



Buongiorno!

This fall, I was fortunate enough to serve my fellow CIMBians as a Resident Assistant and in this role my main project has been to compile this newsletter. I've been working to consolidate narratives, news, and opinions from our students to share with CIMBA parents, alumni, prospective students, and any other people interested. I can personally attest that this study abroad experience has changed me for the better. I've learned so much about myself and in that knowledge, I have grown and improved myself. It's nearly impossible to accurately convey a study abroad experience to someone because its effects are very internal and unique to the individual student. However, I think the personal testimonies of each student expressed in this newsletter will show how life-changing living and studying abroad has been through each of his/her lessons learned, relationships formed, and personal growth this semester. Enjoy!

Arrivederci!

Melissa Draudt, Editor, Virginia Tech

Inside this issue:

Life in Paderno del Grappa	2
From Subway Tunnels to Independence	4
CIMBian Statistics	4
CIMBA Students Give Back	6

CIMBA Teachers Make an Impact	6
Destinations of CIMBians	7
Mindfulness Photos	8
Tips for future CIMBians	9

WHAT'S NEW IN THE MIND LAB

By: Chris Knudsen, LEAP Coordinator

Things are ever evolving here at CIMBA, especially in our LEAP leadership development course and the Mind Lab that houses our bio-technology used for self-awareness. This semester brought wireless GSR instruments used to measure instantaneous stress levels of a group of 5 or less, wireless two pole EEGs that determine resting prefrontal cortex right/left brain biases, and sociometric badges (designed at MIT) that can determine how individuals interact in a group setting. The GSR was perfect to experiment within the KT training setting allowing groups to see how stress impacted their

rational processes. Sociometric badges brought unique insight into how Low Ropes team building groups interacted and the EEGs allowed LEAP participants to have insights into positive and negative biases their brain may have that they are not otherwise acutely aware of. In addition our Heart Rate Monitors saw an upgrade that allowed students to easily compare stress level between multiple events as well as data mark their events and sync with aboutmyspeech.com. These advances allowed students to become more dynamic with their use of this already versatile tool. The Mind Lab itself also saw further integration with its environment with the addition of posters and documents

explaining the CIMBA Leadership process in relative detail. Overall it was a great experience to see the positive reception students had to these opportunities and watch them dig deep into themselves to understand their actions beyond their perceptions and gain awareness of how their biology affects their System 1 responses.



LIFE IN PADERNO DEL GRAPPA

By Chris Day, University of Connecticut

“Paderno del Grappa, is a small town about an hour from Venice, Italy”. This summer I must have said this phrase hundreds of times to friends and family who wanted to know where I would spend my fall semester studying abroad.

My friends who had studied abroad in the past frequented cities like London, Madrid, and Rome, and although I had never been to any of those places, I had a pretty good idea of the culture, history, and significant sites. Before leaving for PdG, I knew almost nothing about the town where I was going to be spending three months. Now that I am reaching the end of my study abroad experience, I feel that choosing to study abroad in this beautiful small town was absolutely the

right decision.

The most important part of studying abroad for me was experiencing a new culture. I have spent my whole life living in New England, and have not had the opportunity to see how people in different areas live. Choosing a small town eliminated the tourist side of living in a foreign place, and inserted me directly into Italian culture. I had to learn to quickly acclimate to the different way of living. At home, we are used to stores that stay open 24 hours a day, large cups of Starbucks coffee, and most importantly being able to speak to everyone. I have learned to get used to the Italian alternatives and have embraced the new culture. Paderno does such a great job of embracing the students who are studying abroad here. I never feel any hostility from

the locals and they have been so great in helping us adjust to Italy.

