- A human intestine is generated in a laboratory using stem cells

- A magnitude 7.8 earthquake strikes Nepal, killing 8,000

- More than 140 killed by Al-Shabaab gunmen at Garissa University College, Kenya

- Spacecraft *Philae* lands on comet 317 million miles away

- Women in Saudi Arabia register to vote for the first time

- Ebola outbreak in West Africa kills at least 11,000

Our world changes, and it stays the same; it has been and still is complex. Between 2014 and 2015, we saw the rise of the Islamic State, continued civil wars in the Middle East, and terror attacks throughout the world. As these and other global news headlines indicate, over 100 years our world has changed much—and little. War continues, though in 2014 and 2015 we saw many small conflicts rather than the World War of 1914–1915. Natural disasters continue, though we know today that some, such as climate change, are exacerbated by human activity. Epidemics also continue, complicated by rapid air travel. Technological advances amaze, shifting from the first transatlantic phone call to space exploration and mobile phones, but also include identity theft and hacking. Medical advancements and human rights successes change lives for the better. Terrorism, so much in the headlines throughout the world today, seems relatively new but terrorist acts occurred in the United States and other countries in 1914 and 1915 and well before, though of course the damage can be more extensive today.

Despite the 100-year gap, the above major news headlines from the respective years provide examples of continuity and change in our world, but to understand fully such global events and issues—in and of themselves as well as across time—we must appreciate the "big picture" and learn how to study both the big picture and all the smaller details that help create the whole. We must know at least a little bit about a lot of things to understand our complex world, including the past, culture, economics, geographical locations, and politics. The Global Studies research process enables us to learn about and combine all these topics as we study the world and how it works.

A Complex World

Our world is a fascinating and challenging subject of study because it is complex. There are so many global actors, political systems, organizations, cultures, economies, geographical boundaries, and conflicts—and the interactions of all these together—to understand. We can include all this in the phrase "how the world works." Yet for all its complexity, our world is well worth studying, for the fun and challenge of learning about it, to help prepare for careers in the globalized economy, to better understand the foreign policy choices governments make, and to simply be aware of the world around

us and our place in it. The complexity of our world is visible especially in processes like globalization and in global issues, global actors, and differing points of view.

Globalization

Globalization is an important subject of study to understand the complex world. In fact, today, this subject frames many others in our study of the world—and is arguably one reason why Global Studies is necessary and important. Despite its frequent usage since the 1990s, the term *globalization* can be pretty fuzzy because it's applied to many different activities and is ill-defined. When talking about **globalization**, an economist usually means something different than a philosopher would. We can try to encompass these differences by utilizing a broad definition: **"the intensification of economic, political, social, and cultural relations across borders"** (Holm & Sorenson, 1995, p. 1). We can add to this definition the idea that globalization is a *process* of establishing and intensifying these relations and interconnections. By emphasizing process, we can include not just the products or results of globalization but also the causes and activities of globalization. This definition helps us grasp that globalization is a multifaceted process that can affect not only economic connections throughout the world but also interconnections of many types.

Because there is no agreed on definition of globalization, there are many debates and disagreements over the word itself and what it describes. In addition to varying definitions, there is also the question of whether globalization is something new beginning in the mid- to late twentieth century, when the term itself came in to use, or something that has existed throughout history. If it is not new, is it different in form or character from previous time periods? Is globalization today, as political scientist Joseph S. Nye (2002) asserts, "thicker and quicker" due to technology and instant communication (p. 85)? When talking specifically of economic globalization, there is disagreement over whether it has to mean expansion of the current global market economy or whether it could be a process of promoting a different economic system emphasizing equality and provision of a social safety net. When talking specifically of cultural globalization, there is disagreement over whether it must be the unavoidable spread of Western culture (sometimes described in shorthand as the Americanization or CocaCola-ization of the world, because of the spread of American culture and products worldwide) or whether it includes more balanced interconnections between many cultures. Given the multiple understandings of and questions and arguments about globalization, the subject of globalization is part and parcel of our complex world.

Global Issues

Certain complex issues or problems in the world are considered "global" because they cannot be successfully addressed by a single country on its own; they can only be tackled together by the countries affected by the issue. A **global issue** is one that **gains attention or "has aroused concern throughout much of the world"** (Soroos, 1990,

p. 310) and is generally one of four types: (1) transnational, (2) tragedy of the commons, (3) parallel, or (4) externally relevant (Soroos, 1990; Zeiser, 1998). First, global issues can be "transnational—that is they cross political boundaries (country borders)" because they "originate in one state but have ramifications for others" (Soroos, 1990, pp. 310–311; Snarr, 2008, p. 2). Examples of such transnational problems include acid rain, where pollutants released in one country can be deposited in neighboring countries, and refugee flows, when large numbers of people flee to a neighboring country for reasons such as war or genocide. The second category, tragedy of the commons, concerns use (and often misuse, hence the tragedy) of resources all countries and peoples share in common, such as the oceans or atmosphere (Soroos, 1990, pp. 310–311). The final two types of issues exist within individual countries but still receive international attention. Parallel global problems get international attention because they are common to many states. The global HIV epidemic and other health issues can be examples. Externally relevant issues become global when "what occurs within a given state is of concern to the outside world" (Soroos, 1990, pp. 310–311; Zeiser, 1998). Such global issues include major violations of human rights such as the Tiananmen Square incident in China in 1989, when the Chinese government used deadly military force to disrupt protests for government reform. The four types of global issues can overlap: If we talk about the HIV epidemic within individual countries, it is a parallel global issue. But if we talk specifically about the spread of HIV from one country to others, it becomes a transnational global issue. Depending on the situation, terrorism can be externally relevant, parallel, and transnational. Global issues are generally problems, and because of interdependence they cannot be solved or managed without coordinated global action. Globalization can contribute both to the existence of and the response to global issues. If we are studying the complex world, we end up studying global issues and how the world responds to them. Ultimately, understanding complex problems allows actors to take action to help manage or solve global issues.

Global Actors

Although many think first of countries, there are a variety of actors at the global level that are part of globalization and respond to complex global issues, including countries, international governmental organizations, international and local nongovernmental organizations, international businesses, individuals, transnational social movements, and media. *Countries*, or what some contributing disciplines call *nation-states*, are key actors in the world. Often the actions countries take (or do not take) contribute to complex global issues and attempts to solve them. We can group countries: The wealthier, industrialized or service-oriented democracies such as the United States, Europe, and Japan are developed countries while those such as Burkina Faso, Georgia, or Timor-Leste that struggle to join the global economy or move beyond resource-based economies, are unable to provide basic services like infrastructure and education, and/or are sometimes politically unstable are developing countries. They are also called resource-poor countries. Organizations such as the

World Bank also commonly categorize countries as high-income, middle-income, and low-income. This categorization has led to the acronyms HIC for high-income countries and LMIC for low and/or middle income countries. Another classification is the "global North" for richer countries and "global South" for poorer countries, based on the fact that most developed countries fall into northern latitudes and most developing countries into southern latitudes on the globe (though this categorization isn't entirely accurate). United Nations reports have even simplified it further, using simply the terms *rich* and *poor* countries. The categories aren't perfect—and are sometimes considered offensive to "poor" countries—and different people sometimes place a country in different categories. The point is that our complex world works differently for powerful, wealthier countries than it does for struggling, poorer countries. The categories help us comprehend and refer to those differences.

