



Minot State
students
**STUDYING
ABROAD**

Featuring:

Brittna Gregory
Nathan Donnelly
Josh Duek
BriAnna Menge
Jaileen Brodziak
Christopher Hodgson
Shelby Pederson

**Office of International
Programs**

500 University Ave W
Minot, North Dakota
58707, USA

Email: studyabroad@minotstateu.edu

Phone:
(701)858-4645

www.minotstateu.edu/international



Minot State student Brittna Gregory, a sophomore studying English Education, is currently studying abroad with Semester at Sea. Semester at Sea is an accredited study abroad program affiliated with Minot State University. Students take rigorous classes aboard the “MV Explorer” and travel to nine or more countries around the world.

While preparing for her voyage, Brittna provided the following explanation for choosing to embark upon such an exciting adventure: “Growing up in small town Berthold, ND where everyone knows everyone, I have learned almost nothing about other cultures other than what was portrayed on TV, in the classroom or on internet sites. As a traveler, I have only stepped in the ocean once, and I’ve never traveled outside of North America. I am excited for my Semester at Sea experience as I know it will give me the ability to learn more about the world without a filter. It will let me see things with my own eyes, feel things with my own hands, and step into worlds one can only imagine setting foot onto.”

“My goal for this voyage is to see things not as a tourist, but as an explorer of the great unknown. I want to use this chance to make friends, learn about other countries and experience sights I never thought I could see as a college student. I want to learn about the people and the language they use and how it applies to everyday life in each country. I plan to learn about what has made each country so different from other countries, including my own and how I can see fragments of these countries’ cultures in my home country.”

Semester at Sea is an amazing opportunity for students to receive a Global Comparative Education. This style of international study allows students to connect with a wide scope of the world’s people, cultures

and traditions. The courses on the ship build upon these experiences. For example, imagine being able to study Buddhism in your World Religion class and then meet real monks in a monastery in Burma.

Thus far, Minot State University has sent two students abroad through Semester at Sea: Brittna Gregory, and alumni Lance Hartlieb in spring 2013. According to Hartlieb, Semester at Sea was the most profound experience of his life. Next fall MSU students Layne Pflieger (Marketing) and Nathan Donnelly (English Literature) will also participate in the Semester at Sea program. We are excited to share their stories in future newsletter editions.



Studio art class on the deck of the MV Explorer.

Why choose Semester at Sea?

YOU WILL GAIN:

- An improved understanding of the world.
- A greater awareness of cultural differences.
- An improved sense of self-confidence and autonomy.
- An improved understanding of multiple cultures.
- A better understanding of own culture.
- A greater acceptance of others and their own opinions.
- An ability to live in a close community.

A Stay in the U.K.

by Nathan Donnelly, Semester at Sea future participant

If you are an American soccer fan, you may remember sitting on the couch and watching as the United States and England tied 1-1 during the beginning stages of the 2010 World Cup. I, however, was sitting in a rowdy pub in London as this game came to an ambivalent conclusion. I was able to experience firsthand the semi-hostile remarks directed across the pond towards my fellow Americans. Had the U.S. beaten England, I’m sure these remarks would have been fully hostile. While this was not the case, I still decided to play things safe and pretended to be a Canadian during the post-game bitterness. Other than this singular occasion, however, the English were a very friendly crowd.

My trip to London was a side trip that resulted from a foreign exchange program hosted by my high school in Williston, North Dakota, and a German high school in Herkenrath, a town near Cologne close to the western border of the country. As part of this month-long exchange trip, we got to fly to London for a week, which is why I found myself in the middle of the World Cup crossfire. Our group stayed in a hostel and visited many notable land marks, as well as some more esoteric travel gems. Westminster Abbey, Big Ben, and Piccadilly Circus were all checked off my travel list on the first day. There is a small park with a few benches directly across from the Palace of Westminster. This is where a few friends and I sat for a few hours people-watching and admiring Big Ben from afar just off to the left of our views. Piccadilly Circus, as can be imagined from the name, was a zoo. It lies in the center of London and can perhaps be compared to Times Square of New York. Giant billboards and some interesting shops were discovered at this busy intersection. These were some of the big-name attractions that I had heard so much about, and they

were all as spectacular as I had imagined them being. These are landmarks that I would venture to say most people make a trip to when they visit London. The rest of my trip was comprised of some more peculiar and lesser known sights.