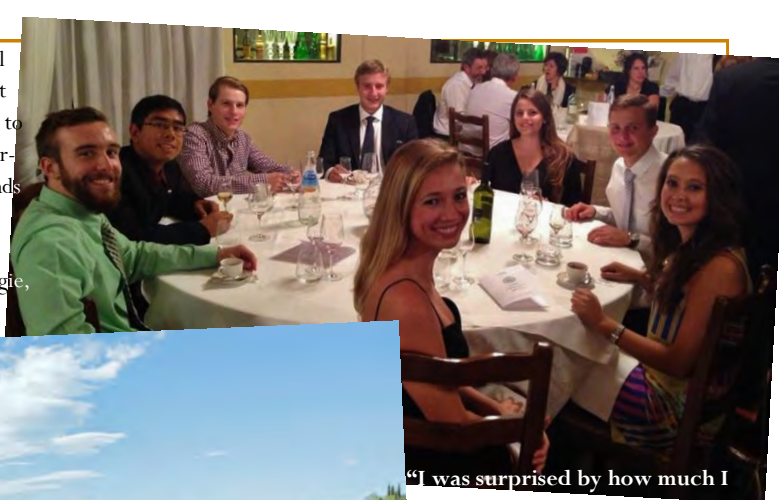
I will never forget the beautiful views of Monte Grappa, ordering sandwiches from the tabacchi, or playing soccer with friends. I think that being in this small town has brought the whole group closer together. The town's quietness has allowed us more time to get to know each other and we became a tight knit group pretty quickly.

When I return home, people will want to hear about all of the cities I have seen throughout Europe, but many of my best memories took place here. Although living in a city can be exciting, I could not think of a better place to study and live with an amazing group of students than Paderno del Grappa.





"I like the small town because it encourages me to travel more during the weekends and see more places."
 – Tony Louwagie, U. of Iowa



"I was surprised by how much I enjoyed coming back to PdG after long weekends traveling! I have never been much of a small town person, but you see a authentic Italian life in a small town and avoid feeling like a tourist during the week. Living here I have gotten to experience a bit of everything, culture in the small town setting and then culture in the big cities."

– Sam Pular, Oklahoma U.

"Paderno del Grappa offers tranquility after a weekend in a busy city. It also helps keep your wallet full, since there are fewer places to spend money than there are in bigger cities." – Jack Prosperi, University of Missouri



"Life in Paderno Del Grappa was very slow paced and relaxing. The locals took their time and seemed to enjoy life more compared to the U.S. I like Paderno because it feels like a real Italian town and not a touristy area." – Miguel Cerritos, U. Iowa



"Paderno del Grappa has been awesome! If I lived in a bigger city, such as Florence or Rome, I feel I wouldn't be as close with my classmates as I am now." – Derek Nagle, West Virginia U.

"My favorite part was being in a dorm. Sounds weird, but it brought everyone together. Especially with a small group, we were all able to share our experience, which made everything more enjoyable." – Kyle Harvey, U. of Kansas

"There are NO tourists (except us), and I love it." – Kayla Krippner, University of Minnesota





FROM SUBWAY TUNNELS TO INDEPENDENCE

By Alison Wilson, University of Delaware

Independence. That thing you think you gained freshman year of college when your parents dropped you off at your dorm and then turned around and drove home without you. Well, think again because you don't really know independence until you study abroad.

Here at CIMBA, we are given about 30 days of free travel. During our first travel weekend, I went to France and Belgium with four friends. We spent Thursday and Friday in Paris and hit the major landmarks of the Palace of Versailles, the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre, the Catacombs, etc. Getting from place to place was the hardest part and we soon realized the best way to get around the city was via the metro system.

Now, I am a native New Yorker and am not intimidated by public transportation in the slightest. However, it only took us one wrong train choice to see that the Parisian system is hard to navigate. Faced with not only unfamiliar territory but also a language barrier, we had some difficulties that Thursday afternoon doing our best to get from the heart of Paris out to Versailles. We hopped on and off trains, went the wrong direction a few times, and then found out we were in the midst of a train strike from an English-speaking couple who had noticed we were confused Americans huddled around our maps between platforms. Luckily, they wanted to get to the same station, and so rather than wait around underground for a train that probably wasn't coming, together we decided to walk to the nearest station where we could catch the train to Versailles.

After spending over three hours that afternoon riding subway cars through Paris, thanks to the couple who told us which train to take, we successfully made it to Versailles around 6 P.M. Unfortunately, we did not make it in time to explore the inside of the palace, but we were able to walk

the grounds. Disappointed by the many obstacles we hit that afternoon, walking through the gardens, I realized it was probably a good time to use one of the tactics we had learned in L.I.F.E. earlier in the program: reappraisal.