When many countries choose to cooperate, they often do so through organizations where national governments make up the membership—*international governmental organizations* (*IGOs*) like the United Nations and World Health Organization. As global actors, IGOs provide forums for discussion, coordinate responses to global issues, and develop guidelines for how countries might behave as they respond. IGOs can be multipurpose, just as the United Nations covers a broad range of issues such as security, economic development, human rights, and other priorities. Or an IGO can have a specific purpose, such as the International Atomic Energy Association's focus on nuclear technology, especially on stopping the spread of nuclear weapons while promoting safe use of peaceful nuclear technologies. IGOs can be universal or, like the United Nations, made up of most countries in the world. They can also be regional: The European Union coordinates policies only among countries of geographic Europe.

Nongovernmental organizations (*NGOs*) are, as their name suggests, organizations whose members are *not* governments or countries. The members of local or national NGOs are usually individuals, while international NGOs can include individuals and/or groups of individuals who make up national chapters of the international organization. NGOs are more likely to have a specific purpose, such as Amnesty International's efforts regarding human rights or the World Wildlife Fund's emphasis on conservation of nature and endangered species. Religious organizations are also NGOs, such as the World Council of Churches and the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. NGOs can be open to anyone, or they may be limited to specific types of members (such as scientists, members of a particular religion, or businesspersons). International NGOs are more active at the global level but, as we will see in the case of the global HIV epidemic, local NGOs can influence global activities.

As global actors, NGOs often serve to draw attention to global issues and to pressure governments and IGOs to act, propose responses and work cooperatively with governments and IGOs to enact them, and fill the gap when other actors fail or lack the resources to act. For example, Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) offers treatment to malnourished children in poverty-stricken countries whose

BOX 1.1
LEARN MORE
The United Nations

The United Nations (UN) was founded in 1945, based on an international treaty known as the United Nations Charter. The Charter describes the institutions, membership, powers, and purposes of the United Nations. Following World War II, its purpose was to serve as a forum for discussion—a center of diplomacy—and thus prevent another world war. It has three broad areas of focus, into which most global issues fall: international peace and security, economic and social development, and human rights and international law. It has universal membership; basically, any recognized country can join if it wants to, and most do. There are currently 193 member countries. When someone says "the United Nations did" something, they are actually saying "most countries in the world agreed to do" something. The UN cannot act independently of its members, though it does have some discretion in implementing the various policies and programs agreed on by its members. To do so, the UN has developed a very large bureaucracy. The UN is funded by dues from the member countries.

The main active bodies of the UN are the General Assembly, Security Council, Economic and Social Council, International Court of Justice, and Secretariat. All member countries attend General Assembly meetings to discuss a wide range of global issues and to develop recommendations and guidelines. The Security Council focuses on international peace and security. It is made up of 15 member states, five of them permanent, that act together to encourage peaceful resolution of international disputes, enact sanctions against countries in violation of Security Council resolutions, and recommend use of force when necessary to resolve an international dispute. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the judicial branch of the UN. Member countries can take disputes to the ICJ for settlement, and the ICJ can offer advisory opinions on questions of international law.

The UN Secretariat handles the day-to-day administration of the organization. The Secretary General leads the Secretariat and has the diplomatic task of representing the UN to all its member countries. For 2018–2019, the UN had a budget just over US$5 billion and approximately 44,000 staff working throughout the world. The UN is not a single organization but a system or "family" of organizations. Programs like the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) operate within the UN structure and budget, and report to the General Assembly on its activities to promote economic, political, and social development in countries through attention to poverty, the environment, human rights, building democracy, and preventing crises. Specialized agencies are independent and have their own budgets and staff, but work within the UN. The World Health Organization (WHO) and World Bank are examples of specialized agencies. WHO was founded as part of the UN; the World Bank was not, but later entered into a partnership agreement with the UN.

For more information on the United Nations: www.un.org

governments cannot offer health services themselves. We also find public-private partnerships, where nongovernment and government entities act jointly in response to a global issue; the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria (discussed in Chapter 4) is an independent, nonprofit, public-private foundation.

We generally consider NGOs to be organizations that contribute positively to the world. Technically, however, terrorist organizations or transnational crime groups are nongovernmental organizations. To differentiate those nongovernmental actors whose intent is to harm from those whose intent is to help, we call the former *suspect organizations*. This term can be controversial; think about the common phrase "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter," which emphasizes that what we might call a suspect organization could be seen as entirely legitimate by others. However, there is general agreement by many global actors that certain organizations are suspect. The Colombian Cali Cartel serves as an example. It dominated the global illegal trade of cocaine in the 1990s, until it was dismantled through coordinated efforts of governments and law enforcement agencies in Colombia, elsewhere in Latin America, the United States, and Europe.

International businesses are another type of global actor, particularly when it comes to the global market economy. Specific terms vary, including MNCs for multinational corporations, MNEs for multinational enterprises, and TNCs for transnational corporations. Whichever term one prefers, we are talking about business enterprises that have factories, stores, facilities, or other assets in at least one country in addition to their home country. McDonald's, Walmart, and Coca-Cola are American-owned international businesses that produce, distribute, and/or sell products in other countries. BP (formerly British Petroleum) is a United Kingdom–based business with global operations. International businesses find supporters when they create jobs and economic growth, but are criticized when they are perceived as having too much political influence in developing countries, violating human rights laws through poor labor or safety conditions, or contributing to environmental disaster. International businesses may also enter into public-private partnerships, as NGOs do.

While *individuals* serve as leaders of countries and make up NGOs and international businesses, we can also study individuals on their own as global actors. Individuals (and groups of individuals) become victims of human rights abuses or natural disaster and contract disease. Individuals also respond to global issues. Prominent political, religious, business, or social leaders within a single country can gain authority and influence internationally even if they are not representatives of government, particularly when their personal behavior and beliefs have an impact on the world beyond that of their governments' policies. The late Nelson Mandela serves as a worldwide symbol of freedom of oppression and discrimination for fighting against apartheid and helping found a truly representative democracy in South Africa—much of his effort came decades before he served as president of that country from 1994 to 1999. Celebrities can use their fame to promote global causes, such as U2 singer Bono's work to draw attention to poverty and the HIV epidemic in Africa and actor George Clooney's

efforts to raise awareness of those issues along with genocide in Sudan and preventable diseases such as malaria.

