

# INSIGHTS

*A look inside innovative programming with ACCENT*



PARIS • FLORENCE • LONDON • MADRID • ROME • ISTANBUL



## ACCENT London: Our Doors Are Open

*by Lizzie Terry - ACCENT London Center Director*

The ACCENT London Study Center opened our new location in May and despite the expected chaos of moving, the first programs in the new space were a great success. Students make great use of the library, computer lab, and student lounge, and both local and visiting faculty take advantage of the prime location to work in the faculty lounge before and after teaching, exchanging ideas with each other and contributing to a feeling of academic community. Complete autonomy in the expanded facilities allows us to be more flexible and creative with our programming and open our lectures and events to London's academic community.

Many of ACCENT's college and university partners have visited since the move and everyone loves the building, gasping when they first enter the Gainsborough classroom to glimpse the beautiful Georgian ceiling and view of Bedford Square. I personally invite any of you who have not yet visited to stop by during your next trip to London. Our doors are open.

## Oltrarno: At the Heart of Florence

Florence is one of the most visited cities in the world and yet many visitors leave the birthplace of the Renaissance without ever having explored one of its most interesting and well-preserved neighborhoods, Oltrarno. Its name in Italian means "beyond the Arno River" and the neighborhood is just that—the only of Florence's four historic quarters (*quartieri*) located completely on the "other" side of the Arno. Since the spring of 2011, Palazzo Guadagni in Piazza Santo Spirito, at the heart of Oltrarno, has been the home of the ACCENT Florence Study Center.

Wandering the Oltrarno neighborhood there is no need to jockey with massive tour groups for sidewalk space. It is an authentic Florentine neighborhood, only a 5-minute walk from Ponte Vecchio and a 15-minute walk from the Duomo, yet worlds away

from the chaos. The area traditionally hosted artisans' workshops, which are still very much present in a higher concentration than anywhere else in the city.

While physically removed from the main tourist routes, the area is far from peripheral and is home to a number of significant artistic and historic landmarks. Palazzo Pitti, with its world-famous museums and impressive Boboli gardens is just steps from the Study Center, as is the Church of Carmine and its Brancacci Chapel, whose frescoes by Masolino and Masaccio mark the beginnings of the Renaissance.

In Oltrarno, ACCENT students interact with locals as they shop side-by-side at the daily market held at ACCENT's front door in Piazza Santo Spirito. They visit artisan workshops as part of classes in entrepreneurship and spend hours perched in Oltrarno's quiet squares with charcoal and sketchpads



to study perspective. Many spend their spare hours volunteering with community groups based in the neighborhood and each semester, members of a nearby senior citizen association visit Italian classes for a language exchange, speaking about local traditions, family histories, and the changes they have witnessed in the city over the years.

Each year more than 10,000 American students study in Florence, but the experience in Oltrarno is unlike any other.

## GlobalNews

- In Paris, University of California students enrolled this semester in the *Paris Still Life* course will attend a live model drawing class alongside their French peers at the Paris 8 University, offering a unique opportunity for academic and cultural exchange.
- Dr. Deniz Bingöl, ACCENT Istanbul Center Director, attended the European Association for International Education (EAIE) conference, hosted in Istanbul this September, during which the University of Minnesota hosted a reception for its European partners at the Study Center.
- Yesenia Castellanos, a student of Landscape Architecture at UC Berkeley, is interning with StudioUAP in Rome for the Zappata Romana project, mapping and promoting community and edible gardens around the city. Yesenia works with the architects in the studio during the week and spends her Sundays working in the gardens on the Ancient Appian Way.
- Santa Barbara City College students in Madrid will meet with filmmakers Álvaro Pastor and Antonio Naharro after screening the pair's first feature film, *Yo También*. The film tells the story of the first man in Europe with Down syndrome to graduate with a university degree. *Yo También* received multiple awards at the San Sebastián Film Festival and at the Goya Awards (Spanish Oscars) when it was released in 2009.

