

Expressions^{1st}

THE NEWSLETTER OF

Thrive. Connect. Transition. Evolve. Advocate.

Generation
@Scripps College

Scripps College

November 2, 2015

Edition 3, Volume 2

A Letter from the Editors

Dear Readers –

We hope this newsletter finds you well! We are so appreciative of all the support we received from the community after publishing our October newsletter, THANK YOU!! We look forward to continuously sharing the experiences of our first-generation community with you.

Given that study abroad applications will be due very soon, we thought it would be a great opportunity to share the experiences of some first-geners who are currently studying abroad, have studied abroad, and those who decided to stay at Scripps. We hope this newsletter provides insight into first-generation students' experiences abroad and will help you to make the off-campus study decision that is right for you – whether that is going and exploring new places or staying at Scripps for your four years.

Both of us decided to study abroad in Italy. We were constantly challenged to grow in different ways, and we learned so much about ourselves. It was not always easy, but we found it to be an amazing and worthwhile experience. Hope you enjoy reading about the first-gen experience abroad!

Enjoy!

Daniela Canas Baena '16 and Juliana Canas Baena '16
Program Co-Interns

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Neva on First-Generation and Study Abroad

Seeking advice and support

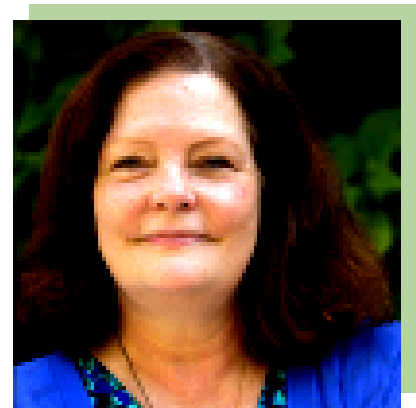
Many years ago, I was a first-generation college student myself, majoring in French at a large state university. Study abroad was not something that many students at my school ever considered, even language majors, so it did not necessarily leave me at a disadvantage that I did not go abroad, almost no one did.

Fast forward to 2015 and that has changed. In today's world, international teams work together to solve a problem or develop a new product. The ability to work across cultures, across borders, and across the languages is vital to many rewarding careers and studying abroad can help develop the necessary skills to do so, while also filling requirements in a major/minor or for a GE.

Around 60% of each Scripps class participates on a SAGE program so doing so is the norm, not the exception.

If the prospect of studying for a semester in another location seems daunting or out of reach, the Office of Study Abroad and Global Education (SAGE) has broken it down to a series of manageable steps. Patricia and I are here to help you navigate your way:

1. In your first year, talk to your faculty adviser of your interest in a studying abroad so you can start working on your four-year plan and thinking about courses to take on campus and away.
2. In spring of your first year, or fall of sophomore year, attend one of the SAGE Info Sessions offered throughout the first half of each semester.
3. Research programs and pick the one that is the best fit for you.
4. Apply to Scripps in early December to participate the following fall or late April for the following spring.
5. Complete the program sponsor application by March or October.
6. An orientation will be held on campus to help you prepare for the journey.
7. Before you know it, you will find yourself in another location, kicking off an unparalleled experience abroad, learning more about yourself and your resilience and abilities.



Neva Barker

What are the roadblocks to studying abroad or doing an internship in Washington DC or Silicon Valley?

The biggest concern is usually financial, however at Scripps, your financial aid package (except work study) can travel with you. Scripps covers airfare, tuition, room and board while you are away. Many of the program sponsors we work with offer additional scholarships and some are specifically for first-generation students. We are happy to talk to parents and loved ones who may have concerns about health and safety or the distance, and help them understand the value that Scripps places on this experience. Studying abroad is not the only way to develop a global perspective, it is just the most efficient. If you have any interest in participating in a SAGE program, drop by our office in Balch 136. Let's talk!