Individuals can work together through formally organized structures, such as NGOs, but can also work together temporarily or informally through *transnational social movements* (*TSMs*). Social movements are groups of people who seek political, economic, or social change (*or* to prevent change), and they become transnational when groups are active in more countries than the government being targeted or when the target of influence is the global community as represented by IGOs or international law. The 1990s movement to ban the use of landmines in conflict serves as an example: One individual contacted and encouraged coordinated effort by activists around the world, some of whom then did the same until the movement ultimately involved over 1,300 organizations in 95 different countries. This movement resulted in the Ottawa Treaty of 1997, which bans the military use of anti-personnel landmines by any country ratifying the treaty. TSMs like the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (see www.icbl.org) can include representatives of NGOs and can develop into NGOs over time if, for example, a formal or permanent structure is necessary to achieve their goals.

The *media*—broadly defined to include print, broadcast, and Internet communication of news and information—can be both a tool for other global actors and an actor in and of itself. While the media does not make policy or solve global problems, it contributes to both efforts by announcing what other actors do and through what gets covered as news. Global actors can utilize the media as a tool to disseminate information and policy positions as well as to persuade other actors to agree with their policy positions or take some sort of action. When George Clooney gave a 2011 interview on CNN about contracting malaria in Sudan and used that opportunity to raise awareness of the disease's impact on African countries among viewers, the media was a tool of an individual global actor. When newspapers and television news broadcasts reported on the government of Bahrain's use of force against pro-democracy protests in 2011, the media could be considered an actor itself, raising awareness among viewers of the protests and the violent government response. Directly or indirectly, this may have prompted countries, IGOs, NGOs, international businesses, and individuals to take action, propose policies, or further raise awareness of human rights abuses in that country and elsewhere.

We know there can be significant disadvantages as well as advantages to social media, particularly when the accuracy or intent of posts is questionable. Nonetheless, platforms like Twitter and Facebook are cost-effective tools that enable individuals, TSMs, and NGOs, especially, to organize and influence others regarding global issues. Twitter, in conjunction with the Experience Project, sponsors Twit-Cause, a Twitter account (@TwitCause) individuals can follow to learn about a variety of nonprofit causes. Individuals can retweet to show support for a cause as well as donate to organizations related to that cause. TwitCauses can be global as well as local, and global TwitCauses have included reducing child hunger and protecting endangered species.

Differing Points of View

If globalization, global issues, and global actors are common subjects of Global Studies, so are the many different points of view about and within these very subjects. There are as many points of view about the interactions between and interconnections among countries as there are countries and peoples in the world. Knowing just our own national point of view limits our ability to understand and study our complex world. We need to be exposed to and open to the variety of points of view throughout the world—and the debates and disagreements that result. With knowledge of these points of view, debates, and disagreements, we can decide for ourselves what we believe about the complex world and why it works the way it does.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) serves as an example. The IMF is an international governmental organization created following World War II and designed to create a more stable global economy as well as reducing poverty and improving the economies of member countries. When the IMF makes loans to developing countries, it sets conditions that it believes will enable the country to bring its economy in line with the global market economy. These conditions have included reducing government spending and removing price controls or subsidies. From the IMF's point of view (and those of many developed countries), the global market economy benefits most countries in the world and developing countries will also benefit from adhering to that economic system. The point of view of the citizens of the country receiving IMF loans and being held to the conditions, however, could be very different. Reducing government spending could mean that the government cuts funding for pensions, education, or other social services its citizens rely on. And removing price subsidies could radically increase the cost of food, fuel, and other necessities for those citizens—increases that are especially hard for the poor within that country to afford. While criticisms of IMF structural adjustment programs led to some reforms in the early 2000s, conditions for funding still remain.

In Indonesia in 1998, government policy changes made in response to IMF conditions—and the pace at which they were made—caused such economic hardship for the people that widespread rioting occurred and contributed to the fall of Indonesia's President Suharto. The United States had positive views of the IMF, because the IMF shares the United States' view of the global market economy. But many in Indonesia had a very negative perception of the IMF. Evaluating the value and actions of the IMF throughout the world would be difficult without understanding these differing opinions and points of view. Ultimately, knowing the points of view of others informs our own.

The Jigsaw Puzzle Metaphor

We can effectively study globalization, global issues, global actors, and differing points of view utilizing an interdisciplinary approach. Interdisciplinary Global Studies as a field of study and the Global Studies research process allow us to understand and

utilize the social sciences and other relevant disciplines to help us engage, intellectually and practically, with our complex world. Ultimately, the goal of understanding and explaining how our world works is to better understand and manage the complex and never-ending interactions between countries, international organizations, and other global actors as well as understand processes such as globalization and to solve or manage new or ongoing global issues. It is not enough to learn facts, figures, past events, or current patterns and trends; we must also *learn how to learn about* our ever-changing world, the actors operating within it, and the problems or issues that develop.

A helpful (if imperfect) metaphor for studying our complex world through interdisciplinary Global Studies is a jigsaw puzzle—a very large, detailed picture with many, many pieces to the puzzle. It is a jigsaw puzzle that we build with only a general idea of what the picture will turn out to be—there can be many equally valid pictures—and one that is never finished. What you can see of the picture—of the world—is enough to figure out what you are looking at and to see some useful, intriguing detail. But there are gaps within the picture, the edges are not complete, not all the pieces fit neatly together, and there are always plenty more pieces of the puzzle on the table with which to add to our current picture or craft a new picture entirely. Jigsaw puzzles, especially those with thousands of pieces, are very complicated pictures. And the world is just such a complicated jigsaw puzzle.

What is different and challenging about the world as a jigsaw puzzle is that many pictures are possible and informative. And any particular picture is never complete, even when we may think it is. If we choose to study a single country such as France, we learn all we can about that single country and put many puzzle pieces into a nice picture, and then discover it is still incomplete around the edges. This is because we cannot study just France in isolation—we have to study it in relation to other countries. We have completed one section of the puzzle, but find more pieces and begin to fit them around the edges of that section to create a larger, fuller picture.

The 2003 War on Iraq is a good example. While some countries supported the U.S. invasion of Iraq to depose Saddam Hussein, two countries particularly opposed to the U.S. intervention were France and Germany. Public opinion in these countries showed that 75% of the French and 69% of Germans were against the U.S. invasion of Iraq (The Pew Global Attitudes Project, 2003), and their governmental leaders spoke out against it. Americans who supported the war felt baffled and betrayed by the reactions of our traditional allies, which resulted in a drop in respect for both countries and protests at French and German consulates around the country. Americans, disillusioned with their allies, took a set of puzzle pieces and created a picture they thought was complete. The puzzle pieces they used came from studying the interactions among the United States, France, and Germany regarding the 2003 War on Iraq from the point of view of being allies and their political relationships since World War II—and the picture that emerged displayed their feelings of betrayal by and unhappiness with France and Germany.

