



ST. NORBERT COLLEGE STUDY ABROAD OFFICE

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CULTURE & LANGUAGE PROJECT

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS & LANGUAGE AREA STUDIES (IBLAS) MAJORS

BEFORE YOU GO

As you prepare for your study abroad experience, do some research on the culture that you are about to enter. Seek out answers to the following questions, and then draw meaningful and insightful **connections** between your answers to each question.

- What do you find most significant about the social behavior of the people of this culture?

Think about customs, acceptable and taboo topics of conversation, social space, physical contact between people, variation between formal and informal situations, clothing, celebrations, and the observations of other symbolic events.

- What do you find most significant about the values, attitudes, and beliefs of the people of this culture?

Think about family, work, leisure, food, time, material wealth or possessions, health, hygiene, and religion.

WHILE YOU'RE THERE

While you are abroad, refer to your preliminary research (see above) to inform your social experiences. Throughout your semester abroad, keep a journal of cultural observations, analysis, and interpretation to help you work through your efforts to understand this culture and to remember your impressions, feelings, and information upon your return.

Your journal may take different forms: blogs, voice recordings, and memoirs are all possibilities, as are typed or handwritten journals.

WHEN YOU RETURN

You will write a **Cultural Interpretation Essay** in your target language. An appropriate member of the MLL faculty will read and grade this essay.

The essay is based and graded on the following:

- the amount of time and relevance of personal experiences used to support assertions made in the essay;
- the degree of insight into the culture that is evident in the interpretation;
- the degree of fairness, self-reflection, and awareness of the student's own culture; and

- language usage: the accuracy of grammar, appropriateness and variety of vocabulary, and the complexity of sentence structure.

After submitting the Cultural Interpretation Essay to MLL, you will arrange a time to give an **Oral Presentation** of ten to fifteen minutes on the same subject as your essay. Following your Oral Presentation, there will be a brief question and answer period.

The Oral Presentation must take place no later than the end of the third week in the semester following your study abroad experience.

The MLL faculty member(s) will grade your Oral Presentation.

The grades that you earn on the Cultural Interpretation Essay and the Oral Presentation will be forwarded to the instructor of IBLS 468. This grade will be included in your course grade for IBLS 468.