

Study Abroad Connections

Message from the Director

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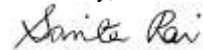
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Dear UHM faculty and students:

When the summer program in Dublin, Ireland was launched in 2015, it was limited to credits in Nursing. Over the years, it has expanded to Public Health, Kinesiology & Recreation Science, and Business internship. The latest offerings include Physics and soon, Chemistry. Feedback from both students and faculty has been overwhelmingly positive. I'm pleased to have these study abroad opportunities for STEM students.

In this issue we hear from two student alumni of a semester program—one in London, England and the other in Seville, Spain.

Sincerely,



Sarita Rai
Director, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Study Abroad Center

Seville

Alexis Dennis
International Business and Management and Spanish



Seville, Spain Spring 2019

I chose to study abroad in Seville, Spain because I am pursuing a certificate in Spanish and I wanted to immerse myself in the language and culture. I am double-majoring in Management and International Business, and the residence director this semester was a Shidler professor, Dr. Liz Davidson, who happened to teach a class in management and another in international business. This provided the perfect opportunity to take classes pertaining to my majors and certificate all while living in beautiful Spain! It was a no-brainer.

Sure enough, after a short stay of only three and a half months, I became more confident in my ability to communicate in Spanish. However, that wasn't the only

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takeaway I gained. I made new friends with whom I have memories to last a lifetime; I traveled more than ever, unlocking an independence that I had not realized I did not already possess from living in college; I was able to pinpoint differences in the American and Spanish lifestyles through research and personal observation, separating common perception from what I could actually observe; and most importantly, I discovered more about what I want in my life.

One of my favorite things about Spain was how community-oriented it was. The Spanish are always out and about with their children, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. I loved living in a big city that still felt like a home. Small shops and even big supermarkets would be closed sometime between 2pm and 7pm. This time-frame allows employees to have lunch at home with their families then take a siesta before returning to work. Also, most shops would be closed on Sunday, and I never saw a store or fast food restaurant that was open 24/7. The focus seemed to be on employee lifestyle over consumer convenience, which is something I never experienced growing up in the United States. It was different, but great to live in a society that values its labor force.

On sunny afternoons when I was not travelling and shops were closed for siesta, I would walk around the neighborhood or relax in the María Luisa Park, simply enjoying the nature and life around me. I often took this time to appreciate the opportunities I had, or sometimes just focus on smelling the flowers, feeling the breeze, and seeing the sunlight hit the enormous trees... I would practice being present. I had heard that self-growth accompanies travel, but I did not know if or how it would affect me. I have grown more thankful for everything in my life, including the beauty that surrounds me.

Travelling has proved to be one of the best learning experiences in my life. Aside from the classroom, I improved my Spanish, learned about life and business in the EU, discovered how to better balance my priorities, became truly independent, and grew to appreciate the small things in life, as cliché as it sounds. I know that I will continue to travel and learn for the rest of my life!



Alumni Spotlight: a one-on-one interview

Kimberly Bonilla

London, England Fall 2018

Graduated Spring 2019 with BBA in Marketing

1. Why did you choose your program locations? What was your goal/objective for studying abroad?

I chose London to study abroad during the Fall 2018 semester because it offered many business courses that are applicable to my Business major. Aside from the numerous amount of business courses to choose from, there are thousands of historical events that London also has to offer. My main objective for studying abroad was to tackle any challenges I may face and be able to go through each one successfully.

2. Did you experience culture shock?

At the beginning of my study abroad journey, I actually did experience culture shock. The culture in the United Kingdom was much different compared to America, except for English being the official language in both countries. However, with culture shock, I was still able to learn how to adapt to the culture.

3. What was the most memorable experience you had?

I would definitely say that the most memorable experience I had was meeting new friends from the same University as I was in and friends from other countries I've met as well through my courses. They were the ones who made me forget about being homesick and I was fortunate enough to travel with most of them to other European countries. At this point, I am still close with some of my friends I've made through study abroad and I hope to continue building long-lasting friendships with each of them. They are the type of friends I will cherish forever. The other memorable experience I had was meeting my Auntie for the first time. She was one of my Mom's best friends who has been living in London for nearly 12 years now. We were able to meet up and got to spend some time together by showing me more around the city of London and introduced me to a restaurant that she usually goes to for dinner. It was such an amazing moment that I was able to see her in London and spent quality time together.

4. What did you appreciate most about your study abroad experience?

What I appreciated the most about my study abroad experience is being able to travel and visit other European countries at a very reasonable price. The world offers so much to see and I am so glad that I got to visit the countries I've always wanted to go to and saw some of the famous landmarks around Europe.

5. Name your top 5 favorite sights to see/things to do.

- a. Chinatown in London - One of the best places that I would often visit while studying abroad in London. Chinatown just offers many different kinds of food and drinks to try. Although the prices were a little high, it's definitely worth it! There are lots of Asian cuisines to eat from and there are also Bubble tea places to get your boba fix from! I highly recommend Chatime and get their "signature black milk tea", it was so good!
- b. SoHo - When you have free time, SoHo is a great place to spend time by yourself or with friends. There are lots of stores you can go into and purchase souvenirs to take home.
- c. British Museum - I got to learn so much significant historical events of Europe.
- d. London Tower - One of the most beautiful things that you must see when in the city of London.
- e. London Eye and Big Ben - Located in the city of London, both are just so beautiful to sightsee.

6. What did you learn about yourself from this experience?

Throughout my study abroad experience, I can finally say that I learned how to handle things, whether it was easy or difficult tasks on my own. Plus, I learned how to navigate through my ways from one place to another by utilizing the 'Citymapper' app.

7. How have these study abroad experiences changed you?

Studying and living abroad definitely gave me the ability to broaden my perspective and be more open-minded of my surroundings and the new cultures I had to adapt myself into. Aside from this, I got to be more independent and learned to do things on my own without depending on others.

8. What advice would you give to prospective students interested in studying abroad?

Don't be afraid to take risks because you never know how it might change you. Be confident in everything you do!



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

Meet the next Resident Directors

... and the exciting courses they are teaching abroad!

Fall 2019

London, England

Anna Feuerstein annamf@hawaii.edu, UHM Dept. of English
ENG 333 (W)—19th Century British Literature
ENG 369—The Novel: Race, Empire, and the British Novel

Paris, France

Glenn Man gman@hawaii.edu, UHM Dept. of English
ENG 272 (W)—Culture and Literature: Paris and France in Literature
ENG 463 (W)—Studies and Film: French Cinema, Literature, Culture & Society

Florence, Italy

Judith Mills Wong jmills@hawaii.edu, UHM Shidler College of Business (retired)
BUS 367I (W)—Doing Business in the European Union: Italy Focus
FIN 305 (W)—Problems of Business Finance: Italy

Kōbe, Japan

Linda Oshita lindao@hawaii.edu, UHM Dept. of Special Education
SPED 446—Seminar in Special Education: Portrayal of Individuals with Exceptionalities in Japanese Popular Culture

Machida, Japan

Cullen Hayashida cullen@hawaii.edu, UHM Dept. of Sociology (retired)
SOC 353 (W)—Survey of Sociology of Aging
SOC 357 (W)—Sociology of Japan

Seville, Spain

Vina Lanzona vlanzona@hawaii.edu, UHM Dept. of History
HIST 350—Iberia in Asia and the Pacific
HIST 451E (W)—History and Literature of the Spanish Civil War