

INSIGHTS

A look inside innovative programming with ACCENT



PARIS • FLORENCE • LONDON • MADRID • ROME • ISTANBUL



Connecting with Alumni Abroad

Last spring, the University of California Davis collaborated with ACCENT to coordinate and host a reception for alumni and current students in Madrid. Sponsored by the school's Provost and the Dean of the School of Education, the evening welcomed Madrid-based alumni and current UC Davis students who were in Madrid for the spring Spanish language and culture program and the UCEAP Rome-Madrid European Transformations quarter, both of which are housed at the ACCENT Study Center.

ACCENT's Study Centers are located in cultural and economic hubs, which are often home to sizeable alumni populations from our partner schools. Our local teams are happy to assist campus alumni offices in reaching out to these communities and planning events with current students and alumni, which not only provide students with valuable insights and networking opportunities, but also strengthen the university identity of the study abroad programs.

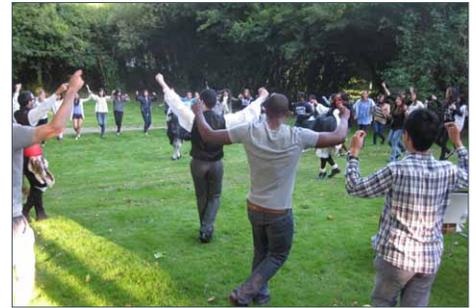
Exploring Regional Identity in Galicia

Throughout history, Spanish society and politics have been characterized by intense regionalism that challenges the formation of a true national identity. These undercurrents, particularly strong in Catalonia, the Basque Country, and Galicia, were greatly intensified during the Spanish Civil War and Francisco Franco's forty-year dictatorship, during which time expressions of regional identity and the use of regional languages were prohibited by law. Today, nearly forty years after Franco's death, any study abroad

experience would be greatly enhanced by the opportunity to study these regional cultures, each of which represents a fundamental component of contemporary Spanish society.

Each summer, participants in the University of California's summer quarter program in Madrid consider the unique aspects of a regional culture firsthand during a study tour to Galicia, organized in partnership with the University of Santiago de Compostela. ACCENT's relationship with the university means that local Galician professors lead the guest lectures and walking tours over the four days in Galicia.

The intensive itinerary provides a complete picture of Galician culture, as students visit a series of small, characteristic Galician towns such as O Cebreiro, a traditional mountain village that is the first stop in Galicia on the Camino de Santiago. Other highlights include guided visits to the breathtaking San Andres de Teixido sanctuary and an afternoon at Garita de Herbeira, Europe's highest



cliff. The study tour in Galicia emphasizes the true diversity of Spain's geographic and cultural landscape.

The group visits the region's largest cities, A Coruña and Santiago de Compostela, where they spend a night in the university dormitory.

For most students, the highlight of the study tour is a workshop in traditional *gallego* music and folk dance, conducted in one of Santiago de Compostela's most beautiful parks, where students let their guard down and dance to live music in Santiago's typical late evening summer sun.



GlobalNews

- Students from the University of Delaware January term theater program in London attended the National Theatre production of *King Lear* and enjoyed a meeting in class with actor Tom Brooke who played the role of Edgar.
- University of Minnesota students taking part in the Sport Culture in Italy freshman seminar will meet with Trevor Mbakwe from the Virtus Roma professional basketball team. Mbakwe played for the University of Minnesota men's basketball team before being drafted to Rome's professional team in August 2013.
- Students of urban sociology in Istanbul will volunteer at a local soup kitchen and refugee welcome center, where they will learn firsthand about the conflict in Syria and Turkey's role in accepting Syrian refugees.

Custom Excursions to Lyon

As a *guide-conférencier* and art historian, ACCENT Paris' Mirek Siedliski not only designs custom excursions, but guides them as well. A licensed guide-lecturer in France, Mirek was invited to a conference in Lyon this fall, hosted by the French National Federation of Tourist Guides (FNGIC). The conference, *Lyon et la soie* (Lyon and Silk), explored the history of silk production in Lyon from the 16th century through the present day. This is just one of many fascinating subjects to study in France's second largest city, only two hours by train from Paris.

