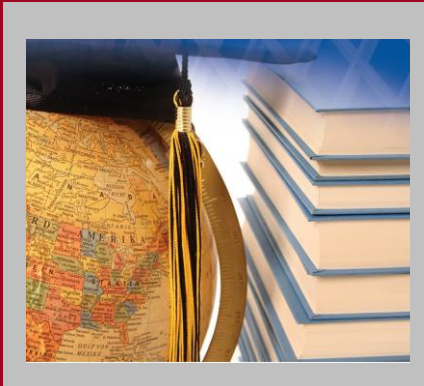


CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY

# TARTANS ABROAD

STUDY ABROAD NEWSLETTER  
GABRIELLE CALABRO: EDITOR



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## Greetings from the Office of International Education!

This January, I will be celebrating an anniversary of sorts. January 11th will mark the three year anniversary of when I first started my own study abroad experience in Ferrara, Italy: a small, quaint, medieval town in the northern Italian country side.

Those several months spent abroad were probably the most fantastic out of my college experience; and I adored college, so that should say something. I had been to Italy a handful of times before, but those family trips were nothing like this: popping to Venice regularly for lunch, gossiping with my Italian classmates about the interesting wardrobe choices made by our professor, and taking advantage of all of the travel opportunities made available by airlines such as RyanAir. Quite frankly, it was a dream of a semester.

That semester abroad changed me in countless ways, and all for the better. I became more confident, more sure of my decisions, and more comfortable in my own shoes. As a current graduate student in the Student Affairs in Higher Education program at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, the topic of student development frequently peppers our conversations. I know first hand how influential my study abroad experience was in accelerating my personal growth, and the internship experience I have been afforded by the Study Abroad Office here at Carnegie Mellon has been an amazing chance to see the beginnings of this student growth occurring in other students. I have been privileged to meet with numerous students who are at the very beginnings of their own study abroad journey, and it has been a thrill to listen to their plans of travelling to exotic locations to study topics that fall all across the board. Of course, whenever someone mentions plans to go to Italy, it is all I can do to refrain from acting like a total fan girl.

For someone reading this newsletter, it would probably be a bit monotonous to list all of the benefits a study abroad experience has to offer. After all, you have either studied abroad previously, or are studying abroad now, or at least have shown some bit of interest in doing so already, so I will spare you. The articles featured in this particular newsletter do a better job than I ever could anyways.

In short, this internship has been an extremely worthwhile experience that will certainly shape my career plans as I begin my job search this spring. The Office of International Education, as well as the Carnegie Mellon campus at large, is a lively, fast-paced, exciting community that has welcomed me with open arms. I feel truly privileged to have contributed to this newsletter, to have worked among such an amazing staff, and to have interacted with such a dynamic student body. Please enjoy!

Gabrielle Calabro  
Student Affairs in Higher Education, M.A. (Anticipated, May 2013)  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania





## “A SIMPLE ARGUMENT FOR STUDYING ABROAD”

JONATHAN CHUNG

Guys and gals, I'm writing to you because I feel self-righteous enough to suggest that you're all missing something in your lives. Don't hate me for it.

But let me begin with a truth – that travelling isn't a unique thing. That travelling is quite normal. Whether for interviews and projects, visiting family, or just for kicks, everyone's done it. What I hadn't realized, though, was just how normal it was. In fact, I thought my background was pretty interesting, having lived in Naples, London, and Seoul, and visited something like thirty countries. Maybe this got to my head a bit, but studying abroad has set me straight.

When I arrived in Switzerland, it was nothing new: a bit of time needed to acclimate to the culture's pace and get to grips with my utter lack of the native language. Quickly, however, it became clear how much there is to learn when you expose and settle into new environments – something I had tragically forgotten.

If you've lived in a place for long enough, your mind starts to narrow and you begin to see things through tunnel vision. Ideas are circulated in the closed loop that is your NA contacts network. You get caught up in the theatre performance that is the American government, begin to internalize stereotypical notions of the outside world and, worst yet, allow yourself to get comfortable. Boring begins to ossify

on your very person. All of these prevent your personal development and keep you from fascinating new experiences.

The key is in the people you meet. How many foreigners do you have exchanges with at CMU? Sure, be generous with the initial estimate. Then, however, reduce that by those who have lived in the US for quite some time, then by the number of people who spend time only with others like them, and finally by those who spend all of their time in front of a computer rendering them inaccessible. You simply aren't exposed to not-American things.

Reading the BBC and FT doesn't count. I did that every morning in Pittsburgh and it simply does not count. Perhaps if you scrutinize the pretenses and biases the authors hold to really grasp their assumptions, but just kidding. Nothing you do will fill the void that is your travelling history.

