BEN KOLENDO

BACHELOR OF ARTS STUDENT *The American University of Paris*

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SCHOLAR SUMMARY

Undergraduate Bachelor of Arts scholar at The American University of Paris in International & Comparative Politics and History, Law & Society. Studies focusing on youth political participation, multi-level governance structures, and the interaction between local identity and supranational integration. Research explores tensions between sovereignty, participation, transnational governance structures, and glocalization.

EDUCATION

The American University of Paris — Paris, France
Bachelor of Arts (Double Major)

- International & Comparative Politics
- History, Law & Society

Expected: Fall of 2029

Scholarships:

- GPS Co-Curricular Scholarships
- THRIVE Scholarship

ACADEMIC FOCUS

Democratic governance	Institutional Accountability	Sovereignty within Globalization
Youth Political Participation	Glocalization and Rescaling	Multi-Level Governance Systems

PRESENTATIONS & DISCUSSION ENGAGEMENT

- Presented research-informed governance proposals within universty and public institutional settings
- Participated in formal board-level deliberation within local governement governance structures
- Contributed to structured policy discussions on youth civic participation, institutional authority, and democratic practice
- Facilitated cross-sector dialogue between policymakers, public officials, and civic actors within professional settings
- Engaged in institutional reform discussions concerning representation and accountability in decision-making processes

RESEARCH

Shrinking Voice: Student Free Expression Rights in United States Schools — **Fall 2025**

The American University of Paris

- Research examining the narrowing of student free speech protections in the U.S. Supreme Court jurisprudence following *Tinker v. Des Moines*
- Argues that courts have reframed youth expression as institutional disruption rather than democratic practice
- Connect constitutional doctrine with democratic theory and civic engagement research

Between the Global and the Local: A Burgundy Perspective on Glocalization and State Rescaling — **Fall 2025**

The American University of Paris

- Uses Burgundy's wine governance as a case study of glocalization and multi-level governance
- Examines the shift from France's AOC system to the EU's AOP framework as an upward redistribution of regulatory authority
- Argues that supranational law and strengthened regional actors collectively rescale and weaken nation-state exclusivity

Closed to Youth: Political Opportunity & Youth Activism Against Florida's "Don't Say Gay Bill" — **Spring 2026**

The American University of Paris

- Examines youth-led opposition to Florida's 2022 Parental Rights in Education Act (HB 1557), commonly known as the "Don't Say Gay" Bill
- Uses Political Opportunity Structure and Countermovement theories to analyze why substantial student mobilization failed to influence legislative outcomes
- Argues that Florida's political opportunity structure is selectively open and demonstrates how unequal access to political institutions can constrain participation within formally democratic systems

Borders Without Monopolies: Glocalization and Border Transformation in Europe — **In Development**

The American University of Paris

- Investigates how multi-level governance restructures the function of borders within European integration
- Hypothesizes that borders persist legally but lose their monopolistic role in defining culture, markets, and sovereignty
- Employs comparative case analysis to examine rescaling and state transformation

Rescaling Governance in Conflict: How Individuals Perceive Authority Beyond the Nation-State (A Case Study of Lebanon & Ukraine) — **In Development**

The American University of Paris

- Examines how individuals in conflict-affected environments perceive governance authority beyond formal state institutions
- Uses comparative case studies of Lebanon and Ukraine to investigate how conflict redistributes perceived authority across local actors, international organizations, NGOs, and foreign states
- Introduces perception as a parallel lens for analyzing governance, legitimacy, and authority alongside traditional institutional approaches

GOVERNANCE & PUBLIC POLICY EXPERIENCE

Undergraduate President **2026-Present**
The American University of Paris
Student Government Association

- Serves as chief elected representative of the undergraduate student body and member of the Student Government Association Executive Board
- Oversees student governance initiatives, institutional advocacy, and executive administration of the Association
- Leads constitutional, bylaw, and governance reform efforts focused on representation, accountability, and organizational effectiveness
- Represents undergraduate student interests in engagement with university administrators, faculty, and student stakeholders

Committee Chair **2024 - Present**
Alaska Department of Health
Children's Mental Health Initiative Committee

- Leads advisory body addressing statewide youth behavioral health strategy
- Facilitates cross-sector a=collaboration between policymakers, public health officials, and community organizers
- Contributes to long-term structural planning for child and youth mental systems

President & Lead Lobbyist **2024 - Present**
Kolendo Collective

- Develops policy proposals related to youth civic participation and governance reform
- Engages with legislative and administrative institutions on issues of representation and public policy
- Produces structured resources for local civic actors

Student Representative **2019 - 2024**
Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District
Board of Education

- Served as official student member within district governance structure and served as official Board of Education member
- Participated in policy deliberation, administrative oversight discussions, and public governance proceedings
- Advocated for institutional transparency and student representation within formal decision-making processes