

PENN ABROAD ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020



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Designed by: Jamie Nisbet

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Front Cover (Left to Right):

- Penn Global Seminar, *Security and Anxiety at International Borders: Turkey and the USA in Global Perspective*, Turkey, Fall 2019
- Emmie Gocke, Semester Abroad at University College Cork, Ireland Fall 2019
- Jackie Shi, Semester Abroad at National University of Singapore, Spring 2020

Penn Abroad | Penn Global | University of Pennsylvania

3701 Chestnut Street, Suite 1W

Philadelphia, PA 19104-3199 USA

T: +1.215.898.9073 | F: +1.215.898.2622



@pennabroad

global.upenn.edu/pennabroad

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ABOUT PENN ABROAD



Penn Abroad is an energetic team dedicated to providing a meaningful global experience to every Penn student. Taking a creative approach to the evolving field of education abroad, the team provides high-touch advising to help students meet their unique academic, professional, and personal goals by providing a vibrant portfolio of global opportunities, including semester study abroad, incoming exchange, internship and research placements, and short-term programs. The team is committed to student development through education abroad, cultivating meaningful partnerships within Penn and across the world, and increasing access to global opportunities.

Our Team

Nigel Cossar

Director

Kristyn Palmiotto

Associate Director

Jamie Nisbet

Marketing and Events Manager

Greta Kazenski

Senior Global Programs Manager

Jacob Gross

Global Programs Manager

Amber Leisher

Global Programs Coordinator

Erica Sebastian

Senior Associate Director

Laurie Jensen

Assistant Director, Global Seminars

Melissa Jen DiFrancesco

Senior Global Programs Manager

Jillian Cener

Global Programs Manager

Josh Pontrelli

Global Programs Manager

Amy Wei

Global Programs Coordinator

FROM THE DIRECTOR

The 2019-2020 academic year ended as one of the most challenging in history, not only for Penn Abroad, but for higher education around the world. While Penn Abroad saw growth in both outbound and inbound study abroad and exchange programs and our highest number of Penn Global Seminar (PGS) course offerings since the program's inception, global programming at Penn felt the brunt of the COVID-19 global pandemic. The international crisis required quick action, including supporting the return of many Penn travelers who were abroad, and making difficult decisions to suspend the travel components of the spring Penn Global Seminars and the entire summer Global Research & Internship Program.

Penn Abroad is resilient. Although the last quarter of the academic year was tumultuous, it nevertheless provided an opportunity for collaborative and creative actions to connect Penn students to alternative global experiences. One such initiative was the summer 2020 pilot of a virtual internship program. As travel restrictions increased worldwide, the Penn Abroad team was quickly able to source a variety of virtual global internship placements and provide full financial support to a group of students to participate in their internship remotely. Feedback from students was overwhelmingly positive and we will expect to see virtual global internships form a part of our regular, ongoing programming in the future.

Working to support students in an uncertain global setting is challenging, but Penn students have remained passionate about pursuing a global program as part of their time at Penn. Advising and applications numbers reached record highs across all of Penn Abroad's programs during the 2019-2020 academic year, and while the year ahead will not be without complications, the team is optimistic for an even brighter future. Penn is an institution that has always embraced the incomparable values of education abroad and will continue with its mission of providing every Penn student with a meaningful global experience.

Nigel Cossar
Director



YEAR IN REVIEW

806 Penn students participated in a Penn Abroad program. An additional 177 students committed to a Global Research and Internship program (GRIP) prior to its cancellation due to COVID-19.

231 incoming exchange students studied at Penn (Increase of 8.9% from 2018-2019)

163 Penn participants identified as a first-generation college student

51% of Penn participants received financial aid

50 students studied in Central and South America on a Semester Abroad program or in a Penn Global Seminar

36 students participated in a Penn Global Seminar focused on the following countries in Africa: Ghana and Zimbabwe

424 students traveled to Europe on a Semester Abroad program or a Penn Global Seminar

92 students traveled to Australia and the Pacific Islands on a Semester Abroad program

123 students studied in Asia on a Semester Abroad program



I got to explore applications of my coursework to real life experiences; the communities, faculty, and organizations that I interacted with were applying theory to practice on a daily basis in very powerful ways.”

