



EUROPEAN STUDIES CENTER

A Jean Monnet European Union Centre of Excellence
A US Department of Education National Resource Center

Special Edition—Alumni Issue



Hello and welcome to our first edition of the *European Studies Center Newsletter* devoted exclusively to profiling our alumni. As you can see, Pitt grads who earned certificates in West European or European Union Studies are a diverse and accomplished group. Each made the decision to do the extra work, put in the extra time, and gain a deeper knowledge of the people, culture, policies, history or contemporary developments in Europe. Since graduating they are part of a network of people in the US and Europe who are linked both to Pitt and to their experiences and studies devoted to Europe. We are proud of this group and hope we can maintain contact in a way that people find enjoyable and worthwhile and supports our continuing effort to give Pitt students the best possible opportunities for working on—and maybe in—Europe.

We thank those of you who contributed to this issue and hope others will do the same when they are reached. In the meantime, please feel free to contact us and to explore our ongoing programs and activities on our website.

We hope to see you in Oakland very soon.

Ron Linden

Director



Joseph V. Balestrino

Graduated: 2007

ESC Certificates: European Union
and West European Studies
Undergraduate Certificates

Current Role: Labor and
Employment Counsel, U.S. Steel

Why did you decide to pursue a West European or EU Studies Certificate?

I have always had a passion for international studies and politics and knew that the UCIS certificate programs would provide an avenue for expanding that interest while also enhancing the value of my undergraduate degree. I chose to pursue both a West European and EU Studies Certificate because as an Italian-American, I have many cultural and family ties to Italy, and because I intended to double major in Political Science and Spanish language. The combination of my Italian background and interest in Spain made the West European and EU Studies certificate programs a natural fit for me.

What was one of the best experiences you had while pursuing the certificate? A great class? A study abroad experience? Directed research?

All of the above. Particularly with respect to the EU studies program, I loved the fact that as an undergraduate student, I was able to take grad courses taught by amazing faculty and study alongside UCIS grad students from a myriad of different backgrounds. The small class sizes too, provided invaluable opportunity for in-depth discussion on topics near and dear to the hearts of my fellow classmates, many of whom had come from Western Europe. I also had the amazing opportunity to directly enroll and study for 6 months at the Universidad Complutense in Madrid Spain, and participate in the Europe East-West Undergraduate Research Symposium while a student of the West European and EU Studies programs.

What advice would you give current Pitt students interested in Europeanizing/internationalizing their studies and professional prospects?

Take advantage of every opportunity to increase and demonstrate your international knowledge base. Study

abroad, pick up another certificate, take honors level and graduate level courses where offered, participate in research opportunities and panel discussions, etc. All of these things will make you that much more marketable to future employers.

Can you think of some programs run by the EUCE – lectures, workshops, etc. – that you participated in and that particularly stand out?

The Europe East-West Undergraduate Research Symposium sticks out, as well as some of the incredible guest speakers the EUCE was able to persuade to come to Pitt and speak on internationally relevant topics, including former president of the EU Commission Jose Barroso.

What's a piece of advice that you would give to a recent graduate who is looking for his or her first job?

The hardest job to land is always the first one. It seems most job boards want a minimum of a few years experience. To get those essential first few years experience, my advice would be to broaden your geographical reach for potential first jobs. In other words, even if, for example, you ultimately want to live in Pittsburgh, the local job market may not support recent grads initially. Therefore, if you are willing to move away from the area and be open to different locales and job markets, you will almost assuredly be able to find a position that will enable you to acquire the requisite experience to move to your desired location later on.

If you could re-live your Pitt days – is there anything that you would do differently?

I would probably be a bit more active in participating in research and speaking symposiums, as well as travel opportunities outside of Pittsburgh.

On a personal note...

What current challenge or quality of life issue have you been recently involved with / concerned about?

I have been involved in pro bono legal work for the indigent community, which speaks to the greater issue of income inequality.

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Tony Catania

Graduated: 2006

ESC Certificates: European Union
and West European Studies
Undergraduate Certificates

Current Role: Financial Consultant
with Kaiser Permanente

Why did you decide to pursue a West European or EU Studies Certificate?

It aligned with a number of my interests including German, Political Science, and Economics. It gave a finer point to those pursuits.

What was one of the best experiences you had while pursuing the certificate? A great class? A study abroad experience? Directed research?

Many of my favorite experiences came from my the EUCE/ESC programs including participation in the Europe East and West Undergraduate research symposium, seeing Jose Manuel Barroso (then EU Commission President) speak at alumni hall, preparing for and submitting my Fulbright application for study in Germany and Poland (I did not get it, but I made it far into the selection process and learned very much) and my study abroad experience in Bonn, Germany.

I studied German at the Goethe institute in Bad Godesberg, Germany and there were many fantastic things about that experience. My sister was studying at the University in Bonn for the summer, so I had a live-in tandem partner which amplified my language study. It was an immersive multicultural experience. I made friends with people from all over the world using German as our common language. I got to do some local travel on the weekends and become familiar with soccer.

What advice would you give current Pitt students interested in Europeanizing/internationalizing their studies and professional prospects?

