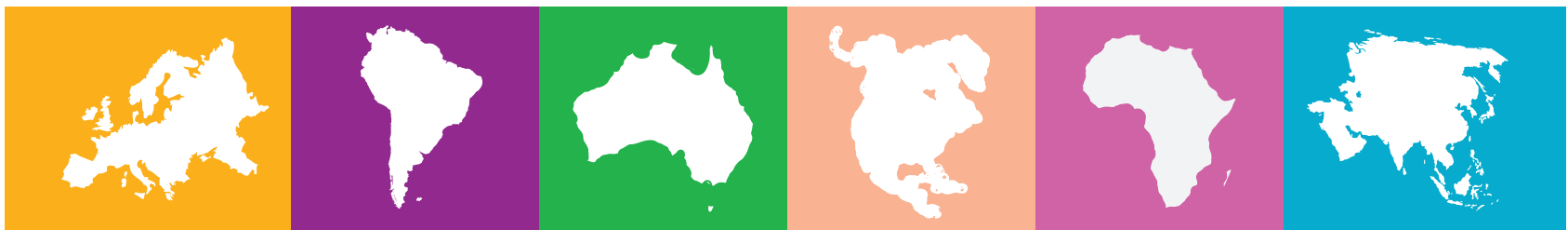


3rd Annual
**LEARNING
ABROAD
CONFERENCE**



Friday, November 7, 2014
1:00 - 6:00 p.m.
MSU International Center

WELCOME!

Welcome to MSU's third annual Learning Abroad Conference!

What constitutes "being abroad" has always been a relative term since what is "home" to one person constitutes "abroad" for another. This is ever more true in today's global realities. MSU has a long-standing tradition of global student mobility, both in-bound and out-bound. This conference is designed as an outlet for student voices and, in a variety of media, feature presentations by students currently studying abroad at MSU or students who have returned from an experience abroad. This conference is designed to let students present their findings to the MSU community, as well as their family, and friends.

We thank our presenters and moderators for their willingness to share their experience and expertise.

We extend a sincere thank-you to the conference organizers who made this event possible:

Kristin Janka Millar
Honors College

Jessica Mestre
College of Education

Karen Kangas-Preston
Department of Theatre

Jennifer Rumler
College of Communication Arts & Sciences

Alison Kolodzy
Department of History & Office of Study Abroad

Inge Steglitz
Office of Study Abroad

Karen Lienhart
College of Natural Science

Gail Vander Stoep
Department of Community Sustainability

Oumatie Marajh
College of Social Science

David Wong
College of Education

Elizabeth Matthews
Office for International Students & Scholars

Amanda Woodward
School of Social Work

Finally, a special thank-you to:

June Youatt, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Chris Bargerstock, Interim Director, Office for International Students and Scholars

Brett Berquist, Executive Director, Office of Study Abroad

Cheryl Benner, Office of Study Abroad (Conference publicity)

Jim Lucas, Assistant Dean, Office of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education

Mike Gruszynski, G6 Studios (Videographer)

Rachel Love, Office of Study Abroad (Conference publicity)

Nick Schrader, Office of Study Abroad (Supervisor for Peer Advisors)

Peer Advisors, Office of Study Abroad (Conference logistics support)

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

1:00 - 1:40 p.m.

Welcome
In Room 115

1:50 - 3:10 p.m.

Student Presentations
In Rooms 303, 305, 307

pp. 1 - 6

3:10 - 3:30 p.m.

Break
Hallway 3rd Floor

3:30 - 4:50 p.m.

Student Presentations
In Rooms 303, 305, 307

pp. 1 - 6

5:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Closing Ceremony
In Room 115

Student Presenters
(Alphabetical Order)

pp. 7 - 10

1:50 p.m. Faced with Reality Abroad

Spain

Skylar Taylor

The presenter set out on a journey to Spain for a volunteer teaching abroad program. This opportunity allowed her to see the world and return home with the satisfaction of having contributed to a local community and experience a new culture as no tourist can. She will share how the reality of the experience differed from the expectations she had for studying abroad.