Adriana Discher, CAS '21

International Honors Program (IHP), Spring 2020

Vietnam, South Africa, Argentina

CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT

In the 2019-2020 academic year, Penn Abroad continued with its significant campus engagement initiatives, pursuing a variety of avenues to meet students where they are. Penn Abroad focused on creative ways to engage with the Penn student community, especially with students from diverse backgrounds and those traditionally underrepresented in education abroad. Key highlights, initiatives, and activities of the past year included:

- The continuation of pop-up advising, providing students with a convenient opportunity to connect with the team in different locations across campus.
- Elevating the role of student voices in reaching the student body, allowing them to share their authentic experiences and insights to prospective students.
- Re-developing advising and marketing materials with the feedback of the Penn Abroad's student leaders, to include a timeline for each program, helping students to visualize the application process.
- Implementing a new communications plan to engage with students via social media, which increased awareness of global opportunities, application timelines, and the student experience.



Students speaking with campus partners at the Penn Abroad Fair

- Developing new relationships with campus partners to appeal to specific populations of students. For example, Penn Abroad presented to Penn Athletics coaches, exploring ways to support student athletes in global opportunities.
- Strengthening existing partnerships with College Houses, cultural and affinity centers, and academic departments through co-sponsored Penn Abroad 101 (PA101) information sessions.
- Customizing PA101 information sessions hosted with PAACH and PennCAP, focusing on identity and supporting FGLI students, respectively.

By the Numbers

1,256 students attended a Penn Abroad event

2,079 student advising appointments and drop-ins

The Penn Abroad Fair

415 student attendees

Class Years Represented:

Freshmen 36% | Sophomores 43% | Juniors 13% | Seniors 3% | Other 5%



DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Diversity and inclusion remained a strong priority for the office. Penn Abroad continued to spearhead the Diversity Abroad Advisory Board (DAAB), meeting periodically with the Board to discuss ways to expand access to global programs and support students of all backgrounds.

Passport Day

Penn Abroad received funding from the CIEE Passport Caravan to host two Passport Day events, held over the course of the fall and spring semesters. In close collaboration with the PennCard Center and the United States Postal Service, Penn Abroad was able to fund over 75 passport applications and passport photos for financial aid recipients who had not previously held a U.S. passport, with priority funding given to students traditionally underrepresented in education abroad. The success in spreading the word to the student population came largely from DAAB partners who shared the opportunity widely with their student groups.

Intersections Abroad

In November 2019, Penn Abroad debuted *Intersections Abroad*, a five-part video series that featured Penn students reflecting on the complexities, challenges, and opportunities surrounding their identity during their time abroad and beyond. *Intersections Abroad* was filmed and edited by student filmmakers (both previous Penn Abroad participants) who carefully interviewed each student to tell an authentic story on how their identities played a role in their experiences abroad. DAAB provided thoughtful feedback and support in the development of the series and played a critical role in promoting the videos to the Penn community.



Osiris Childs during his interview featured in *Intersections Abroad*.

STUDENT VOICES

The 2019-2020 academic year saw exciting growth in multiple programs, which focus on sharing student experiences, peer mentorship, and giving students a voice to improve programming. In addition to maintaining a thriving community of returnee student Ambassadors, Penn Abroad managed a successful third year of the Penn Abroad Leaders (PALS) and launched the new Global Correspondents program. Each of these programs highlights student voices through Penn Abroad's web presence, events, and overall outreach initiatives.



Stacey Gerchick, University of Edinburgh, Fall 2019

Ambassadors

The Penn Abroad Ambassadors, a community of more than 100 students who have participated in Penn Abroad programs, provide valuable information to prospective students who are exploring opportunities and preparing to go overseas. Each Ambassador has an individual profile on the Penn Abroad website, allowing the student to be a voice for their program(s) and to have an outlet to reflect on their experiences abroad. Their web profiles also include contact information for interested peers to reach out with questions and to learn more about specific programs and destinations. Ambassadors are called upon regularly to represent Penn Abroad at events throughout the year, including Quaker Days, Penn Abroad 101 presentations, information sessions, pre-departure orientations, and many others.

