



Overseas Internships: Portuguese Flagship Launches in Brazil



AMERICAN COUNCILS FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Students from the Indiana University Swahili Flagship Program pose with Flagship Overseas Capstone program staff and internship sponsors at the State University of Zanzibar, Tanzania.

Years of on-campus preparation in a domestic Flagship program prepare students for the Flagship Overseas Capstone program, an opportunity to learn about a language and culture from the inside, studying and working with native speakers to gain an understanding of their language, culture, and perspectives. The capstone internship is an integral program component that allows each student to develop professional language proficiency and skills in a position that reflects his or her unique course of study and career interests. Whether a student interns with a multinational corporation, an academic laboratory, a small local business, a local nongovernmental organization, or elsewhere, the value of learning field- or region-specific language by working directly with native speakers is immeasurable.

Most students state that study at domestic Flagship Centers prepared them well for immersion experiences at foreign universities and overseas internships. For example, Sarah Schrader, a recent graduate of Western Kentucky University with dual majors in biology and chemistry, marvels at her language development with The Language Flagship program. "I have gone from zero knowledge of Chinese to superior-level proficiency in under 4 years of study," says Schrader. "Flagship is unique in that it goes beyond simple technicalities and grammatical structures,

helping students root their language skills in a thorough understanding of the culture behind the language." As a science major, Schrader worried that she would not be well prepared to tackle her microbiology and molecular biology classes at Nanjing University. However, she was pleasantly surprised to find that despite some challenges, the strong linguistic foundation built through The Language Flagship allowed her to pick up new science vocabulary quickly and communicate easily with teachers and classmates.

In spring 2013, Schrader completed her Flagship Overseas Capstone internship in a laboratory researching virus- and drug-based cancer treatments at the Shanghai Institutes for Biological Sciences of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. "My internship experience enhanced my professional Chinese skills in practical ways through discussing experimental procedures, analyzing results, and planning future experiments. It required me to quickly master a wide range of scientific vocabulary to be able to communicate effectively," she says.

Christopher Parr, a recent graduate of Indiana University with a major in biochemistry and a minor in East African Studies, echoes Schrader regarding his preparation for study overseas. "The Language Flagship provided the tools which allowed me to expand my language abilities exponentially.

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The first cohort of Flagship Overseas Capstone program students in Brazil started internships in August 2013. In February 2013, these 12 students from the Portuguese Flagship Program at the University of Georgia, Athens (UGA), enrolled in courses at São Paulo State University (UNESP) related to their various majors: political science, sociology, international affairs, public relations, economics, romance languages, history, and biology. During 6 months of in-country study at the university, students became accustomed to Brazilian culture while being immersed in the language with native speakers.

Building on prior study in Spain, Samuel Kinsman, a senior majoring in finance and international business, was drawn to The Language Flagship because "it offered a completely different type of immersion, a longer duration of time overseas, and a chance to gain professional experience in another country and another language," he says. Kinsman sees the finance- and infrastructure-related consulting work he is doing with the Corporate Finance Deals Group of PricewaterhouseCoopers in São Paulo as a great opportunity to improve his professional Portuguese. "Working and living abroad through The Language Flagship gives me exposure to different ideas and ways of thinking. I want to have an international career and to be



UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA, ATHENS

Sam Kinsman (right) and Emily Escoe (second from right) visit Rio Preto with fellow students from the first cohort to experience the Flagship Overseas Capstone program in Brazil.

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SARAH SCHRADER

Sarah Schrader interned at the Shanghai Institutes for Biological Sciences of the Chinese Academy of Sciences during her Flagship Overseas Capstone year.

Studying a language stateside prepares you with basic structure and skills, but being forced to use those skills in a completely foreign culture is not something easily prepared for.” He especially appreciated the hands-on experience and real impact that immersion provided him during his year-long Flagship Overseas Capstone program in Tanzania. “I have learned the language, the culture, and a lot about myself as a person and how I fit in with the world around me,” says Parr. “I can see the world for what it is and not just from an American point of view.”

Many students claim that The Flagship Overseas Capstone internship has an important influence on their future careers. While interning with the Zanzibar Association of People Living with HIV and AIDS (a nonprofit nongovernmental organization that supports and advocates for people affected by HIV/AIDS and increases community awareness about HIV/AIDS), Parr routinely interacted with children born with HIV. This experience solidified his career interests in HIV research and the Doctors Without Borders campaign as well as his desire to spend more time in East Africa. “The ability to speak Swahili has improved my chances of landing a research job in Kenya or Tanzania substantially,” he says, and “most doctors who arrive there have no language training and only speak English.”

