

To: Peggy Re, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs
From: Felipe Filomeno, Director, Global Studies Program
Date: August 25, 2025
Re: YTR Narrative Report



The narrative below summarizes progress on the APR Action Plan of the Global Studies Program (GLBL) from September 6, 2022. The items are numbered according to the action plan, but organized into the categories presented by the Vice-Provost for Academic Affairs.

Organizational and programmatic initiatives

1. Add infrastructure and institutional support for GLBL: (a) Decide on a faculty model to properly re-source GLBL as a program or a department; (b) Develop a new administrative support arrangement. If "shared services" is not going to be expanded to account for a number of the Administrative Assistant (AA) tasks that must be carried out by GLBL, then we will need to revisit the idea of a shared AA. By AY 2022-23.

In the fall of 2024, GLBL finalized new MOUs with MLLI (for Dr. Tania Lizarazo's teaching and service in GLBL) and POLI (for Dr. Felipe Filomeno's teaching and service in GLBL). In the same semester, the GLBL Advisory Board approved an affiliate faculty policy to engage more faculty from other departments. The Program is waiting for the CAHSS Dean's Office to approve the MOUs and affiliate faculty policy.

Since the fall of 2023, Ryan Ibrahim has served as the program's accounting associate for 10 hours a week. She works the remainder of her full-time hours for MLLI.

2. Establish a new advisory board GLBL program to replace the long-defunct coordinating committee. This board will help with the development of by-laws for the program. GLBL will assemble a new board of faculty members engaged in interdisciplinary global studies work. By AY 2022-23

Director Brigid Starkey convened a new advisory board in the spring of 2023, with faculty from MLLI, POLI, SOWK, and HIST. The Advisory Board approved the program by-laws in the fall of 2023. Felipe Filomeno was chosen by the Advisory Board as the new director according to the by-laws. The Advisory Board has since met regularly once a semester. The Director also consults the Advisory Board as needed. The Advisory Board members are listed [on the program's website](#) and featured on the program's social media.

5. Enhance program marketability – its presentation on the program website and other digital materials. Secure explicit and timely institutional help with marketing and website revamping. By Spring 2023.

The Program has centered its marketing message around the concept of global competence, which is now clearly defined on the frontpage of the [website](#). The Director created a presentation about global competence for use at every Welcoming Week. The Director, Coordinator, and CommonVision created a [new program brochure](#) highlighting the concept of global competence, with an emphasis on active learning and career preparation. This brochure is shared with prospective students at admissions open days and the major event.

On the website, the Director and Coordinator added an '[Interdisciplinary Coursework](#)' page with in-depth descriptions of the three thematic areas of the GLBL curriculum: Health, Development, and the Envi-

ronment; Culture, Place, and Identity; and Global Governance, Human Rights, and Civil Society. The Coordinator revised the webpage on [‘Thematic Electives’](#) to include collapsible text blocks to improve site navigation. The thematic elective list is now by department and theme so that students can easily select coursework according to their interests. The Coordinator also created a [‘Where They’ve Been’](#) webpage containing a study abroad map detailing the locations of where GLOBL majors have travelled. The webpage includes profiles for six GLOBL majors who recently studied abroad and linked to their travel blogs. These changes have made the website more student-centered.

The program's Instagram account (@global.umbc) was reactivated in January 2024. With 300 followers as of July 24, 2025, the account has been regularly updated, with posts about student experiences, faculty accomplishments, internships, events, and other matters of interest to current and potential students.

Collaborated with the ComonVision design team to create more brand consistency and recognition across website, social media, and physical promotional materials. Commonvision developed a series of vector images, templates, and animations for the promotion of our GLOBL summer and fall courses. These were displayed prominently in ‘high traffic’ areas like The Commons as an additional opportunity for course promotion and program visibility.

