

RAHBAR KISAN INTERNATIONAL

GU-Q Students Witness Global Shifts Firsthand Through Immersive Learning in Washington, DC



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Now more than ever, students are witnessing major global shifts, with the United States at the heart of these changes. Against this backdrop, during Spring Break, two groups of students from Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q) traveled to Washington, DC, during a pivotal moment in history.

Women as Changemakers

For the third consecutive year, students in the *Women as Change Makers* course embarked on a capacity-building trip designed to empower women and foster camaraderie within the unique environment of Georgetown.

In collaboration with the GU-Q Women's Center and the Office of Student Life, the course and trip highlighted the diverse and intersectional experiences of women, connecting GU-Q students with networks on the DC campus and introducing them to women leaders and changemakers in the U.S. capital.

From meetings with Rosemary Kilkenny, JD, Vice President for Institutional Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, to visits to the Center for Social Justice Research, Teaching, and Service, and classroom discussions, students explored the role of women in politics and religious sectors.

For Mariana Pereira de Souza (GU-Q '26), meeting with female leaders and learning about the political history of the United States through their eyes was a transformative experience.

“Learning this from a woman’s perspective was very empowering because we don’t tend to see ourselves represented in a lot of important spheres,” she said, adding: “They encouraged us to be our truest selves.”

Bridging Two Capitals

For students in cross-campus *Bridging Two Capitals* course, the trip offered an immersive learning experience in international affairs, engaging them with local experts, policymakers, and cultural leaders with their classmates studying in Washington, DC, followed by hosting their classmates in Doha. Through academic discussions, field visits, and collaborative projects, students examined how governance, religion, and global diplomacy shape daily life in each capital.

Pre-trip coursework provided students with foundational knowledge about the capital cities, enabling them to critically compare both cities. During Spring Break, GU-Q students explored

Washington, DC through monument and museum visits and spent time at Georgetown's Hilltop campus.

A week later, during the DC campus's break, eight students traveled to Doha for a parallel experience. Their itinerary included meetings at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Al Jazeera, along with visits to the National Museum of Qatar and the Museum of Islamic Art. To further immerse themselves in Qatari culture, they experienced a traditional *majlis*, explored Souq Waqif, and engaged with the country's rich heritage.

"This inaugural experiential learning class, along with the exchange trips to both campuses, has provided a meaningful cross-cultural experience, strengthening the ties between the student bodies on the Hilltop and the Doha campus," said Alex Sandner (GU-Q '25).

Now celebrating its 20th anniversary in Qatar, GU-Q continues to demonstrate its commitment to academic excellence and educating the whole person through innovative experiential learning courses like these. For students and faculty engaging in these global experiences, the trips served as a bridge between campus communities while celebrating the unique geographical and cultural identities of each location.