Learn about our Study Abroad!

In the summer of 2023, UTSA students went to 5 different countries, experiencing the different cultures, foods, languages, and livelihoods around the world. Find out about their experiences, and perhaps join them for summer 2024!

This is our first attempt to keep you informed about what is happening at the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures. We would love to share your ideas, projects, and adventures.

Message from the Chair
A short message about this newsletter and future publications from Dr. Chappell and Dr. Rushforth.

Meet our Russian Grads
Although there was no study abroad in Russia, we'd like to share information we have from three graduates.

Meet the Student Assistants
The friendly faces you might see around in the office!
In this pilot publication, we provide get-to-know-you segments that highlight the friendly faces you can expect to see around the main office, and we also feature some of the wonderful work our colleagues have done in their summer study abroad programs. Of course, the stories featured here are by no means the entirety of the great things being done in our department. Please view this newsletter as a means of sparking conversation, creating connection, and showcasing a few of our excellent people and projects every month.

Our phenomenal support staff have also been hard at work on a shared calendar for the department. Its goal is to share, in a single, centralized place, our different languages and programs’ upcoming events to raise awareness of our initiatives and create unity across groups.

With that said, I’d like to thank all of our faculty members for their endless efforts to support our students and contribute to the success of the department. We are a team here in MLL with one shared mission, and we’re so much stronger when we all work together.

Dr. Chappell

If you would like to feature a story in a future issue or if you would like an event to be featured, please reach out to Verónica. veronica.foreman@utsa.edu
Like many of you, I'm thrilled about the transformation our department is undergoing. As the lone representative from our department's earlier days, I've had the privilege of both witnessing and participating in this exciting transition.

I cannot express my gratitude enough for those who have stepped into roles I once held. Nelson Hernandez, serving as our faculty champion, has truly been invaluable. Likewise, with Liz Olvera stepping up as the new Spanish coordinator, our department is certainly in capable hands.

It's a profound honor to work alongside such a dynamic team. The unwavering commitment of Veronica Foreman and the innovative spirit of Whitney Chappell, combined with the dedication of our emerging leaders, promises a bright future for our department.

In the midst of all this change, my role as assistant chair remains consistent. As the Spanish saying goes, “hierba mala nunca muere.” Maybe, in jest, that's the reason I'm still anchoring in my familiar role. But, in all seriousness, I'm thrilled to continue this journey with all of you, excitedly looking ahead to what the future holds.

Dr. Rushforth

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Learn about the different Study Abroad Programs offered by the Department!
The Korea Study abroad program this year was at Kookmin University in Seoul, South Korea for the summer were students got to immerse themselves in the Korean culture and lifestyle. The students got to visit tourists spots such as Lotte World, Namsan Tower trails, Hyundai Motor Studio, and the Lotte Tower. The students also got a taste of the culture by going to places such as Deoksoo Palace, Gyeongbok Palace, and Folk Village. These places in Korea helped the students get familiar with the culture and the environment. The study abroad program is beneficial to students who want to engage themselves in the Korean Culture and Korean lifestyle.

Fun Facts:
1. More than 75 million people speak the Korean Language
2. In Korea, babies are considered one year old the moment of their birth
3. Koreans believe that the number four is unlucky
4. Someone’s blood type is a matter of interest to the people
5. Korea has 3,400 islands only 473 of which are inhabited

Contact: deukhee.gong@utsa.edu
Summer Study Abroad

URBINO ITALY

Giulia Young testimonial:

"The five-week Urbino summer program was amazing."

"I learned so much about Italian neorealism, the history of film in Italy, Italian language and culture."

"My major isn’t in COLFA...only way I was able to do a study abroad in Urbino and for that I am truly thankful to the professors, GEV, and UTSA for being able to coordinate the summer program."

"Experience a truly amazing study abroad program without the stress of financial or mental strains that can occur during a full semester abroad."

Contact: molly.zaldivar@utsa.edu
In May 2023, 24 UTSA students embarked on a two-week summer study abroad program led by Mimi Yu, Associate Professor of Practice in the Japanese Program. This study abroad program was in collaboration with UTSA Honors College.

The experiential learning component included a tea farm visit to Wazuka, Zen meditation and a lecture on Mt. Heie, and Japanese traditional sweets (wagashi) making in Kyoto.

Students also had the opportunity to hike around the Arashiyama area to enjoy the world-famous Chikurin (Bamboo Forest) and the Monkey Mountain.

In addition to visiting museums and a university and a business in Kyoto for lectures, the students visited temples and shrines, many of which are historical world heritage sites.

“This study abroad experience has empowered me to push myself outside my comfort zone to make new friends and find my way around in new environments.” - Ian Caldwell

What's next?
The application to 2024 Summer Study Abroad Program in Japan will open soon. For more info, contact mimi.yu@utsa.edu or stop by MH4.01.02.

To learn more about the 2023 study abroad program and the activities, please visit: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xfe4_ltpmII
I went to the Institut Français des Alpes (IFALPES) in Annecy from May 30th to June 24th, along with two other coursemates from UTSA. We did not have a professor from UTSA accompanying us during the trip.