That was when a strong feeling of independence came over me and I realized that despite the troubles we had faced that day, we had made it to the palace. We were in France. We had figured out all by ourselves, without help from parents or other adults: how to fly there from Paderno del Grappa, how to get from the airport to our hostel, how we were going to get to all the other monuments around the city the next day with time to make it to Brussels on Saturday.

The weekend was amazing. We saw so much in those four days- I almost can't believe it. There were no more train catastrophes and I'd say by the end of our time in France, we had become metro-pros. Although I look back on that Thursday afternoon in Paris wishing we had been able to utilize our time a bit more effectively, with a little reappraising, I see it as the moment I realized how much I've grown since I left the States. What initially seemed like the worst possible situation has become one of my greatest memories. One thing is for sure, I never would've learned this lesson back at school in Delaware where my parents are only a simple phone call away.

I can now say I know what real independence is and that is one of the things I will value most when I return home at the end of these 12 weeks. That is something only Europe could have given me.

Special shout out to my Paris and Brussels travel buddies: McKenzie, Miguel, Zig, and Charles! I am so glad we got to spend that weekend together!

CIMBian Statistics

Number of days

89

Number of students

54

Number of teachers

10

Number of colleges represented

19

Most Common College

University of Iowa (22%)

Most Common Class

Operations Management

Most Common Major

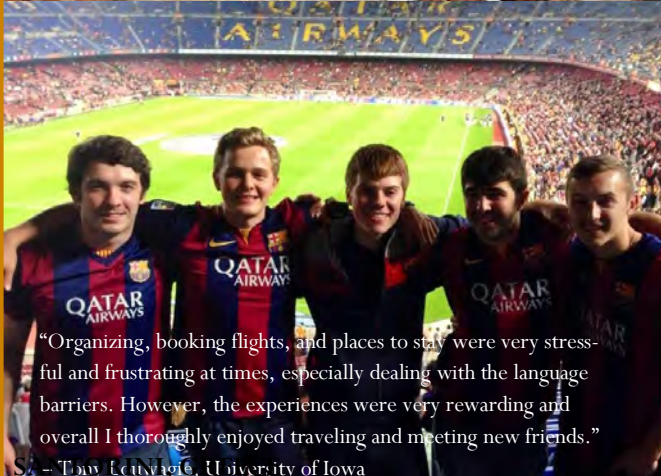
Marketing (26%)

AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

Being in Europe has allowed me to travel freely and become more independent. I have been able to get a taste of a lot of different places, which will help me figure out where I would like to visit again in the future!" – Sam Puskar, U. Oklahoma

VERONA, ITALY

BARCELONA, SPAIN



"Organizing, booking flights, and places to stay were very stressful and frustrating at times, especially dealing with the language barriers. However, the experiences were very rewarding and overall I thoroughly enjoyed traveling and meeting new friends."

Sam – Taylor University, University of Iowa



"Being alone and maybe not knowing the language made my experience that much better. Just being thrown into a country is one of the most thrilling and rewarding experiences a student could have. The most challenging part would probably have to be adjusting to different cultures basically every other weekend."

Kyle Harvey, University of Kansas

ASOLO, ITALY



"My favorite part has been when something that we don't expect to happen just happens; it's always the most fun. The transportation around the cities without knowing the language was tough at times. I became more resilient about challenges that were stressful. Traveling, of course, was the best part of CIMBA." – Miguel Contreras, U. Iowa



LONDON, ENGLAND

"Traveling has been insane. Learning to navigate yourself through new places without the handiness of wifi or your cellphone is definitely a game changer. I really had to learn how to read maps, and be okay with not fully being in the know. I've grown exponentially through travel. My perspectives of the world are wildly more vast than before CIMBA. I have learned more about cultures than some do in an entire lifetime."

Natalie Butler, Texas Tech University

CAIRO, EGYPT



CIMBA STUDENTS GIVE BACK

By Jennifer Steel, Furman University

Volunteering at CIMBA has been a wonderful experience for me. Not only have I been able to give back, in what feels like small ways, but I was culturally immersed beyond touring monuments. I've already dipped my toes into the language through the Italy Live course, and now I get to practice within these conversations spheres.