The resources offered at Pitt with the EUCE/ESC are

fantastic. Take advantage of the undergraduate research opportunities as much as you can. What you learn from both the subject matter and process will stick with you for a very long time. Even if the content does not directly apply to your future career, how you engage with the material and the broader worldview it provides will be an asset.

Can you think of some programs run by the EUCE – lectures, workshops, etc. – that you participated in and that particularly stand out?

The Undergraduate Research Symposium and the speaker series, including the speech by the EU Commission president still stand out in my mind.

Did having European Studies in your background shape your personal and/or professional life?

It has definitely shaped my personal life and intellectual life and because of that, I am sure it has positively affected my professional life. It enhanced my understanding of the complex interactions between democracy, international law, economics, history, and culture.

What advice would you give to Pitt students who want to get into your field?

Be curious and practice asking pointed and actionable questions in writing. Learn how to use spreadsheets well by taking a modeling course from your business school and get practice converting narratives (which should result from your written questions and answers) into spreadsheets.

On a personal note...

What book have you read recently that you'd recommend to others and why?

Oh my god, I have not read a book for fun in WAY too long. I need to solve that problem immediately. In lieu of that recommendation: read The Economist.

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euce-escpitt.tumblr.com



Crystal Christophe

Graduated: 2007

ESC Certificate: West European
Studies Undergraduate Certificate

Current Role: 2nd year MPA
student at GSPIA, pursuing a
certificate in global studies

Why did you decide to pursue a West European or EU Studies Certificate?

I decided to pursue a West European Studies Certificate because I had a strong interest in Europe and Romance languages. I wanted to go abroad and I wanted to learn more about European countries.

What was one of the best experiences you had while pursuing the certificate? A great class? A study abroad experience? Directed research?

I had all of those experiences. I took a wonderful class called Western European Languages and it focused on some of the political aspects of language and the effects of migration. It was fascinating. I also completed directed research, but it was more focused on Italian linguistics. I would have to say though, the best experience I had was studying abroad. I went abroad twice. The first time, I went to France and the second time, I went to Italy. I loved Italy. That experience in particular changed my life.

Did you study abroad while at Pitt? If so, where? What was the best part about studying there?

I studied abroad twice. I went to Grenoble, France and to Syracuse, Italy (Sicily). I loved both places, but Italy was my favorite. The people were amazing and the food was great. I had so much fun and really started to come out of my shell. I also stayed with a nice family. It was a very beautiful place and I enjoyed the program. The best part of the experience was being able to use my Italian language skills to communicate with the locals. I made friends with the staff at the restaurant that was associated with the student meal plan and none of them spoke English. Some of my fellow Pitt classmates and I hung out with these incredibly friendly people sometimes til 4am....just speaking Italian. It was great!

What advice would you give current Pitt students interested in Europeanizing/internationalizing their studies and professional prospects?

There are so many courses at Pitt that count for the certificate. Even if one's specific academic area is not related to Europe, picking these courses to fulfill elective requirements shouldn't be too difficult. Look at the course listings and see what courses mostly align with your professional interests. Also, definitely study abroad. It will make you stand out to employers and you get to experience some of the things that you study at Pitt.

Did having European Studies in your background shape your personal and/or professional life?

It did. It really helped strengthen my desire to learn about other countries. It actually made me more globally minded. I knew that there was a lot more to discover in this world and I wanted to explore it. The language component was also helpful in allowing me communicate with people whose English was minimal. I also think it made me a more compassionate person. I could more easily empathize with immigrants and with people whose first language was not English because I had experience studying in countries where I was the foreigner with limited host country language skills.

What's a piece of advice that you would give to a recent graduate who is looking for his or her first job?

Really get some other opinions on your resume/CV and have different versions of them available that are catered to particular types of positions. You also don't necessarily need to have every position you've ever held, nor do you need to have them listed in chronological order. Sometimes it is good to section off the types of experience you have so that the resume/CV is easier to read. Regarding the search, don't give up. It may seem frustrating at times, but make a goal to send out a certain number of applications each day. It really is a numbers game.

Has knowing a foreign language helped you professionally?

Absolutely. Since I was teaching, I knew about learning a language from both a teacher and a student perspective. It has also been viewed favorably in interviews as recently as last week. Be aware that if you put on your resume that you speak a language, you may be put on the spot to speak it at an interview. This happened to me last week, but I held my own. I've studied many languages, but I only put the ones I'm comfortable with using on my resume.

On a personal note...

What current challenge or quality of life issue have you been recently involved with / concerned about?

Probably the most disturbing issue that has been on my mind lately is the issue of police brutality against people of color. I have also been concerned with the upcoming US presidential elections. I believe that there needs to be election reforms so that candidates from so-called third parties are featured in all major debates and appear on all ballots. I think that there needs to be more choice when it comes to our leaders so that we can finally see real change with issues such as the aforementioned police brutality.



Timothy Deer

Graduated: 2007

ESC Certificate: West European
Studies Undergraduate Certificate

Current Role: Executive Assistant
at the Consulate General of
France

Why did you decide to pursue a West European or EU Studies Certificate?

