



Francis Gow

High school: St. Augustine Preparatory School

Hometown: Managua, Nicaragua

Majors: Political science, history

Minors: Latin American studies

Activities: *Tertulias* table leader, Phi Alpha Theta honor society, Pi Sigma Alpha honor society, Sigma Pi Delta sorority, Phi Beta Kappa

Internship: On-campus internship with the history department

Post-grad plans: Pursue a dual program in law and Latin American studies at the University of Florida

“I have known and worked with Francis since her first semester at Augustana. Over these four years, I have seen Francis conduct herself with unparalleled grace, excel academically and turn her personal difficulties into fuel for her own and her home region’s future. As she prepares to leave Augie, I know her future will be beautiful and bright.”

— Dr. Lauren Hammond-Ford, assistant professor, history

MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2020

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

Why Augustana?

I went to a small high school, and I knew I wanted to go to a college that would emulate the same setting. I did not want to just be a number on a roster; I wanted to form meaningful connections with faculty and administration. Augustana definitely gave me those opportunities. As an international student, you also need to consider finances, and Augustana was the school that gave me the most generous scholarships to fund my education in the United States.

Are you where you thought you’d be when you first came to campus?

No. At first, I wanted to be a diplomat and focus my studies in international relations. During freshman year, I took a history class that changed my approach toward Latin America, my home region. I realized that the history that I was taught did not always show the reality of the majority of the people in Latin America. I developed a passion for human rights that encouraged me to understand my region in a more interdisciplinary way, paving the way to my decision to become a human rights lawyer.

Who helped you get to where you are now?

My parents, definitely, because they always believed in me and encouraged me to pursue any dream that I aspired. *Don Julio y Doña Norma*, muchas gracias por todo!!! Mrs. Ella Fly, my college mom, who supported me and encouraged me to be resilient and bold. My amazing advisor and role model, Dr. Lauren Hammond, who opened my eyes and encouraged me to pursue my passion for Latin America in the many office hours’ discussions that we have had. The history department, who never gave up on me. Dr. Hammond, Dr. Simonsen, Dr. Leech, Dr. Calder and Dr. Ellis, thank you for everything!

My advisor in the political science department, Dr. Mariano Magalhães, who always provided positive energies and smiles throughout the years. Mrs. Sayra Jimenez de Gutierrez, who spent many afternoons with me talking about my aspirations and dreams while providing motherly support and advice. And, finally, all the friendships and connections that I created at the college.

Peak experience?

Winning the Hasselmo Award for Academic Pursuit the spring of my junior year. I was proud to learn that I was honoring the legacy of such an important figure in Augustana’s history. Also, I was humbled to know that the history department wholeheartedly believed in my capabilities as a student and as a future scholar, encouraging me to follow my parents’ footsteps, and at some point, become a law professor.

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What surprised you?

I learned that I am very persistent and can pursue any goal. Also, I realized that regardless of the difficulties you face in life, there will be people who will support and guide you whenever you feel like giving up.

How did you use Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice to participate in the India study abroad program. This program allowed us to learn about and experience how women in Delhi, Agra and Jaipur participate in grassroots activism to bring their demands to the public sphere of society.

What will you miss the most?

I will miss Augie's beauty all year long, especially the slough's amazing landscape. I will miss visiting my professors' office hours to discuss current affairs, and life in general. I will miss going to work with two of my most appreciated friends, Sophie and Claire. I will miss visiting Mrs. Fly's office every day to say hi, even if I am not supposed to be working. I will miss the study sessions with my companion, the Tredway Library. And, I will miss seeing the friendly faces on campus.

Advice for the Class of 2024?

Be bold and brave. Do not be afraid to follow your dreams. Be curious, ask questions and always participate in class because everyone has valuable contributions. Go to your professors' office hours and build those mentor relationships that will last beyond your Augie years.