



The College at
BROCKPORT
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Office of International Education

Syllabus
Culture of Western Europe
May 14, 2018 - May 27, 2018

Contacts

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Program Website: TBD

Course Description and Objectives

This program examines the culture and customs of Western European countries and involves traveling to Italy, Spain, France, and the United Kingdom. This 14-day European tour explores the range of activities, beliefs, behaviors and ideas of groups of people with shared traditions including social customs, leisure activities, dress, celebrations, foods and rituals.



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Course Objectives & Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of the program, it is expected that students will:

1. Understand how culture creates and transforms individual experiences, everyday community life, and social relations,
2. Identify comparisons between US and European lifestyle focusing on attitudes, values, behaviors, celebrations and rituals,
3. Understand the historical events that shaped each unique culture,
4. Learn about the Arts and architecture that are unique each Western European country,
5. Promote cultural competence though interacting with individuals from different cultures,
6. Enhance the ability to make observation, analyze situations and form a perspective using critical thinking skills and document finding effectively.

Grading Scale and Methodology

Grade Scale

	A 95-100	A- 90-94
B+ 87-89	B 84-86	B- 80-83
C+ 77-79	C 74-76	C- 70-73

Methodology

Activity	Available Points
Pre Departure Blog Post: Introduction	5 points
Pre Departure Blog Post: Culture Differences (3)	15 points
Pre Departure Blog Comments (3)	15 points
During Program Blog Posts (3)	15 points
Post Program Blog Comments (3)	15 points
Post Program Reflection Post	35 points
Total	100 points



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Program Website

This website/blog is meant to be the online resource and community for our Study Abroad Program. The blog will serve as an archive of student experiences and knowledge, and it should support student and teacher learning by facilitating reflection and collaboration and by providing contexts for engaging in conversation.

You will use this website for all of your blog posts, from your introduction post all the way until your reflection posts at the end of the program. You will be able to upload photos, videos, and galleries on this site for your future viewing. The page will serve as an excellent time capsule of our experience.

This forum will also be the instructor's way of tracking your work, and ensuring that your work has been completed on time. Should you want to share a post privately with the instructors, please get in contact with them before posting to the blog.

Required Pre-Trip Readings and Web Resources

The following is to be read before embarking on our journey. Please read each specified chapter of the book closely and explore the web resources. You will draw from these to answer questions on your pre-trip blog post (see below).

Western Europe: The Essential Guide to Customs & Culture by Roger Jones

- Italy: Chapter 7
<https://www.ricksteves.com/europe/italy/rome>
<https://www.ricksteves.com/europe/italy/florence>
- Spain: Chapter 10
<https://www.ricksteves.com/europe/spain/barcelona>
- France: Chapter 4
<https://www.ricksteves.com/europe/france/paris>
- England: Chapter 3
<https://www.ricksteves.com/europe/england/london>



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Course Assignments

1. Pre Departure | Blog Posts: Introduction

Please create an introductory post about who you are! Include the following information:

- Name, year, what you study
- Fun facts
- Why you chose this program
- Hopes for the program
- Concerns you may have
- Photo of yourself
- Any additional info to help us get to know you better!

2. Pre Departure | Blog Post: Cultural Differences (3 Posts Required)

For 3 out of the 4 countries we will visit, describe one aspect of the culture that stood out to you from the readings (e.g., food, political system, etc.). Why did it stand out? How does it compare to the culture of the United States? Please list the name of the country as the title of each of your posts.

3. Pre Departure | Blog Comments/Responses: Cultural Differences (3 Posts Required)

Please comment, respond, or further the discussion on any 3 blog posts. You may reflect on how these will impact your experience in Western Europe, comment on the noticeable difference between Western Europe and the US, or interact in any other way that you feel may enhance your knowledge of the country before arriving.



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4. During Program | Blog Posts (3 Posts Required)

You will be required to complete 3 substantial blog posts during the program. **These posts should be at least 1-2 pages in length.** Please select 3 out of the 4 options:

1. Observable differences in an aspect(s) of culture, customs, beliefs, etc. between Western Europe and the United States. Must include a minimum of three photos
2. Photo journal. This must include a minimum of 10 photos, documenting one activity, city, or experience during the trip.
3. Travel recommendation list. Think of BuzzFeed posts (ex. Top 12 lesser-known sites everyone needs to see in London, Top 10 reasons all people need to visit Barcelona at least once in their life, etc.) Must include at least 10 photos.
4. Complete a Yelp! style review. As tourism grows larger in countries of Western Europe, more travelers are relying on reviews/recommendations to make their trip perfect. Complete a Yelp! style review on a hostel, restaurant, attraction, etc. to assist future travelers.