Initially, the Western European Studies certificate sounded like an intriguing way to round out my studies. In the end, the certificate caused me to take on a minor (in addition to already have two majors and the certificate), so it was definitely an enriching experience.

What was one of the best experiences you had while pursuing the certificate? A great class? A study abroad experience? Directed research?

Studying abroad was definitely a highlight. It sometimes sounds a little cliché, but it really is an experience that disrupts your day-to-day life and causes you to reflect on culture and your way of living.

Did you study abroad while at Pitt? If so, where? What was the best part about studying there?

I studied abroad in Nantes, France; having the chance to interact with native speakers every day was a pivotal moment in my studies. It was both enormously humbling and inspiring.

Did having European Studies in your background shape your personal and/or professional life?

On a professional level, the certificate was definitely

helpful. When I was getting my MA, I needed to learn a second foreign language. I had taken German culture courses as part of my certificate, which had lead me to studying the German language (in addition to already speaking French), so it made completing the language requirement a lot easier (and it was unique, since most people chose a Romance language). After graduating, my first job involved both German and French, the former of which I probably would have not studied if it weren't for the certificate.

Can you describe your current job?

I work at the Consulate General of France in Boston, so my professional experiences continue to be tied to my Western European Studies background. I deal with a lot of different aspects of the Consulate, such as event planning and speech writing. As the only American working at the Consulate, I also have the benefit of getting to speak in French everyday.

What advice would you give to Pitt students who want to get into your field?

International sensitivity and foreign language skills are a huge asset if you wish to enter the foreign service, whether through the FSOT or working for a foreign government in the USA.

On a personal note...

What living person do you most admire and why?

Martha Stewart - she recently published a photo in her magazine of herself standing with a shovel in an enormous compost pile at her farm in Maine. You have to admire someone who has an estimated net worth of almost a quarter billion dollars but still thinks she can trick us into believing she shovels her own compost.



The European Studies Center is pleased to welcome Lizz Schellin!

Lizz Schellin serves as the Administrative Assistant to the ESC. A native of Pittsburgh, she graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with a BA in Political Science with minors in Western European History and Legal Studies. Prior to joining the ESC in August 2015, Lizz worked as an Assistant to the Recruitment Department within Pitt's Office of Human Resources, and later as part of the Central Administration within Pitt's University Center for International Studies (UCIS).



Eric Eissler

Graduated: 2009

ESC Certificates: West European
Studies Undergraduate Certificate

Current Role: Editor-in-Chief of Oil &
Gas Engineering

Why did you decide to pursue a West European or EU Studies Certificate?

While studying the German language and wanting to live in Europe I thought getting a certificate made the most sense to broaden my knowledge of the EU.

What was one of the best experiences you had while pursuing the certificate? A great class? A study abroad experience? Directed research?

Within the confines of the question, I would have to say a great class with Dr. Prizel. "EU, CIS and Russia." This class at the time provided me with a spring board into the little-known CIS and its relations with the EU and hegemonic Russia.

What advice would you give current Pitt students interested in Europeanizing/internationalizing their studies and professional prospects?

Try to get an internship at an EU institution in Brussels. It will really help you either stay in Europe or work an IR job in your home country.

Can you think of some programs run by the EUCE – lectures, workshops, etc. – that you participated in and that particularly stand out?

I recall the event when EUCE had the Georgian Ambassador come speak about Russian aggression a few months after the Five-Day War between Georgia and Russia in August 2008.

Did having European Studies in your background shape your personal and/or professional life?

Yes, it did. After I graduated I moved to Sweden for graduate school and got a Master's in European Studies from Malmo University.

Can you describe your current job?

Currently, I am the Editor-in-Chief of *Oil & Gas Engineering* magazine. I use my time abroad and extensive knowledge of the global oil and gas industry to produce a magazine with technical and some Geopolitical articles for my readers.

What advice would you give to Pitt students who want to get into your field?

If you want to be in the global energy industry, you need to know what part of it do you want to work in. engineering, business, policy, IR, PR, etc. and then learn that arm of the industry. Having some experience abroad goes a long way in this industry as it is very diverse.

What's a piece of advice that you would give to a recent graduate who is looking for his or her first job?

While the job search is hard, stay the course, something eventually comes along. Don't be afraid of hard work or doing some menial job while you look for something in your field. It is humbling, it builds character and it demonstrates that you are willing to do what needs to be done to obtain your goal. That's the other thing: Set a goal! Without a goal, you'll stagnate.

Has knowing a foreign language helped you professionally?

Yes. I started with German, then quickly learned Swedish and was able to grasp all other Germanic languages with ease. Also, I learned Turkish, while living in Istanbul. While I don't use them in my work now, Swedish saved me when I first moved to Istanbul and could not find work, but found a great translation gig to keep me going while I looked.

On a personal note...

Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years? 10?

Moving on and moving up and back into IR. I would really like to get back into a think tank and start up my own global energy policy department. I want to use all my experience from living and working abroad with my education in IR and my experience in energy, I think I could create and lead a great program on energy policy within Europe's near abroad: Turkey, Iran, the South Caucasus.



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Helen Ewing

Graduated: 2011

ESC Certificates West European
Studies Undergraduate Certificate

Current Role: Community
Engagement and Program Manager
at Lawrenceville United

Why did you decide to pursue a West European or EU Studies Certificate?

