

Grisel d'Elena

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QUALIFICATIONS PROFILE

Bilingual visionary academic backed by a graduate education in Religious Studies, International Relations, Muslim World Studies, and Women and Gender Studies. Currently working on PhD in International Relations focusing on the Rohingya crisis. Versatile and results-oriented, with experience in media, non-profit and academic settings.

- International experience with stateless Burmese refugees in Thailand and low-income families in Havana, Cuba.
- Collaborations with academic, religious and political figures in the U.S., Myanmar, London, Amsterdam, Paris, and the U.N. in Geneva.
- Local experience lecturing teens on ethnic, racial, gender and class related bullying.

PROFESSIONAL ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, MIAMI, FL

Adjunct Faculty, Current

Teaching Experience in:

- Church and State
- Religion Analysis and Interpretation
- World Religions
- Religion and International Relations

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, MIAMI, FL

Academic Advisor, 2016 - Current

Academic Advisor at FIU's Honors College, Pre-Law and EAP FIU Law

- Assist students with course selections in accordance to major.
- Preparing undergraduates for graduate and law school.
- Advising students through academic and personal challenges.
- Policy clarification and addressing grade concerns.

SIX MEDIA INC., MIAMI, FL

Journalist, 2016

Startup news media company that offered six perspectives to every story.

- Authored two - four weekly articles on key contemporary issues.
- Wrote the top five most read articles on the site.
- Curated and summarized five articles to accompany each authored article.
- Ensured that the reader received well-rounded, diverse perspectives on selected topics.

SOUTH FLORIDA INTERFAITH WORKER JUSTICE, MIAMI, FL

Field Coordinator, Summer 2016

Non-profit working on issues related to worker justice with low wages or vulnerabilities.

- Identified viable sites for survey team to investigate.
- Oversaw survey team conducting research with construction workers.
- Maintained routine data management, tracking and resolved survey data issues.

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, MIAMI, FL

Teaching Assistant, 2014 - 2016

Assisted in teaching 11 Religious Studies courses over a two-year span

- Edited, graded and assisted students with writing in a Gordon Rule course.
- Provided detailed feedback to all students and followed up to ensure course success.
- Incorporated a progressive teaching style inclusive of trending social media outlets to engage students.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND & CERTIFICATIONS

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), International Relations; 2017 – Current

Graduate Certificate in Muslim World Studies
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY – Miami, FL

Master of Arts, Religious Studies - 2014-2016
Graduate Certificate in Women and Gender Studies
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY – Miami, FL

Bachelor of Arts, Religious Studies; Minor: Asian Studies - 2012-2014
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY – Miami, FL

LANGUAGES

English and Spanish – Fluent
French – Reading competency

VOLUNTEERING

2015 – Thila Nyunt Nunnery – Myanmar-Burma

- Assisted nuns in their daily tasks and provided assistance with meals and transportation.
- Taught English to nuns ages 5 to 40.
- Lectured to B.A. students at Sitagu Buddhist Academy on Women and Religion.

2013 – International Student Volunteers – Thailand

- Volunteered at Baan Unrak Children's Home in Sangkhlaburi, Thailand, helping stateless women and children rescued from Burmese ethnic wars and human trafficking.
- English teacher at Baan Unrak Primary School for Grades 2 to 6.

2012-Present – National Voices of Equality, Education and Enlightenment (NVEEE) – Miami

- Executive Board Member, Mentor and Advocate for teens ages 13 to 18, experiencing bullying.
- Organize, direct and lecture for LGBTQ bullying prevention campaigns in the tri-county area and NVEEE's annual Peace Ambassador Leadership Summit (PALS).
- Speaker at PALS on the subjects of LGBTQ, ethnic, racial, gender and class-related bullying.

1999-2006 – Isla Express – Havana, Cuba

- Traveled to Cuba two to four times a year providing medicine, clothing and books to low-income families.
- Translated world history works to children ages 7 to 12.
- Assisted farmers in the town of Güira de Melena collecting harvest.

ACADEMIC CONFERENCES AND INVITED LECTURES

“Rohingya RoundTable Discussion,” The Honors College, Florida International University, Miami, FL, April 4, 2019.

FIU's 100 Women and Social Justice Panel, Center for Women's and Gender Studies, Florida International University, Miami, FL, April 2, 2019

“Re-Forming Rohingya Identity in Light of the International Response to the Refugee Crisis,” AAR: SECSOR, Islam & Religions of Asia Panel, Greenville, NC, March 10, 2019.

“The Plight of the Rohingya: Marginalization, Statelessness and Tragedy,” The Jaffer Center for Muslim World Studies, Florida International University, Miami, FL, October 7, 2018.

“The Plight of the Rohingya: Betwixt and Between Muslim and Burmese,” Miami Dade College, Miami, FL, March 28, 2018.

“Life in the Shadows: The Marginalization of Buddhist Women and Muslims in Myanmar,” School of International and Public Affairs at Florida International University, Miami, FL, September 27, 2016.

“Myanmar's 969 Movement: Rejection of Globalization and Instrumentalization of the Burmese Woman,” AAR, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA, May 7, 2016.

“The Paradox of Ordination and Religious Nationalism: Theravada Buddhist Female Monastics and the 969 Movement in Burma,” AAR, Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence Group, Atlanta, GA, Nov. 21, 2015.

“Buddhism and Women in Religious Studies,” Invited lecture at Sitagu Buddhist Academy, Sagaing, Myanmar, July 14, 2015.

“Overcoming LGBTQ Subjugation to Violence by Normalizing Diversity,” Peace Ambassador Assembly with NVEEE at Marriot – Delray Beach, May 16, 2015.

“The Benefits of Studying Abroad and Volunteer Work,” workshop and lecture at the Peace Ambassador Leadership Summit (PALS), Florida International University, June and November 2014.

“A Quest for Empathy: The Stateless Burmese Women and Children of Baan Unrak,” 15th Annual Women, Sexuality, and Gender Student Association Conference, Florida International University, March 19, 2014.