My first volunteer experience was with the Italian high school students. A group of other students and I helped them practice their English. I had a blast talking with them. Their English is amazing! Making connections with people your age in different cultures is a unique experience that I'm so thankful for. We talked about pop culture and the similarities we shared between America and

Italy. These kinds of interactions make the world feel a bit smaller.

My second experience occurred at the nursing home. The feeling of being greeted by loving grandparents is universal. The men and women there are so appreciative of you just answering questions about your own life. The wisdom from their experiences is irreplaceable.

This coming week, I will have the chance to work with the preschool students. From any age group, volunteering is the keyhole into communities because you are enveloped in their daily lives, concerns, accomplishments and dreams. I cannot thank CIMBA enough, for giving me the opportunity to truly live like an Italian.



CIMBA TEACHERS MAKE AN IMPACT

By Natalie Butler, Texas Tech

I've been learning a lot here at CIMBA—it's that whole "study" part of study abroad coming into play. I want to talk about what I've specifically learned from my finance professor Maria De Boyrie... other than finance.

I like my finance professor because she understands that we are here both to learn and to travel. Some of the students think she's "tough" on us; she often reminds us that studying is just as important as seeing the world while we're here, but only because she truly wants us to learn the subject matter in order to succeed in the class.

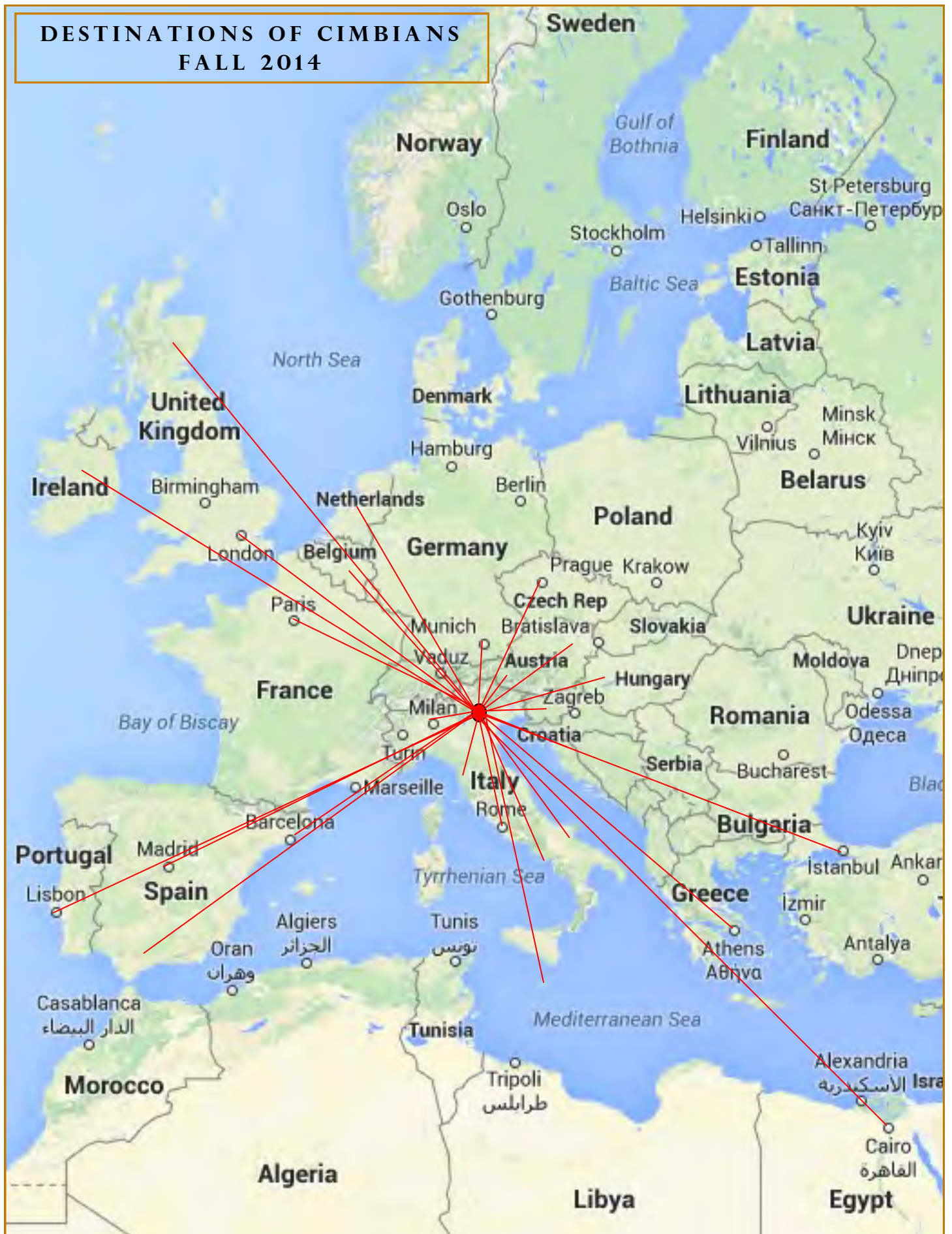
So last week, she said something that I've been thinking about for a couple of days now. It started off with... "I can never save my money because I love to travel." Well looky there, we have something in common. I love, love, love to travel and it's something I don't mind spending my money on.

