



2013 Conference

On a Mission: Fulfilling the International and Diversity Goals of Your University's Mission Statement

02/19/2013

Re-imagining Higher Education in a Global Context



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Access to study abroad opportunities for all

Maximizing the global impact of an institution
while supporting underrepresented students and faculty on campus

Meredith McQuaid, University of Minnesota
AIEA Conference, February 2013

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University of Minnesota

- Minnesota's only public research institution
- Comprehensive institution:
 - 130 undergraduate majors
 - 160 graduate/professional programs
- Enrollment (Twin Cities): 47,323
 - 30,375 undergraduates
 - 16,948 grad/prof

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Access Abroad: Study Abroad for Students with Disabilities

- Students with disabilities served (Twin Cities): 2,211
- Access Abroad website provides guidelines and documents to use when assisting students with disabilities who wish to study abroad
- Initiated through federal FIPSE funding, the resources are designed for education abroad advisers, disability services advisers, and students nationwide and nationally





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LEARNING ABROAD CENTER

Professionals

Access Abroad

- Resources for Students
- Resources for International Education and Disability Professionals
- Accommodation Request Form (pdf)
- Accessibility Abroad Site Summaries
- Access Abroad Contacts

Access Abroad

Overview

Access Abroad is a collaborative effort at the University of Minnesota between the [Learning Abroad Center](#) and [Disability Services](#) to provide information and guidance on accessibility overseas. The materials on this website are designed to assist students, faculty and staff with the process of identifying and obtaining reasonable accommodations and include planning tools to help prepare students for a successful international experience.

Education abroad is an exciting and rewarding opportunity for all students. Making education abroad accessible to students with disabilities offers valuable benefits for everyone involved.

"Going abroad was an irreplaceable experience; everyone should do it. It's more difficult if you have a disability, but it's so interesting to see how cultures differ." Angela Finney, Access Abroad student to Spain

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Resources provided for advisers

- Suggested advising procedures and guidelines
- Downloadable forms to obtain disability accommodations information, administrative guidelines, homestay suggestions, and more
 - Advising guidelines among the most used
- Suggestions on how study abroad office and disability services can design a collaborative advising process to assist students with disabilities as they consider study abroad





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Resources provided for students

- Checklist to follow when considering study abroad
- Tips from past students with disabilities; video interviews with past study abroad students
- Accessibility information for specific U of M study abroad programs
- Suggested external sources on accessibility abroad





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The screenshot shows the University of Minnesota Learning Abroad Center website. The header includes the University of Minnesota logo and the slogan "Driven to Discover". Navigation links include Home, Programs, Students, Parents, Professionals, and About Us. A search bar is present for the Learning Abroad Center. The main content area is titled "Student Experiences" and features a photograph of a group of students. Below the photo, there is a section titled "Student Experiences" with a disclaimer and three student stories: Jennifer Down Under, Andrew: An Adventure in Costa Rica, and Angela: Study Abroad in Spain. A sidebar on the left lists navigation options for the Learning Abroad Center.

LEARNING ABROAD CENTER

Students

Student Identity

Information for Students with Disabilities: Access Abroad

Student Experiences

Jennifer studies in Melbourne, Australia

Andrew: An Adventure in Costa Rica

Angela: Study Abroad in Spain

Student Experiences

These are reports of students who studied through Access Abroad. Access Abroad does not endorse or verify the accuracy of disability information on specific to culture in the countries named.

[Jennifer: Down Under](#)

Jenny, who has a mobility disability, went to Australia to continue her studies in marketing and speech communications. She experienced firsthand the differences between access in Australia and access at home.

[Andrew: An Adventure in Costa Rica](#)

Although Andrew found the intensive coursework to be quite challenging, he didn't let Attention Deficit Disorder interfere with his international experience.

[Angela: Study Abroad in Spain](#)

Spring semester in Spain was an experience of a lifetime for Angela, a student in international business who has systemic lupus.

Other Information

Another excellent source of study abroad stories from students with disabilities is Mobility International USA, which promotes international exchange for people with disabilities. You'll find a number of student articles published in their [AWAY](#) journal (A World Awaits You).

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Angela: Study Abroad in Spain



Spring semester in Spain was an experience of a lifetime for Angela, a student in international business who has systemic lupus. "going abroad was an irreplaceable experience; everyone should do it. It's more difficult if you have a disability, but it's so interesting to see how cultures differ." She says that some things surprised her about the experience. "It was harder and easier than I expected. It was harder because, for example, some streets in Europe are not paved, so getting around in a wheelchair is hard. But there's also a large sense of community and a different kind of focus. Spain has a national lottery, for example, in which all the money goes to [people with physical disabilities]. They don't make laws for little things like we do. The professors were so accommodating and flexible. I didn't need a doctor's letter for anything. I could just talk to my professor. The emphasis is on learning and how hard you're trying."

