

# IEGI Spring 2021 Newsletter

[Title Page: Education Abroad at Binghamton University](#)

## Table of Contents

Title Page: Education Abroad at Binghamton University	1
Welcome! A note from the Office of International Education and Global Initiatives (IEGI)	1
“To Arrive Where We Started”	1
What’s New?	2
Save the Date	2
Upcoming events	2
The Spring (Virtual) Education Abroad Fair	3
Wednesday, February 17, 2-5pm	3
5 Tips on Pursuing Passions Abroad	3
Written by Laura DeLuca	3
Resource Corner: Identity Resources	5
Ways to Stay Globally Engaged Locally!	6
Have a Global Experience from Home!	6
Schedule a Meeting or Attend Virtual Advising	7

## Welcome! A note from the Office of International Education and Global Initiatives (IEGI)

### “To Arrive Where We Started”

To the new subscribers of our semesterly newsletter, welcome! To those of you who have received our past newsletter, thank you for continuing to read! As we approach a year since the pandemic started, a year of no travel or study abroad, we want to talk about one of the reasons we are SO excited to get students abroad again. And, surprisingly, it has to do with returning home.

One of our favorite travel quotes by T.S. Eliot says that “We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.” One of the core benefits of education abroad is the way it challenges our assumptions about what we know and where we come from. Studying abroad and interacting with people from different cultures and backgrounds forces us to reckon with how our understandings of the world are both inherently flawed, and inherently tied to our own culture and background.

Students returning from being abroad will often experience what we refer to as ‘reverse culture shock’ or the feeling that things back home are just not how they remembered them to be. Part of this is because education abroad breaks the illusions we have held about our hometowns, cities, areas and America as a whole. The irony is that this feeling of dissonance is actually helping us, as T.S. Eliot put it, “know the place [our home] for the first time.” We believe this experience is helpful for students to better understand their own culture, and America as a whole.

With that said, we cannot wait until it is safe to get students back overseas again so that they can come back and share their newfound understanding of home with their family, friends, and community. Until then though, we are anxiously awaiting the return of study abroad, and all the benefits it brings.

## What’s New?

While education abroad has remained suspended through the Spring 2021 semester, we have taken the opportunity to get the word out to even more students about what studying abroad is all about. A big part of this outreach was accomplished through event programming, such as International Education Week in November and the various information sessions we held throughout the semester.

We have also continued to get students excited for the return of study abroad by upholding annual traditions, such as the photo contest (many of the photos in this issue are student submissions!) and our semesterly study abroad fair. We actually have our Spring Fair coming up soon, check-out the details below!

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Check-out the rest of this issue for even more updates on what our office has been up to!

Got questions? Email us at [legi@binghamton.edu](mailto:legi@binghamton.edu) or call us at (607)777-2336

## Save the Date

### Upcoming events

Visit our [B-Engaged Office Page](#) for further event details

- Monday, Feb. 15, 2pm - Study Renewable Energy, Technology, and Resources Economics in Iceland!
- Monday, Feb. 15, 3pm - Study or Intern Abroad in Prague, Czech Republic!
- Monday, Feb. 15, 4pm - Study Abroad in Italy!

- Tuesday, Feb. 16, 10am - Education Abroad Scholarships Information Session
- Tuesday, Feb. 16, 1:30pm - Live & Learn in Seoul for the Summer: Korea University International Summer Campus
- Tuesday, Feb. 16, 4:30pm - Study Abroad in Australia!
- Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2-5pm - Spring 2021 Education Abroad Virtual Fair
- Thursday, Feb. 18, 1:30pm - Study Abroad in Asia!
- Thursday, Feb. 18, 3pm - Spend a Summer or Semester in Morocco
- Friday, Feb. 19, 11:00am - Study Social Movements and Human Rights in Argentina!
- Friday, Feb. 19, 11:30am - Pay Binghamton Tuition & Study Abroad in the UK!
- Friday, Feb. 19, 12pm - Study Peace and Conflict in the Balkans
- Monday, Feb. 22, 11am-12:15pm - I, Too, Am Study Abroad: Student Identities Overseas (hosted by SUNY Oswego)
- Monday, Feb. 22, 12pm - Study in the Netherlands: Two Institutions, Many Locations
- Tuesday, Feb. 23, 1:30pm - Study Mechanical Engineering in Paris!
- Tuesday, Feb. 23, 3pm - Study International Relations and Multilateral Diplomacy in Switzerland!
- Wednesday, Feb. 24, 1pm - Study in Florence and Tuscany with Two Italies Program
- Wednesday, Mar. 24, 2:30pm - Summer in South America: Opportunities for 2022 and Beyond
- Monday, Apr. 5, 12pm - Pay Binghamton Tuition & Study Abroad!
- Wednesday, Apr. 7, 4:30pm - Education Abroad for SOM Students
- Thursday, Apr. 15, 11:30am - Study Mechanical Engineering in Madrid
- Friday, Apr. 28, 1pm - Study in Florence and Tuscany with Two Italies Program

