2010-11 Fall Study Abroad Evaluation

Berlin, Germany

Page 1, Q3. Major
1  DWA  Jan 22, 2011 6:53 PM

Page 1, Q4. Program (City, Country, Program Sponsor)
1  Berlin, Germany, IES  Jan 22, 2011 6:53 PM

Page 2, Q1. What were your goals for off campus study?
1  Learn about the current political issues that the country was facing. Also, to witness history in the making and to interact with people from different backgrounds to see how history has changed them.  Jan 22, 2011 6:56 PM

Page 2, Q2. To what extent did you succeed in accomplishing your goals? Why did you succeed or not?
1  I feel like I succeeded in most of my goals, except learn the language as well as I wanted. I did not force myself enough or others to strictly speak with me in German. As a result, my German is better, yet not as good as thought it was going to be.  Jan 22, 2011 6:56 PM

Page 3, Q1. How many students were on the program?
1  19  Jan 22, 2011 7:11 PM
Page 3, Q2. How many Oxy students?

1 0

Page 3, Q3. Please comment on the goals and academic abilities of your fellow students. How were they similar/dissimilar to yours?

1 I felt like the students in my program were laid back and easygoing. However, I felt like they were not as well-informed about the culture they were living in as I was or as academically-oriented. At times, I felt like I was doing more work than I should have been. The goal of most of my classmates was to travel around Europe. My goal was to learn about the differences between East and West Berliners, in this sense our goals were a bit different. However, I enjoyed my time with my classmates, they brought a different perspective on how I look at life.

Page 3, Q4. Describe the background of your classmates, e.g., all Americans, all Oxy students.

1 My classmates were mainly from Ohio, Pennsylvania and Southern California. Our groups politically ideology varied. Some were very liberal, others moderate (like myself), and some very conservative. We were also religiously diverse, among the 19 of us, Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism and Atheism were all present, providing deep and intense conversations. All of my classmates identified as Americans, however, we were also ethnically diverse--asian, hispanic and white. A few of us (like myself) were immigrants who as children moved to America, and have acquired the American identity. Although, we were a small group, we were very diverse in every sense of the word.

Page 3, Q5. Describe your housing situation.

1 I lived with a 65-year-old lady who was amazing. She did not cook meals for me nor did she act as a host mother, however, she treated me like an independent individual. By the end of the experience, we became really good friends. I really like my Host and hope to visit her again in the future.

Page 4, Q3. List any courses and/or professors you would recommend.

1 The Question of Identity in Contemporary Europe (Sabine Berking) AMAZING PROFESSOR! Independent Research (Thomas Wagenknecht) Intermediate German I European Markets in a Global Economy (Uli Brueckner)
Page 6, Q2. Did you contact Oxy alum living abroad as part of the Alumni and Study Abroad Partnership Program (ASAPP)?

1  No, I did not know about this :(  Jan 22, 2011 7:18 PM

Page 6, Q3. What strategies can you recommend for meeting locals and making friends?

1  I would recommend going to Cafes or Bars. I would sit next to someone I do not know and just talk. Most people around, especially if you are a foreigner are more than willing to get to know you and become your friend.  Jan 22, 2011 7:18 PM

Page 6, Q4. Were there aspects of the culture with which you were not comfortable?

1  No complaints  Jan 22, 2011 7:18 PM

Page 6, Q5. What suggestions do you have for future participants for engaging with the culture?

1  Have no stereotypes or assumptions. One will be surprised how different people are once one starts to live with them.  Jan 22, 2011 7:18 PM

Page 7, Q1. How much did you spend on airfare to/from your program?

1  900  Jan 22, 2011 7:30 PM

Page 7, Q3. What was the approximate exchange rate during your stay?

1  1.35  Jan 22, 2011 7:30 PM

Page 7, Q4. How much did you spend on books and supplies?