I grew up in Tennessee but lived in Bristol, England for my high school years. I found the differences between those cultures and political systems both fascinating and instructive, and wanted to continue studying them as a complement to my degree in Political Science at Pitt.

Did you study abroad while at Pitt? If so, where? What was the best part about studying there?

I studied for a summer at the Freie Universitat in Berlin, which was amazing. Berlin certainly lives up to its motto "poor but sexy." The city's history is so tangibly present and vivid, but not in a depressing way. I spent hours just walking around the city, exploring the amazing green spaces, architecture, and nightlife. I learned more German in 2 months than in years of classes.

Can you describe your current job?

I manage community programs and outreach at a Pittsburgh non-profit, Lawrenceville United. I work on initiatives that enhance the quality of life for residents in

my neighborhood, from coordinating tree plantings to organizing the Farmers' Market to advocating for responsible nightlife options. It's incredibly varied and fun.

What advice would you give to Pitt students who want to get into your field?

Learn to write well. Involve yourself locally, whether it's running a community garden or interning for city government. The lessons you learn from being a part of a localized system are so transferable- both what works and what doesn't.

What's a piece of advice that you would give to a recent graduate who is looking for his or her first job?

Take every opportunity to meet people who do what you want to do. Most will be happy to talk to someone else passionate about their field, so it's a great opportunity to gather ideas and make connections.

On a personal note...

What current challenge or quality of life issue have you been recently involved with / concerned about?

In my current role at Lawrenceville United, I've been advocating for affordable housing and responsible development. Pittsburgh has been growing quickly, and we need to make sure that we're growing opportunities for everyone. Personally, I am really passionate about campaign finance reform, because I think it's the only way to reverse the disenfranchisement of the American voter.

Join us for our monthly videoconference series,
Conversations on Europe!

Tuesday, January 19, 2016

12-1:30 P.M., 4217 Posvar Hall

The Continent is Cut Off! The British Referendum on the EU

Tuesday, February 16, 2016

12-1:30 P.M., 4217 Posvar Hall

Who's Legacy? Museums and National Heritage Debates

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

12-1:30 P.M., 4217 Posvar Hall

Greece and the EU: The Way Forward?

To participate via remote access, contact Kathy Ayers at
kma69@pitt.edu. For more information, visit:

www.ucis.pitt.edu/esc

EngagePitt Campaign

The European Studies Center is raising funds through EngagePitt to enable more Pitt students to experience the personal growth and professional benefits of living, working or studying abroad. As this opportunity presents a substantial challenge for most Pitt students, funds from this source will go directly to offsetting costs involved in providing them with what is often a life changing experience.

Funds raised through this campaign will provide direct support for students who are pursuing study and internships in Europe. Our goal this year is to raise \$5,000.00, which will provide five scholarships of \$1,000 apiece. While modest, this amount can provide the crucial difference to our undergraduates. To contribute, visit engage.pitt.edu/project/1022.



Rachel Feinstein

Graduated: 2011

ESC Certificates: European Union
and West European Studies
Undergraduate Certificates

Current Role: Manager of
Government Affairs at Hearth, Patio
& Barbecue Association

Why did you decide to pursue a West European or EU Studies Certificate?

I decided to pursue both the West European and EU Studies Certificates because I thought it would complement my Political Science major and French minor. I was very interested in EU politics and why the member countries joined the EU.

What was one of the best experiences you had while pursuing the certificate? A great class? A study abroad experience? Directed research?

My best experience was studying abroad. I actually got to meet an EU official (the sister of my host mother) and regret not asking her any questions. I recommend that, if you come upon similar opportunities, don't allow feelings of intimidation prevent you from expressing curiosity. You will regret it.

What advice would you give current Pitt students interested in Europeanizing/internationalizing their studies and professional prospects?

I strongly suggest studying abroad or getting involved with any local international groups. For example, Alliance Francaise is a great organization that provides course in French language and culture, cultural events, and more. There is an Alliance Francaise in Pittsburgh in Lawrenceville. Also, if you can take any economics or business classes while studying abroad, that is very helpful for professional development.

Can you describe your current job?

As Manager of Government Affairs with the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association (HPBA), I represent the association in meetings with Congressional staff, legislators, regulators of the EPA and Department of Energy, and in coalition meetings. Most of the issue I lobby on are related to energy, environmental impact, and small businesses. HPBA is a trade association whose members include manufacturers, distributors, retailers, and other businesses with interests related to hearth products (fireplaces, woodstoves, etc), outdoor living (patio furniture, fire pits, patio heaters), and barbecue grills. In addition to lobbying, I work with our members on contacting their elected officials on issues

important to them (grassroots organizing) as well as travel around the U.S. speaking at industry events about the hearth products industry and relevant regulations.

What's a piece of advice that you would give to a recent graduate who is looking for his or her first job?

Be flexible and open to doing work you may not have expected. When I was getting ready to graduate from Pitt, I wanted to work for a think tank doing policy work. I ended up finding an entry-level position through a staffing agency with an obscure-sounding trade association. I didn't think I would be here long, but I've been with my current company for 4.5 years. There are hundreds and hundreds of trade associations looking for hard working talent, so don't turn down an opportunity because it doesn't sound exactly like something you thought you would be doing.