2:10 p.m. Shared Stories and a Dialogue in Mali

Mali

Drew Smith, Karl Bayer Schwinghamer, Rae Chaloult, Moussa Traore & Sean Fitzpatrick

The presenters left Michigan State to spend a month in Mali, where they met other students, teachers, and artists. The presenters and those they encountered were all reflecting on the events which had taken place in the past two years in Mali, as well as creating a space where all Malians could use their experiences to resolve past social and political wounds and move forward. The presenters want to share their experiences, from the people they met and the work they were able to do during their trip, which is still ongoing in Mali.

2:30 p.m. (Im)possibilities

Jordan and Morocco

Brady Ryan

The presenter studied intensive Arabic in Amman, Jordan on an independent direct-enroll study abroad program during the 2013-14 academic year. He then spent summer 2014 continuing intensive Arabic study in Meknes, Morocco through a co-sponsored program. The programs were culturally, academically, and personally challenging and enriching. He will address personal change and growth within a context of cultural difference; focusing on embracing uncertainty and change as a formative experience, one that opened him up to new possibilities and perspectives.

2:50 p.m. Housing Comparison: United States & Cuba

Cuba

Emily Villegas

Life in Southern Texas, a region of the U.S. that has historically been struck by poverty, is often lived with scarce resources. The presenter's experiences growing up along the U.S.-Mexican border gave her insight to these harsh realities. Her trip to Cuba with the Culture and Sustainable Development program exposed her to similar living conditions in an urban environment. However, the level of poverty that she knew from a U.S. context was very different from what she came to see in this Caribbean island. This presentation will focus on these differences by sharing one family's efforts to build a home in Habana Vieja, or Old Havana.

3:10 p.m. Break

PRESENTATIONS

Moderator: Karen Lienhart

3:30 p.m. **Chasing Leprechauns in Ireland**
Ireland
Carla Willard

As a non-traditionally aged student with a life-long interest in Irish mythology, this presenter had always dreamed of going to Ireland but thought it was out of her reach. This summer the English Department gave her the opportunity to participate in a month-long study abroad trip. The program visited historic sites and museum exhibits related to her favorite mythical characters, the Tuatha de Danaan. It was the experience of a lifetime.

3:50 p.m. **Starfish**
China, Costa Rica, Malawi, Rwanda, Bangladesh, and India
Kirk Mason

In January, 2013, the presenter embarked on a round-the-world documentary production trip, highlighting the research and world-changing work of MSU faculty. While producing a story in Bangladesh, he witnessed crippling inequality, corruption on a scale previously unknown, and sadness beyond anything he had experienced. Simultaneously, he learned that everything one does in the universe has a rippling effect, even if it is almost imperceptible, and that it should be a fundamental goal to make the world better. No matter where you are from or what cultural upbringing shaped you, we are all humans who have the power to help each other.

4:10 p.m. **Hi, I Am Sergio: It Is Nice to Meet Myself At MSU**
United States of America
Sergio Polimante

The presenter is a student from the Brazilian Program Science without Borders. This program seeks to strengthen and expand the initiatives of science and technology, innovation and competitiveness through international mobility of undergraduate students. The presenter will discuss how the changing of environment changed his personal thoughts about life.

4:30 p.m. **The Best, Most Intimidating Decision I've Ever Made**
Tanzania
James Cotter

The presenter traveled to Tanzania to study sustainable community development through the College of Social Science, made financially realistic by the incredibly generous acts of the donors, the Kolschowskys. After settling into both Michigan State and his discipline, the presenter craved to get outside his comfort zone. His travels helped him break down personal and social barriers and many pre-conceived notions quickly faded as a result of personal bonding with many now life-long friends. He was also made aware of the tricky and messy process of development, and how it has been executed in unhelpful ways for so long. The presenter discovered that learning to be sustainable economically, equitably and environmentally is vital for anyone involved in international development, and hopes to engage with the field further in the future.

1:50 p.m.

Life Under the Iron DomeIsrael
Lia Kamana

The participant originally studied at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem for five months, but when she fell in love with everything the country had to offer she extended her trip by accepting a three month internship as a reporter for the Jerusalem Post where she found both professional and personal growth. The participant tested her skills, fears, and the person she thought she was while covering Operation Protective Edge and living amid political unrest.