But that particular jigsaw puzzle was, in fact, incomplete. Other news articles, right alongside those on consulate protests, discussed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

(NATO) taking command of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan in 2003, where the United States and allies had been fighting against the Afghani Taliban and Al Qaeda since 2001. Those who thought they had the complete picture—of French and German opposition to the U.S. invasion of Iraq—unintentionally or intentionally failed to see additional puzzle pieces that were available, pieces that added significantly to the puzzle's picture. Partly because NATO took command of the ISAF and increased the number of troops in Afghanistan—troops from NATO nations including France and Germany—the United States could redirect its efforts and troops toward Iraq.

Without recognizing these additional pieces to the puzzle, we would never notice that, despite their public denunciation of the War on Iraq, France and Germany helped make it possible by supporting NATO engagement in Afghanistan. Such contradictions and complexities are often present in international relations; governments have to simultaneously keep their own voters happy in the short-run while maintaining long-term alliances and agreements with other countries. Governments often don't mind if their own people (or the people in other countries) fail to notice the contradictions, because it can make the governments' attempts to balance domestic and international demands easier. Those Americans involved in protests against France and Germany never noticed that France and Germany contributed, even if indirectly, to U.S. efforts in the War on Iraq, because they failed to see or ignored certain pieces to the puzzle and put together an incomplete picture.

As fascinating as the complexity is (or as many puzzle pieces as there are), our global puzzle could be *too* challenging and overwhelming without tools for managing that complexity and facilitating our study of the world, its inhabitants, their interactions, and their interconnections. Global Studies provides us with these tools. If the world is our puzzle, interdisciplinary research is how we find the pieces and figure out how to put them all into place to make our picture as complete as possible, even if we recognize it will never be fully complete.

Being Interdisciplinary

In the face of our complex world and all there is to learn, understand, and explain within it, Global Studies helps us manage that complexity because it is one within the larger class of interdisciplinary studies. An interdisciplinary approach allows us to utilize information and scholarly analyses from many disciplines when one discipline alone will not provide us with the necessary puzzle pieces to create a full picture. Once we review what a discipline is and why it is useful to integrate them, we can examine why and how interdisciplinary Global Studies provides us with tools for understanding how the world works—for finding and placing puzzle pieces into a global picture.

In a university setting, disciplines are established, specialized fields of study. Dating back to the Greek philosopher Aristotle, scholars have tended to break complex topics into smaller sub-topics to make them easier to study. They then focus

on certain subtopics as subjects of study. To go back to our puzzle metaphor, they take complete pictures and break out individual puzzle pieces to better examine each individual puzzle piece. Scholars traditionally apply this "divide-and-conquer strategy" to their studies (Newell, 2007, p. 260). For example, when faced with a problem such as environmental disaster, a biologist might look at the scientific causes; an economist might study the economic consequences for businesses, governments, and individuals; and a political scientist might examine possible government policies to reverse or prevent environmental damage. Eventually, the structure of most universities came to follow these specialized fields of study, or academic disciplines; therefore, universities have a Department of Biology and a major in Biology, a Department of Economics and a major in Economics, and so forth.

Each discipline has its own subjects of study, key concepts, theories, and accepted research methods. Individuals typically specialize in a discipline and, sometimes, a certain subject of study within that discipline. Specialization became institutionalized through university structures and the resulting education they provided to their students.

There is value to specialization; much knowledge and many scientific developments resulted from studies of ever-more-specific subjects. But the divisions between disciplines are artificial, created to help simplify subjects of study and enable scholars to better learn and study each subject through narrow research topics. Broader research topics—especially those related to complex global processes, issues, actors, events, interactions, and points of view—often cannot, however, be effectively studied by a single discipline alone. Specialization can make us too narrow to find answers to all our questions about how the world works. The creation of subdisciplines within social science disciplines demonstrates this. Subdisciplines, also called subfields, are specific areas of research within an academic discipline. As the subjects of study within disciplines got increasingly specific, scholars acknowledged the artificiality of the divisions between disciplines and how those divisions limited their ability to fully study their subjects. As a result, they began to expand their subjects of study and create new subdisciplines that again crossed disciplinary lines. Examples of such subdisciplines include political economy within the discipline of political science and economic geography within the discipline of geography.

There are problems in the world, such as environmental disasters, that we can only solve with the joint efforts of biologists, economists, and political scientists, among others. Political scientists can propose certain governmental policies to fix the damage and prevent another disaster, but would those policies be successful if they do not understand the biological causes of the environmental disaster, or if they do not understand what the damage costs those involved, including the very government that must make policies? While specialization helps us better understand certain aspects of a problem, we often cannot solve a complex problem unless all the specialists share and combine their knowledge. And that is where interdisciplinary studies or interdisciplinarity comes into play.

The idea of *interdisciplinarity* continued to exist alongside disciplines because there have always been topics that can be better explained and problems that can be better solved or managed by utilizing knowledge from more than one discipline. *Inter* simply means among or between; so interdisciplinary is among or between disciplines. The divisions between disciplines have always been artificial, if well-built and long-standing. They can hamper the study of and finding solutions for complex problems. As a result, interdisciplinarity became an educational goal during the 1900s in the United States. Going back to the early 1800s, U.S. university and college structures relied on disciplinary departments. By the early 1900s, the number of departments and subjects available in universities had expanded in response to student demand and there was a growing concern that students were becoming *too* specialized. During the 1910s and 1920s, attention focused on the creation of a common curriculum—or general education—that combined disciplines and was thus interdisciplinary even though it was not called such. Immediately prior to and then also following World War II, attention to studies of regions throughout the world, complex foreign and defense policies, and technology led to an increase in interdisciplinary teaching and research. By the 1960s and 1970s, interdisciplinarity was seen as a revolutionary approach to "boring" universities that were not keeping up with the times (Lattuca, 2001). Universities and professors became concerned about the artificial, if necessary, divisions between disciplines and their impact on what students were learning. Concerned that students were less able to study and solve complex problems, they began concerted efforts to cross and recombine the disciplines, or at least the knowledge generated by them, through creation of interdisciplinary courses, majors, research projects, and general education programs. There was, in other words, a growing push to develop *and teach* completed puzzle pictures by emphasizing why and how to put all the disciplinary puzzle pieces together again.

Although a variety of definitions for *interdisciplinary* exist, many of them generally emphasize **an interdisciplinary approach** as **a process for managing complex topics and problems, those which are too complex to be effectively explained by individual disciplines**. Any interdisciplinary approach "draws on disciplinary perspectives and integrates their insights through construction of a more comprehensive perspective" that is ultimately "complementary to and corrective of the [individual] disciplines" (Klein & Newell, 1997, p. 394). Building on earlier definitions, Repko, Szostak, and Buchberger (2014) define the term as "a cognitive process by which individuals or groups draw on disciplinary perspectives and integrate their insights and modes of thinking to advance their understanding of a complex problem with the goal of applying the understanding to a real-world problem" (p. 28).