Penn Abroad Leaders



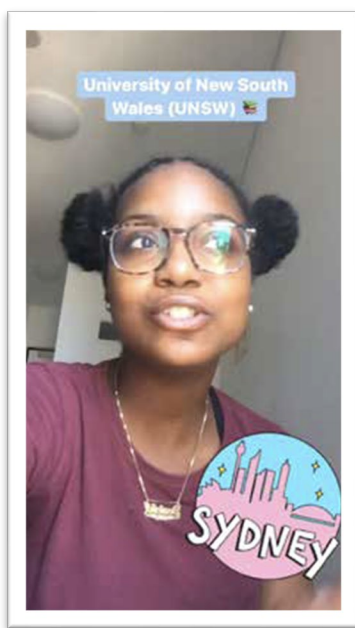
The Penn Abroad Leaders during their Fall 2019 planning retreat

The Penn Abroad Leaders (PALs) are a subset of Ambassadors, selected through a competitive application process,

who serve as Penn Abroad's student advisory board. PALs represent all three outbound Penn Abroad programs and come from a diverse range of backgrounds. The 2019-2020 cohort of PALs focused on providing student input to Penn Abroad on presentations, written materials, and peer outreach and engagement. Highlights of this year's PALs initiatives included:

- Hosting a social event in late fall with exchange students where they facilitated conversations around different cultures and customs, as well as ways Penn students can connect with their exchange student peers.
- Arranging a series of study breaks for prospective students, providing a space for those interested in going abroad to hear from and speak with their fellow students who have participated in Penn Abroad programs.
- Organizing an Ambassador Interview Series for the Penn Abroad Blog, highlighting individual Ambassadors and asking them nuanced and thought-provoking questions on their time abroad.

Global Correspondents

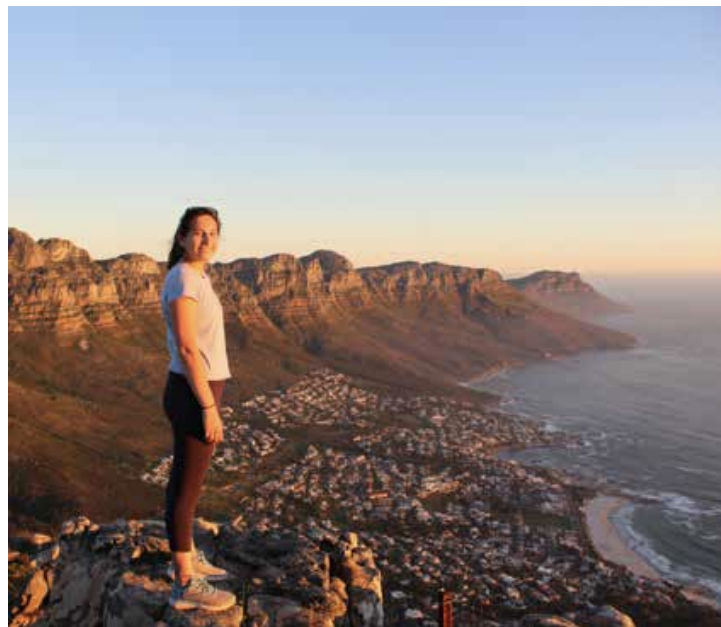


Danielle Miles-Languigne, University of New South Wales, Spring 2020

Penn Abroad launched the Global Correspondent program in Fall 2019, selecting five students per semester to document and share their study abroad experience with the Penn community. The Global Correspondents wrote reflective blog posts, posted highlights of their time abroad on social media, and participated in a takeover of the Penn Abroad Instagram account. Upon their return to Penn, the Global Correspondents became Ambassadors and continued to share their abroad experiences with the wider Penn community.



Emmie Gocke, University College Cork, Fall 2019



“Hi, my name is Keren and I am a junior studying criminology and psychology in the College! I am spending this semester abroad at the University of Cape Town in South Africa. Since Cape Town is in the Southern Hemisphere, I actually began my spring semester in July, and only have three weeks of class left! I’m excited to be sharing photos with you of my journey so far. Here, you can see me at the top of Lion’s Head, a must-climb for everyone visiting the city. It takes about an hour to hike, and the views from the top are spectacular. I’m excited to show you highlights of my time in Southern Africa!
#pennabroadtakeover #wherewillpenntakeyou”

SEMESTER ABROAD

Semester and academic year study abroad continues to be an attractive opportunity for Penn undergraduates to receive academic instruction in a new culture and environment while simultaneously earning credits toward their undergraduate degree. The 2019-2020 academic year proved to be unforgettable. Highlights and accomplishments from the year included:

- The largest Semester Abroad (SA) enrollment in the past five years.
- An introduction to discipline-specific advising for Nursing and Engineering students, allowing students in majors underrepresented in SA to have more clarity on the pathway for a seamless integration of a global opportunity into their Penn career.
- Successfully navigating unprecedented crisis management situations, ranging from responding to political instability in Hong Kong in fall to the COVID-19 response in the spring.