## Eight Centuries of Service in Florence

ACCENT has recently embarked on a new collaboration with one of the oldest, most respected charitable institutions in Florence, the Misericordia. This fall semester, ACCENT students had the opportunity to enrich their academic experience abroad by becoming interns and volunteers for this icon in the Italian social services sector.

Established in the 13th century, the Misericordia's origins lie in the transport of sick patients to hospitals and providing burial for the deceased. Over the years, their reach broadened as they liberated debtors from prison, gave dowries to poor girls, and raised funds for the ill. In addition to maintaining its tradition of caring for the sick and elderly, today the Misericordia offers a number of services: medical treatment, food aid, shelter for women in crisis, and mental health management.

At the Misericordia, ACCENT students observe and assist with health service and civil protection operations in conjunction with



local volunteers and healthcare professionals. They participate in activities that range from emergency ambulance transport to providing security at national soccer games.

This partnership has successfully enabled students partaking in internship and volunteer opportunities to become active participants in all aspects of the Florentine community. They learn about complex social problems, interact with marginalized populations, and develop the ability to communicate across cultural and linguistic boundaries. Above all, students say that it is a “character building” and “teamwork promoting” form of experiential learning that also engages their interest in medicine, psychology, and sociology.

## Comparative Healthcare in London

Starting this fall, the University of California semester in London is offering a new course, *Comparative Healthcare*. The course is being introduced at an exciting time for England and the United States; both countries have recently undergone significant reform of their healthcare systems. Healthcare systems across the globe are facing a monumental challenge to deliver high quality, effective healthcare at a time of ever-increasing demand and financial pressure. The new course in London explores recent reforms, the structure of both countries systems, the drivers towards achieving universal care, and compares the different approaches to efficiency, patient choice, quality, and many other aspects of healthcare systems.



The course features guest speakers from different branches of the English National Health Service (NHS), including primary care and Public Health England. Students also have the opportunity to visit an NHS hospital to bring some of the themes in class to life. London is an international center for excellence in the health sciences and offers endless opportunities for students intending to enter the allied health professions, including a series of free public events at leading academic institutions such as The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London School of Economics, and The Royal Society.

The course instructor is Alisha Davies, who in 2008 received a PhD at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine investigating the epidemiology of coronary heart disease in the UK. Dr. Davies is currently a Specialty Registrar in Public Health in the NHS, based at the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust in London. She has previously contributed to the improvement of national surveillance of infectious diseases in New Zealand and the development of the Chlamydia Screening Programme in England.

## Academics in Florence, a Healthy Challenge

*by Mariarosa Mettifofo, PhD  
Academic Coordinator, Florence*

Serving as Academic Coordinator for the University of California and the University of Minnesota at the ACCENT Florence Study Center means working closely every day with a large group of passionate and highly qualified faculty in a great variety of disciplines. Exchanging ideas with faculty on innovative in- and out-of-class activities and opportunities for academic enrichment for ACCENT students truly represents one of the most rewarding aspects of my job.

Being dedicated to providing a rigorous and meaningful educational experience to students in Florence means exposing them to the extraordinary resources of the territory while also encouraging them to get out of their



comfort zone and truly accomplish what study abroad should stand for: a healthy personal challenge.

With this idea in mind, over the past two years we have developed a wide array of initiatives to facilitate the students' engagement with the city. Whenever I get a chance to converse with the students about what they value the most of their experience here, I am reassured that this is the right direction to go. Our students come from the most diverse personal and academic backgrounds, and

for a great number of them, this is their very first experience with study abroad. By their own admission, Florence represented for many of them a relatively reassuring choice: a manageable city with a long reputation for study abroad and a large international student population. Our goal is to make sure they do not remain enclosed within this familiar territory but find creative ways to challenge themselves, opening up to a new culture and reassessing their own identity in the process.



# ACCENT *on* INTERNSHIPS

## British Journal of Hospital Medicine

On her internship application, Gina Kim ranked medicine and journalism as her top interests. Gina studies Integrative Biology at UC Berkeley and has volunteered in hospitals and as a peer health educator, but she also has a passion for journalism. As a child she dreamt of becoming a news anchor and more recently, interned as a writer and editor with an online and print journal for Korean Americans. During her fall term in London, ACCENT arranged an internship for Gina with Rebecca Linssen, editor of the *British Journal of Hospital Medicine*. It's the marriage of her two passions. "I never would have expected to have an internship that combines these two interests," says Gina, "I was surprised and ecstatic."

