ALED 340/485 – International Leadership Study Abroad to GREECE
A Partnership with Department of Agricultural Leadership Education and Communication and Department of Student Activities

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We embarked upon this Study Abroad course with 14 eager students.

Thessaloniki
Kalabaka
Athens

Activities Overview
Olive Oil Class
Cooking Class
Farm Tour
Traditional Taverna
Thessaloniki Open Market
Mount Olympus
City Tours
Shopping Centers
Archaeological Museum
Fish Taverna
Marianna Farm
Gerovasileiou Winery
Mount Athos & Ormos Panagias Chalkidiki
Meteora Monasteries
Acropolis
Parthenon
Plaka & Monastiraki
Aeropagitou
“I learned many things in Greece when I was immersed into their culture and lifestyle. At some points I was a follower and at other times I developed my leadership skills. In both situations I discovered the person I am and what my strengths will be in life. It is true, leaders are made not born, and I believe this trip helped push me in the direction of what type of leader I want to become. I came out of this experience more optimistic and adventurous than I had ever been before. I tried new foods, climbed up cliffs and jumped off a sailboat into crystal clear water. This trip helped me discover who I want to be and where I want to end up in life.”

Cassandra Rozinsky
“One of the things I was most excited about was the renowned Greek olive oil. However, I was a little confused when we were told to drink it straight from a glass during the olive oil tasting. The Olive Oil categories include fusty, musty acidic, and rancid. I could not really taste a difference in olive oil, I was still confused as to why we were not dipping bread into it.”
“The Gerovasiliou Winery is an absolutely stunning 64 acre vineyard with an amazing museum and wine bar. We learned that Greece mainly produces white grapes, therefore fermenting into white wines. We also learned that the wine is aged in order to enhance the taste.”

“This vineyard was the most beautiful thing I have ever seen. I kept looking out in awe. It never felt real, it felt like it was a picture I was looking at. The weather was amazing on that hill. I loved touring the winery!”
“Olives, olives, and more olives. I learned very quickly that Greece is olive country! I hate olives, but I can come home saying that I tried every olive offered to me. My taste buds never agreed with them, but I tried! The amount of olive trees and olives that I saw while visiting Greece was astounding. When we did our Olive Oil Class and were informed about how many liters of olive oil the average person in Greece consumes per year compared to Americans, I was in shock! Olive Oil is truly used in every Greek dish and is such a huge part of their economy.”

“The open market was very unique because of all the fresh goods, such as fruit, fish, and poultry. The market was supposed to be shut down due to sanitation regulations, but the Greek people refused because they said it was tradition.”
Mount Olympus

“The weather on Mount Olympus day was not really in our favor. Driving up the mountain I was so scared. I cannot believe that those roads did not have railings the whole way up! I am so glad that we did not have to cancel our hike. I have never hiked anywhere before and I was truly afraid once we started. I enjoyed hiking, it was beautiful.”

“Mt. Olympus was an amazing growing experience. We hiked past a beautiful river and up to some ruins within the mountain. It was very foggy and a little rainy, but that did not defeat us! We gained a lot of teamwork experiences and encouraged each other through the trails!”
A leader must be able to do everything that they ask of their followers, a leader cannot live in fear or regret and a leader must challenge themselves so they can also challenge their team. This experience also challenged me to place trust in my teammates which created bonds and group dynamic. This taught me about reaching goals and working hard. Even though it was scary climbing and sometimes I may have slipped, when I finally reached the top the view was worth it and the proud feeling I had. I learned that you have to work hard for what you want and once you achieve it the reward is far more than ever expected.
Athens

It was definitely a weird experience going into a culture I was not used to. One thing that was hard to get used to was being stared at everywhere we went. We stuck out like a sore thumb every place that we visited maybe except for Athens were there were more Americans. The language barrier was really a culture shock for me. Trying to decide what they were trying to say to them trying to decide what we were saying was difficult to adjust to in the beginning.
Parenthon

Experiencing such a known and renowned landmark was a truly amazing and insightful experience. Along with the meaningful history, overcoming physical hardships on the climb up were very impactful as well. Conquering fears and expanding teamwork capabilities greatly enhanced my encounters.
How will you use your study abroad experience to impact your leading in your student organizations or employment?

While at work I will be more positive especially in the times when it is more difficult. Learn to be open-minded and try new things. Be an example of how people should act and work. Stand out and do not follow the crowd.

Chandler Gehm

Through my studies abroad I have learned the importance of doing what I feel is best for myself rather than following the crowd. I spent much of my time during the past two weeks going a different direction than most others members of the trip and I am glad that I did because I feel more able to make my own decisions and come to my own conclusions. I will be able to use this experience in the workplace by thinking outside the box that my predecessors have established. this does not mean that I intend on breaking employee policies, rather I will now feel more confident working on new tasks that I felt I wasn't good enough to do before.

Marissa Fava
What was the most impactful activity during your study abroad experience?

The most impactful activity we did while abroad was exploring the cities with Kostas. Walking the streets of Thessaloniki and Athens, there were many people asking for money, even kids were playing instruments trying to get some as well. I was very apprehensive about giving money to them because how was I to know if they were really in need of the money or just faking it. We have to a child during lunch one time and all he did was give us attitude for not giving him enough. That really turned us away from giving more to others. Kostas, on the other hand, did not discriminate against any of those people. He gave to each person that we came across. I hope I can learn from his way and become more selfless like he was.

Anna Srubar

It is very difficult to choose one experience that impacted me the most during my study abroad. Everything we did had an impact on me and my way of thinking. If I had to choose what had the biggest impact it would be the people who were on the study abroad with me. It was fun being with mostly girls for two weeks because in my normal life I am almost always surrounded by men. In the Corps of Cadets, my job, and at the Fire Department I am always surrounded by men and being able to do and see so many incredible places with a large group of women really helped me experience these places in a different way. I am incredibly thankful that I got to make so many new friends who have had and I know will continue to have such a large positive impact on my life.

Stephen McWilliams
The study abroad literally changed my life. Most of what we covered in class was material I had already learned but what I gained abroad could not have been taught anywhere else. The biggest thing I will take away is what you can gain from putting yourself out there. A skill that I find very important when working in a group because if you never speak up or try to get to know people you miss out of what’s going on around you. A big part of leadership is adapting to what's going on and what people need you for and this trip was a great way of developing this skill as well. By putting myself out there to go on a trip to a foreign country with strangers I experienced so much and met people I believe will be in my life for a long time and I also learned the importance of flexibility and patience.

Baily Rainey
During my study abroad trip, I became much more experienced with navigating myself in stressful or unknown situations as well become much more culturally aware. My world perspective was also greatly broadened, as I learned what it feels like to be a language and cultural minority, as well as how to appreciate a culture much different from my own. I learned to not be afraid of how cultural things and that the US is no necessarily the center of the world. This will make me a better leader, as I will better understand the cultural background of others, have respect for other cultures and traditions, and am more well-rounded. I can better understand and communicate with not only other Americans but others worldwide.

Samantha Moore