My parents have taught me how to cherish the right things — love, family, fun, and travel — and I'm so thankful to them for that. Although traveling is expensive, a mixture of this experience and my parents have taught me that money is not everything.

The next bit of what my professor said is something that will stick with me forever, "When I'm old and gray, I won't have any money left over. So all I'll have to eat is a can of beans. But as I'm eating that can of beans, I'll be reminiscing on the beautiful places I've traveled to." Something about this simple statement opened my heart to the pure joy that comes to me from travel. So thank you, Maria, for reminding me of my never dying case of wanderlust.



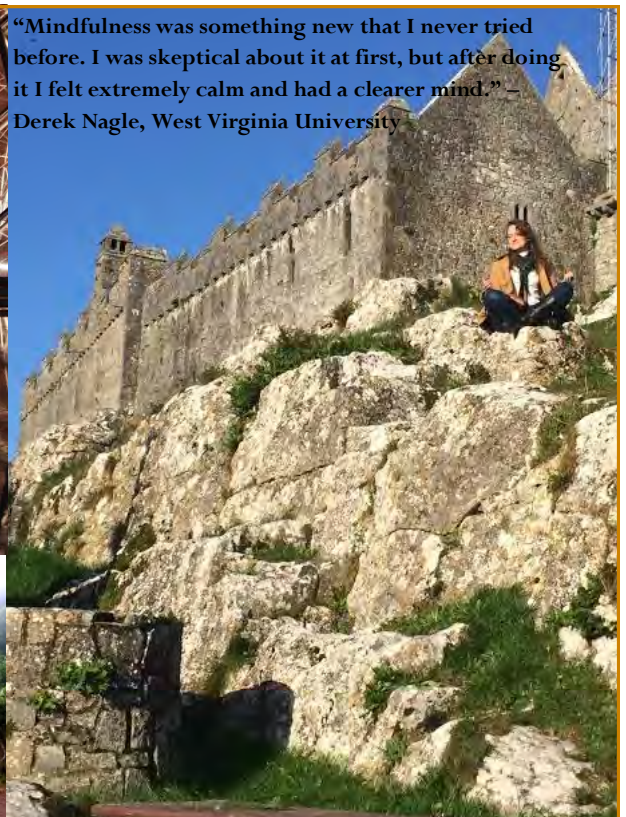
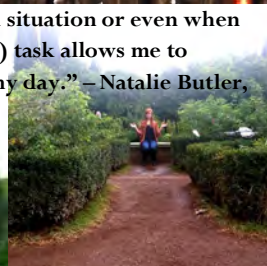
DESTINATIONS OF CIMBIANS FALL 2014





Winner of the Mindfulness Photo Competition!

"Mindfulness has been helpful when I am in a stressful situation or even when I just have a small amount of free time. This simple(ish) task allows me to 'reset' my body and mind before continuing on with my day." – Natalie Butler, Texas Tech University



"Mindfulness was something new that I never tried before. I was skeptical about it at first, but after doing it I felt extremely calm and had a clearer mind." – Derek Nagle, West Virginia University

"It's been proven to positively affect decision-making ability as well as stress levels, so why not give it a try? Ten minutes per day is not a huge commitment."