Expanded Programming

Following the formal review of the Europe and Latin America portfolio in Summer 2019, Wharton added abroad opportunities in several locations and the College also expanded its engagement with programming through the Consortium for Advanced Studies Abroad (CASA). New programs in the Wharton portfolio include: CET São Paulo, Fundação Getúlio Vargas in Brazil, and Stockholm School of Economics in Sweden. New programs for students in the College include: CASA Santiago, CASA Dublin, and an expansion of existing Oxford College offerings with the addition of Lady Margaret Hall, giving Penn students the ability to study at Oxford for a semester or year.



“I found that the only way to learn the language in this setting is to dare to use it, make mistakes, and learn from that. Language immersion is a difficult, tiring, and incredible process that I wouldn’t trade for anything. Thanks to this study abroad experience, I am now better equipped to take on the challenges of life, since life inherently involves

leaving my comfort zone, making mistakes, and learning from those mistakes.”

Thomas Maggiola, CAS '21

Fall 2019 – CIEE Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

By the Numbers

Top Destinations

UK – 188

Australia – 89

Spain – 56

France – 45

Italy – 27

Israel – 23

Ireland – 13

South Africa – 12

Singapore – 11

China – 10

574 committed 2019-2020 students

(Increase of 10.2% participants from 2018-2019)

207 Fall | **357** Spring | **10** Year

Home Schools

- CAS 60.8%
- Wharton 19.9%
- SEAS 6.8%
- Nursing 2.1%
- Dual-Degree 10.5%



Ambassador James Nycz, University of Cambridge, Fall 2019

Increased Enrollment

The increase in enrollment during the 2019-2020 academic year was driven by a variety of factors, including increased outreach and engagement at department and school levels, with cultural centers, and through direct engagement with student clubs and organizations. Penn Abroad’s thriving Ambassador program, which provides prospective students with an accessible network of peer feedback, also played a significant role. These enthusiastic Ambassadors provided first-hand accounts of their abroad experience and shared how going abroad has shaped their Penn experience, leading to increased interest in programs such as the University of Cambridge.

New program structures offered by partner institutions in Australia, namely, University of New South Wales (UNSW) and the University of Sydney, increased enrollment in Australia by 73%. Historically, students interested in studying abroad in Australia and other southern hemisphere institutions faced challenges due to the partner university's academic calendar, which frequently ended in late June, interfering with potential summer internships and other academic plans. The introduction of a 1+3 program structure, in which students enroll in one intensive course prior to the Spring semester, then enrolling in 3 regular semester courses, allowed students interested in attending UNSW and the University of Sydney to do so without compromising any summer plans for work or internship experiences that typically commence in June.



EXCHANGE AT PENN



Fall 2019 excursion to Wissahickon Park

Newly rebranded in 2019, Exchange at Penn (EAP) allows undergraduate students from partner institutions worldwide to attend Penn for a semester or year-long exchange to experience Penn's unique academic culture and co-curricular opportunities. During the 2019-2020 academic year, Penn Abroad welcomed its largest cohort of international exchange students to date, with 231 students hailing from over 51 partner institutions to pursue coursework across Penn's four undergraduate schools.

- With a focus on student engagement, the rebranded EAP underwent several enhancements in the past year, including:
 - Offering live pre-arrival video chats with accepted exchange students to help answer questions, alleviate any concerns, and solicit feedback.
 - Creating a centralized FAQ and Resource page for the Penn Abroad website dedicated to exchange students and exchange partner institutions.
 - Expanding the number of extracurricular events aimed at connecting exchange students with exchange mentors, Penn Abroad returnees, and prospective study abroad students.
 - Spotlighting the exchange student experience at Penn through personal interviews featured on Penn Abroad's website and in Penn Today

- Developing a post-program survey for exchange students designed to collect constructive feedback about the EAP program.