Trigger warning: Some content within this presentation involves an account of war and violence. The sound of sirens and gunshots and images of violent protests will be used during the presentation.

2:10 p.m.

Traveling & Social Anxiety - The Art of Asking for HelpUnited Kingdom
Elliott Strong

The Presenter traveled to London for his Politics and Markets class and to Cardiff for personal exploration. Through both experiences, he learned how to put aside anxiety, ask strangers for help, and create friendships through a shared common ground.

2:30 p.m.

Connecting Past, Present, and Future through Learning Abroad in IndonesiaIndonesia
Elizabeth Gil

The presenter participated in the College of Education's Fellowship to Enhance Global Understanding study tour to four cities in Indonesia. She was struck by various commonalities between her new Indonesian experience and her own culture. Reflecting on her study abroad experience has had implications for her future preparing teachers to work with students from diverse backgrounds.

2:50 p.m.

Hakuna Shida: Connected Cross CulturallyUnited States of America
Linlin Liang

The presenter traveled to Tanzania with a joint study abroad program from the College of Communication Arts and Sciences and the College of Engineering. Her learning abroad experience included the service-learning projects within the program in rural Tanzania and her own research project in urban Tanzania. She will compare different cultures that she has been exposed to during the program and share her personal experience about how to make connections between cultures. She hopes her insights will help others to better adjust themselves to a new culture on the road.

3:10 p.m.

Break

PRESENTATIONS

Moderator: Elizabeth Matthews

3:30 p.m.

Ir más allá: Discovering the Importance of my Voice through Studying Abroad

Ecuador
Caitlin Parks

The presenter's desire to travel had always been so strong that when the opportunity to live somewhere outside of the U.S. occurred she chose to go for as long as possible. Tired of the daily routine, she went to Ecuador for an escape. Thoughts about values and relationships while immersed in Ecuadorian culture led the presenter to record her journey and create a personal documentary called "El Escape." Through this artistic process, aided by film classes abroad, she discovered the importance of her own voice and learned how to share these perspectives with others.

3:50 p.m.

Que me quiten lo bailao,' and other Unparalleled Idioms to Explain the Unexplainable

Spain
Taylor Dombrowski

The presenter studied in Valencia, Spain for five months and at the end left with a substantially improved understanding of Spanish language and culture. Spanish idioms or frases hechas as they are known, facilitated her understanding of a culture rich in history and values and gave her a new perspective on the world and the people in it. This learning abroad experience has helped her focus her passion for understanding foreign cultures and has broadened her opportunities for developing a career abroad.

4:10 p.m.

Hanging Up My (Unused) Superman Cape at the Age of 24

Ghana
Rachel Garbo

The savior complex, or the deep desire to help others, is a visceral and heavy load to bear. Learning to let go of this complex allows freed individuals to more effectively examine and interact with their surroundings. During the Public Health in Ghana: Methods for Community Practice program, the superman cape went from weighing down the shoulders upon which it rested to permanently joining other unfeasible clothing in the closet.

4:30 p.m.

BLENDED

United States of America
Rachel Nanteza

In the past two years, the presenter has studied abroad spending 20 months doing the International Baccalaureate in the UK, and only four months so far at MSU. Alongside academic achievement, both opportunities have helped her realize the role studying abroad plays in appreciating oneself, and understanding the practicality along with the importance of diversity.

1:50 p.m.

What is a Life Changing Experience?

South Africa
Sabrina Salome

The presenter traveled to South Africa to study the big cat species of Kruger National Park. She will highlight the unexpected outcomes the trip presented her with, dismantling what it means to be immersed in a life-changing experience.

2:10 p.m.

Change Your Mind, Change Your Life: Stepping Outside Your Comfort Zone

Germany, France and United Kingdom
Whitney Carter

The presenter will tell her story to those who may find themselves in the same predicament she was in when she first decided to study abroad, about how she decided not to let the odds that were against her dictate her life outcomes. As an out of state, first generation student, the idea of studying abroad seemed farfetched and impossible. One day she realized it was not about the circumstances, but rather the choices she made that would define her as a person. She realized that dedication was the art of never giving up and this discovery changed her life. The presenter now wants to inspire those who may believe it's impossible, letting them know that when the odds are against you and you have the depth of clarity to listen to your own instinct, you'll become the best you can be.