Like Parr, Christa Kumming reports that her internship at Creative Solutions Resource Center in Mangapwani, Zanzibar, Tanzania, intensified her long-term career aspirations—in her case, an international career with a focus on community development. A recent graduate of Indiana University with a major in studio art and minors in African languages and art history, Kumming helped young individuals develop story lines and write scripts for the local puppet theatre and gained a deeper knowledge of Swahili sayings, songs, and cultural references in the process. This internship built on themes Kumming presented in “Reconstructing Education in Tanzania” at The Language Flagship National Student Meeting 2012.

The Flagship Overseas Capstone experience can be as unique as the student. Boren Scholar Leena Warsi, a recent graduate of the University of Texas, Austin, majored in Arabic language and literature and South Asian languages and cultures. “Film courses, internships with local organizations, and comprehensive conversation sessions with language mentors greatly improved my listening and speaking skills, specifically in understanding cultural references and colloquialisms,” says Warsi. Her interest in foreign media and documentaries led her to an internship with a local filmmaker in Alexandria, Egypt, where she wrote scenes for films and conducted oral interviews with actors in Arabic. As a result, Warsi left Egypt feeling ready for her future. “The rigorous training offered by The Language Flagship prepared me for a career involving foreign language education, translation, or media analysis,” she says. “I finished my capstone year with a better understanding of the region and a greater desire to be part of its future.”

For Christopher Robinson, a recent graduate of Arizona State University with a degree in sustainability and a focus on international development, Flagship Overseas Capstone internships at two environmental nongovernmental organizations were a great fit. At Global Environmental Institute, Robinson researched the environmental and social impacts of Chinese overseas investment, and at Chinadialogue, he conducted interviews and was involved in writing, editing, and translating for the firm. “The Language Flagship allowed me to be exposed to language situations and experiences that I probably never would have had,” says Robinson.

Flagship students return from their capstone year with a level of in-country experience that goes beyond what is taught in the classroom. This opportunity to gain the know-how and confidence required to thrive in an international work environment after graduation is a defining feature of the Flagship program.



CHRISTOPHER ROBINSON

Christopher Robinson explored the picturesque Huangshan (Yellow Mountain) during his Flagship Overseas Capstone year in China.

Word from Flagship

Sam Eisen
Director
The Language Flagship



INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

The Language Flagship is reaching new heights as large groups of Flagship students complete overseas programs and internships. Undergraduate language proficiency results continue to rise; preliminary reporting indicates that 89% of the 2012–2013 Arabic Flagship Overseas Capstone cohort reached the speaking proficiency goal of Level 3 on the Interagency Language Roundtable scale and that 94% of students in the Russian Flagship Overseas Capstone program reached or exceeded this goal.

Both the quality and variety of internship opportunities are growing. This issue of *Discourse* features students who have used their professional-level language skills to complete internships in fields such as health and social services, finance, media and communications, and energy and environment in countries including Brazil, China, Egypt, Russia, and Tanzania.

The Flagship model—which combines language, culture, and regional studies with study in professional fields—supports movements that integrate language and humanities programs more broadly to enrich professional training and career preparation. Brigham Young University (BYU) Dean of Humanities John Rosenberg describes such an approach in this issue of *Discourse*. The Humanities+ program at BYU encourages students to develop leadership and problem-solving skills, intercultural flexibility, language abilities, and creativity that they can market to employers. Humanities+ students may add foreign language study, majors in disciplines and professional fields outside the humanities, and international internships to their humanities experiences.

As concern increases nationwide for higher education to show that graduates are succeeding in the workplace, integrating languages and humanities with a career track has two positive results: The dichotomy between pure humanities and career training changes, and an integrative model that embraces the larger value of humanities (specifically, language study and cultural expertise) is created within a model focused on career and results.

Portuguese Flagship ... (from page 1)

a credible link between English- and Portuguese-speaking businesses and people," says Kinsman.

Emily Escoe, a senior pursuing a major in public relations, is happy with the level of preparation Flagship gave her before she departed for Brazil. "Before starting classes [at UNESP], I was definitely intimidated by the thought of taking courses at a Brazilian university with all native speakers," says Escoe. "However, after spending a few weeks in the classroom, I felt like I was actually really well prepared—linguistically and culturally—for this experience."

