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1. My semester at the University of Winchester expanded my global knowledge both inside and outside of the classroom. As a Political Science major, I was able to make the most of my experience by observing the different governmental systems around me and how they interact with the systems at home. On campus I was enrolled in two Political Science classes with a global focus. In Human Rights in the Global Political Economy, I was able to study the forces at play in the protection and abuse of human rights around the world. In The War on Terror, The Axis of Evil, and Beyond, I was able to view the Global War on Terror from a different perspective. It was refreshing to see these topics from an English perspective and to see the similarities and differences from the US.

The similarities and differences of the UK to the US were also pronounced in experiencing English culture. From slight differences in language and accents to public transportation to student life, I was able to gain true cultural immersion into England. The differences in the University system was one of my biggest culture shocks because it felt so much more laid back than UWEC. Classes were only one day a week for two hours each, and there was usually only two essays that made up my grade. I found it interesting that a 70 was considered an excellent mark on an essay because the mentality is that there is always room for improvement even on the best work. In England I also had to navigate public transportation which I have not had much prior experience with. I missed being able to get into my car and drive whenever I felt like it, but English people are not in as big of a hurry as Americans are. Finally while British accents were pleasant to hear all the time, it made for some miscommunication which often led to some frustration. Thankfully, I was able to pick up most of the language differences fairly quickly.

Finally, my study abroad experience also included travel outside of England. I was able to travel to all of the countries in the UK: Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales which gave me a better understanding of the complexities of how the UK works. I was also able to travel around Europe as well to Ireland, Spain, Greece, Italy, Germany, The Czech Republic, The Netherlands, Belgium, and France. In

my travels outside of Winchester, I learned a lot about the European Union and how it interacts. Differences in currency, when my passport got stamped and when it didn't, differences in airport security, and public transportation were all educators in themselves. Having a student visa in the UK meant that every time I came back through the UK border from another EU country I had to get another stamp in my passport because the UK is not part of the Schengen region. Learning about the UK's position in the EU was fascinating because it is not on the Euro either, but it plays such an important role in the politics of Europe. Travel away from my host country was a great way to learn about global relationships.

2. An example of how my study abroad experience advanced my knowledge and understand of the world's diverse cultures and values is my relationships with my English professors verses my relationships with my American professors. In the UK professors are almost never addressed as "professor" because that title is saved for the very elite. Instead professors preferred to be called by their first name. This was very unsettling for me because it seemed so casual and almost disrespectful. I have always addressed my professors as either "professor" or "doctor" as a sign of respect until I went to England.

My first week of classes in Winchester involved a lot of awkwardness for me because I was never sure how to address my professors both in emails and in person. I had a lot of questions about what was expected of me in this new University system, so I had to face my lack of cultural knowledge head on. It was surprising to find out that not only do students use first names with their professors, but it is also not uncommon for students and professors to get a drink together in a pub. At first I found this quite uncomfortable because in the US I always felt like professors and students had a more controlled structure for interaction that almost exclusively fell on the classroom.

However this example opened my eyes to different cultural values when it comes to education. This is not to say that the UK values education and educators less than the US, but they value the

educator-student relationship differently. In the US the students are hardly ever on a first name basis with their professors, and the interaction is very structured. There is more class time than in the UK, and there are set office hours for students to come talk to a professor. In England, the relationship is more personal. I feel like it is designed to make professors seem more approachable and open to students. In the UK students there is less class time so students are to decide for themselves when they need more guidance from professors whereas in the US, more class time allows the professors more time to guide their students in the right direction whether they need more help or not. How a culture values educators and students can give a greater insight to the culture as a whole, and calling my professors by their first names allowed me to develop a more personal connection with them than I would have at UWEC.

3. Throughout my experience I learned a lot about global systems, institutions and relationships of power. First as a US citizen, I noticed the power that a US passport had at all of the passport controls I went through. The US and most of Europe are on very good terms, and as a result, I was able to go through passport checks quickly and without any problems. In both Italy and Greece, the officers saw my passport cover, and gave me a stamp without even bothering to give my photo page more than a very brief glance. Obtaining my student visa in England was also easy. All I had to provide was my passport and letter of acceptance to Winchester, and I had a six month visa. The US's relationship with Europe made my traveling experiences easier.

I also learned a lot about the European Union. I learned which countries were part of the EU, which were on the Euro, and which were in the Schengen region. During my experience, Greece was threatening not to honor its debts to Germany from when the country was bankrupt. If not repaid, Greece would be kicked off of the Euro. Even though the UK is not on the Euro, it was very concerned about the situation and what it would mean for the entire EU if the negotiations failed. I learned a lot

about how interconnected the economies of Europe are, and how one country's financial decisions could affect the financial wellbeing of 27 others.

Finally, I was traveling to Winchester the day of the Charlie Hebdo attack in Paris. Through this act of terrorism I was able to learn about how different countries and organizations react to terrorism. While Al Qaeda took credit for the attack, France did not respond in the same manner that the US responded to 9-11. After 9-11, Article Five of the NATO charter was invoked which states that an attack against one country is viewed as an attack against all the countries in NATO. However after the Charlie Hebdo attack, NATO's Article Five was not invoked. France chose to condemn the act of terrorism through diplomacy instead of react militarily. This taught me about both the different lines of thought involved in terrorism responses and the different relationships of power in NATO. My global knowledge has been greatly expanded by my study abroad experience.