Has knowing a foreign language helped you professionally?

Absolutely! I work with a lot of Canadian companies as about one-fourth of our members are Canadian, many of whom speak French. A couple years ago, I was asked to translate our association president's speech into French and then translate it live during his presentation at our association's largest event of the year. It made a huge impact on our French-Canadian members and made people feel more included in the association. I also use my French on phone calls with our Canadian members and it's nice to understand sidebar conversations during meetings with French-Canadians who haven't yet discovered that I speak French.

On a personal note...

Now that you have graduated and left Pittsburgh, how do you see the city? Do you think the city itself made a contribution to your education and left you with something you take with you on your career and travels?

I see the city as a technology and medical innovation hub in the U.S. I'm always very proud to say I went to school in Pittsburgh, especially to Pitt. Unlike other cities whose primary job providers were large manufacturers, Pittsburgh has successfully reinvented itself and is actually increasing its population rather than losing it to other cities. The city definitely made a contribution to my education with its museums, libraries, and non-profit organizations that help refugees from war torn countries. The city is our campus.



Jasmine Laroche

Graduated: 2011

ESC Certificate: European Union
Studies Undergraduate Certificate

Current Role: Graduate Student,
University of California, Berkeley
Goldman School of Public Policy

Why did you decide to pursue a West European or EU Studies Certificate?

When I was an undergraduate student, I was very interested in understanding policies and conflict management. I was really drawn to international studies, but I discovered that Pitt doesn't offer an International Relations major. To fill that void, I decided that I would get a certificate in Global Studies and European Union Studies. I always had a strong interest in European history, and I always wanted to study abroad in a Western European country. The European Union Studies certificate allowed me to study abroad in Barcelona, Spain while simultaneously fulfill all of my required coursework.

I love that the certificate gave me the opportunity to study abroad. I lived in Barcelona, Spain for four months and it was the most fun I have ever had. I loved exploring the beautiful city, I traveled to several other countries within Europe, and I felt like for the first time I was able to fine tune my Spanish speaking skills.

What advice would you give current Pitt students interested in Europeanizing/internationalizing their studies and professional prospects?

My advice would be to meet frequently with your advisor. The advising team has a wealth of resources that can help guide you to taking the classes that may suit you best, advise on what internship opportunities are available, and provide information on potential research opportunities you may participate in as an undergraduate student.

Did having European Studies in your background shape your personal and/or professional life?

I believe that the European Union Studies Certificate prepared me for my career and graduate studies. Traveling abroad helped me to appreciate both international and domestic policies. I realized that my passion for serving those in need can also be translated domestically. As a result of this, I chose to work for a small non-profit, the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, and serve low-income, high academic achieving students post graduation. That experience really peaked my interest in domestic policy and how I can better reach low-income youth. This then lead to me enrolling at the

Goldman School of Public Policy at the University of California, Berkeley. Without my experience abroad, along with the economics course I took through the European Studies Certificate, I don't think I would be where I am today.

What are you doing currently?

I am a full time student at the University of California, Berkeley Goldman School of Public Policy. After school, I hope to work as an Evaluations Manager and evaluate programs that are meant to serve underrepresented communities, particularly communities of color.

What advice would you give to Pitt students who want to get into your field?

I think what is really important is setting up informational interviews with people that you think are doing interesting work to you. At my previous job, the work that Director of Evaluations was doing really peaked my interest. She was conducting research on the barriers that undergraduate students face while transferring from a two year to four year institution. I asked her if I could assist her with her research, and that opportunity is what lead me to apply to graduate school and focus on program evaluation as a career interest.

What's a piece of advice that you would give to a recent graduate who is looking for his or her first job?

My advice would be to never take a job just for the money. This happened to me and I was very unhappy. It's really hard transitioning to working a full time 9 to 5 job, and when you are at a job that does not fulfill you or bring you happiness it makes life ten times harder. Has knowing a foreign language helped you professionally?

On a personal note...

Now that you have graduated and left Pittsburgh, how do you see the city? Do you think the city itself made a contribution to your education and left you with something you take with you on your career and travels?

Pittsburgh is a great city that I will always consider a second home. It was a place where I grew as a young woman, and it gave me so many opportunities that I will never forget. I think the experiences that I was given, studying abroad and meeting new and different people, are really what have impacted me more so than my education. Life is about the journey and the people that you meet, and Pittsburgh has contributed to my life journey.



Kevin McCarthy

Graduated: 2005

ESC Certificate: European Union
Studies Undergraduate Certificates

Current Role: Senior Business
Intelligence Analyst at Slippery Rock
University

Why did you decide to pursue a West European or EU Studies Certificate?

I pursued an EU Studies Certificate because I was -- and still am -- fascinated by the experiment of the EU. I see a lot of inspiration in a set of leaders with diverse constituencies choosing an unorthodox way to overcome the war that plagued the continent for generations. Now, their collective challenges are different, but they still exist. And I wanted to better understand the dynamics of this unique, historic supranational entity.