Please note: This is not a completely comprehensive list of every event this semester. For further event details and to find out about new events, please visit our B-Engaged page [here](#). Please note, the IEGI reserves the right to change or cancel events if needed.

## The Spring (Virtual) Education Abroad Fair

### Wednesday, February 17, 2-5pm

Twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring, our office holds an Education Abroad Fair. In the past, pre-COVID-19, the fairs took place in-person with the Fall Fair having representatives from various study abroad organizations and other SUNY study abroad offices present.

However, this past year, our Fall Fair shifted to being completely virtual. We are excited, now, to be planning for our Spring Fair to also be held completely virtual. The Spring Fair, happening Wednesday, February 17th from 2-5pm is open to all current Binghamton students. At the fair, you can browse our different education abroad programs and speak to members of our office, including advisors, student ambassadors, and student alumni. This is a great opportunity to learn more about studying abroad and ask any questions you may have! We encourage all students with even the slightest interest in studying abroad to attend! For further details and to register, click [here](#).

## 5 Tips on Pursuing Passions Abroad

### Written by Laura DeLuca

When you go abroad, it can be easy to leave your passions at home. Although easily forgotten when planning an exciting semester in another country, everyone has a bit of downtime while studying

abroad, whether that be in between classes or trips. Why not do what you love abroad, and potentially make some long lasting friendships along the way? Here are 5 tips on how you can plan to pursue your passions abroad.

#### 1) Do Your Research

Using all of the accessible information available via the internet can provide you with once-in-a-lifetime experiences while studying abroad. Doing your research and planning how you will explore your passions abroad ahead of time will enrich your study abroad experience and allow you to make some great friends along the way.

#### 2) Seek out Local Events

Participating safely in local events could be a great way to continue fostering your passions abroad and provide you with the opportunity to meet people with similar interests as you. Apps like Google Maps and AroundMe are great for finding local hangouts and events. I strongly recommend regularly checking these apps as well as doing more general Google searches while abroad and fitting some events into your schedule. I personally sought out open-mic poetry nights abroad because I am a passionate listener and performer of spoken word poetry; this allowed me exposure to great literature as well as local people who share this passion with me. This made it easy to make friends while studying abroad because I already knew that I had something in common with people at these social events.

#### 3) Find Local Groups

A great way to connect with others is also finding local groups of people who do what you love. Facebook and Slack groups are great for finding like-minded people with similar goals as you. Whether it be fitness groups or book clubs, there are communities out there that share your passions. These groups meet both virtually and in-person, so this could be a great way to make friends and maintain social interaction while abroad. Although a fun opportunity, do not forget to meet in public, well-lit places, avoid giving out personal information, and share your location with a friend (or you could even bring a friend with you!); the opportunity to communicate virtually first may provide you some comfort instead of having to meet in person right away.

#### 4) Take Extracurricular Classes

Learning something new can be a great opportunity to gain some knowledge about something that interests you. As someone who loves to exercise, for me this took form in taking weightlifting and spin classes at my local YMCA while studying abroad in London. These classes were very inexpensive, and I was able to make friends with the regulars. I loved being able to stay active and meet people outside of my program. Whether it be exercise classes, art classes, or history discussions at a local museum, you will surely be able to find educational opportunities abroad.

