

# Study Abroad Connections

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## *Message from the Director*

Dear UHM Faculty and Students:

Happy 2020 and Year of the Rat! Although some may view January as a bit of a let-down after the busy and festive holidays, it's also an opportunity for a fresh, new beginning; a rebirth.

In this issue we hear from a returning student from London, England, who—despite a rocky start—was able to thoughtfully reflect on her study abroad program as a whole and see herself in a different perspective. We are thrilled to have a new addition, Greg Harris, to our advising team. In the two months he has been with us, Greg, with his study abroad and advising experience, has hit the ground running.

Best wishes for a successful semester.

Sincerely,

*Sarita Rai*  
Sarita Rai

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## *London, England: Studying Abroad: A Perfect Imperfect Experience*

**Jocelyn Grandinetti**  
**Geography Major, English Minor**  
**London, England: Fall 2019**

I would love to start off a description of my study abroad experience on a positive note, saying that at the moment I stepped off the plane into the brisk chilly air of London I felt that delicious exhilaration of a new adventure, and could already sense the great impression that this experience would have on the rest of my life. However, I must admit that this was not the case.

In actuality, although my friends and I took off from Honolulu in a great whirl of excitement for said adventure, we were dead by the time we landed in Heathrow airport after about twenty-four hours of travel time consisting not only of strenuous flying but also numerous delays and even an unexpected flight change. After all this, I found myself stepping off the plane eight hours later than planned with the onset of a fever adding a hazy delirium to the brightness and loudness of the bustling airport.

We were off to a great start.

I'm sure at this point you may assume that I am about to describe how horrible my study abroad experience was since, of all the memories I could have chosen from to start off this article, I had chosen one of the most uncomfortable and, frankly, painful ones to start with. But this is not the case. In fact, I chose to describe this very first memory of London because, although it was definitely not the most enjoyable part of the trip, it is nonetheless a precious memory that now stands in my mind as an endearing recollection which began the many sweet memories that followed. I feel that, like this very first experience of fatigue and discomfort in an entirely fresh, new city, the accumulation of experiences that I had in London all added up to allow me to grow into a better version of myself at the program's end.

Let me back up to explain myself a bit. I am an only child, and, as I often like to say, I grew up being "spoiled but not rotten." Whether or not I ended up being rotten is still up to debate, but the point is that I had never left home without my parents for such a long stretch of time until I took part in study abroad. I had never even lived in a dorm prior to the program since I commute to school from home, so I never really learned how to cook for myself or even do my own laundry before (ok fine, laugh away if you want to). However, it was much more than that. Prior to leaving home to study abroad, I had been so used to living with my parents in the same house and the same neighborhood to the point where I came to realize that I was unsure of who I was apart from these aspects of familiarity.

So, when I was thrown into a foreign country away from all these things for the first time, it was a bit of a shock. I still remember that first night when we arrived on campus, and the security guard showed me to my room and shut the door behind him. That was the most reverberating silence I had ever experienced, and it was so alien to me to have a room all to myself without anyone familiar around me. But I quickly shook this feeling, since the excitement and bustle of London makes it impossible to be stuck in your own head for too long, and I was quickly flung into the new fun and intoxicating (I am certainly not referring to alcohol use) dorm life in London.

From then on, both through my growing closeness to my study abroad group and through the diversity of experiences as we all explored London together, I began to feel myself reshaping my identity. No longer did I feel like I was merely my parents' daughter, or my friends' friend: I was me. I was growing into an individual and starting to recognize and understand how I felt and acted in different situations, whether they involved taking the tube around the city or making friends with people whose accents I could barely make out. This all may sound a bit basic to many, but to me it was a big deal. Being thrown into a completely new living situation and having a multitude of new and exciting experiences freed me to be myself and better understand what that meant to me.



## *New SAC Staff*

**Greg Harris**

**Study Abroad Advisor**

**located in Arts & Humanities; Languages, Literatures and Linguistics Advising Center,  
Sinclair 301**

Aloha, Bonjour, Hola, Guten Tag, Konnichiwa, Hello, Yassas! I am so excited to have started my journey with UH-Mānoa and the Study Abroad Center this past October! I have been in Hawai'i for close to six years and previously worked at Hawai'i Pacific University in Academic Advising. Prior to that I worked in Residence and Life and Student Activities while in undergraduate, graduate school, and professionally. I have a B.A. in Psychology and minor in Special Education from Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio, and a M.S. degree in Student Affairs and Higher Education from Indiana State University.

During my undergraduate career, I studied abroad in Paris, France and south into the Loire Valley; Chambord, Blois, Chenonceaux, and Chinon. Study Abroad, to this day (15 years later), is one of the most rewarding and memorable experiences of my life. I had the opportunity to see life from a whole new cultural perspective. I was able to study French Fairytales and Castles and Cathedrals while in France! Where is a better place to learn about these topics?! My only regret is not studying abroad again for a semester or longer!

My biggest piece of advice comes from a quote by Clifton Fadiman, "When you travel, remember that a foreign country is not designed to make you comfortable. It is designed to make its own people comfortable." A lot of students are going to go abroad and in the first few weeks and feel homesick and fearful. Do not let the homesickness and fear get the best of you! Get out of your room, meet the people and immerse yourself in the culture, the food, and the environment; very soon you will love every second, feel like you have a new home, and not be looking forward to leaving!





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uhmstudyabroad

*Dare to Discover,  
Dare to Learn, and  
Dare to Understand*

## Spring 2020 Calendar at a Glance

### Study Abroad Fair

**Wed., January 22**

9:00am - 2:00pm  
Campus Center

### Informational Meetings (Summer 2020)

**January/February**

Visit website for details

### Summer 2020 Application Deadline

**Tues., February 18**

### Year in Kōbe or Machida, Japan Application Deadline

**Mon., March 2**

### Fall 2020 Application Deadline

**Wed., April 1**

### Informational Meetings (AY 2020-21 Japan)

**February 2020**

Visit website for details

### Informational Meetings (Fall 2020)

**February/March**

Visit website for details

## Meet the next Resident Directors

### SUMMER 2020

#### Kōbe, Japan

**Atsushi Hasegawa** atsushih@hawaii.edu

*Dept. of East Asian Languages and  
Literatures: Japanese*

#### Shanghai, China

**Jing Wu** wujing@hawaii.edu

*Dept. of East Asian Languages and  
Literatures: Chinese*

#### Angers, France

**Eve Millett** millett@hawaii.edu

*Mānoa Advising Center*

#### Lille, France

**Ann Auman** auman@hawaii.edu

*Communications*

#### Paris, France

**Kim Binsted** binsted@hawaii.edu

*Information and Computer Sciences*

#### Florence, Italy

**Laura McGuire** mcguirel@hawaii.edu

*Architecture*

#### Berlin, Germany

**Krisna Suryanata** krisnawa@hawaii.edu

*Geography*

#### Dublin, Ireland

**Jason K. Higa** jkenjih@hawaii.edu

*John A. Burns School of Medicine, Dept.  
of Anatomy, Biochemistry & Physiology  
AND*

**Robert Cooney** rvcooney@hawaii.edu  
*Public Health (retired)*

#### Seville, Spain

**Heather Nylén** nylen@hawaii.edu

*Languages and Literatures of Europe  
and the Americas: Spanish*

#### Mendoza, Argentina

**Jayne Scally** jaymeas@hawaii.edu

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