I took Global Issues 401 as the capstone to my International Studies Minor and Fairhaven concentration titled “Law, Diversity, and Justice: Transnational Advocacy through Counter-Narratives.” As a Fairhaven student and young scholar, I recognize the critical importance of taking an interdisciplinary approach to my program of study and my research. When I studied abroad in the Dominican Republic, I witnessed firsthand the complex interplay between globalization and sex work. My research question “What is the feasibility of using a formal sex-worker union as a technique to reduce sex trafficking in the Dominican Republic?” was narrow and I knew that it would take extra digging on my part to create a well-rounded project. My research is fairly unique, as very few scholars have ventured to analyze potential solutions, especially in Latin America. Confronting an insidious problem, such as sex trafficking, requires scholars to synthesize perspectives from many different angles in order to analyze possible solutions.

I began my research by reading selections from books on the broad topics of sex trafficking and Dominican Republic culture, such as Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery by Siddarth Kara, and The Devil Behind the Mirror: Globalization and Politics in the Dominican Republic by Steven Gregory. I did not limit myself to print books that were immediately available in the library, but took the extra steps of utilizing Summit and ILLiad to order the materials I needed. I then turned to encyclopedias, such as the Encyclopedia of Prostitution and Sex Work and the International Encyclopedia of Human Rights: Freedoms, Abuses, and Remedies to identify authors contributing to the scholarly literature on my subject. As I found related articles, I used their bibliographies to locate even more articles that centered the important themes of my topic.

I also used a variety of online databases to obtain the most relevant contemporary research. I began by using broad multi-disciplinary databases such as JSTOR and Academic Search Complete. The Literature Review section of my work demonstrates my ability to evaluate scholarly literature. In my analysis I used databases featuring a variety of disciplines, because I recognize that each perspective works together to create a more complete understanding of this issue. I accessed LexisNexis Academic, which brought me the article “Labor of Love: Using
International Labor Law to Achieve Human Rights for Women Sex Workers in the Dominican Republic” by Tiffany Compres in the *Georgetown Journal of International Law*. I accessed Anthropology Plus which brought me to the article “Beneath the Master Narrative: Human Trafficking, Myths of Sexual Slavery and Ethnographic Realities” by Edward Snajdr in *Dialectical Anthropology, Special Issue: Anti-Anti-Trafficking? Toward Critical Ethnographies of Human Trafficking*. I accessed Historical Abstracts, which brought me to the article “Incorporating Sex Workers into the Argentine Labor Movement” by Kate Hardy in the journal *International Labor and Working-Class History*. This is just a sample of the variety of peer-reviewed scholarly journals I was able to locate on my topic through adept use of databases.

I also incorporated primary sources into my work, which I analyzed using the lenses from scholarly literature. I analyzed the policies of the U.S. Department of State and identified the weaknesses present in the policies. The most relevant of the many publications released by the State Department was the 2014 Trafficking in Persons Report. I also examined the website and publications from the sex worker union in Argentina. This primary source allowed me to analyze the perspectives of the participants within that union as a possible model for the Dominican Republic. It is important that researchers include the perspectives of the models they examine going beyond secondary sources whenever possible.

My research fully acknowledged the complexity of sex trafficking by utilizing perspectives of labor, human rights, history, anthropology, public policy, law, public health, tourism, feminism, and economics. I am proud of the way my paper allows these perspectives to enhance and speak to one another to create a single cohesive narrative. I am excited to continue to develop my researching skills as I pursue a Master’s degree in International Relations after my graduation from Western.