

“I think that my trip to Europe has helped me see many differences that exist between my own culture and their culture. This has helped me better understand what my culture is and why I am like I am.”

~ Mike Brinck

“As I experienced more, my realizations both challenged and clarified the expectations that I had set before leaving for France, and this has given me a better perspective on my own culture and those around the world...After living in France for six weeks and then returning to my life in the United States, I went through much more of a culture shock than I expected. The initial sight of my friends and family was wonderful and exactly what I needed, but as I started to get back to my normal life, things kept catching me off guard...Sitting down in front of a television for the first time was also strange, as I realized that I had not touched a TV remote in weeks. Along with realizing that I don't need to watch TV all the time, I also find myself being more aware of my electricity usage and my eating choices. Living in France has most definitely shaped me into a better person who is more culturally aware and appreciative of all the different things the world has to offer.”

~ Brittany Lewis

“Their idea of a relationship has changed how I view my friends, family, and girlfriends. I enjoy spending time with them more now than I did when I went to France. Their idea of food has also challenged and changed the way I eat and see food. The preparation and consumption of food with all of its complexities has influenced me to change my eating habits, where I buy my food, and how I eat it...My time in France has changed me as a person in many ways that I can observe and in some ways that cannot be seen. It has been the best experience of my life, I have made friends that I will never forget, seen wonders of the world that many will never get to see, thank you Doctor Ko for letting me enjoy your company and I look forward to working with UC International in the future.”

~ Taylor Brooks

I believe that this diversity of cultures and teaching has resulted in myself becoming more socially and intellectually educated as a world citizen...I am happy I decided to participate in this summers study abroad program at Audencia. I would have never expected a couple of years ago that I would have studied and lived abroad in Europe this summer. Living abroad has exposed myself to many different cultures throughout Europe...Audencia widened my perspective on how education is taught outside of America and exposed myself to new challenges both in and outside of the classroom...My visit to the E.U. was also a great opportunity to visualize where E.U. laws are created and enforced as well as physically interacting with active members within the actual various institutions in which they conduct their business. I look forward to applying everything that I have learned and experienced while abroad towards my future and am confident that I will serve as a better world citizen and businessmen because of my participation in the 2011 Study Abroad program through the University of Cincinnati in Nantes, France at Audencia Nantes Ecole de Management!”

~ Chris Carey

“Upon my return to the United States last week, I noticed cultural differences as soon as I stepped foot off the airplane and begun my walk through the airport. For instance, I noticed a souvenir shop that sold “proud to be American” products. Upon seeing this I actually experienced some reverse culture shock because in France you would never find a store like this...In addition to having some of my ideals clarified during my trip, I also began to question some of my own cultural makeup...I also wondered why we, including myself, are more focused on where we want to be in our careers, and how we are going to achieve our “dream job” rather than accepting where we currently are in life, what is going to make us happy today, and the world a better place tomorrow. It dawned on me during my plane ride back to the States, the French perception of Americans is correct; we live to work, whereas they work to live...In closing, this study abroad has made me question some of my beliefs I once thought to be correct. It’s also given me the self-confidence to be more independent because I know any problem I’m faced with there is always going to be a way to solve it. It may not be easy at the time, but if you think, try, and become a little creative you will find a way to solve your problem. Lastly, the French culture has taught me to slow down and appreciate each day.”

~ Eric Fahrenkopf

“Overall I think that cultural themes are helpful especially to someone who is completely unfamiliar with a culture. They do a good job of summarizing the general behaviors of various cultures. But they are never a substitute for real life experience. The best way to really understand a culture is to immerse yourself in it and meet as many people from that culture as possible. That experience inevitably changes you as a person because it forces you to learn more about yourself and take a more introspective look at the things you do and believe, and also why you do and believe those things. So for me, as much as this study abroad was an opportunity to try new things and learn about new cultures, it was equally an opportunity to discover new things about myself and my culture.”

~ Chizi Igwe

“In conclusion, while I discovered that there were many differences in France that I felt uncomfortable or unfamiliar with, there were just as many (or more) that made more sense to me than the way that American society has imposed upon us. I envy the French's freedom to speak their minds, express themselves openly, and live without unnecessary impositions or aggression from the local police. These differences do not necessarily define the French as rude or unruly, but is a mere demonstration of the different ways that people can be cultivated.”

~ Justin Morrison

“When I sat down and began to re-read all of my cultural observations, my eyes began to water as I realized how much I truly miss France. This summer was filled with many unforgettable moments, life lessons, and growing experiences. Before leaving the US I had fears such riding the train, communicating, and my host family. These fears left me with some doubts about my trip to France and whether or not I should be going. Thank goodness I had already purchased my non-refundable plane ticket before this fear had taken hold; because I would have regretted that decision for the rest of my life I’m sure. By nature I’m not a person who likes change, and I think that this trip was all about change for me. Between changing my address for a few weeks, to changing languages, friends, countries, and families...After traveling, studying, and learning abroad for six weeks I can honestly say that I learned so much more about myself and things that are of importance to me...But as I was sitting in the Nantes airport I saw an advertisement for an MBA program in Rennes and my wheels began to turn. They have several programs that are offered in English and they also like to set you up with companies as well...I’m hoping I can find some way to work this into my future...My summer in Nantes was definitely the experience of a lifetime, it helped me to see just how capable I am, that I can truly do anything that I desire or aspire to do. It may take a little effort but I can push myself to go further, and that the benefits from my effort may affect me in ways I couldn’t imagine.”

~ Angela Nelson

“Suddenly I’m a huge advocate to foreigners who want to travel to America and also I’m a huge advocate for Americans who want to travel just about anywhere. I knew I didn’t want a whole lot to do with finance, but now I kind of just want Lee’s job! I want to be able to help other Americans become more cultured and aware of the world so that they can see cultural differences and be more welcoming and accepting to people visiting our country.”

~ Rachel Oakland

“Throughout my time in France I have noticed multiple changes in myself and how I conduct myself with others. I have noticed a new appreciation for things, a new drive and ambition for things I never thought I had wanted before until I got a small taste of it. I learned things about myself, and noticed and changed things about the way I am with others to communicate more clearly, respectfully, and with a much higher tolerance of differences. The time I spent out of the United States was the most rewarding experience that I could have ever given myself. I now have dreams to experience more outside of my simple hometown, and make an influence on the world that I have learned does not evolve around the United States. It is, to a large extent the opposite in fact. I have seen in eight weeks more than I ever would have imagined seeing in my life and it gives me hope to strive to keep seeing and doing more...My eyes have been opened to ways of life that was ignorant enough before to believe that they mimic the United States mentality and ways of thinking. I now hold an appreciation for ways opposite of my own and am curious to experience more in the future based on the experiences I have had in the past two months.”

~ Nicole Sharp