The confidence that these students exhibit is the result of in-depth preparation in the domestic Portuguese Flagship Program. In addition to receiving intensive language instruction in class, the students participate in cultural and immersion-like activities in and out of the classroom intended to equip them with linguistic and cultural skills and knowledge as well as the ability to apply those skills and knowledge in academic and professional contexts. One immersion-like experience is Teletandem language learning, whereby UGA undergrads studying Portuguese are partnered with UNESP students studying English to collaborate on projects in both languages via video conferencing. "The authentic discourse exchanged with a real live Brazilian peer increases our students' oral practice significantly and creates rich opportunities to share cultural knowledge," says Robert Moser, director of the UGA Portuguese Flagship Program.

Moser also sees the value of Portuguese in the Flagship language roster. "The last decade has seen fast growth, high rates of foreign investment, and significant internal investments in Brazil's infrastructure, education, and poverty reduction," he says. These investments have resulted in "unprecedented opportunities for U.S. citizens who wish to engage Brazil in the areas of international relations, business, education, media, the arts, and more."



UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA, ATHENS

Students in the Portuguese Flagship Program at the University of Georgia, Athens, celebrate Brazil's independence at a cultural event on campus in September 2012.

Op-ed: Humanities+: Seeing with Both Eyes

John R. Rosenberg
Dean, College of Humanities, Brigham Young University

In *On Moral Fiction*, John Gardner tells a story of Norse gods fighting gamely against the forces of disorder and chaos. Woden seeks out the king of the trolls, gets him in an armlock, and asks how good might triumph over evil. "Give me your left eye and I'll tell you," says the troll. Woden plucks out his eye, hands it over, and awaits his answer. The troll responds, "Watch with *both* eyes."

We either are or are not (depending on what you read) mired deeply in a crisis of the humanities. We also have been going about our jobs with only one eye, the virtuous eye of the noninstrumentalizable liberal arts. "What then do [the humanities] do?" asks Stanley Fish. "They don't do anything." The humanities admit no justification outside of themselves. Yet, squinting keenly with this right eye, we spy the virtues of a liberal arts education: critical thinking, historical consciousness, global citizenship, artful communication, tolerance for ambiguity. Good things all, with two caveats. First, what we name as the primary benefits of a humanities education usually are secondary accidents of the curriculum. We teach Arabic or Dante and assume that one or more of these virtues will materialize in our students' thinking and behavior, but we rarely emphasize the very things we claim justify our presence at the university. Second, we do not attend to the biographical reality that college is but a short chapter in our students' lives. The right to teach big ideas is purchased with the responsibility to help students connect those ideas to the world of work.

As educators committed to students' success—not for a semester, but for a lifetime—we watch with both eyes. While the right eye peers into classrooms, the left eye strains beyond the horizon to what our students will do in 5 or 10 years. At Brigham Young University, we are implementing this concept in the Humanities+ program, which cultivates students who are passionate, articulate, and unapologetic about their humanities degrees. The "+" dimension encourages students to supplement their majors with a dual major, a second or third language, technology or business courses, or an international internship—all ways to translate the liberal arts education into another arena.

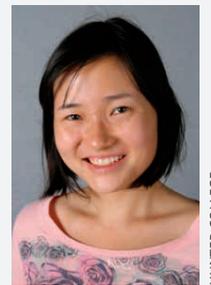
Flagship programs, properly implemented, are models of stereoscopy. One eye targets the local, a domain and a level of proficiency, while the other captures the global, the breadth of a well-educated citizen. The Language Flagship is a model of not only language acquisition but also a kind of whole-sighted learning that best serves students and their evolving communities.



MARK A. PHILBRICK

Flagship Student Develops Skills for Federal Employment

Increasing numbers of Flagship students are receiving Boren Scholarships and preparing for careers in federal service. In the 2013 academic year, 21 Flagship students were awarded Boren Scholarships for overseas study (eight for Chinese, six for Arabic, five for Russian, and one each for Persian and Korean). Crystal Yeh, a junior majoring in Chinese and environmental science, received an award to study Mandarin in China. Her parents are native speakers of Chinese, but Yeh had only moderate exposure to the language growing up; a desire to be fluent to near-native proficiency brought her to the Chinese Flagship Program at Hunter College. Yeh is using her Boren Scholarship to complete the Flagship Overseas Capstone program in Nanjing, China, and hopes to gain valuable experience related to renewable energy while overseas. "My career goals include working for the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Policy and International Affairs," says Yeh. "I am directly enrolled in courses at Nanjing University, including environmental policy analysis and the low-carbon economy, which will help me to understand China's energy policies and practices. In addition, I plan to intern for an environmental protection or renewable energy development firm to master professional discourse in Mandarin."