– Jack Prosperi, University of Missouri



"It was difficult to start because I was not used to sitting still and letting myself focus on me, even if it was just breathing. I will continue to use it because it really does help clear my mind and focus on what is the most important." – Kyle Harvey, University of Kansas



CIMBA students practice mindfulness all over the world

"Whenever I get a minute in the future, I will definitely think to be mindful. It has helped with my overall outlook on life, even though at first I didn't see the benefit. It is very different from what I expected."

– John Maxwell, Purdue University



Mindfulness is the intentional, accepting and non-judgmental focus of one's attention on the emotions, thoughts and sensations occurring in the present moment

STAYING IN TOUCH...

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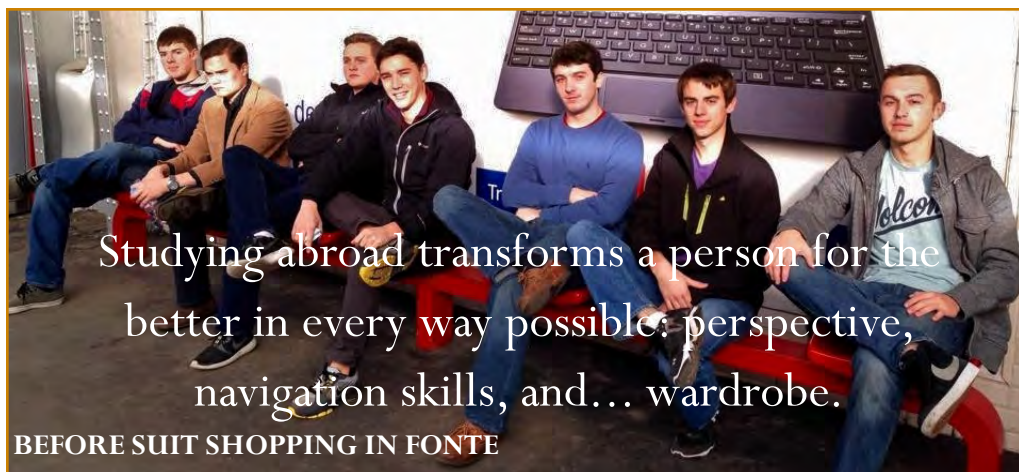
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Studying abroad transforms a person for the better in every way possible: perspective, navigation skills, and... wardrobe.

BEFORE SUIT SHOPPING IN FONTE



AFTER SUIT SHOPPING IN FONTE

TRAVEL TIPS FOR FUTURE CIMBIANS

By Kayla Krippner, University of Minnesota

The three most important lessons I learned while here at CIMBA:

- 1) Don't plan too far in advance for travel, but do plan ahead. It sounds confusing, but I want to emphasize that it's not necessary to plan before coming abroad because your plans will likely change or you'll meet new people and want to travel with them to new and exciting places. However, I found that not planning ahead led to stressful last-minute planning. Therefore when I recommend planning ahead, I suggest doing so. Not only is it less stressful this way, but also, it is usually cheaper! I know for a fact I could have avoided a good amount of travel anxiety and feeling like a stressed-out travel agent if I would have made more of an effort to PLAN AHEAD!
- 2) Travel in small groups of no more than four. Maybe this is just a personal preference, but I think it is a good idea for multiple reasons.

With a smaller group of people there are fewer opinions and interests to try and align and it's much easier to coordinate planning in small groups. There is no doubt that traveling with lots of people is fun, but in that case, it seemed to work out best to book lodging separately in small groups for the most part in order to do our own things during the day, and then maybe gather together at night. Also, although the locals always seems to know by some 6th sense, having fewer people together draws less attention to your presence as tourists.

3) If there are specific things you are set on doing or seeing while you're in Europe, make sure to plan them out in advance so that they make it into your schedule and plans. I really wanted to go to a soccer game while here, but I didn't plan ahead for it, time ran out and the opportunity was lost. These kinds of disappointments can be easily avoided by taking the time to do some planning in advance. At the same time, I just look at it as an opportunity to come back to Europe!