For students like Angela, there's little question whether study abroad has made a difference. "I had so much fun," she says. "I wouldn't replace the experience for anything in the world. It gave me my independence back. It's a challenge, but you feel wonderful. People had said to me, 'You can't do this.' And I did it!"

The information presented here is derived from the reports of students who studied through Access Abroad. Access Abroad does not endorse or verify the accuracy of disability information on specific to culture in the countries named.





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Serving students with disabilities

- 2011-12: 35 undergraduate students with disabilities studied abroad
 - Majority had non-apparent disabilities (e.g., mental health, ADHD, migraines)
 - 3 students were deaf/hard of hearing
 - 3 students used assistive mobility devices
- Participation increasing about 10% a year





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Students of Color (SOC) at University of Minnesota

- 5 campuses
- SOC undergraduate enrollment
 - 15.6% U of M systemwide
 - 18% at Twin Cities campus
- SOC study abroad participation
 - 12-13% at U of M
 - 19% national average





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Online Profile

- Student takes lead to identify topics
- Encourages early disclosure
- Provides opportunity for discussion
- Lets students know we are aware of their concerns

Topics to discuss

What would you like to talk to a staff member about?
(select all that apply)

Program type

- Study abroad
- Internship
- Language study
- English language options
- Service learning
- Volunteer
- Work
- Teach English
- Travel

Academic questions

- Academics/courses
- Application requirements
- GPA
- Language prerequisites
- Class standing

Financial questions

- Financial aid
- Scholarships
- Work while studying abroad

Logistical questions

- Application process
- Housing/meals abroad
- Passports/visas
- Student athlete status

Culture/Identity questions

- Multicultural considerations
- GLBT considerations abroad
- Cultural norms in country

Health/Accommodation questions

- Health care abroad
- Medications abroad
- Mental health abroad
- Disability considerations
- Dietary needs/restrictions

Family/Relationship questions

- Family commitments in the U.S.
- Relationships/dating abroad
- Spouse/child accompanying you

Content developed for the Summit for Learning Abroad, August 2010, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Any unauthorized use, disclosure or distribution is strictly prohibited.

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Campus Partnerships & Beyond

- Multicultural Study Abroad Group
- SEAM Freshmen Seminar Modules
- Multicultural Training for Advisers
- Dialogues on Diversity
- Outreach Events
 - MLK/Access to Success Study Abroad Day
 - Multicultural Kickoff
 - MCAE fair
- Diversity workshop for on-site staff

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Print & Web Resources

- Multicultural Study Abroad brochure (currently being phased out)
- Students of Color website
- MSAG website for advisers

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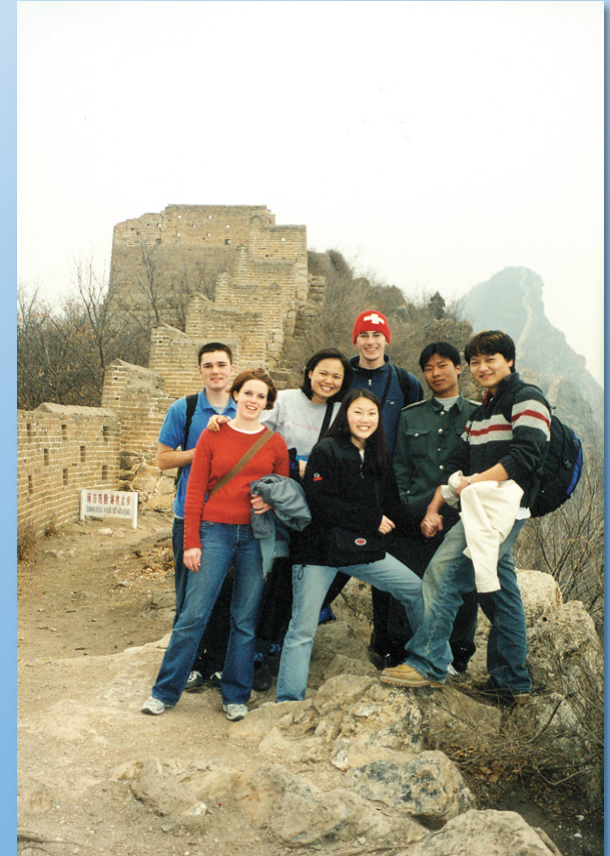
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Financial Motivation

- Diversity scholarships
- First generation/financial need scholarship
- Financial Aid Preview Meeting
- Strategies for talking with SOC about scholarships
- Offer resources for essay writing (workshops) and lots of encouragement



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Advising Points

- Follow the student's lead
- Acknowledge
- Ask clarifying questions
- Support
- Identify resources

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