Interdisciplinarians—people who utilize such a process to integrate information and scholarly analyses from two or more disciplines in their teaching and research— often use very specific terms to distinguish exactly how the disciplines are brought together. Two such terms are multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary. *Multidisciplinary* refers to gathering together information from several disciplines in a way that is cumulative but does not alter or necessarily combine the information. We can still identify

which information comes from which disciplines. A common example is a panel presentation on a topic such as terrorism. Panelists could include historians, political scientists, and sociologists. Each panelist talks individually about his or her discipline's perspective on terrorism, but no linkages are explicitly made—except perhaps in the minds of the audience. *Interdisciplinary* refers to an integration of information and scholarly analyses so that the end result is fundamentally different (and, as the saying goes, greater) than the sum of all its parts. The information and scholarly analyses of the contributing disciplines are so well combined that they no longer stand out on their own.

An effective metaphor for the differences between multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary is based on fruit, fruit salads, and smoothies (Augsburg, 2006; Nissani, 1995; Repko, 2012; Repko, Szostak, & Buchberger, 2014). Each individual discipline is a particular fruit: History is strawberries, geography is blueberries, and political science is raspberries. Multidisciplinary is a fruit salad: The individual disciplines or fruits are combined by adding each in with the others, but we can still tell which contributions are from which disciplines just as we can still see and taste the differences between the strawberries, the blueberries, and the raspberries. Interdisciplinary is a smoothie: The various disciplines or fruits are so well blended that they have become an entirely new product. We neither see nor taste the original fruits individually, but instead experience a new taste and texture as a result of blending. Both multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary efforts help us explore the complexity of how the world works; the focus here is on the integration inherent to interdisciplinary efforts.

While the idea of an interdisciplinary approach may be new, the simple fact is that, without realizing it, we all undertake a similar process of gathering, comparing, and combining information all the time. If I am running late for work and need to figure out the fastest route to get there, I might check traffic reports, consider what time of day it is and whether I have to deal with rush hour traffic, think about where there are construction zones, and factor in the weather. I gather and integrate all that information, along with the potential routes I might take, and make a decision. Doing this may not seem like I have solved a complex problem, because we all do it so often. But I have done exactly that. In fact, research shows that

> the human brain is designed to process information integratively. . . . A person's ability to make a series of complex decisions without consciously reflecting on all the parts of those decisions is an example of a person's natural capacity to process information integratively. (Repko, 2008, p. 276)

Every day, people make decisions in their lives and careers that involve the gathering, comparison, and combination or integration of information from multiple sources. One purpose of discussing Global Studies as an interdisciplinary process is to reflect on the fact that we already know how to undertake a similar thought process—and regularly do so. We can learn to apply a similar, if more directly analytical, process to research the world using interdisciplinary methods.

Global Studies

If our complex world—and all it encompasses—is what we are studying, interdisciplinary Global Studies provides us with effective tools to understand and manage that complexity because it combines knowledge gained from the social sciences and other relevant disciplines into comprehensive descriptions and explanations of our world. To know about how the world has worked in the past is vital, but history alone does not fully explain how it works today. To know about trade and financial interactions in the world is also vital, but knowledge of economics alone also does not fully explain how the world works. We need to add in politics, culture, and geography as well. Combining, for example, anthropology, economics, geography, history, and political science tells us more about how the world works because together they describe more facets of how the world works than any one of these disciplines does individually.

Global Studies is one of the many interdisciplinary efforts to survey relevant disciplines and recombine the knowledge generated by them to understand and manage complexity—in our case, of how the world works. As an interdisciplinary approach, Global Studies emphasizes why we recombine the information and scholarly analyses of separate disciplines and provides us with an approach for doing so. Chernotsky and Hobbs (2013) define *Global* (or *International* in their case) *Studies* as "a field of inquiry that examines the broad array of human relationships that involve cross-border interactions" (p. 3). If we build on this definition to focus on process, we can adapt the definition for general interdisciplinary studies (above) to design a definition specifically for **Global Studies: a process that utilizes the social sciences and other relevant disciplines to describe, analyze, and explain how the world works and prompt solutions for managing the complex global problems in our world.** Global Studies is a process of gathering, comparing, and combining[1] the information and scholarly analyses generated by contributing disciplines to learn about our complex world and solve or manage its complex problems. This definition can be tailored by listing disciplines specific to a particular interdisciplinary research project or a university's academic major in Global Studies. For example, based on the disciplines it includes in its Global Studies major, one university might define Global Studies as a process that utilizes information from the disciplines of anthropology, economics, geography, history, and political science to describe, analyze, and explain how the world works and prompt solutions for managing the complex global problems we face today. Other universities might include fewer or more disciplines, such as art history, communication and/or journalism, languages, literature, philosophy, religion, and sociology. Other interdisciplinary fields, including area studies such as Middle Eastern Studies or European Studies, can also contribute information and insights to Global Studies. A tailored definition can help students better understand their major, the courses included within it, and

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[1]The "prepare, gather, compare, and combine" research process presented throughout is adapted primarily from the interdisciplinary studies process defined by Repko (2008, 2012) and Repko and Szostak (2017), and also includes ideas found in Klein (1990), Newell (2007), and Szostak (2002).

the competencies they can expect to develop before graduation. In Global Studies research, specifically, it is the complex problem under study that ultimately determines the relevant disciplines. How to determine which disciplines are relevant is covered in Chapter 3, on the Global Studies research process.

It is not only the contributing disciplines that differ from university to university; the name of the interdisciplinary major (or program) can vary as well. Global Studies, International Studies, and International Affairs are common names for interdisciplinary majors today, and World Studies is an older name still utilized by some universities. Scholars disagree about whether or not these names for the majors are interchangeable. For many, "Global" Studies is more inclusive and analytical because they see "international" as restricted to only nation-states or countries. That is, after all, what *international* means: among or between nations; the definition excludes other global actors such as NGOs. Other scholars, however, believe the term *international* has evolved and now has a connotation that includes many global actors and the interactions between them. While I use the term *Global Studies* for this book, I hope that all interdisciplinary programs studying our world—no matter the name—will find the process useful.

The social sciences are at the core of Global Studies and the field may include additional disciplines. For the purposes of this book, we focus on the disciplines of anthropology, economics, geography, history, and political science as disciplines contributing to Global Studies. This is because Global Studies majors at universities and colleges across the United States (and the similar interdisciplinary majors called International Studies or International Affairs) commonly include these disciplines in their programs.[2] Again, as noted above, some universities may include other disciplines and students should ensure they understand the disciplines included in their program of study and/or needed to complete Global Studies research.

Each of these disciplines can be considered a social science, and the social sciences are disciplines that study human behavior and interactions (broadly termed *social interactions*) in our world. More specifically, the social sciences focus on the interactions of human beings within a society. In Global Studies, we extrapolate this definition beyond human beings to countries, organizations, and other global actors—made up of human beings—and their interactions within the global system. We can use the social sciences—specifically anthropology, economics, geography, history, and political science—to understand these interactions. "The social sciences seek to explain the human world and figure out how to predict and improve it" (Repko, 2012, p. 5).

