

## Business Students Reap Benefits During Two-week Study Abroad

Contributed by Andrew M. Abernathy  
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OXFORD, Miss. - Twenty-six business students return to the University of Mississippi this fall smarter and with stories to tell about studying abroad in England, Ireland and the Czech Republic.

The travel during the university's two-week May Intersession was arranged with help from alumni and the guidance of faculty members. The students enjoyed learning experiences both in and out of the classroom, concentrating on management information systems, economics, and bargaining and negotiations. All students were required to complete a final paper upon returning home.

(l to r.) Tony Ammeter, David Colbert, Kevin Stevens, Will Geary, Mark T., Elliot Warren, Will Threadgill, Olivia Munoz and Will Harris at Stonehenge.

London, England

Eight students enrolled in the course MIS-309 Information Technology traveled to London with Tony Ammeter, associate professor of Management Information Systems.

"What we tried to do is get out there and say, 'Here's how businesses work; here's how they use technology,'" Ammeter said. "Anytime you can get students involved in what you are teaching, it's superior."

The students participated in a series of field trips, including visits to the London Stock Exchange, the London Metal Exchange, Lloyd's of London, the National Maritime Museum, the British Museum and, of course, Stonehenge.

"I felt I learned more during those two weeks abroad than can be taught in a whole semester in a classroom," said junior accounting major Will Threadgill of Tupelo. "We were able to speak with many of these businesses' executive officers. Being able to see how these companies worked gave me a new perspective on how technology is becoming incorporated into many aspects of the business world."

Business school alumni also helped the class arrange field trips to Bristow Helicopters, a FedEx Courier station and a Domino's Pizza headquarters store.

Ammeter said he would like to take another group to London or a similar location next year.

"It's different than what you normally find in the classroom, but it achieves the same thing," he said. "They hear it, they smell it, they touch it and everyone takes something away from it."

Other students on the London trip were Will Geary of Jackson, Olivia Munoz of University, Elliott Warren of Brookhaven, David Colbert of Austin, Will Harris of Nashville, Tenn., Kevin Stevens of Lenoir, Tenn. and Mark Tcherkezian of Charlotte, N.C.

Dublin, Ireland

Nine students traveled to Dublin, Ireland, with Fred Dorn, clinical professor of management, for the course Organizational Behavior. The course is designed to study the culture, history and economics of the nation and how these factors affect how businesses are structured and function.

"Our classroom was the country," Dorn said. "We went to castles, we went to lakes, and we went to businesses."

Students lodged in a hostel. Their daily activities ranged from exploring the crowded streets of a city built for another time to taking a private tour of the Guinness Brewery or traveling cross-country to see the Cliffs of Moor. They were instructed to take notice of how culture can affect business and consumer behavior.

"A lot of times, it's hard to learn through textbooks, but with this trip it became more realistic," said Lindsey Pate of Laurel, a junior marketing communications major. "As I was writing my paper, I suddenly realized how much I had learned. In two weeks, I began to grasp concepts of their culture and their transformation into a global society. They are now one of the richest countries in the European Union and they worked hard to get to that point."

The students also visited the U.S. Embassy, a FedEx Courier station and the historic Kilmahan Jail, and they managed to get in a round of golf while discussing management and economic theory.

"If you don't understand the history and the culture of a place, then you can't understand how organizations function and managers manage," Dorn said.

Other students traveling to London were Will Strahan and Ryan LaFitte of Oxford, Billie Clare Darby of Batesville, Heather Cosby of Courtland, Lauren Hughes of University, Harrison Land of Knoxville, Tenn., Evan Miles of East Cobb, Ga., and Erin Mitchell of Cumming, Ga.

Prague, Czech Republic

(l to r.) Mark T., Will Threadgill, Elliot Warren and Kevin Stevens examine part of a helicopter prop at Bristow.

Bargaining and negotiation were the topics of study for seven business students who traveled to the Czech Republic with Stuart Schafer, instructor of management and a career planning specialist.

Prague is a good place to study the art of bargaining because it allows students to get out of their element and analyze their actions, Schafer said. For example, when cultural and language barriers get in the way, just getting separate checks at a restaurant can require quite a bit of negotiation.

"There's an aspect of negotiation in everything you do," he said. "This class is designed to make you look at the world in a different way. If you can find common ground, then you can usually get more for yourself."

Students traveled to the U.S. Embassy, marveled at the architecture and learned how to sharpen their negotiation skills doing everyday things such haggling at a market and negotiating bus fare.

"In a sense, we learned a lot of tactics," said Brittany Earls, a senior economics major from Petal. "But more importantly we learned how to deal with people. Dealing with people in a different culture makes you learn how to communicate a lot quicker."

Earls, who is minoring in Russian, said communicating with the younger generation was easier since most people under 25 spoke both Russian and English. She originally signed up for the trip to sharpen her Russian.

"Negotiation is a life skill," Schafer said. "It's just a matter of finding an agreement and getting what you want."

Other students on the trip to Prague trip were Andrew Johnson and David Steele of Oxford, Megan Tussey of Ocean Springs, Timothy James of Greenville, Ala., Andrew Brock of Lookout Mountain, Ga., and Cole Wise of Luverne, Ala.

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