

Education Abroad Returnees of the Month March 2018

Hannah All

3rd year Art History major

UVA Exchange: Regents University London, Fall 2017

The inaugural UVA London First program launched in Fall 2017, providing incoming first year students an opportunity to spend their first semester in London. Several upperclass students including Hannah were selected to study on exchange at Regents University while providing support to these first year students as they began their UVA experience abroad. The same opportunity will be featured again in London this fall and for the inaugural semester of UVA Shanghai First at Fudan University.



Most interesting class and why? Did you take classes in connection to your major or electives?

The most fantastic part about my study abroad course load was that I got to take such a diverse range of classes that I would have otherwise never taken! Though I did take one course specific to my Art History major back at UVA, the other three were completely unrelated to my specific area of study. While this might sound odd, it gave me the amazing opportunity to take a break from the rat race of normal school, and to really explore new topics of interest. My favorite class was called “The Psychology of Fashion”, and it was taught by a retired executive from Louis Vuitton. Having always been interested in fashion, but never enough to pursue it as a profession, this class was always a treat to attend. Had I not gone abroad, I would have never taken such a course.

How was education abroad different than anticipated?

The main difference in my instruction at Regents was that most of my classes used the landscape and resources in London as teaching tools- that is, we went out into the city nearly every day to observe, visit museums, attend shows, and so much more. The learning was extremely hands on. Being at a school located right in the city center afforded my instructors the unique opportunity to utilize the colorful culture and enhance their material.



Number one way the experience contributed to your growth

UVA is an extremely close-knit community, with a beautiful focus on strong friendships and bonds between students, faculty, and staff. Without realizing it, in my first two years at UVA, I had become extremely reliant on others, for happiness, support, and company. I was the type of person who found it hard to be alone! I never ate alone, I went on runs with friends, there was very little I did by myself. When I first got to London, I sat in my dorm room, hungry and in need of a coffee. But who would I eat with? Should I walk out into the city, unknown to me at the time, and find the cappuccino I was so desperately craving? Over my time in the city, I grew to realize that I could be brave. I was capable of traveling, learning, and experiencing joy independent of other people. This is one of the most important lessons I have ever learned in life, and I have my time abroad to thank for it.



Favorite local hangout, and why?

The Volunteer pub! This was the pub right near my school, and it was like a local watering hole for all types of people in central London. My roommate and classmates would meet there at the end of a long day for the world's best fish and chips (though I am biased). What I loved so much about the Volunteer was the mix of people that you would get to see and interact with. Pub culture is a staple in the fabric of London, and England as a whole, and this was the place to experience it to the fullest. You could get a full English breakfast, consisting of blood sausage, bacon, eggs, toast, baked beans, and potatoes accompanied by a strong black breakfast tea, for around £5, and it was served all day long.

Most interesting/delicious cuisine tried

My favorite restaurant, which I went to four times, was called Dishoom. With a line out the door and around the block, it was always a shot in the dark getting a table. They didn't take reservations, and so you checked in at the desk and received a pager that only worked within 30 yards of the building. People waited in the bitter cold, night by night, for this amazing Bombay Cafe. Originally started by a group of

Zoroastrian immigrants from Iran, this amazing restaurant has become all the rage in the diverse city of London. My favorite dish was their classic Biryani sauce, which I put on everything from masala prawns to chicken tikka.

Most meaningful experience abroad

While abroad, I was living in a dorm room. Originally, I was not looking forward to having a roommate, but my attitude quickly changed when I met my roommate Madison. Madison is also a 3rd year at UVA, and it took flying halfway around the world for us to become

friends! We traveled to nine countries together, and now she is one of my dearest friends. I had so many meaningful experiences abroad, but one sticks out. It was within the first month of the semester. We had been going out and exploring our city, and realized we hadn't gotten to see the National Gallery yet. Both being art fanatics, this was unheard of! We spent the next 4 hours wandering around the beautiful halls of the museum, silently taking in some of the world's greatest art. From Neoclassicism to Impressionism, this museum has it all. Getting to enjoy the world through centuries of art and history was a privilege, and it is a memory I will keep with me always.

Sum up the experience in three words:
Seized every adventure!

Anything else to add?

I would just love to thank the UVA Study Abroad office, and our program advisor Michael Levenson for the amazing opportunity they provided me. My time in London was life changing, and I hope that after graduation, I will get to move back to London and put down roots.



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