In the spring of 2025, the Director and Coordinator have established partnerships with the Community College of Baltimore County (CBCC) and Howard Community College (HCC), including articulation agreements, guest talks by the Director at the community colleges using the presentation on global competence used at Welcoming Week and distributing the program brochure, and invitations for community college students to participate in GLOBL events and its collaborative online international learning with a Brazilian university. The articulation agreement with CCBC was approved in the summer of 2025. The GLOBL Director and Coordinator are working contacts in CCBC’s Global Studies Certificate program to promote this agreement, advertise it on our respective websites, and establish a more concrete transfer pathway. The agreement with HCC has received feedback from the UMBC Registrar and will be updated to incorporate the suggestions. We anticipate the HCC agreement will receive approval for implementation by spring ‘26.

Research

GLOBL is an undergraduate program. Its only faculty member dedicated 100% to the program is a teaching assistant professor. Therefore, the APR Action Plan did not include research initiatives, except for student research (including faculty-mentored community-engaged research), which is discussed below under student experience and success.

Student experience and success

As of Spring 2025, the GLOBL student population is majority female (66%) and racially and ethnically diverse (only 25% of students identify as white). Transfer students, first-generation college students, and international students are minorities (21%, 27%, and 10%, respectively).

GLOBL enrollment has not shown a clear trend over the past three academic years. The total number of students was 73 in Spring 2023, 66 in Spring 2024, and 71 in Spring 2025. Course registration and full-time-equivalent enrollments (FTE) have also remained relatively steady, with a slight increase in the last academic year. The average total GLOBL FTE was 12.5 in AY2022-23, 11.9 in AY2023-24, and 16.1 in AY2024-25. The number of degrees awarded, however, increased from 19 in AY2022-23 to 21 in AY2023-24 to 24 in AY2024-25. We expect the enhanced program marketing and articulation agreements with community colleges to improve our recruitment efforts and enrollments.

As the tables below show, GLBL graduation rates have declined for freshmen but increased for transfer students. Overall, GLBL graduation rates are lower than POLI and higher than MLLI rates. GLBL first-year retention rates have shown no clear trend. Overall, GLBL retention rates are lower than POLI and MLLI rates.

Graduation Rates

	GLBL_Fresh 4yr_Grad	POLI_Fresh 4yr_Grad	MLLI_Fresh 4yr_Grad	GLBL_Transf 4yr_Grad	POLI_Transf 4yr_Grad	MLLI_Transf 4yr_Grad
Fall 2016	15	28.6	21.7	42.9	58.6	19
Fall 2017	40	25.6	23.8	30	51.7	26.9
Fall 2018	35	38.5	34.4	33.33	43.3	32
Fall 2019	34.6	50	28.6	33.33	54.2	40
Fall 2020	26.7	44.2	17.2	50	60.9	25
Average	30.26	37.38	25.14	37.91	53.74	28.58

Retention Rates

	GLBL_Fresh _1yr_Ret	POLI_Fresh _1yr_Ret	MLLI_Fresh _1yr_Ret	GLBL_Transf _1yr_Ret	POLI_Transf _1yr_Ret	MLLI_Transf _1yr_Ret
Fall 2016	50	51.4	60.9	71.4	82.8	52.4
Fall 2017	68	59	47.6	30	69	57.7
Fall 2018	65	61.5	43.8	33.3	60	56
Fall 2019	57.7	76.1	66.7	55.6	66.7	75
Fall 2020	40	75	58.6	62.5	82.6	43.8
Fall 2021	50	53.4	44.4	50	70	52.9
Fall 2022	57.6	62.3	84	100	67.7	58.8
Fall 2023	50	62.7	46.7	66.7	82.6	54.5
Average	54.79	62.68	56.59	58.69	72.68	56.39

We conjecture that the difference in retention between GLBL, POLI, and MLLI is due to the complexity of the GLBL major (combining interdisciplinary coursework, language learning, and a global experience). The GLBL 100 instructor (Dr. Brigid Starkey) and the Program Advisor (Grace Castle) have noticed that many incoming students only realize in the course of their first year that GLBL is not a typical international affairs program (focused on diplomacy, security, and foreign policy) and has requirements beyond disciplinary course work (language and global experience). We note below and in the action plan the changes that should improve graduation and retention rates.