What was one of the best experiences you had while pursuing the certificate? A great class? A study abroad experience? Directed research?

The single defining experience I had at Pitt was pursuing my BPhil through the Honors College, which included research under the guidance of Dr. Alberta Sbragia. Her standards and experience set a high bar for my work, and I learned a great deal about project management, self-motivation, and academic curiosity that still serve me to this day.

Did you study abroad while at Pitt? If so, where? What was the best part about studying there?

Yes, I spent a summer studying in Florence with Pitt in Italy. The immersion experience was the only way I can envision having built a fluency in a foreign language. It gave me experiences in Europe that helped me to better understand the cultural underpinnings of the EU that must be navigated with every meeting of the Council, with every piece of legislation that is put forward by the EU Parliament.

What advice would you give current Pitt students interested in Europeanizing/internationalizing their studies and professional prospects?

Start with a class. Chances are, almost every course you can find on international studies (including on the EU) will fulfill a general education requirement. And don't wait for an "A" in French 1 to start going to French Club meetings. Getting involved outside of the classroom reinforces the learning that you experience inside of the classroom, and it makes you that better of a cultural and linguistic thinker. (This, of course, applies to every

language, not just French.)

Can you describe your current job?

My role at Slippery Rock University is to help the University leadership better understand and make smart decisions from available data. This can be anything from creating new majors that meet labor market needs, to better understanding how to retain and graduate our students, to giving managers access to daily, on-demand reports that allow them to better manage enrollment.

Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years? 10?

In 5 years, I will have completed my doctorate in education and, I hope, will have built out my skills as a predictive modeler and a big data analyst. In 10 years, I hope to be in a leadership position at a higher education institution, where I can continue to help students learn and succeed.

What's a piece of advice that you would give to a recent graduate who is looking for his or her first job?

First, understand what aspects of a job would make you happy. Should it be challenging? Should the schedule be flexible? Do you need to earn a lot of money, or is it more important for you to be in a position of power and influence within an organization? Reach out to alumni, family and friends, and any on-campus advisors that you have to discuss what types of jobs might fit your needs. Take the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator test. And do research on potential careers at www.bls.gov/ooh or at www.onetonline.org.

On a personal note...

What current challenge or quality of life issue have you been recently involved with / concerned about? (Climate change, upcoming US elections, health awareness, etc.)

My current university (Slippery Rock University) is a public education institution in Pennsylvania, meaning that we have a mission to serve the Commonwealth's people first. I am heavily involved in helping the University identify and support students in need, including those who are first-generation college students, who come from low-income households, and others who are generally at risk for not completing their degree. Aside from my involvement and concern about the state of education (K-12 as well as higher education) in Pennsylvania, I am concerned about government transparency nationally and about economic development, both nationally and internationally.



Terra Walker Mrkulic

Graduated: 1996

ESC Certificate: West European
Studies Graduate Certificate

Current Role: Senior Social Media
and Content Marketing Manager

Why did you decide to pursue a West European or EU Studies Certificate?

I was fortunate to study abroad in Naples, Italy as a junior in high school and was looking to further my education and knowledge of Italian language and literature. Speaking Italian was then, and still today, a great joy.

Did you study abroad while at Pitt? If so, where? What was the best part about studying there?

Yes, in Feltre, Italy with Professor Looney. I had studied abroad in Italy in high school in southern Italy, so this was an excellent opportunity to see a part of the country I had not explored before. It was so much fun to see many of the places we had been reading about in our classes, such as paintings by Titian and Tintoretto, and palazzi by Palladio. 20 years later I am still in touch with many of my fellow study abroad students.

What advice would you give current Pitt students interested in Europeanizing/internationalizing their studies and professional prospects?

Travel, explore. It makes all the difference in the world. If you can, live abroad for a good chunk of time. It totally changes your perspective on life.

Can you think of some programs run by the EUCE – lectures, workshops, etc. – that you participated in and that particularly stand out?

The one that comes to mind was a lecture/reading by former US Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky of his translation of *The Inferno*.

Did having European Studies in your background shape your personal and/or professional life?

Absolutely 100%. My first "real" job after graduating from Pitt was with international travel/education company, EF Education in Boston, MA. My role was to plan and manage group tours and negotiate hospitality contracts with Italian vendors. My knowledge of Italian language

and culture was critical for success in this role. And a side benefit of the job was that I had to travel through the country looking for new routes, hotels and restaurants for group travelers to enjoy. How many people get to take the luxurious Orient Express from Rome to Venice "for work"? After one year in this job, the company moved me and the rest of my team to Amsterdam where I lived for 5 years. Having a solid foundation of understanding of European history and geography was extremely helpful during my years living in Europe.

Can you describe your current job?

Ever since those early days using the internet to find mentions of Dante for Professor Looney, I have been a huge fan of digital media and communications. I orchestrated a career change a few years ago and now serve as a social media strategist and blogger for tech companies in Manhattan. I help these companies find and connect with their customers through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. I love it! It's exciting to be part of an industry that's changing so quickly.

What advice would you give to Pitt students who want to get into your field?

Find a mentor who can help you get a foothold in the industry. Learn from others who have come before you.

