

International Institutions, New Europe Study Abroad 2017

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Browning, Lizzy Schmitt, Elliot Stockton

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Itinerary

May 9-12: The Hague, Netherlands

May 9: Meet at Amsterdam airport, take bus to The Hague, and explore the area.

May 10: Meeting at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

May 11: Meeting at the International Criminal Court, and watching witness testimony in a criminal proceeding. Free afternoon, and welcome dinner!

May 12: Meeting at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, boat tour of The Hague, and depart for Brussels

Itinerary Continued...

May 13- 19 Brussels, Belgium:

May 13: Free day

May 14: Free morning, and a bus tour of Brussels

May 15: Meeting at the US Mission to the EU, and meeting at the European Parliament

May 16: Meeting and tour of NATO SHAPE in Mons, Belgium.

May 17: Information session, and research opportunity at the European Commission. Role playing game at the Parliamentarium.

May 18: Meeting at the European Commission, lecture at Université libre de Bruxelles with Professor Oriane Calligaro (who is honestly one of the greatest people in Brussels), and farewell dinner at La Mirabelle.

May 19: Meeting at the European Council. Free afternoon or departure from Brussels.

Day One

On day one, everyone arrived in Amsterdam and was then bussed to The Hague. Though we had a walking tour of The Hague scheduled, most of the group missed it due to delayed flights. Once everyone was in The Hague, we checked into our hotel and we were free to explore the area and get dinner on our own.



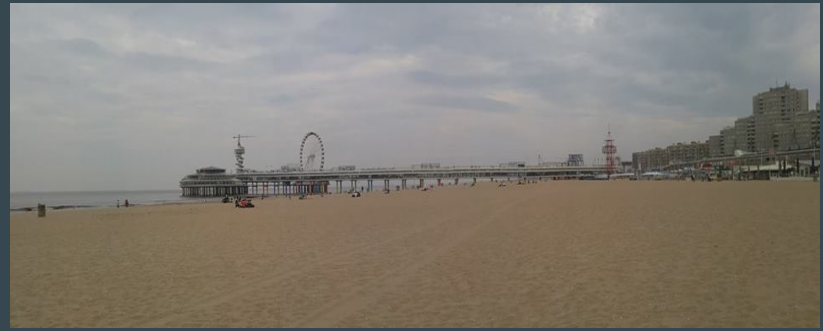


Day Two

This was the first official day of the program. First we went to the ICTY, there we watched a documentary about the inhumane conditions in the former Yugoslavia, and the legal process. Second we went to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, there we learned about how this organisation is getting rid of member-state's chemical weapons. Lastly, we met at the International Court of Justice. We ate lunch there and toured the gardens. We also learned about how the court functions, the structure of the court, and about some of the cases brought to the court.

Day Three

We visited the International Criminal Court just outside of the city center of The Hague. There, we went through the visitor center, had a presentation from some of the outreach staff from the ICC, and finally we watched a witness testimonial in a criminal proceeding for the Gbago (Cote d'Ivoire) trial. After we had a free afternoon!



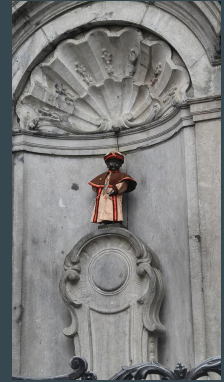
Day Four

We had a meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where we learned more about the Netherlands position in the European Union. Furthermore, we learned about how the EU is handling the refugee crisis. We were able to ask questions, and got in depth answers that helped with our research papers. Later that afternoon we took a boat tour of The Hague, had dinner on our own and then departed by bus for Brussels



Day Five

This was our completely free day. Some students took an early train to Paris, France and spent the day exploring the city. Another group spent the day touring a medieval style castle in the city of Bruges. Another group spent the day exploring Brussels, and the Royal Museum of Fine Arts.



Day Six

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Day Seven

On this day we had a meeting at the US Mission to the EU. There we learned about what it's like to work in the foreign service, how to become a member of the foreign service, and more about the relations between the US and the EU. Later we went to the European Parliament where we learned about the work the parliament does, and how legislation is created within the EU.