Lyon is home to one of the world's most prestigious silk producers, Tassinari et Chatel, providing a dynamic and customizable excursion visit. Students of marketing consider the evolution of the luxury brand, born from Lyon's tradition of weaving elaborate creations for France's royal palaces since Louis XIV.



Groups studying engineering, technology, and design explore the progression of technique from hand-weaving, to Jacquard's first mechanical loom (installed at Tassinari et Chatel in 1806), to the company's blend of pioneering technology and traditional craftsmanship in today's market. Students studying fine arts and history can view the plans for some of the manufacturer's most important works on display at Versailles and Elysee.

Beyond silk, Lyon has world-renowned examples of architecture from Medieval and

Renaissance times, as well as modern masterpieces such as Jean Nouvel's Opera House and Santiago Calatrava's TGV train station.

Lyon is widely considered as France's gastronomic capital. During guided visits to the city's historic markets, students consider the evolution of cuisine in Lyon and topics in globalization and international food law. Though the annual Fete de Lumiere happens only once a year in December, the festival has made Lyon a destination for lighting engineers and energy companies seeking to establish their place on the cutting edge of lighting technology. Company visits and guest lectures can be arranged all year long.

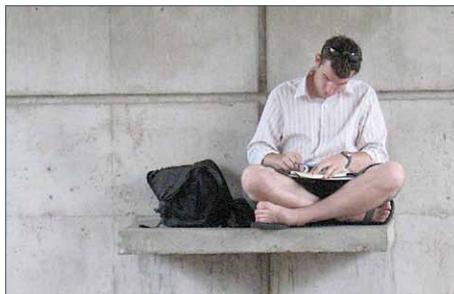
As more and more study abroad programs seek to include custom excursions that relate directly to the course's learning objectives, Mirek's extensive network, expertise, and creativity make all the difference for programs at the Paris Study Center.

New Perspectives on Paris

Students on the UCEAP Fall 2013 program in French and European Studies who participated in the program's pilot introductory drawing course, *Paris Still Life*, learned to see the city of light from an entirely new perspective – their own. Faculty and administrators at the University of California sketched out the idea for the course, while the local instructor, artist Kasia Ozga, brought it to life with her creativity and local knowledge.

The class offered students wonderful opportunities to interact with French art students and engage with the city. Students drew live models alongside their French peers at the Université Paris VIII, found inspiration in some of the city's iconic neighborhoods such as Montmartre as well as in some lesser known areas like the *promenade plantée*, and they even tried their hand at drawing small machines in the Musée des Arts et Métiers.

Towards the end of the term, students followed in the proverbial footsteps of Degas



and spent an afternoon drawing circus students who were practicing in the tents of the Fratellini Circus School. During the last week of the program, ACCENT hosted a week-long exhibition that students organized in collaboration with their instructor. Students, faculty, and administrators had the opportunity to explore and appreciate the thematically arranged pieces and to reflect upon how University of California students see the city of light.

Madrid: One Neighborhood at a Time

The University of California's European Transformations program offers students the opportunity to study in two European capitals, Madrid and Rome. This unique program model permits students to sharpen their critical thinking skills and further intercultural development as they immerse themselves within not one, but two new cultures. The courses are taught across both cities, affording students the opportunity to interact with twice the number of local faculty, all experts in their fields and specialists in

the host-city. These professors collaborate to teach a series of complex courses that consider both Spanish and Italian case studies, exploring historical parallels and the shared challenges presented by the 21st century.

One of these courses is *Neighborhoods of Madrid & Rome: Architecture, Community, & Urban Planning*, added to the curriculum this year to accommodate rising enrollments after a successful 2013 pilot program. *Neighborhoods* is based on past courses taught by Dr. Antonella De Michelis, a professor with the University of California's Rome Through the Ages semester program. Dr. De Michelis collaborated with the local faculty and academic coordinators in Madrid and Rome to adapt the course to a dual-city model, exploring both cities as interactive studios to understand the unique links between urban design, national identity, and historical context.