These enhancements greatly improved the EAP student experience in 2019-2020, and Penn Abroad looks forward to continued growth of this important program that brings the world to Penn.



My exchange year at Penn was an enriching experience and one that has helped my development both academically and personally. During my first class at Penn, I met the professor whose research has shaped a lot of my master thesis that I had written just a few months prior. This in itself was a remarkable experience and very inspiring.”

Aminullah Noor

Rotterdam School of Management

Fall 2019 – Wharton Exchange



GLOBAL RESEARCH & INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Global Research & Internship Program (GRIP) made significant strides forward in the 2019-2020 academic year, which included enhanced advising procedures and new placement opportunities to diversify GRIP program locations and industries. These changes were made in order to address the highly independent nature of GRIP and the wide variety of opportunities available.

With a focus on the student experience and new placement opportunities, highlights included:

- The development of industry-focused placement guides, a step-by-step program timeline, and the introduction of a more personalized advising model for students that offered customized advising appointments based on each student's programs of interest.
- More robust funding information and a more flexible award structure to increase transparency and access in the GRIP funding process, including sliding scale award amounts based on student financial need and guaranteed full funding for Highly Aided students.
- New opportunities in the humanities, social sciences, business, and engineering launched for Summer 2020 and included placements such as Community Development in Ecuador, Law & International Affairs in Beijing, Archaeological Excavation in Armenia, and Social Science Research in Auckland, among many others.
- A site visit to existing and potential new GRIP partners in Morocco, Jordan, and Israel in Fall 2019.

By the Numbers

177 students committed to a program placement prior to the program's cancellation due to COVID-19 *(Increase of 25.9% from placements in Summer 2019)*

24% of students identified as a first-generation college student

59% of students received financial aid

Innovation Amidst Disruption

Although the COVID-19 pandemic required Penn Abroad to suspend normal GRIP operations prior to the start of Summer 2020, the team pivoted quickly in order to continue their mission without the option of travel. A group of 20 students participated in the Virtual Internships Abroad (VIA) pilot program, each receiving full funding from Penn Abroad to support their remote summer internship with an employer based abroad. The team solicited feedback from students throughout the summer and administered pre- and post-program surveys to measure the efficacy of virtual global internships. Due to an overwhelmingly positive response, Penn Abroad will continue to offer remote global internships in the year ahead.



PENN GLOBAL SEMINARS

With dynamic new courses, fascinating travel destinations, and compelling faculty leaders, the Penn Global Seminars (PGS) program continues to advance Penn Abroad's mission of providing students with academically rigorous global opportunities.

During the 2019-2020 academic year, the PGS team executed 12 of the most diverse and innovative seminars to date, serving a record 212 students. Several new program sites were added to the portfolio, including Costa Rica, Turkey, Japan, Zimbabwe, and Greece. For the second year in a row, students paid a flat fee of only \$950 which covered all aspects of their participation in a PGS, including round-trip airfare, lodging, ground transportation, entry fees, and group meals.

Showcasing an increased commitment to deep collaboration with overseas colleagues, four PGS faculty leaders taught their seminar in partnership with faculty based in the host country, providing a unique opportunity for Penn students to learn alongside their international peers. One such course was taught by Penn Integrates Knowledge (PIK) Professor Beth Simmons and Professor Meltem Müftüler-Baç of Sabanci University in Istanbul, Turkey, and centered on security and anxiety at international borders. Throughout the fall semester, Penn students learned collaboratively with their Turkish peers in an online format. During the course travel component, Penn and Sabanci students met in person in Turkey, traveling together to Ankara to meet with Turkish and American government officials, hosting focus groups in Istanbul for Syrian refugees and migrants from across the region, and even flying to Izmir to see the port from which many refugees depart to make their way to other parts of the Mediterranean. Penn students returned to Philadelphia with a nuanced understanding of the challenges faced by refugee populations and policymakers in the Middle East.