Gina works across from Rebecca in an open plan converted church in South London. The office is shared with other copywriters and editors at the Mark Allen Group, parent company of the medical journal. Gina feels that she is contributing much more than in previous internships, quickly gaining confidence in copyediting and also working with Rebecca to learn new software and assist with the journal's layout. "At first I was really hesitant to ask questions," Gina remembers,



"but Rebecca pushed me to do so. Now I have to pat myself on the back. I feel much more confident with the work, and I know that it is because of the knowledge and experience that Rebecca has shared."

This semester in London is Gina's last at UC Berkeley. She is still considering her options post-graduation, but she knows that her internship experience in London will play a major role. "I want to go home with a clearer sense of direction and a solid foundation from which to launch my career. If I keep growing as I have in each week of this internship, I know it will lead to something big."

## Italy Travels in Florence

After three semesters at the University of Minnesota, Sarah Bentley officially committed to a pre-physical therapy track – an allied health program with an unforgiving list of prerequisites. The program, however, would not keep her from her lifelong goal of studying in Italy. Sarah not only arranged her coursework to include a semester abroad, but also found time to complete five semesters of Italian before arriving in Florence in January 2013.

Her goal-setting did not stop upon arriving in Florence. She prioritized language practice and interaction with locals, deciding that an internship would make the difference: "I wanted something that would challenge my communication and customer service skills in a foreign environment, one in which I was not always comfortable or familiar."

ACCENT arranged an internship for Sarah with Italy Travels, a tour operator servicing Florence, Rome, and Venice. Sarah collaborated on a series of projects, writing and researching in both English and Italian. She often interpreted conversations between her co-workers and English-speaking tourists on the phone and in person. Sarah realized that despite her preparation, communicating with her co-workers was quite challenging. "There are only so many ways to express a concept with limited vocabulary," she says, "I learned to think in a more dynamic and elastic way, paying more attention to visual clues."

The placement of a future physical therapist in a tourist agency puzzled some of her friends, but Sarah knew it was the right match: "Each patient will have a different cultural and personal background. There could be language barriers. A physical therapist needs to be able to develop and maintain conversations during the course of treatment in order to put the patient at ease. Connecting with the patient's motivations and personality is essential when developing a treatment plan." With the skills acquired in Florence, Sarah is up for that challenge.

## Faculty Focus: Exploring London's Olympic Past...and Present

*by Donald Dengel, PhD, University of Minnesota*



Minnesota students visit Wembley Stadium

*Dr. Donald Dengel's January term program included students from the University of Minnesota's School of Kinesiology, Carlson School of Management, and College of Science & Engineering.*

In 2012, London hosted the Olympic Games for the third time, highlighting another unique period of rich history for London, the world, and the Olympic Games. With the help of ACCENT, we were able to take classroom learning to the streets of London. Using lectures in politics, sports science, and finance, our students learned about each of the three London Olympic Games and the impacts they had on the city. The 1908 Games came at a time when the United Kingdom was at its highest point as a world power, with London at the heart of it all. Forty years later much had changed. The 1948 Games took place in London after a 12-year hiatus caused by World War II, and came to be known as the Austerity Games because of the post-war rationing and poor economic climate that existed in London. The 2012 Olympic Games involved the redevelopment of London's East End, and were advertised as the Legacy Olympic Games. The hope that embodies the Games of the XXX Olympiad will leave a lasting legacy for this area of London and its residents. After the lectures, students took to the streets of London and the surrounding areas to visit the locations where these games took place. The sights included places like Wembley Stadium, Wimbledon, Windsor Castle, Hampton Court Palace, and the BBC Headquarters. Students also experienced Britain's love of sports and competition firsthand by attending a Premier League Football match. While building students' confidence as world travelers, this course allowed students to leave behind the textbook and learn about history by actually seeing and experiencing it on the streets of London.