The course instructors for Madrid and Rome, Germán de Diego and Andrew Kranis, respectively, are both urban historians and practicing architects. Instruction will take place predominantly on-site, as the group visits each neighborhood to gain a deeper understanding of the cities' layout, topography, and infrastructures within a socio-historic framework. Students will be required to record their observations both in- and outside of class in a sketchbook to encourage more active engagement with their surroundings, while developing analytical and intercultural frameworks to process this and any future experience in a foreign context.



Photo by Kasia Ozga

ACCENT *on* INTERNSHIPS

Second Gen Pictures in Madrid

Before setting foot in the offices of Second Gen Pictures, an independent film distributor in Madrid, Panayiota Kuvetakis had already completed a number of internships Stateside in public relations and copyediting. While her previous internships were valuable learning experiences, the senior at UC Berkeley credits her experience in Madrid as a turning point in her academic and professional development. “I study Comparative Literature and Theater, which are both based in critical reading. I’d never thought of that as a marketable skill, but at Second Gen it was much more applicable than I ever imagined. I felt like a credible reader.”

When Panayiota started her internship at Second Gen, her managers Marc Vergoz and Sandra Ortiz had just returned from the Cannes Film Festival with piles of new movie scripts to evaluate. She read through all of these scripts and generated “coverage,” including a summary of each script and her opinion of the films’ fit for the Spanish market. It was a role that required a nuanced understanding of Spanish culture, something that her two managers helped her to develop through open dialogue and structured feedback on her reports. “My reports included a recommendation to consider or pass on each script, and I felt like my input and opinions were genuinely trusted and considered.”

The internship experience also proved valuable for Panayiota’s language skills. Toward the end of the internship, her managers challenged her to write her reports in Spanish, providing her with edits and feedback that



dramatically improved her writing skills. She also contributed by reading and editing the translation of a French novel under consideration for development into a script.

“I was very close to not studying abroad,” remembered Panayiota. “I’m very involved on campus and did not want to waste a semester away, but now I understand the value of study abroad. I don’t know when else I would ever have gotten that chance, personally and professionally. It gave me a lot of confidence in my abilities, prepared me to face the job market, and inspired me to consider film production as a possible career.”



Excursion to 18th Century Bordeaux

As part of the annual fall semester program, University of Southern California in Paris students embarked on a custom excursion to Bordeaux, an opportunity USC Resident Director Sylvie Koneski and ACCENT’s Mirek Siedliski designed in collaboration.

A walking tour presented the city and its monuments, focusing particularly on the 18th century influences that dominate Bordeaux’s architecture. Students were also taken to the Musée d’Aquitaine where they spent much of their time in the rooms dedicated to the extraordinary political, social, and economic expansion of the city during the 18th century when Bordeaux participated actively in the slave trade.

The city of Bordeaux takes advantage of the fact that its hinterland is one of the most fertile areas of France and produces around one third of all the fine delicacies for which France is so well known, like wine, foie gras, and truffles. With this great asset at their fingertips,

they very cleverly engaged in direct trade with the French colonies in the Antilles, providing wealthy plantation owners with the luxury goods to match their lifestyle. These goods were delivered in exchange for colonial foods much sought after in Europe such as coffee, cocoa, and sugar, and Bordeaux made huge profits by exporting these products at huge profit across the continent.

It is this level of detail and exploration of a country’s culture and history that help students better understand their host-country and the tapestry of events that make France what it is today.

Direct Enrollment and Full Immersion in Madrid

One of the advantages of direct enrollment is cultural immersion. In Madrid, ACCENT’s local partner institutions — Universidad Complutense, Universidad Politécnica, and Universidad Carlos III — offer a variety of co-curricular activities that promote the students’ understanding of the Spanish culture. Whether sport, political and cultural events, or community service opportunities, ACCENT encourages students to take advantage of any opportunity to socialize with local students and live the experience abroad not as mere spectators, but as active participants in Spanish university life.

In addition to a series of cultural events at the ACCENT Study Center, students may

join the activities on campus organized by international associations such as the Erasmus Student Network (ESN), a non-profit international student association that brings together exchange students at several universities in Spain and Europe. They offer a range of support services and educational and cultural events.

