



AUSTIN GIGNILLIAT

MASTER'S STUDENT IN
HUMAN RIGHTS AND
HUMANITARIAN ACTION,
SCIENCES PO

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Austin Gignilliat's SLP experience and his passion for human rights have led him to pursue a Master's degree in Human Rights and Humanitarian Action at Sciences Po in Paris, France.

Austin Gignilliat graduated from the University of Georgia with a Bachelor of Arts in International Affairs and a Bachelor of Arts in Economics. While at UGA, Austin took advantage of the many opportunities available and was a member of Mock Trial, SPIA Ambassadors, Dr. Carmichael's Global Citizens Press, and a scholar in the SLP.

Austin greatly appreciated the environment fostered in the SLP. He enjoyed being surrounded by students from different backgrounds and majors, each of whom brought unique perspectives to the table but all united in their passion for National Security. Through the SLP, he gained many critical skills that would aid him in his career, most especially the ability to write efficiently for policy briefs. The program also developed his ability to look at international relations through a security lens and to network in professional settings. During his second semester with SLP, Austin interned with the Carter Center's Democracy and Governance team. He then went on to intern at the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the U.S. Mission's Office of Human Rights Affairs in Geneva, Switzerland and served as a short-term election observer with the OSCE in Ukraine.

Austin turned his passion for human rights into a career at the National Democratic Institute. He worked on multiple programs in Central and West Africa, including one on women's participation in Congolese political parties. In 2021, Austin decided to further his education and is currently pursuing an MA in Human Rights and Humanitarian Action at Sciences Po in Paris, France.

Austin's advice for current SLP students is "to make your own luck" when applying for internships and jobs you want by networking, asking for informational interviews, and taking the chance to reach out to employers through social media and email. For those wanting to go into the NGO/CSO space, be prepared that entry-level positions often require a good deal of administrative work and demonstrating knowledge of how to manage a budget is important. Austin exemplifies the success derived from narrowing your interests and following your passion.