



Travel Abroad 2009-2010, Lawrence Tech./Kent State Florence Program; People, Places and Perceptions.



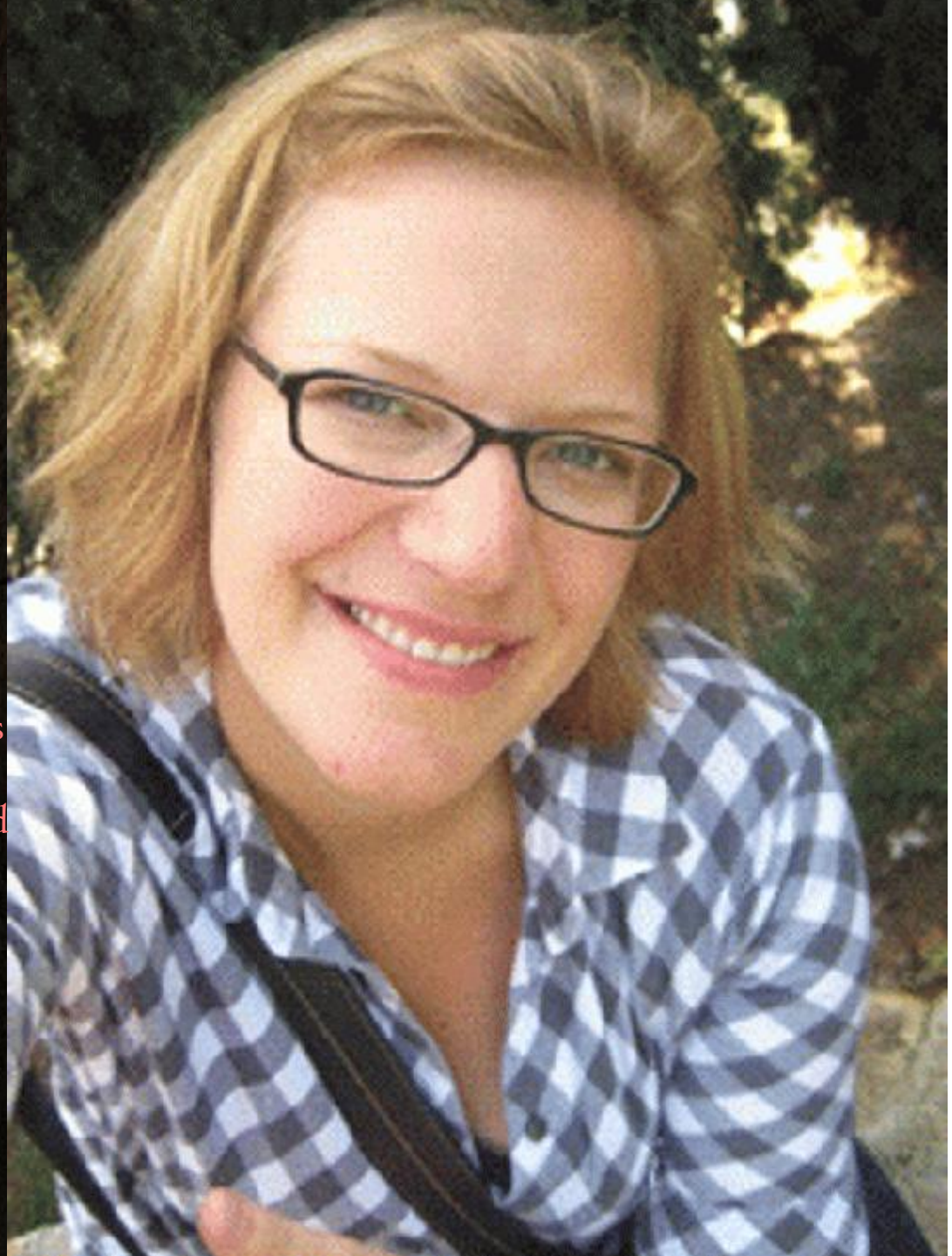
"Travel is more than the seeing of sights; it is a change that goes on, deep and permanent, in the ideas of living." - Miriam Beard.