## Bringing London to St. Louis

Adjunct local faculty bring great value to study abroad programs, not only excelling in the classroom, but going above and beyond to counsel students through the transition to a new country. Beyond the syllabus and far from the lecture hall, they are enthusiastic to explain intricacies of local history and culture that lend a sense of context to the student experience. Study abroad faculty often expand their role of professor to include that of academic and career advisor, not to mention mentor.

This is exactly the case with Dr. Andreas Staab, who is the Internship Program Director for the Washington University London Internship Program, based at the ACCENT London Study Center. Dr. Staab also teaches on the program's European Study Tour (detailed in next article). Outside the classroom, Dr. Staab is founder and managing director of a training and consulting agency, which works with governments,



NGOs, and business groups in Central and Eastern Europe on EU accession issues. Dr. Staab was recently invited to lecture on campus in St. Louis by the Olin Business School's Office for International Programs and Global Initiatives and the School's student-run International Business Association. The lecture was entitled "The Sovereign Debt Crises in the Eurozone."

Increasingly, colleges and universities are bringing faculty from their study abroad programs to campus, finding that it is a great opportunity to connect with past students and pique interest in potential future students. During his trip to campus, Dr. Staab also met with underclassman to answer their questions about the London Internship Program.

Of course selling London is no problem for Dr. Staab, who believes the city "offers ambitious and motivated students the chance to be inspired by a relentless creative energy." He expands, "London is unique: fostered by the processes of globalization and EU

integration, the city has been a magnet for foreigners and the population of London now consists of fifty-six percent of residents who were born outside of the UK. It truly is an international city, arguably unlike any other place in the world. London continues to attract the top talent in the world."

## European Study Tour

In addition to innovative courses and top internship placements in some of London's most competitive companies, it is the European Study Tour that makes Washington University's London Internship Program stand apart from the rest. Pairs of students are assigned a European country and policy research focus, and then set up meetings with policy makers and businesses in their assigned country, spending three days in the capital city conducting primary research. The experience culminates with a four-day trip to Brussels during which students visit the European Parliament and the European Commission and hear a range of different opinions about European integration. Following group workshops, students present their research to their peers and invited guests in a series of seminars and a thematic group presentation. Students work closely and pro-actively with Brussels insiders - from members of parliament, to EU civil servants and lobbyists during workshops and seminars.

## Faculty Focus: Global Application of Managerial Accounting

by Karen Geiger, MS CPA and Glenda Levendowski, MS CPA  
Arizona State University, WP Carey School of Business

Double-entry accounting was originally described in 1494 by a Tuscan monk, Luca Pacioli, when he documented the system used by Venetian merchants. As educators, we both believe that "seeing is believing," and with the help of ACCENT in Florence, we developed our *Managerial Accounting in Italy* course so that our students could go to the birthplace of accounting and experience the continued use of these concepts in today's global businesses. ACCENT arranged for us to visit Piaggio, the Italian company who manufactures Vespa scooters, as well as motorcycles and commercial vehicles, around the world. Piaggio took our students through their factory in Pontedero and provided explanations of their manufacturing processes. Piaggio also hosted a question and answer panel that included senior management who provided insight into considerations required for today's global companies to compete successfully. Our students also visited Carrara, where the marble used by Michelangelo for his David is still mined. Students saw how specialized equipment impacts the type of work that can be done by small groups of workers, and how an industry that has been in

existence for hundreds of years continues to evolve as techniques and equipment are improved. The importance of automation in the forms of computers and specialized equipment was further illustrated for our students in their visit to Furpile, a manufacturing company in Prato who makes textiles for some of today's most famous designers. These experiences provided our students with a unique perspective on the relevancy and "real world" application of the concepts we are teaching – regardless of the type of business – in today's global economy.

### Look for the 4th Issue of Insights in March!

The next issue of ACCENT's newsletter will highlight custom programming in Madrid and Paris, including highlights from fall and spring programs in both Study Centers.

For past issues of *Insights*, visit our archives at:  
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