HUNTER COLLEGE

Crystal Yeh, a junior in the Chinese Flagship Program at Hunter College, is using her Boren Scholarship to complete the Flagship Overseas Capstone program in Nanjing, China.

Flagship Student and Boren Scholar Puts Skills into Practice in Saint Petersburg

As Inna Makheddinova learned during her Flagship Overseas Capstone year, gauging public opinion is important to both business and local government in modern Russia. She completed an internship at IzoStudio (now Exact Poll), a public opinion research center in Saint Petersburg, where she reviewed weekly public opinion polls, analyzed data, and researched social issues—including issues related to a project commissioned by the local government to create language programs for the integration of migrant workers. “My capstone year in Russia allowed me to apply classroom knowledge to the real world. It taught me to listen, observe, analyze, and understand people from different backgrounds and to communicate with others. Those transferable skills are invaluable no matter where you work,” she says. A recent graduate of Portland State University (PSU) with degrees in international studies and Russian, Makheddinova received a Boren Scholarship to support her capstone year in Russia. She says that in the Russian Flagship Program at PSU, her language skills improved “significantly through intensive course work and weekly meetings with a tutor or conversation partner as well as extracurricular activities. . . . By the time the capstone year rolled around, I knew what to expect as I had participated in many, many hours of language training and practice in preparation.” Makheddinova is pursuing jobs in international business or international development related to Russia or Russian-speaking communities. Her long-term career goal is to work for the U.S. Department of State in the Office of Russian Affairs.



INNA MAKHEDDINOVA

Inna Makheddinova visited the 11th-century Cathedral of Saint Sophia on the grounds of the Kremlin in Veliky Novgorod, Russia.

Flagship Centers

Arabic

Michigan State University
University of Arizona
University of Maryland,
College Park
University of Oklahoma
University of Texas, Austin
Alexandria University, Egypt¹
*Moulay Ismail University,
Morocco¹*

Chinese

Arizona State University²
Brigham Young University
Hunter College
Indiana University, Bloomington
San Francisco State University
University of Mississippi
University of Oregon
University of Rhode Island
Western Kentucky University
Nanjing University, China³
Tianjin Normal University, China¹

Hindi Urdu

University of Texas, Austin
Jaipur Hindi Center, India⁴
Lucknow Urdu Center, India⁴

Korean

University of Hawai'i, Mānoa
Korea University, South Korea⁴

Persian

University of Maryland,
College Park

Portuguese

University of Georgia, Athens
São Paulo State University, Brazil⁴

Russian

Bryn Mawr College
Portland State University
University of California,
Los Angeles
University of Wisconsin, Madison
*Saint Petersburg State University,
Russia¹*

Swahili

Indiana University, Bloomington
*State University of Zanzibar,
Tanzania¹*

Turkish

Indiana University, Bloomington
Ankara University, Turkey¹

Pilot Flagship/ROTC Centers

Arizona State University
Georgia Institute of Technology
North Georgia State College
and University

The Flagship Mission

The Language Flagship leads the nation in designing, supporting, and implementing a new paradigm for advanced language education. Through an innovative partnership among the federal government, education, and business, The Language Flagship graduates students who will take their place among the next generation of global professionals, commanding a superior level of proficiency in one of many languages critical to U.S. competitiveness and security.

What Do We Do?

Flagship Centers offer students intensive language instruction to enhance their academic degrees, graduating students with professional-level language proficiency. Programs include periods of rigorous language and cultural immersion at Overseas Flagship Centers. The Language Flagship also funds a select number of pilot K–12 programs designed to provide an articulated path of language instruction for students from elementary school through college.

Flagship graduates leverage their superior language and cultural skills in various careers, offering an intercultural perspective to employers in the federal and state governments, global businesses, and nongovernmental organizations.



THE LANGUAGE FLAGSHIP

Creating Global Professionals

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