A Semester abroad is a time that will forever affect a person's life. It is a time where we can have a fresh start and escape from reality. I will forever remember my stay in Italy. Those four months were some of the most fun filled and exciting times of my life. I met people we would have never met; I saw places that we would have never seen. It was an experience unlike any other. The small taste I had makes me eager to see more. I love the time I spent, I am thankful for the friends I made and can never replace the knowledge I gained. I was excited to come home and I am anxious to return.

Chelsea Sturza

I, Christy Scherzer, studied in Florence Italy for four months during the fall of 2009. The semester that I spent in Italy was during my junior year at Lawrence Technological University in the College of Architecture. While in Italy I studied architecture, Italian art history, international business and the Italian language. All of these courses combined added up to a well rounded semester that not only educated me but gave me an inside view of the Italian and European culture. Four months of studying amongst some of the oldest architecture in the world has changed the core of my thinking. I once thought that contemporary architecture was where the world needed to focus, but I now see that these immense buildings have stood the test of time and have amazing stories to be told with their history and evolution.

This experience could not have been taught through books on American soil. The direct connection with the Italian culture and beauty is one that will never be forgotten.



My name is Collin Graw and I am a Senior studying Architecture and Construction Management. In the fall of 2009, I was able to take part in something truly special when I had the chance to study for the semester in Florence, Italy.

As a lover of art and architecture through my entire life, I know there is no better place to learn about the two subjects than the "birth place of the Renaissance," Florence, Italy. Many of the world's most famous artists such as Michelangelo, Da Vinci, and Brunelleschi all lived and worked in this city, and I had the chance to live in the same place, centuries later, surrounded by the magnificent pieces of art and architecture. What made the experience even more valuable was the fact that I was able to feed my passion for art and architecture off the love and knowledge of a very prestigious faculty. I now know there is no way to better understand a subject than to visit the actual place or see the actual object.

While studying the impressive Italian art and history under some very intelligent people was great, the other reason I appreciated my time abroad was the insight I received as to how Italians approach their architectural design. Much of Italian architecture is historic and cannot be torn down, so learning to adapt to what is existing was of the utmost importance.

Traveling throughout Italy and other European countries allowed me to see how culture changes from region to region within Italy, as well as how it changes from country to country. I spent most of my time in Italy but was lucky enough to visit Germany, Austria, and the Netherlands on more than one occasion.

All in all, despite the burden of shelling out even more money than normal for a typical semester at LTU, studying abroad was worth every penny.



Traditionally, travel is viewed as a chance to bask in art, architecture, food and music and for the majority that is exactly what they receive. They will learn factoids, snaps pictures of beautiful vistas and stand in line to see priceless objects of civilization but those are attributes of a vacation. Ten days traveling is an amazing escape from the world we live in and for many it is deeply rewarding. I am one of those people and I have experienced firsthand what happens when we return from a vacation, we slip back into our lives and our experiences drift away. We will always have images to remind us and we might catch something on the television that will take us back to those experiences.

I was fortunate enough to live in Florence, Italy for four months and there I began to find more fulfilling travel. I discovered through constant exposure and course work that it is possible to receive more than fleeting memories. We studied history, art and culture the same as the people that clogged the streets that we walked every day. The difference was we existed in the fairytales that they were experiencing. We developed favorite stores, gelaterias and even knew service hours of our favorite places..

I don't believe we began to appreciate our experience less as the time went on but we were given time to recover from shell shock. Simply we got over it and I believe that is how we came to experience a more truthful Florence. The assistance of mentors and our personal curiosity lead us to understand the climate of Florence from a social stand point and not just historically but in modernity as well. Perhaps we just learned a lot more of the same information but I believe we were able to understand them and piece them into a network of knowledge. Comprehension of the environment that is being experienced may just be the key to a valid visit.

When we recall Florence it will not be buildings and pizza, it is not a space to us, but actually a place.

Ryan Shaner





Duomo in Winter , Florence, Italy.



Palazzo della Signoria at night, Florence, Italy. Scene.



Group Photo; Christy, Colin , Chelsea, Brandon and the un-usual suspects in Italy.



Villa Medici at Castello (Villa Reale) Italy.



Christy and Ryan  
(Not real)

Leaning Tower of Pisa.



Vienna.



Colin at roof of  
Duomo (Yes real)