

# CURRENTS

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## Study abroad challenges college students

**W**hen I think back to my college days, studying abroad was less common than it is today. Today, in many of our institutions, it is often recommended, if not incorporated in the college course requirements. Yale, for example, is considering making it a requirement.

According to The Princeton Review, more than 150,000 undergraduates take this opportunity each year.

Why is studying abroad an important component of college education? What are some of the lessons learned? And, what is a typical experience? Let's look at the answers to these questions, through one college

### THE HOMEFRONT



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from her major and therefore decided to select electives.

student's journey.

In the beginning, Anne had her heart set on traveling to Australia. After weighing the hefty cost of the flight, she considered the University of Edinburgh in Scotland instead. Her first task was to make sure she would receive credit for the courses she chose. Unfortunately, it became apparent that she would not be able to enroll in courses

Her next obstacle was her passport. She tried to renew her passport four months in advance. She waited and waited. It didn't arrive. She kept calling, up to the week before her departure. She spent a half a day tracking it down and learned they had misspelled her name. In order to obtain it in time, she had to pay extra and it arrived two days before her departure.

The day before leaving, Anne was excited, anxious, relieved about her passport, and focused on last-minute items. She wondered if she were independent enough to manage the whole trip. She knew it was going to be about five months before she saw her family or closest friends.

The day arrived. Anne brought her two "100 pounds" luggage. Upon weighing in at the airport, she immediately realized she had overpacked. Standing in line, she self consciously omitted unnecessary outfits. Her flight went well and she fortuitously met up with an old high school friend who was in the same study abroad program.

Once in Scotland, the program offered an orientation that included day visits to various museums and clarity about expectations. Students were informed that they were representing the United States and were expected to behave well. They were also given an agenda that spanned their