4. During my semester abroad it was announced that after many legal battles, Hersey's had convinced the US to stop importing all Cadbury chocolate made overseas. This decision made in the US has impacted the UK in a negative way. Hersey's has a licensing agreement to make Cadbury in the US, but it is a different recipe than the original UK version. Because of trademark issues, the US will stop importing UK Cadbury chocolate along with other candy bars deemed to be infringing on trademarks of Hersey's. While upsetting those who believe that the UK version tastes better, the decision will have an impact on US-UK relations.

Because the US market will be cut off for the most popular British chocolate, this is negatively impact the UK's exports and therefore its economy. The US and UK have been very good trading partners since the advent of industrialization. This new US policy will slightly dent that trading relationship. The US feels it must protect its most popular domestic manufacturer of chocolate, and by doing so, it is hurting the chocolate market for one of its most loyal allies.

Cadbury will still exist in the US, but it will be the US recipe instead of the UK one. Because of the closing of the US market, Cadbury may decide to take a leaf out of Hersey's book and lobby the UK government for protection. Without the US, Cadbury may decide to expand its already popular domestic market by trying to block the sale of Hersey's and US Cadbury. If this were to happen the US and UK would both have protectionist policies in place for their chocolate manufacturers which would hurt US-UK trade, lower exports for both countries and have negative economic effects. This seemingly simple decision of the US to protect its chocolate makers could have greater global implications.

5. My study abroad experience has greatly increased my interest in international politics and law. As a pre-law student, I have thought a great deal about what area of law I would like to pursue after Law School. My classes in the Political Science department had gotten me interested in International Politics, but it was always only one of many ideas for my future. After studying in England, taking two politics classes from a different perspective, and experiencing first-hand the relationships at play in the EU, my interest has greatly increased. Even though I am a long way away from deciding the area of law I will pursue, my search for Law Schools now includes schools that have International Law programs or areas of emphasis.

Although my future law career is not defined yet, my study abroad experience helped me develop skills that will be beneficial in my future workplace. Taking classes in another country and culture has helped me develop my critical thinking skills further because I had to learn how to analyze a problem from a different perspective. Thinking about politics from a British perspective instead of an American perspective allowed me to see the possibilities for different kinds of solutions. For example, in my Human Rights class I had to analyze human rights from very different cultural perspectives, and then have to come up with solutions that could cross cultural lines. This kind of critical thinking will be very beneficial in my future law career.

Another skill I developed was the ability to communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds than myself. Although British and American cultures are often seen as very similar, there are some significant differences. I was able to create constructive relationships with both students and professors without falling into the “ignorant American” stereotype. This skill will benefit me greatly in the future because if I decide to pursue a career in International Law, I will have a greater ability to communicate with other lawyers and government officials from different cultures. Communication is a key aspect of any line of work, and especially in law, where cultural values often shape legal doctrine, being able to both communicate with and understand other cultures will boost my effectiveness as an International lawyer.

6a. One disorienting dilemma I had experienced while abroad was navigating my first week of classes on campus in Winchester. The orientation and information given to me by various members of campus seemed incomplete or vague to me. I was jet-lagged and trying to figure out a new university system, and I became very frustrated. I was struggling to find textbooks, my email and learning network access were not working which resulted in many trips to the Tech Department, and my lectures seemed to be more of general overviews instead of specific information. I felt extremely lost and disoriented because I usually pride myself on be a successful student that always knows what is expected of me.

b. Before experiencing this dilemma, I used to believe that education was relatively similar around the world. This experience allowed me to learn about the different expectations of students in different cultures. British students are expected to put in a lot more work outside of class whereas American students are expected to spend more time in class taking in knowledge passively through in depth lectures. The change in learning environment for me was very challenging, but also very informative. I learned that different cultures practice different kinds of educational strategies, and I believe that experiencing this first-hand has given me a more holistic world-view.

c. The decisions of how a country's students will be educated will always have global implications. Different educational strategies will create different ways of thinking in students. These differences in thinking are a major part of cultural differences and how countries react to different global situations. In this way, my decision to study in a different culture has taught me to think like how another culture thinks. I now have the ability to use my knowledge of different ways of thought to hopefully create solutions to complex global problems in the future.



This photo was taken hiking at Beachy Head outside of Dover, England. One of my goals of this experience was to make new friends in new places. Even though this trip was one of the first we took together, it was where my friendships started with both my fellow Blugolds and students from around the US. I am very happy to call all of the girls in this picture some of my closest friends.



Another goal of mine was to go visit historical places and learn about the history of England and its people. My trip to Stonehenge was amazing because I got to experience one of the most mysterious parts of English history and one of the Wonders of the World. I loved going to new places and learning about their history, and I was proud to represent my fellow Blugolds abroad!