When I first arrived, I settled in at my host family’s house in Pringy. My hosts, Laurence and Albert, let me use their son’s bedroom during my stay. I attended orientation with other incoming students. With a semi-intensive schedule, I attended classes five times a week, alternating between mornings and afternoons.

When my homework was completed, exploring Annecy took up the rest of my time. For entertainment, IFALPES organized fun and cultural activities for students, some of which I attended, including a viewing of the first Euro match in a bar with fellow classmates. I also went to the movies a few times with friends, had fun at the annual music festival, went to the beach, and visited the Château d’Annecy.
MEET SOME OF OUR RUSSIAN GRADS
SEE WHAT BEING PART OF OUR PROGRAM CAN DO FOR YOU!

**Taylor Helmcamp**
- Currently pursuing a law degree and a MA in East European Studies
- Fulbright Recipient
- Studied abroad in Moscow as an undergraduate
- Interning at Norton Rose Fullbright Law Firm

**Mariam Kerfai**
- Served in the Peace Corps in Georgia
- Recently obtained a Masters Degree in International Relations in Geneva, Switzerland

**Rachel Pharr**
- Currently teaching STEM in Boston for Teach for America
- President of Russian Club
- Winner of UTSA COLFA Undergraduate Research Conference poster presentation for poster created in Russia in the Fake News Course
- Studied abroad in Kyrgyzstan with a scholarship from ASU Melikian Center

For more info, contact andrew.chapman2@utsa.edu
This past summer, a couple of our fellow roadrunners participated in a study abroad program in Dresden, Germany, led by Dr. Devon Donohue-Bergeler. Our runners explored the country, absorbed cultures, and practiced their multilanguage skills. Here is what they had to say.

"Dresden has a lot to offer in terms of natural beauty, cultural history, delectable cuisine, and abundant vegetation. Dresden’s history and museums were stunning. I liked being able to observe what we were learning about. I found it fascinating how many gardens surrounded each neighborhood, business, or shop."

Shea Puhaly

“...Dresden’s food was so tasty and fresh. Dresden’s streets were bustling with activity, including lines for pizza and music. You must have Pizza Fünf if you ever have the chance to visit Dresden. You will never have a better pizza roll in your life...”

Shea Puhaly

“A new experience

Shea Puhaly

“If you have the chance to travel abroad with Dr. D, I advise you to take the opportunity to see Dresden from her perspective and then experience on your own.”

For more info, contact devon.donohue-bergeler@utsa.edu
Meet the Administration

Veronica is the new Senior Administrator of the Modern Languages & Literatures. She started as a dedicated homeschool teacher, a passionate volunteer, and a proud mother of Ellen Foreman, an international prize-winning pianist. She has a deep-rooted love for community service, which she developed at a young age by supporting her church and school in their efforts to help less-privileged communities. This commitment to service led her to be involved in numerous organizations, such as the Junior Tuesday Musical Club and the Catholic Schoolhouse Chapter San Antonio, among others.

In Mexico, she served as the Director of Ecology for the county and later as the Coordinator for the Municipal System for the Desarrollo Integral de la Familia. She presented at a conference for the World Health Organization in Mexico during her time as Director of Ecology and received a national award from Editorial Televisa for her environmental education project. Furthermore, Veronica has extensive experience in education. She worked as a teacher for eleven years in a Catholic school.

Originally from the Chicago area, Whitney Chappell earned her B.A. in Spanish and English at the University of Illinois, her M.A. in English (Linguistics) at Northern Illinois University, and her Ph.D. in Spanish Linguistics at the Ohio State University. She moved to San Antonio to work at UTSA in 2013 and fell in love with the bilingual and bicultural character of the city (although she does not love the summer heat). She enjoys teaching classes related to sociolinguistics and variation, and her research explores how Spanish speakers negotiate their identities and map others in social space using variable pronunciations. On a personal note, she enjoys spending time with her family, traveling, jogging, and listening to podcasts (recommendations always appreciated).
Meet the Student Assistants!

Jose Foronda
I am a junior studying digital communications and marketing. I am an officer for the Filipino Student Association. The languages I am currently learning is Korean. I highly recommend it to everyone.

"Live the life you want."

Leah Biache
Hello! My name is Leah Biache. This is my second year at UTSA. I am majoring in Equity and Education. I plan on becoming an elementary school teacher. My hobbies consist of karaoke, cleaning, and church. My faith and family are the most important things to me. I am part of the Christian Students on Campus club and hope to join at least one more group.

"One day, or Day one."

Raphael Mamaradlo
I am a Junior, double major in Cyber Security and Information Systems. I do enjoy composing music (EDM, Orchestral, Japanese-Rock), playing guitar, designing outfits, and electric longboarding.

"A ship is always safe in port but that is not what ships are for."

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veronica.foereman@utsa.edu
Meet the Student Assistants!

Sean Stone
I'm Sean. I'm currently majoring in Modern Languages with a focus in Japanese and minoring in Linguistics. I like to read, listen to music, and hang out with my dog in my free time.

"Together, we can turn our dreams into reality & achieve greatness."

Sofia Salazar Arguelles
I'm a senior double majoring in Music Performance and Business Management. While not in the office you will usually find me volunteering, going to classical concerts, dancing, or relaxing watching movies/shows.

"Prove them wrong, babe."
NEWSLETTER CREDITS

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