The social sciences are closely related and mutually reinforcing. We know the dividing lines between them are artificial, even if they allow for specialization. Anthropology, economics, geography, history, and political science are related to one another as social sciences and there can be overlap among them. For example, while geography specializes in studying space, place, and locations, each of the other disciplines

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[2]Based on a 2015 review of the online mission statements and curricula of roughly 80 International Studies, Global Studies, International Affairs, and other such interdisciplinary, international programs at U.S. colleges and universities.

BOX 1.2
LEARN MORE
The Social Sciences

Colleges and universities group disciplines and majors into several large categories including the natural sciences, humanities, and social sciences. The natural sciences study the natural, physical world and include such disciplines as biology, chemistry, and physics. The humanities are the disciplines such as arts, languages, literature, and philosophy that study human creativity and what it means to be human.

The social sciences are different from the previous two in that they study the social relations and societies of human beings. Disciplines in the social sciences include anthropology, communication, economics, geography, political science, and sociology. There is debate whether a discipline such as history would be a social science or one of the humanities—because history not only studies the records produced by human beings, much as the fields of art and literature do, but also studies past social relations and societies. This tells us that the categories, while useful, are not without their overlap or critics.

contributing to Global Studies can also produce information about geographical location and its impact on the past, politics, economics, and culture. For example, prior to the advent of air travel, whether or not a country had access to a seaport was important to politics, trade and economics, and how isolated their culture was—and so scholars in the disciplines of politics, economics, and anthropology had to take geographical location into account in their studies. Each of these social science disciplines studies human beings and their behavior, but focuses on a slightly different aspect of human behavior. Each offers unique contributions and, therefore, is of value to Global Studies. Other social sciences and even disciplines in the natural sciences or humanities may be useful to Global Studies; while these five are common, your university or professor—or more important, your research project—may require other or additional disciplines to understand and explain how the world works.

Anthropology provides us with in-depth knowledge of how people live their daily lives, including family life, religion, identity, gender, and traditions—which create patterns of behavior shared by groups of people that we call *cultures*. More specific to Global Studies, anthropology contributes an understanding of the variety and impact of cultures throughout the world on how the world works and the impact of how the world works on cultures.

Economics studies the distribution of resources (or lack thereof), including the structures and functioning of the systems that produce and distribute economic resources. This can include decision making under situations of scarcity and the institutions that make those decisions. The discipline of economics considers resources and

their distribution as motivators of human behavior (Repko, 2008), and so economies and how they operate are integral to Global Studies subjects of study, particularly in situations of scarcity.

Geography provides us with an understanding of space, place, and locations—and how we as humans interact with them. Where we live can impact many types of human activity, including agriculture, development, identity, languages, migration, and population. This is true at several scales or levels from the local to the global, so geography contributes information about the varied impacts of space, place, and location on Global Studies.

History examines past human behavior, particularly processes of social, political, and cultural change over time, looking for patterns and trends that help us explain how we got to where we are today—and possibly to inform where we might be going in the future. History provides the background and context for all Global Studies research—we can better understand how the world works today by understanding how it worked in the past.

Political science studies politics, or more specifically power, political ideologies, political decision making, and institutions such as governments and their relationships with their citizens. Within political science, the subfield of international relations

FIGURE 1.1 **Global Studies**
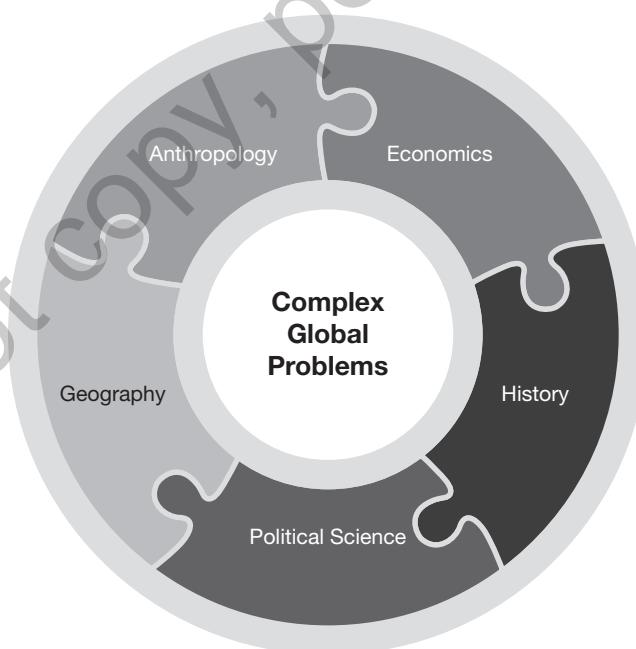
Source: iStock/theseamuss

more specifically studies governments' relationships with each other and other global actors such as international organizations. Interactions between global actors, power, and political decision making—especially as they relate to conflict or cooperation—are fundamental to all Global Studies subjects of study.

Because these disciplines make contributions to our understanding of how the world works, the facts, figures, and analyses they produce become the pieces of our global puzzle. Understanding the causes of war, for example, requires understanding how factors such as the past, politics, economic resources, culture, and geographical locations interacted to lead to conflict. To successfully use these disciplines to understand how the world works, we need to be familiar with each one individually and with how together they provide us with an understanding of our world. Anthropology, economics, geography, history, and political science may all study human behavior, but each discipline also offers its own unique contribution through its use of subjects of study, concepts, research methods, and theories that together make up a discipline's perspective (Repko, 2012).

Disciplinary Perspective

Perspective is a point of view or a way of "seeing" the world—it is the "lens" through which we view globalization, global issues, and global actors and their international interactions we want to understand. "Perspective does not mean opinion; it refers to point of view—literally, point from which something, an object outside the mind, is viewed" (Appleby, Hunt, & Jacob, 1994, p. 256). As we learn and understand the subjects of study a discipline focuses on, the key concepts it utilizes, the methods with which it gathers its data, and the theories that create its frameworks for analysis, we also learn the context within which researchers from that discipline choose to situate their experiences, analyses, opinions, and beliefs (Newell, 2007; Repko & Szostak, 2017). We begin to "see" the world as an anthropologist, economist, or geographer would. Understanding disciplinary perspectives is key to interdisciplinary studies: The lens through which a discipline views the world is its most distinctive feature, as the incorporation or integration of disciplinary perspectives into a larger, more holistic perspective is the chief distinguishing characteristic of interdisciplinary studies (Newell, 1998, p. 215). It is important to remember that while we consider disciplinary perspective a "lens" shared by those within a discipline, this does not mean that all scholars within a discipline agree on all the features that make up that lens. As can be seen in Chapter 2, theoretical approaches and research methods, in particular, are features around which debates within a discipline can center. For example, in recent years scholars within each contributing social science discipline have taken a "critical turn" or employed critical theory to question the assumptions and accepted knowledge in their respective disciplines. Yet even when disciplinary scholars disagree, it often is to change or defend a feature of that discipline's accepted perspective—and so even disagreement and debate informs us about disciplinary perspective.