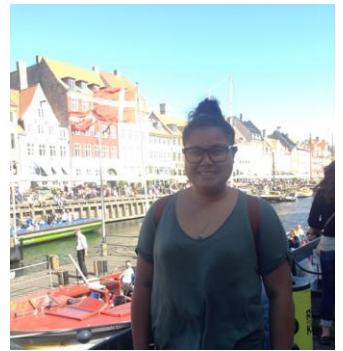
Studying Abroad: A First-Gen Experience

Leonida's experience in Denmark

Going abroad was always something that I thought I would never do. I thought that if I wanted to see Copenhagen, Paris, or Barcelona, it would be when I was retired. Even then, I pictured myself crunching the numbers to see if I could swing a week in Europe. So to be in Denmark and traveling around Europe is surreal to me. I actually get to see all of these places that I saw on my Tumblr dashboard. Despite my ability to travel around Europe, I still can't help but feel alienated from the other students at DIS. Even though most of us are traveling, I still find myself feeling inferior to them because they have seen all of these amazing places before. They have been to Prague, Madrid, Rome, and Amsterdam on family vacations and the only place I went with my family for a "vacation" was San Luis Obispo.

I don't resent or blame my parents for never taking me to Europe or even Disneyland when I was little because I knew we didn't have enough to make it there. My mom worked two jobs just to make sure we had food on the table and to save up for when my brother and I went to college. I understand the sacrifices that my family has made to get me to where I am today. The lessons I have learned and the experiences I had growing up were far more important than going to London when I was 5 and barely remembering it.

When I tell people that this is my first time out of California and abroad, I don't feel ashamed. Instead, I feel proud of myself and my family because my being in Denmark is proof of how much work was put into getting into college and being able to study abroad. While I may not see every sight in Europe, I am definitely trying to see as much of it as I can, while also enjoying my time here in Denmark. Sometimes I still wake up in the morning and it dawns on me that I am not in my bed in Clark hall. Instead, my bedroom is in Denmark's countryside and getting to class means riding my bike and the train. I am definitely enjoying my time abroad and taking as many pictures as I possibly can so I can remember this trip for the rest of my life.



Studying Abroad: A First-Gen Experience

Chrysanna's experience in Italy

Studying abroad in Florence, Italy last year was everything I was told it would be: amazing, beautiful, life-changing, and unforgettable. It was also overwhelming, challenging, and at times, incredibly lonely. Homesickness at Scripps only took a little while for me to adjust to during my first year in college. But in Italy, it stayed with me the entire semester. I felt weird talking about this with other students, because most of them said that they didn't feel homesick at all! Being in a different country from everyone you know and love can make you feel like you're missing out on their lives, even though you're having an amazing, once-in-a-lifetime experience yourself. It might have been especially affecting me since it was my first time out of the United States since I was 7, and my first time ever navigating a different country on my own.

Though I didn't feel as much of a "culture shock" as I expected, little things like the language barrier, being ahead of home by several timezones, and lack of consistent wifi and warm water contributed to the distance I felt. I missed the comfort of being home and being able to connect with friends and family on a regular basis. The first few nights were especially rough, and I began

questioning what I had gotten myself into and whether I would be able to survive four whole months abroad.

But in the mornings I would wake up to golden sunlight, ringing bells of the Florence Cathedral, and a beautiful view of the city's rooftops. I walked down streets and through piazzas and felt an energy that was completely new to me. I attended classes where I learned skills that I could only have gotten from living in the artistic center of Italy (marble carving and Italian fashion design, anyone??). I attended field trips, made new friends, and explored cities so full of history that I could never completely take it all in. Gradually my memories of feeling lost and isolated began to be replaced by a growing sense of captivation and wonder at what would be my new temporary home. In the end, I grew more comfortable with living independently and exploring what felt like a new world. As a result I opened myself up to incredible experiences that changed my perspective for the better. Studying abroad is never easy, and you will repeatedly be put out of your comfort zone, but it is one of the most exhilarating and eye-opening ways to spend a college semester.



Studying Abroad: A First-Gen Experience

Sarah's experience in Russia

Привет!

If you are anything like me, then thinking about studying abroad in Europe is filled with unknowns. Before I touched down in Frankfurt, I had never left the United States, making every step of my journey to Russia a new experience. While I have only been in Russia for any amount of time, I hope the following advice will help anyone planning to study abroad in Europe make their decisions.

Electronics

If you wish to take your laptop and cellphone abroad, there is good news; most chargers for them are already dual voltage, 120v and 240v, so you do not need a voltage converter for them, just a plug converter. Check the internet for which plugs your intended country uses, or buy a converter with multiple conversions.

As for cell phones, check with your study abroad program ahead of departure to see if they will provide you with a SIM card. If this is the chase, make sure your carrier unlocks your phone before you leave, or plan on buying a cheap phone when you arrive.

