reliant I want to help people be free."