On the morning of the second day of my time spent in London, my travel group and I went on a Jack the Ripper tour. We were led through some of the oldest parts of London and told that these were the areas where the infamous killer struck. The fact that these areas of London were still cobblestoned made the experience a little more eerie. The tour ended with our guide’s speculations as to what happened to the killer whom was never caught. She thought that Jack had headed to America (this may have had something to do with the fact that all of her current customers were Americans). After this tour came Madame Tussauds, a giant wax museum with just about every celebrity and famous historical figure you can imagine. I even got the shake the (wax) President’s hand. If you stand in one place long enough while on the floor of the museum, a few people may even come up and examine you as if you were part of the wax collection. This happened to me while I was at the museum, and these people were in for quite the startle when I moved suddenly. Some of the other highlights of my trip included a Phantom of the Opera show (don’t bring cameras or they will be confiscated), St. Paul’s Cathedral, and the London Eye, which is 400 foot tall ferris wheel and a great way to orient yourself in the city.

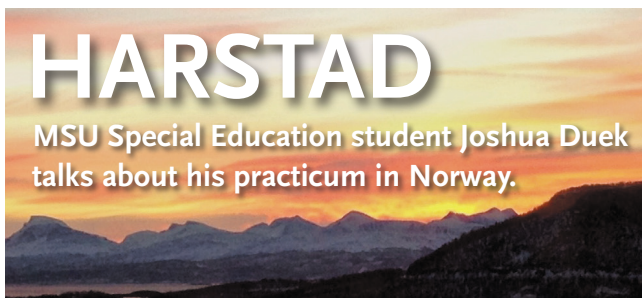
Leaving London was a struggle. There was so much that I got to experience that I would have loved to do again. I was left with only one experience that I would not hope to relive, and that was the experience in the pub as the British tied with the U.S. in soccer. If you are going to London, enjoy the experience, but be mindful of the soccer schedule.

Students who have **EVOLVED** through MSU's study abroad programs.



"Being in another culture was the first time in my life where I didn't understand exactly what was going on around me. I mean, I couldn't understand what people were saying, I couldn't understand the context, and everything was unfamiliar. That was probably the most valuable part of the experience because it allowed me to really understand what my [special needs] students go through on a daily basis, and it taught me to learn how to empathize with them."

- Joshua Duek



Joshua Duek was the spring 2014 award recipient for the High North Fellowship Scholarship. This exciting scholarship provides funds for one MSU student majoring in Special Education or Social Work to study abroad in Harstad, Norway for a semester. Participants of the program are placed in a practical setting working in a Norwegian schools.

Joshua's journey into the Arctic Circle, and living in Harstad was an adventure. At first, he experienced many frustrating moments, such as adjusting to living in a country he wasn't accustomed to, experiencing cooking for himself, learning how to properly pronounce Norwegian words, fitting the large sized Norwegian Kroner bills (currency) in his wallet and going through culture shock. However, he says that even though some moments were difficult, he is so humbled and proud of his time spent abroad, because of the person he has become as a result of it.

Once Joshua became more adjusted to the lifestyle of Harstad he was able to dive into the culture of Norway. He mentions that the best possible thing you can do when you feel like something could be different or challenging, is to be open to learning. Much of his practicum was spent in silence, enabling him to sit back, listening with an eagerness to learn. Once he felt like he had absorbed enough to participate in a respectful way, he did. It was important to him to become engaged with the students in the classroom using a Norwegian approach.

In the process of learning a Norwegian approach to teaching, he also gained perspective on the Norwegian way of life. Josh is a very social person, and loves surrounding himself with people. He decided to join several extracurricular sports teams, allowing him to become good friends with local athletes, who in turn helped him integrate into the community of Harstad. These new connections helped him feel more rooted in his life in Norway.



BriAnna Menge

BriAnna Menge is a senior at MSU studying Special Education and Elementary Education. BriAnna is a high-

achieving student, equipped with extensive knowledge gained from her previous practicum that took place in North Dakota.

In the past BriAnna has organized a diversity program called "Helping Kids Piece Together the Meaning of Diversity" where she taught the concepts of diversity to a group of elementary students in Thompson, North Dakota. With this background, she is really looking forward to understanding first-hand the importance of being culturally aware and sensitive to those she is working with, both colleagues and students.



Jaileen Brodziak

Jaileen Brodziak is a Canadian student at MSU studying Special Education. She is a remarkable young woman with an

infectious personality. Jaileen had traveled around parts of Europe several years ago, however, she has never been to Scandinavia.

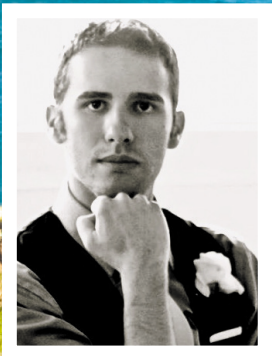
Jaileen will be placed in a local high school in Harstad, and she will be working directly with the special education students. She will be receiving credit for her Minot State *Leadership in Special Education* course while in Norway. Before departing, Jaileen stated, "I am excited to learn new skills that apply to my field of study and be able to share and pass on what I've learned to better the needs of others."