3. Move to change the structure of the foreign language requirement in the GLBL program to make it more achievable for the diverse cohort of majors the program now serves. Discuss alternative options to the current single language, 301 requirement with the newly formed advisory board. By deadline: AY 2023-24

In fall 2024, a revised foreign language requirement entered into effect. Now, GLBL majors must complete a "GEP+2" requirement: two semesters of language study in addition to fulfillment of the UMBC GEP foreign language requirement (201-level). If courses are taken within the same language that meets the GEP requirement, they must be beyond the 201 level. If courses are taken in a different language, they can be at any level. For example, a student may take Spanish up to the 201 level to fulfill the GEP requirement and then take Spanish 202 and 301 to fulfill the GLBL requirement. Alternatively, that student could take Spanish up to the 201 level to fulfill the GEP requirement and then take French 101 and German 101 to fulfill the GLBL requirement. Students can also take American Sign Language courses for this requirement. Since the inception of the program, the language requirement has been a challenge for students. We expect the requirement change to improve student retention and graduation.

While the GEP+2 revision to the GLBL language requirement has made it more achievable for our cohort of majors, implementing this requirement in the degree audit architecture has been challenging. Although the Program Coordinator worked extensively with the Registrar's Office to develop a method of tracking this revised requirement, there are frequent errors, especially for students with prior language learning from high school or community colleges. As a result, she conducts regular reviews of student degree audits to manually update language requirements when needed.

4. Re-examine the GLBL curriculum regarding core required courses and their GEP statuses. Discuss with the GLBL advisory board possible curriculum changes: (a) Offer a culture GEP course on GLBL, (b) Collaborate with other departments on different research methodology course options in addition to GLBL 300, (c) Work with GLBL faculty on a capstone/portfolio concept for GLBL 400. By AY 2023-24

Former Director Brigid Starkey created the course GLBL 210 The Global Business Realm, which carries the Culture GEP designation. She taught the course for the first time in Winter 2025.

Regarding research method course options, the Director expects the implementation of the affiliate faculty policy to open alternatives. Faculty from other departments who regularly teach research methods courses could combine a section of GLBL 300 with their regular courses. For example, POLI 301 Research Methods in Political Science and CSST 300 Methodologies in Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies cover both quantitative and qualitative methods and could be combined with a small GLBL 300 section in which GLBL majors would enroll. By teaching a combined section, the faculty teaching POLI 301 and CSST 300 will have earned the status of GLBL affiliate faculty. This arrangement would reduce the likelihood of GLBL majors taking GLBL 300 with the same professor who taught them GLBL 100.

Regarding the capstone idea, GLBL 400 Approaches to Globalization has required students to complete a case study applying theories of globalization to real-life organizations or communities since the course was first offered in the fall of 2014. This assignment is akin to a capstone research paper. Case studies from that first semester were published in the [Global Baltimore Report](#). In the most recent edition of the course (Fall 2024), each student completed a case study of the 2022 Maryland Climate Solutions Now Act, including a research paper and infographic.

6. Provide student majors with clear career planning and advising. They specifically need more information on relevant internships and independent research opportunities. Work with the Career Center to develop a more dynamic information dissemination model for classroom visits. And, encourage them to expand UMBC's connections to international/global-focused internships and solidify relationships with NGOs, non-profits, diplomatic operations, etc., in the Baltimore-DC region. Also, work with the Center for Global Engagement (CGE) and the Shriver Center. By AY 2022-23

Between AY2022-23 and AY2024-25, GLBL supported 20 URCAD projects, including three by students who had received undergraduate research awards. In the same period, GLBL faculty mentored 22 students in GLBL 401 Individualized Study in Global Studies independent study students. In 2025, Dr. Filomeno created GLBL 402 Collaborative Research in Global Studies, a lab-style course where students collaborate on a faculty-led research project. The Program's website now has a dedicated [page featuring undergraduate research projects](#) by GLBL majors and presenting internal programs to support undergraduate research, such as URA and URCAD. The [faculty profiles](#) were revised to include a mentorship statement telling GLBL majors interested in research the kind of projects they can supervise.