Day Eight

On this day we took an early bus ride to Mons, Belgium. Mons is the home of NATO SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe). At SHAPE we learned about the responsibilities of NATO, the structure of SHAPE, the relationship between the EU and NATO, as well as how orders from NATO get executed by SHAPE. We also ate lunch at SHAPE Club, a pleasantly surprising dining experience, and had a tour of the compound. “Chris,” our tour guide, will live in our hearts for eternity with his sharp, Polish-brand of wit and delight.



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What did we take away from this experience? Maggie-

After this experience I am more sure that this is what I want to be studying. I now understand the inner workings of the European Union, and have a much deeper understanding of the refugee crisis plaguing not only Europe but the surrounding areas. Additionally, the topic of my research evolved after visiting the International Court of Justice. Without this experience I would not have had this new insight. Lastly, I am now considering joining the foreign service after graduation thanks to the meeting at the US Mission to the EU. I would love to return to the Eurozone and learn more about other member-states' opinions of the European Union. As well as continuing to learn about European culture.

Preston-

I was fortunate enough to enjoy a fair amount of joyful surprise each day of this trip. From the Peace Palace to Manneken Pis, each morning gave rise to new challenges, and each evening concluded with a newfound understanding and respect for both the histories and complexities of the cities I visited, as well as the cultures and atmospheres that permeated those vistas. Is Europe my favorite place to visit in the world? God no. But this trip has taught me that what we see on the outside isn't always what's on the inside. There are over 25 member countries that make up the EU, and to truly understand Europe, just like you would another person, you should spend each day getting to know them a little more. It can only be to your benefit.

Lizzy-

This experience has left me with more questions than I initially thought I would have. Visiting the institutions, the courts, as well as the university in Brussels was rewarding and often had great speakers who were able to get into detail of what they do and the function of the body they worked for. However, since my research topic was the European financial crisis, asking various people of how the institutions handled the crisis only made me question more because I was ultimately not satisfied with the answers I received. This led to me reevaluating my research topic and deciding to take a different approach towards it. Walking away from this study abroad I have a better understanding of International Institutions, and also a pretty good grasp of their pros and cons.

Michelle-

I was already excited planning this trip because I had never been abroad before this trip. However, I was concerned that as someone focused on environmental law, the speakers and visits wouldn't be relevant to what I was researching. I was pleasantly surprised that many of the presenters were able to relate their talks to environmental issues and answer my questions about specific issues. I especially loved the cities we visited on this trip. The Hague, which I had never heard about before this trip, was definitely my favorite. It was absolutely beautiful and the International Criminal Court, International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, and the Peace Palace were amazing and tied together international law and global history in an amazing way. This trip definitely opened my eyes to the importance and potential of international law in relation to environmental law.

Elliott-

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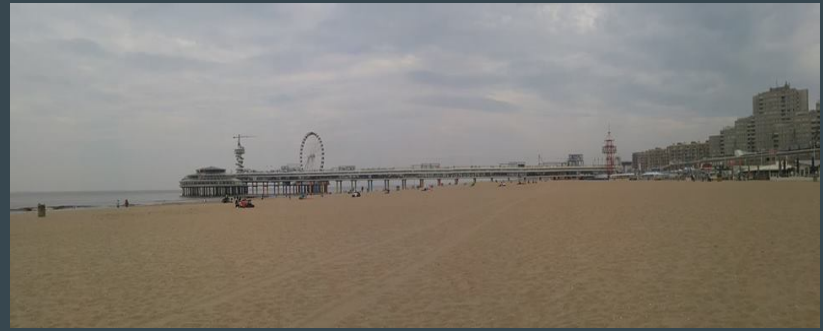


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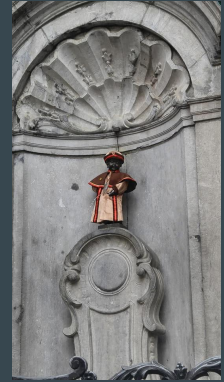
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