I spoke with a girl who was born in Germany and lived in Sweden, was studying in Spain and on exchange in Switzerland. Comparatively speaking, her background was nothing unique. Within the first minutes of our speaking she was talking to me about how asinine 'Jersey Shore' was and that her friends all really think of America as being this way. I cringed inside a little. We argued about the culture stateside and eventually I came away with a profound, albeit embarrassing, understanding of the Scandinavian perception of us and why this was the case. And this was

on the first day here. Since I arrived, I have continuously met people who aren't special in any objective way but simply have different backgrounds, who think in different ways, and force yours to do likewise.

In Europe, this kind of personal history is common, the subsequent interactions everyday occurrences. Travelling is easy and people hop around at leisure. People learn more about other cultures and usually become more perceptive and reasonable as a result. They know the names of foreign dishes and think their neighbors are absurd for thinking that the tax scheme across the lake is acceptable. What isn't normal is being mired in a single culture for so long, letting your imagination and ability to adapt to new ideas grow fusty.

Last weekend, on the train back from Milan, I woke up next to a guy listening to Dr. Dre. After agreeing 'Still D.R.E.' was his undisputed masterpiece, we started talking about life in Switzerland and he mentioned he had just finished his mandatory military service. Then we started talking about how one can be certain every Swiss town has a cathedral and a shooting range, the Swiss respect for wildlife and their regulation surrounding hunting, and ultimately contrasted this to the openness of hunting in the US. It was philosophical.

(Cont. on page 4)

*"To travel is to discover that everyone is wrong about other countries."  
~Aldous Huxley*





Christine Warner, Amsterdam



Elias Fatsi, Fiji



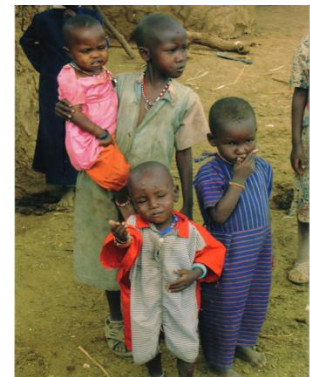
Geoffrey DiBeneditto, Italy



Meredith Clark, France



Samantha Laffey, Ireland



Steven Maher, Kenya

**SAVE THE DATE**

**WELCOME BACK RECEPTION**  
**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2013**  
**4:30-6:00PM DANFORTH, UNIVERSITY CENTER**

*“When preparing to travel, lay out all your clothes and all your money. Then take half the clothes and twice the money.”*  
~Susan Heller



## ARGUMENT FOR STUDYING ABROAD:

(CONT. FROM PAGE 2)

Believe it or not, I don't mean to trivialize these conversations with my dry humor or suggest that 'deep conversations' are the sole vehicles for flexing your mind. But this guy on the train was a painter. Yet he was one of the most curious guys I've ever met and he was traveling back to Zurich to get enough shut eye to last him painting an office building the next day. Can you get that in the US? Not likely.

This kind of exposure to new ideas is equally as apparent when I'm merely standing in line at the local café, noticing the conservative behavior of the barista and how certain expectations are held about how ones deportment. Having to adapt yourself to respect the norms and carry on an exchange is just as much an exercise in thought.

The point I'm trying to make is that you are just missing a serious amount of eye-opening experiences by not going out and diving into new environments. And your college years are absolutely the time to do it. When else can your shy self be prompted into interaction with locals (it will be at your exchange university), will you be able to spend months travelling at a time and with caution thrown to the wind (not within the first years of your career if you're serious about it) or

have the college-try courage to walk into a room full of conservative, dead-pan serious German folk and ask them to teach you their card games?

The answer is probably never, although I'll grant that a few of those were loaded questions.

If nothing else, study abroad to get away for a little. Study abroad to get a few neat stories for your scrap book, or speak to every girl using the lame 'how do you pronounce this?' (while pointing at your useful-expressions pocket language book). Study abroad for the food, for goodness' sake.

Hopefully this has in some way or another at least motivated you to consider it. And if this was unclear, I apologize. Writing things on your iPhone whilst sitting on the floor of on an overbooked train (thanks Austrian man who sold me my ticket!) is not so easy. But it's a damned good story!



### REMEMBER

**Check on your CMU classes for next semester while you are overseas!!**

Visit <https://enr-apps.as.cmu.edu/open/SOC/SOCSe rvlet?Formname=ByDept> for the list of course offerings.



#### Helpful Links:

Center for Disease Control  
<http://www.cdc.gov/>

Disability Travel Resources  
<http://www.makoa.org/travel.htm>

GLBT Resources  
[www.gaytimes.co.uk/HotSpots/GayGuide.html](http://www.gaytimes.co.uk/HotSpots/GayGuide.html)

Let's Go Travel Resource  
[www.letsgo.com](http://www.letsgo.com)

Pittsburgh Post Gazette  
[www.post-gazette.com/](http://www.post-gazette.com/)

Sexual Assault Advisors  
[www.studentaffairs.cmu.edu/SA](http://www.studentaffairs.cmu.edu/SA)

The Tartan  
<http://www.thetartan.org/>

#### Transfer Credit: Follow-Up SATCs

If you have made changes to your course registration abroad and have not already made arrangements with your academic advisor(s), please use this [Follow up SATC Form](#) to update your courses.