On the Program's website, [the presentation each of the three thematic areas](#) of the curriculum ends with a description of jobs associated with the area and an alumni spotlight detailing their current role and career trajectory in that thematic area. The page about [internships and job opportunities](#) was revised to include links to the Career Center (especially its webpage about working and interning abroad), globally-

oriented non-profit organizations, businesses, and government agencies (including a section on organizations in the Baltimore area), and employment boards focused on global careers (UN Careers, Devex, Global Jobs, etc.). The Program also occasionally shares internship opportunities on Instagram.

In 2024, Dr. Filomeno founded a UMBC Global Studies group on LinkedIn, where alumni, faculty, staff, and students can network and share professional news and opportunities. It had 73 members as of June 15, 2025. In the fall of 2024, Dr. Filomeno added to GLBL 400 a session on graduate school and careers in global studies and exercises around real-life job ads. In the spring of 2025, the Program hosted the first Global Career Conversations, a yearly event open to the community where a distinguished global professional talks about their career and shares advice with students. The first speaker was Dr. Astra Bonini, a senior official of the United Nations.

We expect the above changes to improve retention and graduation rates by facilitating students' envisioning of future careers connected to the GLBL major.

7. Work on explicit collaboration with other units on campus regarding areas of enhancement that will serve both GLBL's interests and those of the collaborators. There will be a discussion with the advisory board on a possible requirement that GLBL majors declare a minor or certificate in a CAHSS department/program. Consider other colleges as well. By AY 2022-24

As stated above, in the fall of 2024, the Advisory Board approved an affiliate faculty policy to structure collaboration with other units on campus. The policy is under review by the CAHSS Dean's Office.

As of June 10, 2025, 85% of declared GLBL majors are pursuing at least one additional plan of study:

- 67% have at least one additional major; the five most popular secondary plans of study are: POLI (53%), MCS (8%), GES (6%), FinECON (4%), and ANTH (4%).
- 37% are pursuing at least one minor; the five most popular minors are: World Politics, German, Information Systems, Law and Justice, and Music.
- 13% are pursuing an upper-level certificate; the most popular are Spanish, Security Studies, and Korean.
- 21% are also members of the Honors College.

As such, requiring GLBL majors to add a minor or certificate would be largely redundant. Instead, the Program Director and Coordinator have informed students that they may choose electives at the intersection of the Global Studies major with another major, minor, or certificate. This information is on the program website and is conveyed to current and prospective students during the Director's talk on global competence at Welcoming Week and in advising sessions.

8. Explicit support for community engagement scholarship and related student enhancement activities. Explore ways to fund recurring projects with the Dean's office, outside of the internal awards currently available. By AY 2023-24

In 2024, Director Brigid Starkey and Incoming Director Felipe Filomeno created a three-year plan for carry-over funds, allocating \$12,000 for "enhanced learning experiences," including community-engaged learning projects. The use of such funds is currently suspended as the Provost has limited the use of carry-over funds to "critical need" activities. The Director has informed the new assistant teaching professor of the Breaking Ground grant program of the Center for Democracy and Civic Life as a funding source for recurring community-engaged student experiences.

Final thoughts

Despite the above initiatives, the emergence of globally oriented B.A. programs at the University of Maryland, College Park (UMD) may negatively impact future enrollment in UMBC's Global Studies (GLBL) program. In spring 2025, UMD proposed a *Global Cultures* B.A. with a purpose and structure closely resembling UMBC's Global Studies B.A. Following a meeting between UMBC and UMD to discuss the proposed program, UMD agreed to rename it *Global Culture and Thought*, signaling an emphasis on the humanities and thereby reducing direct overlap with UMBC's interdisciplinary program rooted in both the social sciences and humanities. Additionally, in summer 2025, UMD proposed a *Global and Foreign Policy* B.A. Its proponents had met with GLBL faculty in 2024 to explore ways to avoid duplication. The resulting program appears to incorporate those recommendations by emphasizing policy analysis and including a required quantitative methods course. Nonetheless, these represent only marginal distinctions. Like UMBC's Global Studies B.A., both new UMD programs are interdisciplinary and globally focused, which poses challenges for GLBL's enrollment moving forward.