Learn more about Harstad through BriAnna's blog at:
<http://briannas-excellent-adventure.blogspot.com/2015/01/travel-time.html>

Students who will **EVOLVE** through MSU's upcoming study abroad programs.

Student Teaching Abroad

Christopher Hodgson will be completing his student teaching in New Zealand through The Global Student Teaching program.



Christopher Hodgson is an MSU Elementary Education major who will be doing his practicum in New Zealand this spring.

Prior to his departure, Chris reflected on why he is so excited to student teach abroad: “My thirst for knowledge and expertise in all areas continued as I entered college at Minot State University to begin my freshman year as a Zoology major, with active participation in the Drama department. Before I ever decided to be a teacher, I was determined to earn a degree in Zoology so I could spend time in the wild studying wolves in some other country, so the idea of studying abroad has been with me since a very young age; but when I was first presented the idea of studying abroad for student teaching, I had thought, ‘wow that would sure be fun, but how could I do that with education degree?’ A friend and I discussed the possibility of student teaching abroad in New Zealand together and thought the experience would be wonderful. We knew this would be a once-in-a-lifetime experience that would only be possible if we seize the opportunity right now as students.”

Chris explains that studying in another country opens a person to different ideas and practices. It would be impossible to gain these skills without stepping outside your comfort zone. Study abroad is a great way to quench your natural thirst for knowledge.

Chris continues, “Of course the main reason for wanting to perform my student teaching in New Zealand is because I have heard from several educators that the education in New Zealand is phenomenal and how successful it is,

so why not gain some of that knowledge and bring it over to the states to incorporate it into our teaching? The thing I most want to investigate would be their developmentalist approaches to teaching.

I learned that in New Zealand the day you turn five years of age is the time you begin school. This brought up so many questions like: How does a teacher manage a classroom that may have students where it is only their first day, but others who have been in school for almost an entire year? How does a student move on to the next grade or level if there is no true beginning or end to a school year? How do teachers approach teaching various lessons and skills if their students are all at varying levels of development, nor have yet to learn the foundational skills for said topic?

It is questions like those that drive me to do my teaching practicum in New Zealand. It is part of our nature as humans to thirst for knowledge and state our curiosity. That is why I will be successful in my endeavors. Like most people I have had to work to get where I am now and in doing so, I don't like to give up on my dreams. As such, I wouldn't squander any affordances offered my way. To sum up why I know I will be successful in this program is that I believe in my abilities, and myself, yet I am humbled by the amount of knowledge I have yet to learn. Studying abroad is something I have always wanted to do because of my thirst for knowledge of the world around me. Furthermore, I understand that the difference between a successful person and others is not the lack of strength or knowledge, but rather a lack of their will.”

Meet students who will
EVOLVE
through MSU's
spring 2015
Study abroad
programs.

Brittna Gregory
Semester at Sea

Christopher Hodgson
New Zealand

Shelby Pederson
Megan Fitzpatrick
Edelbis Ortiz
Spain

Rebecca Deaver
Rachael Simon
Ireland

Cassidy Gempler
Denmark

BriAnna Menge
Jaileen Brodziaak
Norway

Spanish in Spain

Shelby Pederson will be studying Spanish language in Sevilla, Spain this spring 2015.



Shelby, a Spanish and Social Work major, believes that learning Spanish is extremely important in North Dakota for her fields of study. With an increase in Spanish speakers moving into the area, the need is growing.

Shelby decided to study abroad in Sevilla, Spain along with her friend Megan Fitzpatrick, in order to become fully immersed in a Spanish speaking country. She will be taking a series of courses at Universidad Menendez Pelayo to enhance her Spanish language skills, while simultaneously working towards her degree at MSU. She will be staying with a host family in the city during her program.

This program offers a great combination of strong academics and a broad range of subjects, thus allowing Shelby and Megan to take courses suitable for both their Social Work and Nursing degrees. The girls will also be joined in Sevilla by Edelbis Ortiz Gamboa, who is an MSU Business major. This program is an especially good choice for students who want to study abroad together because the range of course subjects offered is so broad.

Sevilla is a medium sized, very old city that is home to architecture and history extending far into the past. Shelby is excited to see these aspects of Spanish history.

Shelby has traveled throughout Germany, Australia, England, France, Belgium and Switzerland, but has never been to Spain.

Shelby is excited to be able to apply what she learns to her future career in Social Work. She knows she will enhance her cross-cultural competencies and learn about working with diverse populations. Shelby is particularly interested in working with children because she believes that intervening with students who are struggling at an early age could resolve problems before they might develop.

MSU language majors are required to study abroad. This program in Spain is an excellent choice with a variety of classes that could have transferable credit to MSU. All three MSU students participating in the program during spring 2015 will be receiving credit for their time abroad, while becoming fully immersed in Spanish life.