1  $30  Jan 22, 2011 7:30 PM
**Page 7, Q5. How much did you spend on local transportation to/from daily class?**

| 1 | $55.00 | Jan 22, 2011 7:30 PM |

**Page 7, Q6. How much did you spend on personal travel during your time abroad? Please specify length and nature of your personal travel.**

| 1 | $1,500 dollars. Porto, Portugal (4 days) $250 (Fall Break) Madrid, Spain (3 days) $250 (Fall Break) Valencia, Spain (5 days) $200 (Host Family Visit) Italy (6 days) $500 (Host Family Visit) London, England (3 days) $300 (Pre-program Visit) | Jan 22, 2011 7:30 PM |

**Page 7, Q7. Describe how you took your meals, e.g., groceries prepared in kitchen, dining hall etc., and how much you spent on meals weekly, not including bars, clubs etc.?**

| 1 | meal were not provided. Therefore, I mostly cooked or went out to dinner. So, on an average week, I would spend anywhere between $150-170 dollars (120-140 Euros). | Jan 22, 2011 7:30 PM |

**Page 7, Q8. What would you recommend as a minimum monthly budget for incidental expenses, excluding travel? Please include recommendations for such items as: local transportation to/from daily class, telephone calls, internet, laundry, museums, concerts, movies, cafes, restaurants, pubs and clubs.**

| 1 | I would recommend on average for one month in Berlin 500 Euros. This amount is fair and not to restrictive. Yet, with 500 Euros you will not be able to do everything you will want to do. You will have to limit yourself and pick and choose what is more important to you. | Jan 22, 2011 7:30 PM |

**Page 7, Q9. How do you recommend taking your money abroad? Did you open a local bank account?**

| 1 | I would just leave the money in your bank account in America. (Bank of America) Many banks in America have sister banks abroad, who do not charge a transaction or international fee. So, it is almost like your account is in that country. This is safe, and if your parents want to add more money, they can easily do so, by going to your home bank. Also, if you lost your card or something does not go right, it is better to get it resolved in America, as customer service in Europe is not as efficient (in my opinion of course). | Jan 22, 2011 7:30 PM |
**Page 8, Q1. What sort of items or clothing did you take along and then find you did not need?**

| 1 | I found out that I did not need shorts for the fall semester in Europe. Did not use my shorts at all. | Jan 22, 2011 7:33 PM |

**Page 8, Q2. What did you take that you found most useful?**

| 1 | I brought a jacket. | Jan 22, 2011 7:33 PM |

**Page 8, Q3. What do you wish you had brought along?**

| 1 | I wish I had brought along more jackets and sweaters. | Jan 22, 2011 7:33 PM |

**Page 8, Q4. Were there any items you wanted that you were unable to obtain?**

| 1 | no | Jan 22, 2011 7:33 PM |

**Page 8, Q5. In general, how would you describe the weather in the area in which your program was based?**

| 1 | It is cold! The weather in Berlin starts getting cold in late October, early November. Bring jackets and sweaters! | Jan 22, 2011 7:33 PM |

**Page 8, Q6. Did you have access to computers and/or email? If so, please describe what type of computer services you used. Did you use your Oxy email?**

| 1 | Yes, I had access to all my e-mails. I brought my laptop with me and used my host's wi-fi! | Jan 22, 2011 7:33 PM |

**Page 10, Q2. What information about your program could be emphasized more to prospective applicants?**

| 1 | I did a non-oxy program. I wish it were offered at OXY, it was amazing! | Jan 22, 2011 7:37 PM |
Page 10, Q3. Describe the overall strengths and weaknesses of the program.

1 Strong teachers and advisors who helped me get everything I needed. I really loved the IES Staff in the Metropolitan Studies Program in Berlin. Weaknesses, I cannot think of any. :) IT was really great. Maybe the only weakness was that there were no classes, beside German class, offered in German. Jan 22, 2011 7:37 PM

Page 10, Q4. Do you have any suggestions for the program director(s) and/or staff off-campus?

1 Nope! keep doing the great work you do! Jan 22, 2011 7:37 PM

Page 10, Q5. For what sorts of students, if any, would you recommend this program?

1 I would recommend this program to students that want to travel and learn about Eastern and Western European ideologies. This program was perfect for that. I would also recommend this program for DWA majors who are interested in European Politics. Jan 22, 2011 7:37 PM

Page 10, Q6. Are there students you would especially recommend not enrolling in this program?

1 I would not recommend this program to Art majors or film majors. Jan 22, 2011 7:37 PM

Page 12, Q2. Please provide any additional comments here.

1 I really appreciate the opportunity I was given. This will be an experience that will impact my future and the decision that I will make. Study abroad is beyond learning a language, meeting new people, or taking classes in that country, study abroad is an experience that makes one reflect about oneself, ones goals, ones dreams, ones role in the world and makes one appreciate the beauty of diversity. Also, it puts one in the middle of history, it brings to life the issues that one usually reads about in the newspaper or history books. Study abroad is a life changing experience. Jan 22, 2011 7:42 PM