One common criticism of interdisciplinary studies is to question whether students can learn enough about several disciplines to effectively utilize their information and insights (Benson, 1982; Newell, 1983; Newell, 2007). After all, doesn't it take graduate school to "master" a discipline? Interdisciplinarians acknowledge "it takes many years to learn a discipline" but counter that "it takes only a few readings to begin to develop a feel for how that discipline characteristically looks at the world, its angle of vision, its perspective" (Newell, 1998, p. 217). Global Studies researchers—in classrooms and in practice—could find themselves part of collaborative interdisciplinary teams but also working as "solo interdisciplinarians" (Newell, 2007, p. 247). Especially for the latter,

> at this point in the process, the required breadth of knowledge in each discipline is quite modest: command of the few relevant concepts, theories, or methods from each discipline that are applicable to the problem under consideration, and a basic feel for how each discipline approaches such a problem. . . . If the problem can be illuminated adequately using a handful of introductory-level concepts and theories from each discipline, and modest information is readily and simply acquired, then a solo interdisciplinary researcher or even a first-year undergraduate student can handle it. Luckily, one can get some useful initial understanding of most complex problems using a small number of relatively basic concepts and theories from each discipline. (Newell, 2007, p. 253)

Global Studies research requires that we understand disciplinary perspectives and, to have that understanding, we need to be familiar with each contributing discipline's subjects of study, key concepts, research methods, and theoretical approaches.

Subjects of Study

Subjects of study are just that: **the subjects researched within each discipline**. As mentioned above, the included Global Studies disciplines, as social sciences, study humans and human behavior. In the "divide and conquer" tradition of disciplines, however, each studies different manifestations of human activity. The disciplinary summaries in Chapter 2 briefly describe each discipline's focus, emphasizing their role in understanding the world around us.

Key Concepts

A **concept** is **an abstract idea generalized from particular instances or examples of things** (Neufeldt & Guralnik, 1991, p. 288). Such abstract ideas become key to a discipline when there are many of the particular instances or examples it is generalized from—when the idea is so common within the discipline that it becomes necessary for anyone studying within that discipline to understand it. One example is the concept

of power in political science. Power can be defined as "the capacity to do things and in social situations to affect others to get the outcomes we want" (Nye, 2011, p. 6). Because there are so many instances of one leader or country trying to influence other leaders or countries, every student who seeks to study politics must grasp the concept of power.

That does not always mean concepts have widely accepted definitions, even within a single discipline. Nye's is but one definition of power. Although they may all contain similar elements, there are at least half a dozen definitions in the discipline's literature. When there are multiple definitions within a discipline, researchers must be clear in their own writing about which definition they utilize for a "fuzzy" concept. When several definitions exist, choosing one to clearly present in the research project offers readers clarity as well as researchers the firm grounding needed to determine which disciplines are relevant.

There can be overlap between concepts and other elements of disciplinary perspective—such as subjects of study and research methods. Culture is a subject of study for anthropology, but is also a concept. The very lack of clear definition tells us it is an abstract idea—a concept. One difference, however, is that concepts generally apply to and help us understand more than one subject of study—and, thus, to understand disciplinary perspective.

Research Methods

Research methods are simply **the techniques and strategies used to do research—to gather data** to learn how the world (or anything else) works. Global Studies disciplines can both have unique and shared research methods. Historical methods emphasize the gathering of primary sources such as census results, letters and diaries, and oral histories. Historians also rely on secondary sources, or what scholars have previously written about a subject of study, and those secondary sources might come from another discipline. Anthropology is often differentiated from the other social sciences by its reliance on lengthy periods of fieldwork to observe peoples and how they live their daily lives, although the disciplines of geography, history, and political science also rely on fieldwork. Economists are likely to emphasize statistical analysis of data, although the other contributing disciplines do as well.

Most scholarly books and journal articles explain their use of research methods, and there are two main categories of research methods in the social sciences: quantitative and qualitative. *Quantitative research* is about studying the "amount of something" based on "counts and measures of things" (Berg & Lune, 2012, p. 3), such as an economist studying the amount of money spent on the HIV epidemic by a country, organization, or the world as a whole. Quantitative methods often utilize experiments and "number-crunching" or "the tools and techniques of statistics, from simple graphs and tables to sophisticated multivariate techniques" (Remler & Van Ryzin, 2015, p. 61). The purpose of quantitative research is to measure, count, categorize, and classify information. The advantages include the ability to gather and process large amounts

of data that allow results to be generalized into larger patterns and trends, to do so precisely and relatively efficiently, and to maintain the objectivity of the researcher. The main disadvantages are that quantitative data lacks detail and context.

Qualitative research is about studying the "nature of things" using "the what, how, when, where, and why of a thing" including "meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions" rather than numbers to understand the why and how of an issue or event (Berg & Lune, 2012, p. 3). Qualitative research has the advantage of being rich in detail and it relies on the subjective personal experiences and background of an expert researcher for interpretation, but it can be time-consuming to gain that expertise and gather the detail. Qualitative methods include observation, interviews, focus groups, and textual analysis.

While quantitative methods can tell us how much money a country is spending on the HIV epidemic, qualitative methods can tell us the human impact of that money: If a country is unable to afford to provide medical care for individuals with HIV or AIDS, how does that impact the individuals' lives? The lives of their families? Quantitative research can tell us about the financial cost whereas qualitative research can tell us about the human cost. "It is not the topic of the research that makes it qualitative or quantitative—the distinction lies in the nature of the data and methods of analysis" (Remler & Van Ryzin, 2015, p. 61).

Case study is also a qualitative method, one that involves the description and explanation of an event, issue, organization, or person as one example of a larger category of events, with the goal of using the one example as a way to partially describe and explain the larger category. The global HIV epidemic is an example of the larger category of global health issues, and thus to describe and explain the global response to the HIV epidemic provides information about how the world responds to other global health issues. Case studies are particularly useful when we need to study something "within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 1994, p. 13). This is often the true within Global Studies, and so Global Studies research is demonstrated here utilizing case studies of the HIV epidemic and terrorism as global issues.

In some of the social sciences, there have been ongoing debates among scholars over whether quantitative or qualitative methods are "better." Ultimately, both have their place: "A discipline tends to link with certain problems that in turn link with certain theories that in turn link with certain methods" (Repko, 2012, p. 211). While, traditionally, economists tend to rely more on quantitative methods and anthropologists on qualitative, each discipline can use both. In doing Global Studies research, we will be accessing publications that include or blend both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Research methods are an advanced topic for study within a discipline. For our purposes, we need basic knowledge of how each Global Studies discipline gathers and analyzes its information to understand the sources we read. To solve the problem of getting to work on time, mentioned earlier, I need to know where construction zones are slowing traffic. I do *not* need to understand the reasons

for the construction project or the specific engineering tasks that must be carried out to finish the construction project; I need only know how the construction zone affects traffic flow at the particular time on the particular day that I will be driving to work. Similarly, in Global Studies we do not necessarily need to do original research ourselves at this point, but we do need to understand how disciplinary information and insights we rely on were gathered to use them effectively. A deeper understanding of research methods and the ability to do original research may come with additional college or university courses. Original research could then become part of your Global Studies research process, as could research in teams made up of representatives of relevant disciplines.