Please complete all categories, including URLs for specific courses. You will automatically receive an email with the changes you are proposing. Once we receive the completed form we will send it to relevant academic advisors. Advisors will review courses and send you confirmations of approval where appropriate.

*"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines, sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover." - Mark Twain*



## TRAVELING ON A WHIM

### TAMAR FEINGENBAUM

I've never been one for last minute decisions. I never finish (or start) an assignment the night before it's due, and travel plans are always solidified weeks (or months) in advance. Needless to say, I was a little overwhelmed when my study abroad program in Venice for the fall semester was cancelled well after the deadlines for other programs. However, with some help from the CMU study abroad office and my family, I started researching other destinations for the semester, and picked out Brussels, Belgium.

I had no idea what to expect from Brussels. I had taken two semesters of Italian in anticipation of Venice, but didn't speak a word of French or Dutch, the languages spoken in Brussels. My cold weather clothes were in a storage unit somewhere in Pittsburgh. Vesalius College in Brussels didn't offer any art classes to fulfill my required creating units. Despite all these concerns, I was thrilled to be able to study abroad at all, so I packed my bags and made my way to Brussels.



Friday morning following our first week of classes, my roommate and I both woke up early for no particular reason. We didn't have specific plans for the day, and had spent the previous two weeks touring around Brussels. Caught up in the beautiful morning and the freedom of living abroad, we decided to head to the train station and get on the first train out. Our adventure led us to Ghent, an unbelievably beautiful town 45 minutes outside of Brussels. I had never heard of Ghent before our expedition, but it quickly became my favorite place in Belgium. The winding canals and picturesque buildings immediately made me appreciate my newfound sense of adventure.

The following Tuesday night I was at a friend's apartment for dinner, and we ended up discussing how neither of us had been to Paris. Still exhilarated and inspired from the previous week's last minute excursion to Ghent, we decided to go to Paris two days later. By the end of dinner we had bus tickets, a hostel, and plans to spend the weekend in Paris.

That weekend in Paris was one of the best weekends of my life. The city was gorgeous, our fellow hostel dwellers were friendly, and most importantly I had ventured to a foreign country with minimal planning and made it a success. There's something magical about being able to wander and explore without any specific direction.

I have learned so much from my study abroad experience. Most of all, I now recognize that not everything has to be done the "right" way. The best moments happen when you stop worrying about insignificant details and start saying yes. Trips can be planned on a whim. Last minute doesn't necessarily mean bad. Who knows, I may even start a paper the night before it's due. Crazy things have happened.



*"Travel and change of place impart new vigor to the mind." - Seneca*



# Carnegie Mellon Tartans Abroad

*Study Abroad Newsletter*

## NATIONAL FACEBOOK CONTEST

### GOABROAD.COM TEAM

The GoAbroad Team is excited to announce the launch of our first Facebook Cover Photo Contest. Earlier this semester, we shared the news on our social media communities about this opportunity for students and travelers to get their travel photos seen with GoAbroad, and we're looking forward to seeing even more photos!

If you are a student or an alum who is looking to get your work in front of international audiences, this is your chance. GoAbroad's Facebook page reaches over 39,000 fans and is broadcast to even more world travelers through GoAbroad's multiple social media communities. Entering this contest is also as easy as it sounds!

All details regarding how to enter the contest, what is required, and terms and conditions, can be found on the GoAbroad Blog: <http://www.goabroad.com/blog/2012/10/08/goabroads-facebook-cover-photo-contest/>

The GoAbroad Cover Photo Contest will run from October 2012 until January 2013. Starting October 15, 2012, GoAbroad will feature a top entrant's photo on GoAbroad's Facebook Page, so start getting those submissions entered! Please contact the Office of Intl. Education with any questions!

*The CMU Study Abroad is not affiliated with the GoAbroad.com Team in any capacity*

## SOCIAL MEDIA

*CMU Study Abroad is now active on Facebook and Twitter!*

**Become a fan on Facebook:**

[Carnegie Mellon Study Abroad](#)

**Follow us on Twitter:**

[@CMUStudyAbroad](#)

*Make sure to get connected in order to receive all of the latest news and updates from the CMU Study Abroad Office!*

# Study Abroad

Work Volunteer Research Study

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*"There are no foreign lands. It is the traveler only who is foreign."  
- Robert Louis Stevenson*