A Fletcher education is highly customizable, and each student may decide on a different academic trajectory to suit his or her own professional and academic goals. To get a better sense of how these individual curricular decisions can play out, we asked recent students in their final semester to talk about their goals, their classes, and the decisions made during their Fletcher career. Meet Mark:

**Pre-Fletcher Experience**  
International Admissions Counselor, Wake Forest University  
Fulbright Fellow, Andorra

**Fields of Study**  
International Negotiations and Conflict Resolution  
Role of Religion in International Affairs

**Capstone Topic**  
*Recalibrating Development: Proposing a Framework for State-driven Diaspora Development*

**Post-Fletcher Professional Goals**  
I will use my career to advance international cooperation with a dual purpose of promoting peaceful coexistence and increasing efficiencies. I have a particular interest in working in US-African relations and learning better ways to coordinate diplomatic affairs with civil society. At the moment, I would like to serve as an employee of the US government, but am open to working in other sectors if a position opens up which furthers my professional and personal goals.

**CURRICULUM OVERVIEW**

**Semester One**
- Processes of International Negotiations  
- Islam and Politics  
- Data Analysis and Statistical Methods  
- International Organizations

*During my first semester, I wanted to take a combination of courses in which I knew I was interested and courses which would expose me to Law and Economics-oriented courses. Such an approach also enabled me to meet students with many different academic interests; your fellow students will teach and stretch you extraordinarily. In particular, I found Professor Warde’s Islam and Politics class fascinating and in him I also found a wonderful mentor and research supervisor.*

**Semester Two**
- Understanding the Role of Islam and Christianity in Politics (Harvard Divinity School)  
- Religion and Conflict in International Relations  
- Econometrics  
- Peace Operations

*During this semester I wanted to focus in and expand my understanding of one of my core interests, religion in politics. Outside of these two core classes, I thrived in Professor Johnstone’s Peace Operations which forced me to strengthen my analytical and writing skills. Econometrics with Professor Schaffner was the course at Fletcher which most pushed my comfort zone and I truly enjoyed the thoroughness of her teaching and the teamwork that this course requires. As someone who wants to work in helping formulate policy, econometrics gave me confidence that I can discern important information from research even if I never work directly in the field.*

**Summer Internship**
Economic and Political Assistant, U.S. Embassy, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Semester Three

- Elementary Modern Standard Arabic
- Religion and Political Violence (Harvard Divinity School)
- Conflict Resolution Theory
- Migration and Governance

This semester was an opportunity to further explore coursework on the relationships between religion and politics, deepen my theoretical understanding of conflict resolution and get insight into the all-important field of migration. Migration is often a source of tension and if poorly managed can lead to cultural or resource conflict and this course specifically focused on south-south migration rather than the more talked about south-north migration. Dr. Kane's course at Harvard gave me a chance to look with an academic lens at what I experienced first-hand in the Sahel. Finally, I took advantage of Tufts’ fantastic language programs to learn some basic Arabic which ended up a very time-consuming course.

Semester 4

- US-European Relations
- Foreign Relations of the US since 1917
- GIS for International Applications
- Human Security: Sudan and South Sudan
- Independent Study

During my last semester I took two courses that I believed would give me excellent historical perspective of the United States’ evolution in the 20th century. Professor Scharioth’s US-European Relations course is the best course available to keen one’s memo-writing and to give you experience giving briefings to senior officials as his C.V. is spectacular and his passion for the class is unrivaled. I also used this semester to conduct research and complete my thesis for graduation, gain a new practical skill in using GIS software where again the Tufts program is strong. Finally, I saw Professor DeWaal’s and Professor Mazarana’s course on human security in Sudan and South Sudan as an opportunity to put into context much of the academic work. Outside of classwork, I was working closely with a few classmates to put on the yearly Africana conference; if you are heavily involved in organizing good conferences, it is worth noting that they may take a lot of your time, so I kept this in mind as I designed my schedule.