What's a piece of advice that you would give to a recent graduate who is looking for his or her first job?

Get as much practical experience as you can while still a student or when you first graduate. Volunteer, network and make as many connections as you can in the field of your choice. Create a digital presence that speaks to your successes (online resume, portfolio) and definitely google your own name to make sure everything that comes up is something you wouldn't mind your next boss seeing. When you get your first job, do whatever necessary to understand and exceed your manager's expectations of you. Never say, "that's not my job," even when asked to do something out of your comfort zone.

On a personal note...

Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years? 10?

I have great passion for what I do and the brands I currently work for. In the future, I am planning to start my own social media consultancy called NextDoorMarketing.com.



Kevin Newak

Graduated: 2007

ESC Certificates: European Union
Studies and West European Studies
Undergraduate Certificates

Current Role: Analyst, U.S.
Department of Defense

Why did you decide to pursue a West European or EU Studies Certificate?

I have been fascinated by Europe since I was a teenager. When I arrived at Pitt, I decided that I wanted to learn more about the continent. That interest naturally progressed to certificates in West European and European Union studies.

What was one of the best experiences you had while pursuing the certificate? A great class? A study abroad experience? Directed research?

I really liked Dr. Alberta Sbragia's class on the European Union. I knew that she was a very knowledgeable expert on the topic, so I never wanted to miss a class, even though it was at 8:00 AM!

What advice would you give current Pitt students interested in Europeanizing/internationalizing their studies and professional prospects?

My most important advice would be to study abroad. A study abroad experience provides a student with great exposure to the outside world, and hopefully allows a student to learn another language. Acquiring languages and completing coursework on the EU should then make a student more competitive for internships in international organizations.

Can you describe your current job?

I work as an imagery analyst for the Department of Defense, where I focus primarily on intelligence issues.

What advice would you give to Pitt students who want to get into your field?

I advise Pitt students to have a variety of internships (especially internships that require a government clearance), learn foreign languages (such as Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian, and Spanish), and make

connections through professors to experts in foreign affairs. Also public speaking and concise writing is very important!

What's a piece of advice that you would give to a recent graduate who is looking for his or her first job?

Attend job fairs! I received my current job when I interviewed with my agency at the 2009 Big East Job Fair (when Pitt was still a member of that conference) in New York City. This opportunity allowed me to show a recruiter my resume and writing samples in person, rather than through an online portal.

Has knowing a foreign language helped you professionally?

French has definitely helped me professionally! I take the Defense Language Proficiency Test each year as part of my job; when I earn high scores on the test, I receive additional pay. Also, I use French to translate materials and engage in exciting training opportunities.

If you could re-live your Pitt days – is there anything that you would do differently?

I wouldn't change that much. In terms of courses, I realize now that I should have taken more business, economics, and statistics classes in order to acquire more concrete skills. With regards to extra-curricular activities, I was a member of the Pitt Marching Band, a role which provided me with lifetime friendships and great travel opportunities; however, that position also required a major time commitment. I didn't have a lot of free time to pursue other activities, like joining a fraternity or participating in student government, both of which interested me during my years at Pitt.

On a personal note...

What current challenge or quality of life issue have you been recently involved with / concerned about?

I'm concerned about U.S. security in an unstable world. I was only a junior in high school when the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks happened, but that moment prompted me to focus my studies on and eventually find a career in international affairs and security issues. I still have a passion for this issue.



EUROPEAN STUDIES CENTER

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Dr. Adrian S. Petrescu

(GSPIA Ph.D. 2003)

Graduated: 2001
ESC Certificate: West European
Studies Graduate Certificate

Current Role: Student, Creighton
University School of Law; Clerk, U.S.
District Court, District of Nebraska

Why did you decide to pursue a West European or EU Studies Certificate?

It was a natural choice for me. As a Romanian born parliamentary diplomat, joining the EU and NATO was one of the core international policy issues for my then home country, and that was a core academic interest for me then. The role of the EU in international business, or in international security, along with NATO, are still today major areas of interest of mine.

What was one of the best experiences you had while pursuing the certificate? A great class? A study abroad experience? Directed research?

I was awarded one of the first ever EU Center pre-Doctoral Dissertation awards. I thus got to travel to Brussels Belgium and to interview executive level EU policy makers and a variety of executive business leaders in EU based high-tech companies, large, medium and startups. The work was great for my research and I even got invited to take part as a special guest researcher in one of the EU sponsored High Tech conferences (Helsinki, Finland, November 1999). Bluetooth and a number of other now taken for granted technologies were first introduced then. That conference gave me a first class look at technological advances in Europe and globally for the next coming two decades...

What advice would you give current Pitt students interested in Europeanizing/internationalizing their studies and professional prospects?

Take every chance that the EU Center offers. Big or small. Courses by EU senior/executive level guest lecturers, research opportunities, trips to the EU, publishing opportunities, networking with EU officials or simply with EU Center alums. The opportunities made available by the EU Center are simply amazing. They will help tremendously over time.

Did having European Studies in your background shape your personal and/or professional life?