These organizations allow students to contrast their first impressions, opinions, and concerns about living and studying in Spain with other international students who are also experiencing the Spanish culture for the first time, and who can consequently contribute to the decodification of linguistic, cultural, and social elements of the Spanish behavior, history, and traditions.

Indeed, cultural immersion is challenging since it requires a student to abandon his or her comfort zone and dive into uncharted waters. Through regular meetings and events, ACCENT aims to motivate students to face these challenges and make the most of their study abroad experience.



Faculty Focus: Fluent in Film

by Juan M. Morali

Audiovisual language is one of the most universal and influential forms of art and social communication. Together with ACCENT Madrid, I created the *Introduction to Film* course as a complete immersion into the language of film in order to introduce Santa Barbara City College students to the complete range of elements that form this complex art of communication.

Such detailed knowledge of narrative possibilities provided the students with a broad understanding and vision of the cinematographic language: genres, acting styles, camera position, framing, photographic styles, sound, and editing. Through this introduction, students acquired a critical discourse that helped them look at and speak about movies in a totally different way.

In addition to theoretical coursework and screenings of key films throughout history,



the course necessitated a culminating experience to complete the sense of immersion in the film narrative. Toward the end of the semester, we screened the Spanish independent film *Yo, también*, which not only exposed students to the unique art of translating a local story for a global audience, but also provided them the opportunity to meet the film's directors in person. Álvaro Pastor and Antonio Naharro are two of the best-respected Spanish screenwriters-directors in the industry today. *Yo también* received multiple awards at the San Sebastián Film Festival and at the Goya Awards when it was released in 2009.

After the screening, students participated in an informal question and answer with Pastor and Naharro, which turned out to be one of the highlights of the course. Students discussed and asked about the creative process behind the art of writing, producing, and shooting the film, all while speaking a 'language' that only months before was completely unfamiliar.

Learning Online, Abroad in Madrid

In September, Santa Barbara City College students will arrive in Madrid for the school's second fall semester program in the city. This year, students will take part in a pilot program that introduces online courses to the Madrid curriculum, expanding the portfolio of transferable credits available to students during the semester. It is a technique that increases



the value of the program for cost- and credit-conscious students and is expected to boost recruiting efforts.

Campus faculty will instruct the online courses, while local experts in Madrid will lead a series of experiential guest lectures and site visits that complement the online course material with local case studies. These on-site hours will facilitate the students' engagement with the host cities, exposing diverse neighborhoods and exploring local culture and society through the two disciplines: communication and environmental science.

Two online courses will be added to the curriculum alongside Professor Juan Morali's *Introduction to Film* course, a Spanish art and culture course, and Spanish language.

These courses will also be available to students studying next fall with SBCC's dual-city Paris and Istanbul semester, using online discussion boards to create dialogue across cities, continents, and cultures for Santa Barbara students abroad.

Teaching French to Beginners

From the age of three and a half, Sylvie Clémence knew she wanted to teach. This comes of little surprise when witnessing her enthusiasm and passion for her job as she welcomes each new group of beginners (students who have never studied French) with the *fraîcheur* of someone on their first day. Sylvie insists that it is this energy and personal investment that are essential in teaching a language to beginners, something she has been doing with ACCENT for nearly fifteen years.

When a student arrives in France and doesn't know how to communicate in the local language, the French language teacher becomes that student's lifeline and his or her main point of reference. The ability to actively participate in everyday life is necessary to fully embrace and understand a new culture and lifestyle. In order to do this, a student has to feel both confident and reassured, says Clémence. "There is certainly a theatrical element involved," she notes. "Students have to learn to 'play at being French'" and while they start off in the safety of the classroom, they can then take that role-play out into the street and start interacting in a way that will enrich their day-to-day life. In addition to role-plays and theater activities in the classroom, Clémence often takes her teaching to the street, which allows students to put

their beginner French skills to use around Paris in the Latin Quarter, Belleville, and Montmatre.

It is this dedication to a student's whole experience and the understanding of what makes somebody want to keep learning long after they have learned the basics that make Sylvie Clémence the much appreciated and successful teacher she always longed to become.

Look for the Next ACCENT Newsletter in July!

The next issue of *Insights* will highlight custom programming in Florence and Istanbul.

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