## 5) Be Open-Minded and Set Realistic Expectations

While planning your education abroad experience, it is easy to create unrealistic expectations regarding the amount of activities you will be able to do in a period as well as the amount of people you will meet. Since I participated in the Semester in London program, all of the courses I took and many of the trips I went on were with the people in my program, and with a faculty member from Binghamton University. I noticed that many of us felt disappointed in the lack of interaction with local people. Pursuing your passions abroad is a great way to work around this feeling. It forces you out of your comfort zone and fosters your own independence by allowing you to do activities alone. That being said, one could easily feel intimidated while seeking out these activities. If you feel nervous, bringing a friend from your program could be a great way to feel more secure while adventuring. Or, if you prefer to fully immerse yourself in the surrounding culture and go alone, be cautious, but allow yourself to have an open mind and welcome new friendships.

## Resource Corner: Identity Resources

Do you have questions or concerns about how your identity plays into your experience abroad? Check out the [resources we have on our website!](#)

### **If You Have Questions About Being...**

#### **LGBTQIA+**

Check out our array of resources on being LGBTQIA+ abroad! It's important to know the social and political climate you are entering in order to feel safe and comfortable abroad. We have a compilation of links regarding laws, travel organizations, international organizations, and scholarships on our website, which can be found [here](#). You can also check-out the [Q Center's](#) website and resources.

#### **A First Generation College Student**

The education system is complex, which can make it difficult for first generation students to navigate their college experience. Our [website resources](#) provide you with several possible contacts, and advice columns in order to help you feel comfortable applying for study abroad. You can also check-out the [Educational Opportunity Program's](#) (EOP) website and resources.

#### **A Student of Diverse Race(s) and Ethnicity(/ies)**

In order to feel safe and prepared to study abroad, it is important to get any questions answered if you are a student that identifies as a racial or ethnic minority that has concerns about the implications of their identity abroad. [Diversity Abroad](#) is a great resource that addresses identity-related concerns for prospective study abroad students. Additional information is on our [website](#). You can also check-out the [Multicultural Resource Center's](#) (MRC) website and resources.

## A Student with a Disability

If you have questions about how to plan to study abroad as a student with disabilities, we encourage you to contact us via email at [legi@binghamton.edu](mailto:legi@binghamton.edu) or connect with us through virtual advising hours, where you can speak with an advisor or student ambassador. We can help you assess your options and ensure your needs are met. [Our website](#) also has several links to websites providing tips on studying abroad as a person with a disability. You can also check-out the [Services for Students with Disabilities'](#) (SSD) website and resources.

## Ways to Stay Globally Engaged Locally!

### Have a Global Experience from Home!

We know COVID-19 has continued to disrupt mobility and the ability of students to travel internationally. However, there are plenty of ways to stay globally engaged, locally. Check-out some of these opportunities below:

#### 1. Connect with International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS)

Want to connect with ISSS, international and domestic students, faculty, and staff this upcoming semester? Check out the [ISSS B-Engaged homepage](#) to see their upcoming events!

They would love to see you at their International Coffee Hour Events! Below are the details of these four events!

[Friday, February 5, 9:00-10:00AM](#)

[Friday, March 5, 3:00-4:00PM](#)

[Friday, April 2, 9:00-10:00AM](#)

[Friday, May 7, 3:00-4:00PM](#)

#### 2. Check-out SUNY's Virtual International Opportunities!

Did you know that you have access to virtual opportunities across the SUNY system? While travelling remains uncertain due to COVID-19, check-out these Virtual Global Learning Opportunities [here](#).

#### 3. English Conversation Pairs

Would you like to help another student improve their English skills while learning more about another culture and language yourself? [English Conversation Pairs](#) offers you an opportunity to do just this. In this program, sponsored by the English Language Institute, native English speakers are paired with non-native speakers of English, and the two spend an hour or so a week together in conversation. This semester all meetings will be virtual!

[Click Here to Fill Out an Application Online](#). **Please note that applications are due by midnight on Thursday, February 25th!** If you have any questions, please contact the English Conversation Pairs Director, [Trena Haffenden](#).

## Schedule a Meeting or Attend Virtual Advising

Still have questions about education abroad and want to schedule a meeting with us? See our advising team's scheduler links below:

[Amber](#)

[Callie](#)

[Anna](#)

[Linda](#)

Email us at: [iegi@binghamton.edu](mailto:iegi@binghamton.edu) or call us at: (607)777-2336

Or come to Virtual Advising, Monday-Friday, 1pm-4pm: <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/91419963980>