2:30 p.m.

We're All People

New Zealand
Mikayla DeMers

The presenter will speak about the importance of studying and making relationships with people abroad. Growing up abroad she knows the importance of making those who are away from home feel welcome. She will speak about what she has gained from her friend from Kenya and also about the lesson she learned while studying abroad in New Zealand.

2:50 p.m.

Northern Michigan to East Asia: A Cross Cultural Journey

Japan and China
Nathan Hejl

The presenter traveled to Japan as part of the Business and Culture in Japan program and completed an internship in Hong Kong this past summer. He shares the stages of his evolving understanding of diversity as an MSU student, having come from rural Northern Michigan and ultimately being immersed abroad as a minority himself. He also addresses how this experience has fostered an appreciation for international students at MSU.

PRESENTATIONS

Moderator: Amanda Woodward

3:10 p.m.

Break

3:30 p.m.

Dance and Culture in Cuba

Cuba

Erin Eschels

The presenter traveled to Havana, Cuba to learn about the strong Cuban culture that has been isolated from the United States for decades. She will talk about Cuba as a whole to develop a better understanding of this inaccessible country and address the powerful role music and dance play in the country's culture.

3:50 p.m.

First World Problems

Italy

Emily Kilcline & Elizabeth Fowler

The presenters will look at how a six week study abroad meant much more than nine credits, exquisite food and beautiful sights. Once comical problems inspired the presenters to help others and make global connections and friendships that they never thought imaginable.

4:10 p.m.

Changing My Cultural Lens: Lessons from Ghana

Ghana

Rachael Hume

The presenter recently completed her Master of Public Health practicum in Ghana through a study abroad program from the College of Human Medicine Program in Public Health. While conducting her research on community health perceptions of malaria, she had a significant personal growth experience as she navigated daily life and cultural differences between the U.S. and Ghana. She will be sharing her personal experiences about the importance of appreciating and understanding different cultures without being influenced by existing perceptions created from inaccurate representations. She hopes that her insights will motivate others to hold an unbiased view of other cultures, and that this will promote more global acceptance of different cultures, especially as it relates to health practices and interventions.

4:30 p.m.

Going Green in the Emerald Isle

Ireland

Brigid Kennedy, Carly Paxon, Scott Lyman & Kathryn Smith

The presenters traveled to Ireland for a Freshman Seminar Abroad. Through studies of Irish politics, literature, and culture they gained a greater understanding of the world in which they live as well as valuable skills necessary to find success in a university setting.

STUDENT PRESENTERS



	Room	Time
Bayer Schwinghamer, Karl Alumni, Residential College in the Arts & Humanities/History	303	2:10 - 2:30 p.m.
Carter, Whitney Senior, Psychology	307	2:10 - 2:30 p.m.
Chaloult, Rae Junior, Residential College in the Arts & Humanities	303	2:10 - 2:30 p.m.
Cotter, James Senior, Interdisciplinary Studies	303	4:30 - 4:50 p.m.
DeMers, Mikayla Freshman, Global Studies in the Arts & Humanities/Russian	307	2:30 - 2:50 p.m.
Dombrowski, Taylor Senior, Spanish	305	3:50 - 4:10 p.m.
Eschels, Erin Junior, Journalism, Honors College	307	3:30 - 3:50 p.m.
Fitzpatrick, Sean Senior, Residential College in the Arts & Humanities	303	2:10 - 2:30 p.m.
Fowler, Elizabeth Senior, Communications	307	3:50 - 4:10 p.m.