5. Post Program | Blog Comments

Please comment, respond, or further the discussion on any 3 blog posts posted during the trip. How did you relate to the poster's experience? Do you have a similar or different assessment of the event? What can you add to the original post that would enhance or change the understanding of the experience?

6. Post Program | Reflection Post or Video

Option one:

Reflection Post

This blog post will be a way for you to reflect on the program as a whole: what you have learned from an educational, physical, or cultural standpoint. You should talk about any benefits that this program has had for you. The paragraph below outlines the proposed benefits and outcomes of participating in a study abroad program. Read the following paragraphs to get an idea of ways to talk about your experience. In completing this exercise, it may be helpful to imagine yourself describing your experience to a future employer in an interview setting. **This post should be at least 2-3 pages in length.**



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The Benefits of Studying Abroad:

“The benefits to completing an internship abroad both professionally and personally are immeasurable. You will learn more about your country, your home, your prior education, and yourself than you have ever learned in a semester. You will have the opportunity to meet students from around the world, learn about human values through integration into another culture, increase your foreign language skills (perhaps), have the opportunity to work and/or study at prestigious organization, and become more sophisticated and more self-reflective.

An internship abroad increases your flexibility and openness to new ideas, allows you to enjoy academic and experiential learning, and deepens cross-cultural understanding while it encourages independent thinking. Your intellectual maturity and self-confidence will rise along with your career prospects. All in all, you will become better prepared for your life and work in our increasingly globally interdependent world.”

OR

Option two:

Reflection Video

This is an opportunity to show us your video making abilities! Create a promotional video for the program of about 2-4 minutes in length, encouraging students to study abroad on this program. The video should be filled with more videos than photos (this is not a photo journal). Think of a typical GoPro video, or travel videos. This should be filled with exciting elements from the trip, and should encourage future students to participate on the program!



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Calendar

Date	Location/Information	Assignment Due
TBD	Pre Departure	Introduction Post
TBD	Pre Departure	Cultural Differences Post
TBD	Pre Departure	Responses/Comments to Cultural Differences Post
May 14, 2018	Depart USA	
May 15, 2018	Arrive Rome – Colosseum Tour	
May 16, 2018	Rome - Vatican Tour	
May 17, 2018	Travel to Florence	
May 18, 2018	Florence Tour	
May 19, 2018	Travel to Barcelona	Blog 1 Due
May 20, 2018	Barcelona Tour	
May 21, 2018	Barcelona - Montserrat Excursion	
May 22, 2018	Travel to Paris	Blog 2 Due
May 23, 2018	Paris Tour	
May 24, 2018	Paris Free Day	
May 25, 2018	Travel to London – Westminster Abbey	Blog 3 Due
May 26, 2018	London Tour	
May 27, 2018	Return to US	
June 1, 2018	Post Program	Reflection Post/Video



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Rules for Submission

Please submit all posts on TBD. These posts should follow the calendar above, and are expected to be submitted by the date listed. If for any reason these dates change, please abide by the new due date and disregard the date listed in this syllabus.

Responsibilities

All of the assignments are meant to focus on the following areas: a critical reflection upon the study abroad experience, an appreciation and understanding of another culture, as well as an increased sense of self-awareness.

Failure to complete the course requirements will result in a failing grade for this course.

Failure to comply with all programmatic, academic, and internship site policies and procedures may negatively affect student grades. The following are examples of such negative behavior:

- Failure to attend in-country orientation sessions and required professional activities
- Failure to comply with policies and procedures at the internship site
- Failure to interact in a positive and respectful fashion with internship site supervisors and workers
- Failure to interact in a positive and respectful fashion with Resident Directors or Program Coordinators
- Behaving in a knowingly culturally offensive manner

Disability Policy Statement

Students with documented disabilities may be entitled to specific accommodations. The College at Brockport's Office for Student with Disabilities (OSD) makes this determination. Please contact the Office of Students with Disabilities at (585) 395-5409 or osdoffic@brockport.edu to inquire about obtaining an official letter to the course instructors detailing any approved accommodations.

It is vitaly important that the Office of International Education be informed by the student at the time of program application if the student has need of any specific accommodation. On some programs and in some countries the available facilities and laws dealing with disabilities are different than on the campus at Brockport. Ample time needs to be given so that the Office of



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International Education can seek to provide the best opportunities and advice for any student that needs special accommodation.

Policy on Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is a serious breach of that trust which exists between a student, one's fellow students and the instructor. Academic dishonesty is a major violation of College policy, which can result in the failure of this course, as well as in a range of disciplinary actions, from an official warning to suspension or dismissal from the College. Any student suspected of such a violation will be subject to charges.