Theoretical Approaches

Theoretical approaches and research methods work together because theory enables a researcher to analyze the data gathered, draw conclusions, and develop scholarly insights. The use of the word theory differs between everyday life and the academic study of the social sciences. A common use of theory in everyday life is as a hypothesis—a possible explanation based on little evidence that can guide further investigation. In the social sciences, however, a **theory** is a tool we use to make sense of data we have gathered (possibly to test a hypothesis). We use theory to **analyze the relationships and patterns among facts in evidence** to draw conclusions from our information. There are many different definitions of theory across the social sciences. According to Joseph Nye (2007), a well-known political scientist, "theories are the road maps that allow us to make sense of unfamiliar terrain" (p. 8). One way is to view theories as **mental maps or frameworks we apply to information** to better understand it. Theory helps us simplify reality; without theory, we may become so lost in facts that we can only describe what we learned and are unable to analyze for relationships and patterns. However, social scientists must remember that theory can simplify reality but not replace it. As we find patterns among our facts in evidence, theories help us put our facts in a larger context as part of our analysis. Ultimately, theory serves to allow us to describe and explain our subjects of study and, in social science disciplines, to attempt to predict future patterns based on those descriptions and explanations. Theory allows us to produce insights, or scholarly analyses, from information (Newell, 2007; Repko, 2008). Across the social sciences, the terms approach, framework, and model may be used synonymously with theory.

Global Studies disciplines encompass many theories and theoretical approaches—there is no single theory that explains human behavior in general or an individual discipline's subjects of study. Depending upon the discipline, multiple approaches may coexist or compete for attention because over time theories have been proposed, tested, and criticized—and then revised or discarded. When theories coexist, we can think of them as tools in a toolbox: For our task at hand, we pull out whichever tool best allows us to accomplish that task. While both a hammer and a wrench will help us pound a nail into a wall, clearly the hammer is the better choice. The same is true

of theories: We have many to choose from, but one theory may be better suited to one research topic than another. The discipline of anthropology is one that celebrates eclecticism in theories: Many coexist, such as Marxism, postmodernism, and environmental approaches, and scholars utilize whichever theory best allows them to study the subject about which they want to learn.

In the political science subfield of international relations, however, theories compete. Many scholars seek to find a single theory that best explains international relations; they object to having many tools in the toolbox and seek instead a single multipurpose tool—like a Swiss army knife that includes a knife, scissors, corkscrew, pliers, screwdrivers, file, and other implements all in one design. Debates therefore continue over international relations theories such as realism, liberalism, and constructivism as each vies to be the multipurpose tool that best explains how, for political scientists, the world works.

Because they are all social sciences studying human behavior, there are theoretical approaches common to all the contributing disciplines included here. Some scholars call these "grand theories" and hope that, because they can apply to all these disciplines, common theories may develop into that multipurpose tool. Within each discipline, they may be more or less valued. Examples of theories that are common across Global Studies disciplines include Marxism, postmodernism, and feminism.

Theory, like research methods, is an advanced topic for study within any discipline. What is important for our purposes is that theory produces the insights that result from a discipline's perspective and its unique contributions to Global Studies.

Descriptions of five contributing disciplines are in Chapter 2, emphasizing the disciplines' subjects of study, key concepts, theories, and research methods to provide an overview of its disciplinary perspective. One goal of these disciplinary descriptions is to provide you with the basics of each discipline—to allow you to effectively engage with each discipline and its perspective. Disciplinary courses in your major should also contribute to your knowledge of contributing disciplines and their perspectives.

It important to know, however, that just as the world they study constantly changes, so do the Global Studies disciplines: Advances in research and technology, the borrowing from discipline to discipline, and debates or disagreements among scholars within the disciplines can alter them over time. For example, the advances of information and communication technologies and explosion in their usage has created the need in political science for studies of e-governance, or government agencies' use of the Internet and other technologies in providing citizens with services. In anthropology, fieldwork traditionally meant travelling to and living in another country to study communities and their cultures. With the advent of the Internet, however, some anthropologists may never leave home, instead immersing themselves in online communities to study their cultures. While Chapter 2 covers the basics of each discipline here and now, those basics can change over time and future Global Studies research may require you to update as well as expand your knowledge of the contributing disciplines.

Global Studies Research

To learn about our complex world and how it works, we can gather information about the past, politics, economic resources, culture, and geographical locations to achieve the "big picture." To get all this, we must gather information from more than one discipline. We need to build on the knowledge of each discipline by being interdisciplinary. Interdisciplinarians tend to define the process as a series of steps, although there are many models and differing numbers of steps (Augsburg, 2006; Klein, 1990; Newell, 2007; Repko, 2006, 2012; Repko & Szostak, 2017; Szostak, 2002). What all models of the process have in common are steps for preparing, gathering, comparing, and combining information and scholarly analyses from multiple disciplinary sources so as to more fully understand the subject under study. *Global Studies Research* explains and demonstrates an interdisciplinary, integrative approach based on common critical thinking and comparison skills, utilizing the metaphor of a jigsaw puzzle. Students will learn how to gather, compare, and combine information and scholarly analyses (puzzle pieces) from the contributing disciplines of anthropology, economics, geography, history, and political science.

To undertake interdisciplinary Global Studies research, we follow a process that enables us to bring together published, secondary source research resulting from each contributing discipline's perspective and combine it into a comprehensive depiction of our subject of study. To go back to earlier metaphors, the interdisciplinary Global Studies Research process enables us to make smoothies—a final research product that combines the knowledge gained from the contributing disciplines into a fundamentally different end result. While the smoothie metaphor best describes the end goal of interdisciplinary Global Studies research, it is the jigsaw puzzle metaphor that best demonstrates the process of producing that end goal of integrative research.

We first prepare to research, by choosing our research subject and question—selecting the type of picture that our jigsaw puzzle will portray. Just as jigsaw puzzle pictures might be landscapes, city scenes, animals, or maps, our Global Studies research subject might be globalization, global issues, global actors and the interactions between them, or differing global perspectives. We then gather our research or knowledge produced by the relevant disciplines; this stretches our metaphor a bit, because instead of a single jigsaw puzzle packaged in a box full of pieces, we have to go out and find the puzzle pieces for ourselves. They are instead stored in a series of boxes, or within disciplinary and other types of research. Finally, we figure out which pieces fit together and snap them into place in the jigsaw puzzle picture—we compare and combine research results from the contributing disciplines into a comprehensive new research product. Chapter 3 goes into this research process in detail, but first Chapter 2 introduces the five contributing disciplines included here: anthropology, economics, geography, history, and political science.