Toilets

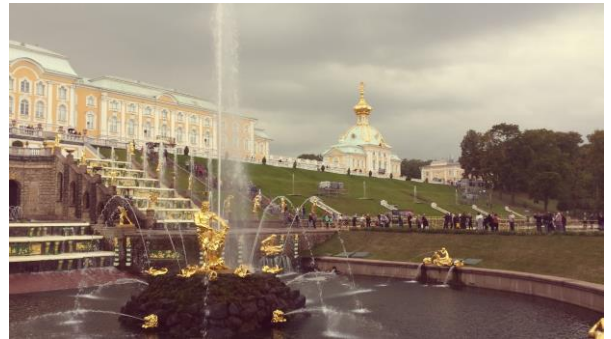
This is just a heads up for something that shocked me when I learned of it. In some other countries, including Russia and Greece, toilet paper is placed in a trash bin, not flushed. In addition, a small charge to use public restrooms is common in Europe (about 50 cents in Saint Petersburg), but cafés usually have bathrooms somewhere in the back.

Accessibility

European cities are old; Saint Petersburg, which is comparatively young, is still 312 years old: older than the Declaration of Independence by 73 years. Others reach into the thousands and as such, have streets of cobble stone, aged sidewalks, and buildings without elevators. Some countries do have the equivalent of the ADA but many do not, Russia included. Here, ramps are uncommon and bathrooms often tiny. If you have any sort of disability that makes it difficult to get around, talk to your program and to students who have been there before so that there are no surprises when you arrive for your adventure.

Going abroad is a fantastic experience. It is a chance to meet new friends from all over the world, not just your country of choice, who share a love for the language and culture in which you are immersing yourself. Although there may be struggles, and days where you get lost or do not find what you are looking for, there will be days where you see incredible bits from another culture that make everything else worth it. If you have the chance, take it. I am so incredibly glad that I decided to come to Russia, even though a little over a year ago I had other plans. My studies here have given me an understanding of Russian culture that I could not have gotten from my classes in Claremont; the same information is given new depth.

There is a Russian saying, "***It is better to see it once than to hear about it a thousand times.***" I have found it to be true.



Why study abroad was not the right choice for me...

Elisa's decision to stay at Scripps



I was aware of how huge the opportunity to study abroad was. It was an opportunity to explore a new country, study in a different part of the world, and the greatest factor for me was that it would not amount to nearly as much if I were to take the trip on my own some other time. I did give it some serious thought, but in the end I chose not to go. The reason I decided to not study abroad was that at that time I was enjoying what I was studying, the professors I was taking classes with, the relationships I was building, and I did not want to leave that behind.

I was also in a weird situation academically because I was studying Chican@/Latin@ History and I was on the pre-med track. Ideally I would have wanted to go to Spain, but I was not going to be able to take science classes there because they were not being taught in English (which made it even more complicated because doing science abroad was already



“THIS WAS
ONE OF MY
ADVENTURES
DURING MY
JUNIOR YEAR
AT SCRIPPS.....”

a sticky situation).

My advice is that if you are contemplating not studying abroad, whether your reasons

line up with mine or not, you simply need to embrace the decision you make! I know it probably does not sound like much advice, but I realized that my situation at the time was not the best to go abroad and I promised myself that one day I will visit Spain (or any other country for that matter). And to be honest, I do not regret my decision! But yes, feel it out, seek advice regarding your situation, and remember, if you ultimately are not able to study abroad, the country you desire to go to now will always be there when the opportunity presents itself again☺!

Parting Words

*"You can steer yourself any
direction you choose."*

-Dr. Seuss, *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*



We chose Siena, Italy.... Where will your dreams steer you?

UPCOMING FIRST-GEN EVENTS:

- Mentor-Mentee Dinner in the Village
- Office Hours with Mary Hatcher-Skeers
 - Friday, Nov. 13th 11:30-12:30, Motley Coffee House
- Time Management Workshop
 - Tuesday, Nov. 17th 12:15-1PM, Humanities 102

We Want to Hear From You!

To inspire our readers and recognize your accomplishments, we would like to feature your story in one of our upcoming newsletters. Please email us a personal article or poem depicting your experience as a first-gener to firstgeneration@scrippscollege.edu.