Of course. Our lives evolve in interesting ways, and rarely may we determine what exactly shaped them in what way. I spent a fair amount of time in Belgium in the past 14 years since getting my West European Studies Certificate. I researched extensively European Science and Technology policies and comparisons between those and the US, Japan and other nations. I continue to research and write on EU issues, inclusive of issues affecting newer EU member states (EU10 and EU2).

When supervising Master theses I often have the ability to propose and guide themes that offer comparisons between US and European policies and practices in a variety of fields, from pharmaceuticals and business investment practices to education policies. I made and maintain a plethora of professional friends in the EU, whether working in business, science or in EU institutions. I often serve as an invited judge to the European Youth Innovators Forum. I served as a Board member on the European Association for Creativity and Innovation.

Can you describe your current job?

After teaching mostly graduate public policy for over 15 years and administering a graduate program in Public Policy for over 8 years, I am currently a full time Law School student in my last year of studies with the Creighton University School of Law. I am also clerking (as a Law School externship) with the United States District Court, District of Nebraska. In the meantime I continue to write on knowledge production, on innovation and global science & technology policies, on international security, combatting terrorism, on education policy, and several other policy issues.

What advice would you give to Pitt students who want to get into your field?

Persevere. Take advantage of all the rich and unique resources that Pitt offers in EU and European studies and beyond. Travel to and research in Europe. Get to know scholars and practitioners that the Center knows and invites to Pittsburgh or the Center can refer you to in Europe. Network here, there, everywhere. Make a name and reputation while in graduate school. It will carry over and amplify many fold over your career.

If you could re-live your Pitt days – is there anything that you would do differently?

Maybe simply be more “pushy” to research and write jointly with Pitt faculty. In engineering and the sciences co-writing with doctoral candidates is much more common than in social sciences. I would try harder (than I did while I was in graduate school at Pitt) to affect a change in the social sciences towards mirroring more the habits and standards in engineering and the “hard” sciences.

On a personal note...

What living person do you most admire and why?

Professor Alberta M. Sbragia, Professor William N. Dunn, Professor G. Michael Fenner, Professor Charles E. Lindblom, and of course, my father. Each for their respective utmost contribution to knowledge creation in a wide array of fields. My father for his added contribution to help me ask better questions.

If I must choose only one, then Professor Charles E. Lindblom, whom I only know from his many great books. Dunn and Sbragia introduced me to those books.



Megan M. Stupak, JD

Graduated: 2011

ESC Certificate: European Union
Studies Graduate Certificate

Current Role: International Trade
Law Research Assistant, Fox School
of Business at Temple University

Why did you decide to pursue a West European or EU Studies Certificate?

I decided to pursue the EU Studies Certificate because I was looking for something to enrich my undergraduate experience. I was on track to graduate early, and thought it would be more beneficial to explore another field of study.

What was one of the best experiences you had while pursuing the certificate? A great class? A study abroad experience? Directed research?

My best experience while pursuing the certificate was my study abroad experience. I studied in Paris, with a program specifically for Business and International Affairs, through IES. The program fit in perfectly with the certificate classes, with options such as political economy and international business and finance options. We also went on field trips across Europe, including a trip to the UN in Geneva. I loved improving my French while being steeped in Parisian culture.

What advice would you give current Pitt students interested in Europeanizing/internationalizing their studies and professional prospects?

My advice would be to pursue every international experience possible—whether it be study abroad or an internship, or events with the EUCE here at Pitt. You never know what is going to be the ticket to a great career—whether it is hearing about a path you had never thought of, or impressing a potential employer in an interview.

Can you think of some programs run by the EUCE – lectures, workshops, etc. – that you participated in and that particularly stand out?

My friends and I would go to as many Pizza and Politics events as we could—hearing about new topics and listening to compelling speakers was always great, and it didn't require a large sacrifice of time. The pizza didn't hurt either!

Did having European Studies in your background shape your personal and/or professional life?

My EU Studies certificate has certainly shaped by academic and professional life. It solidified my desire to do *something* international with my career, even if I didn't know exactly what that was at the time. I focused my law school career on international law and public policy, and am pursuing a career in those fields.

Can you describe your current job?

I graduated from Temple Law with my JD in May 2015. I am working as international trade law researcher while I look for a permanent job in the global health, public policy, or international development fields.

What advice would you give to Pitt students who want to get into your field?

This field is pretty popular—and competitive. My advice would be to take opportunities as early and often as possible. Getting experience living in another country, particularly developing countries, is also crucial.

Has knowing a foreign language helped you professionally?

Knowing French has given me an edge in getting internships during law school. Law is such a global field now; it can only benefit you to know another language.

If you could re-live your Pitt days – is there anything that you would do differently?

I would learn a third language! Knowing two is great—but knowing three would be better. I want to start learning Arabic now, since it is a great complement to French in my field. It would have been much easier to learn it when I had the time in college.

On a personal note...

What current challenge or quality of life issue have you been recently involved with / concerned about?

Studying and working in the public policy field means I've been involved with a lot of important issues. I've done a lot of work on human trafficking, including an internship with Greenpeace, where I researched human trafficking in the fishing industry in Southeast Asia. I also recently presented a white paper on human trafficking and immigration reform at a national conference in Seattle.