	Room	Time
Garbo, Rachel Graduate Student, Master of Public Health	305	4:10 - 4:30 p.m.
Gil, Elizabeth Graduate Student, Education	305	2:30 - 2:50 p.m.
Hejl, Nathan Junior, Marketing	307	2:50 - 3:10 p.m.
Hume, Rachael Graduate Student, Master of Public Health	307	4:10 - 4:30 p.m.
Kamana, Lia Senior, Journalism	305	1:50 - 2:10 p.m.
Kennedy, Brigid Freshman, Undeclared (James Madison College)	307	4:30 - 4:50 p.m.
Kilcline, Emily Junior, Advertising	307	3:50 - 4:10 p.m.
Liang, Linlin Graduate Student, Telecommunication, Information Studies and Media	305	2:50 - 3:10 p.m.
Lyman, Scott Freshman, Undeclared (James Madison College)	307	4:30 - 4:50 p.m.
Mason, Kirk Alumni, Residential College in the Arts & Humanities/ Media & Information with Documentary Studies	303	3:50 - 4:10 p.m.



STUDENT PRESENTERS



	Room	Time
Nanteza, Rachel Freshman, Environmental Engineering	305	4:30 - 4:50 p.m.
Parks, Caitlin Senior, Spanish/Interdisciplinary Studies in the Arts & Humanities	305	3:30 - 3:50 p.m.
Paxon, Carly Freshman, Undeclared (James Madison College)	307	4:30 - 4:50 p.m.
Polimante, Sergio Sophomore/Junior, Engineering	303	4:10 - 4:30 p.m.
Ryan, Brady Senior, Arabic, Honors College	303	2:30 - 2:50 p.m.
Salome, Sabrina Senior, Zoology	307	1:50 - 2:10 p.m.
Smith, Drew Senior, Residential College in the Arts & Humanities	303	2:10 - 2:30 p.m.
Smith, Kathryn Freshman, Undeclared (James Madison College), Honors College	307	4:30 - 4:50 p.m.
Strong, Elliot Junior, Political Theory & Constitutional Democracy/Social Relations & Policy	305	2:10 - 2:30 p.m.
Taylor, Skylar Senior, Spanish	303	1:50 - 2:10 p.m.

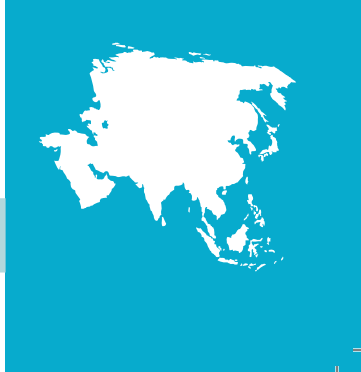
Room

Time

Traore, Moussa 303 2:10 - 2:30 p.m.
Senior, Residential College in
the Arts & Humanities

Villegas, Emily 303 2:50 - 3:10 p.m.
Junior, Psychology

Willard, Carla 303 3:30 - 3:50 p.m.
Sophomore, Linguistics



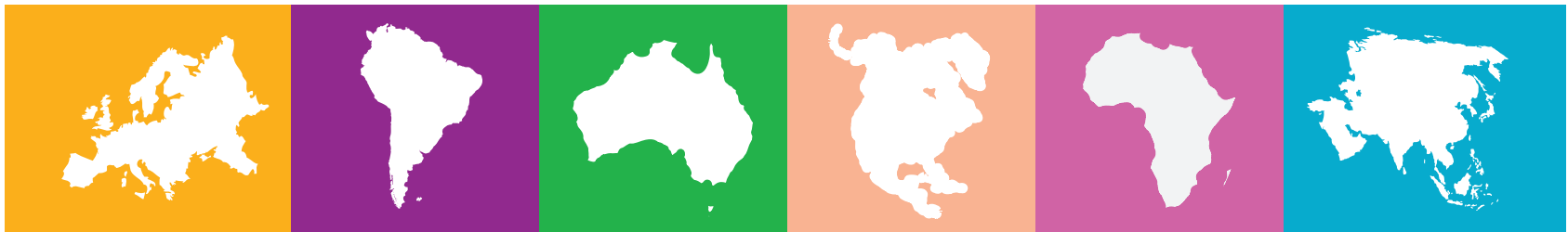
NOTES



NOTES



**GO GREEN,
GO WHITE,
GO ABROAD!**
Thanks for joining us!



**MICHIGAN STATE
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