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University Honors Program Student Named Semi-Finalist for Fulbright U.S. Student Program

February 13, 2020

Samuel Hobbs has been named a semi-finalist for the Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Program (ETA), taking an important step toward his goal of teaching English in Colombia next school year.

“I’ve had so many great opportunities here at Georgia Southern that have helped me to develop a true love for teaching and mentoring students and the Fulbright Scholarship allows me to explore this passion in a rigorous and exciting manner,” Hobbs said.

Hobbs will graduate in May with a degree in Political Science and Spanish, and is currently working on his honors thesis, “Does Description Equal Prescription? A Case for Gender Quotas in Latin America” mentored by Dr. Jamie Scalera. The thesis focuses on the influence that women have on legislation rates pertaining to women such as reproductive healthcare, sexual and domestic violence, and education in Latin American legislatures.

Hobbs conducted a case study analysis of countries that have gender quotas, a fixed percentage of women in the legislature, to determine if the presence of women increase the rate of legislation passed in regards to the aforementioned topics.

“Going to Colombia with Fulbright will give me even more insight into this topic because Columbia doesn’t have a gender quota. This will help me to explore the effects this has on the rates of legislation passed in a country that does not adhere to this other method,” Hobbs explained. “I’ve also had to translate hundreds of laws from Spanish to English for this project, so it only made sense to apply to a country where I could strengthen my Spanish.”

The next steps for the semi-finalist include an interview with the selection committee in Colombia. Final decisions will be made later in the spring.

In regards to his future with both this program opportunity and his thesis research, Hobbs said, “Well, if all goes as planned, I am certain that I will cry. As for my thesis, I plan on expanding my dataset and research to Africa, Asia, and Europe during my time in graduate school and hopefully get it published. With the Fulbright program, I would gladly postpone my graduate school plans and receive this opportunity with open arms.”

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Samuel Hobbs