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# London Program Enables Students to Study and Intern Abroad

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BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— Illinois Wesleyan University's [London Program](#) is expanding the definition of study abroad.

The program grew this year to offer participants internship experiences while they are studying in London.

"Offering internships gives students a chance to have an international work experience early in their academic career, which is another added value of an IWU education," said Director of the International Office Stacey Shimizu.

This fall, four students – Kyra Loew '19, Ricardo Lu '20, Autumn See '20 and Halee Stirrat '20 – out of the 14 total IWU London participants had the opportunity to intern with a London company or organization in addition to completing their coursework focused on censorship and the arts.

Loew, an English-Writing major, said she applied for the London internship to gain first-hand experience in an office environment while expanding her cultural perspective.

"Working as an intern not only helped me develop some crucial work skills, but gave me the opportunity to observe British values and compare them to what I grew up with in the States," Loew said.

As an intern for The Artists Partnerships, a leading UK acting agency representing top British and international talent, Loew said her main tasks ranged from researching companies and sorting fan mail to publishing social media posts. Script reading was a task that Loew said related directly to her major.

"I got to read a manuscript for a potential comedy film and summarize the plot and characters. It gave me a small look into the process of film adaptation," Loew said.

Lu, a sociology major, said he chose to complete an internship in London to explore British workplaces.

"I worked near Waterloo station, where I could directly see the London Eye," Lu said. "It was great to experience the unique British tea culture and work-to-live work ethic."



Illinois Wesleyan London Program participants had the opportunity to intern with a London company or organization in addition to completing their coursework.





Ricardo Lu – whose desk is pictured here – interned with the Domestic Violence Intervention Project.

Lu interned with the Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP), an organization that works to stop domestic violence and reduce the harm it causes to women, children and families. In addition to attending meetings and discussing the challenges and breakthroughs of DVIP, Lu said that at the end of each workday, he was able to show his personal support by signing a letter to victims of domestic violence.

"I will definitely recommend this opportunity to people I know," Lu said.

See, an accounting major, interned for GDR Creative Intelligence, a consultancy focused on innovation and emerging trends in retail, leisure and hospitality.

"I decided to participate in the internship program because I believed that an international internship would give me cultural experience that would be difficult to get elsewhere," See said. "It was not only a resume builder, but also a crucial part to broadening my cultural experience."

By participating in project meetings that focused on the company's deadlines and global trends, See was able to experience the differences and similarities between American and British work culture.

"I would definitely recommend the internship during the London Program to other students, especially if it pertains to their major," See said. "I feel that the experience gained from an international internship is beneficial to life in the long run, because it's a chance to see how the everyday British man or

woman lives their life. There may be differences, but in the end, we are the same."

Illinois Wesleyan partners with the American Institute for Foreign Study (AIFS) to help place students accepted to the IWU London Program in an internship that meets their goals and expectations.

"Students who choose an internship as part of their semester in London get to know British culture in a way that's different from that of their classmates, and, because each internship is arranged in terms of individual student requests, they get to know it in ways that differ from one internship to another," said Illinois Wesleyan Professor of English and Director of the 2017 London Program Kathleen O'Gorman.

Throughout the semester, students work in their placement and participate in an International Internship course, taught by a local faculty member, while taking three additional IWU London Program courses, including the director's course and two general education electives.

"Among other things, they learn the rhythms and energies of working there, what assumptions others have about their work in relation to one another and the collective aims, and they learn a lot about themselves," O'Gorman said. "In the informal moments in which colleagues may be chatting about their home lives, in spontaneous invitations to head to the pub after work with the others on staff – in endless casual and more formal moments of any given work day, they're processing at a variety of levels what life in this exciting world city involves. It's a texture of life that's as multi-faceted as it is enriching."

Participation in the London Program is open to IWU students of all schools and majors who are in good standing, who have at least four units of credit toward graduation, and who have completed at least one semester of study on-campus. A maximum of 24 students may participate.

Applications for the IWU London Program are due in the International Office by 4:00 p.m. on March 1. Students can apply online by following this link: [www.iwu.edu/study-abroad/applying/Forms.html](http://www.iwu.edu/study-abroad/applying/Forms.html).

For additional information, please contact the International Office at (309) 556-2770.