

Achieving ‘Global Fluency’

Why study abroad programs are a necessary part of legal education

When I welcomed our new students in August, I spoke to them about how to make the most of their time in law school and best prepare for the legal profession. In addition to getting hands-on practical experience, which I wrote about in my previous articles, I emphasized the importance of gaining “global fluency.” As I told them, our graduates will be entering a legal environment that is increasingly globalized, with international issues impacting the full spectrum of practice areas and internationally trained (and multilingual) foreign attorneys competing for clients, cases and transactions.



USD School of Law has long been at the forefront of providing opportunities to study abroad. We established the first summer study abroad program outside of London, when we initiated our Paris program in 1973. Professor Bert Lazerow, who has directed our summer programs for 40 years, is a recognized leader in international legal studies. When I came to USD after more than 20 years in private practice representing international clients in business transactions globally, one of my first priorities was to establish a broader range of international study opportunities for our students, and to encourage more of them to participate in these programs. In addition to our four summer study abroad programs,

we now offer eight semester exchange programs at leading international law schools.

Summer Study Abroad Programs. Our four summer study abroad programs in Europe have recently been revamped to provide more focused training in specialized legal areas associated with each location. Our program in Florence, the great city of Renaissance art and a leading center of creativity, focuses on intellectual property, art law and technology. Our program in the great financial center of London focuses on private international law with courses on multinational corporations, cross-border business transactions and international commercial arbitration. The program in Paris, a center of legal education since the 12th century, focuses on public international law and human rights. And Barcelona, a major commercial center on the Mediterranean, has a curriculum focused on European law, comparative law and international trade.

Semester Exchange Programs. Over the past two years, we have expanded our semester exchange programs from a single program at the University of Copenhagen to include new exchanges with the Dickson Poon School of Law at King’s College, London; the European Business School in Wiesbaden, Germany; ESADE Law School, Ramon Lull University in Barcelona; Hebrew University, Jerusalem; Universidad Torcuato di Tella Law School in Buenos Aires, Argentina; the Singapore Management University; and Peking University School of Transnational Law in Shenzhen, China.



These are all outstanding institutions, and these exchanges give our students access to an incredible range of specialized courses taught by leading legal experts, as well as unique opportunities to experience living and learning alongside future world leaders in law, business and public service.

Price Family International Fellowships. We have also been working to make these programs both more attractive and accessible to our students. Thanks to the generosity of the Tom and Gwen Price Family, students attending our summer study abroad and exchange programs, as well as those doing the international internships I discussed in my last article, are able to receive financial support through the Price Family International Fellows Program. My goal is that, with these expanded programs and fellowship support, more of our graduates will have the advantage of international legal training, and will enter the challenging and competitive legal marketplace with global fluency. ✈

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