Expanding the Portfolio

A majority of the 2019-2020 seminars were new to the PGS portfolio. One of these courses was "Mongolian Civilizations: Nomadic and Sedentary," taught by Dr. Christopher Pratt Atwood of the East Asian Languages and Civilizations department, the first ever joint offering between the Penn Global Seminars and the Benjamin Franklin Scholars programs. Penn Abroad also expanded its partnership with the Critical Writing Program to include three writing seminars with travel to Japan, Zimbabwe, and India. All three of these writing seminars were composed of predominantly first-year students who were excited have their first study abroad experience at Penn.



“I gained so much perspective on what it’s like living in another country and got to see firsthand how the differences affect the citizens there. I think I was able to broaden my idea of how healthcare works in other locations, which is really important when working with patient populations from all over. I was able to enrich myself with the culture as well, which is something that words cannot even describe how valuable it is.”

Ariana Nunez

Health and Healthcare System in Chile

Chile, Fall 2019



Operations Strategy Practicum, Israel, Fall 2019



Field Studies in Tropical Biodiversity and Conservation, Costa Rica, Fall 2019

By the Numbers

212 students participated in twelve seminars

(Increase of 4.5% participants from 2018-2019)

Class Years: Freshmen 21.1% | Sophomores 22.6% | Juniors 24.5% | Seniors 28.8%

24% of students identified as a first-generation college student

71% of students received financial aid

55% of US participants who identified as students of color

A Necessary Pivot

Like every other facet of global and domestic programming at the University of Pennsylvania, the PGS program faced challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In early March, Penn Global made the difficult decision to suspend the travel components of all seven spring semester courses. The team then assisted faculty leaders in transitioning the on-campus components of these courses to remote instruction following an extended spring break. Despite the difficulties caused by the pandemic, the PGS team worked with faculty leaders to retain their course's global nature by infusing virtual elements into the curriculum. From interactive tours of Kyoto and Tokyo to Zoom conversations with experts in Mongolia and Ghana, students were still able to have unique opportunities to gain a meaningful global experience from their PGS course.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

During the first half of 2020, Penn Abroad orchestrated a robust response to the COVID-19 pandemic while having a record number of students studying abroad. As the virus's impact spread across the globe, Penn Abroad provided targeted information to students based on their program location, developed a website that centralized COVID-19 updates, and instituted a seven-day work week to ensure that students and families always had a means of receiving support from Penn Abroad staff.

Key Response Dates:

- **DEC 31, 2019** WHO China Office reports pneumonia of unknown cause.
- **JAN 27, 2020** The University urges return of all travelers in China.
- **FEB 2, 2020** DOS issues Level 4: Do Not Travel advisory for China.
- **FEB 26, 2020** Spring Break PGS travel to Mongolia is suspended.
- **FEB 29, 2020** CDC issues Level 3: Reconsider Travel advisory for Italy.
- **FEB 29, 2020** Penn Abroad facilitates the departure of students from Italy.
- **MAR 2, 2020** The University suspends all Penn-sponsored travel to China, Italy, Iran, and South Korea, and urges the suspension of all other non-essential travel

over Spring Break. Penn Abroad facilitates departures and program changes accordingly.

- **MAR 3, 2020** All spring break PGS travel components are suspended.
- **MAR 4, 2020** Penn Abroad facilitates the departure of students from CDC Level 3 countries.
- **MAR 11, 2020** President Trump announces travel restrictions for all of Europe.
- **MAR 13, 2020** Penn Abroad facilitates the departure of students from all abroad locations; All May PGS travel components are suspended.
- **MAR 17, 2020** GRIP Summer 2020 program is canceled.
- **MAR 19, 2020** Department of State issues global Level 4: Do Not Travel advisory.

Semester Abroad

Penn Abroad's response to COVID-19 began in January with the departure of students from China and Singapore. By late February, the University of Pennsylvania convened a task force which used recommendations from the World Health Organization, CDC, and Department of State to make rapid decisions surrounding student well-being for all remaining students abroad. Penn Abroad strongly advised all Semester Abroad students to return home regardless of program location by mid-March, and Global Program Managers worked with each student individually to facilitate and finance their departure. While a small number of students opted to remain abroad, by April 1st, 346 of the 367 students who began the Spring 2020 term abroad had returned home.

By April 1, 2020, 346 out of 367 Semester Abroad students returned home from Italy (21), UK (107), Spain (37), France (34), other European countries (34), Australia/New Zealand (60), Middle East/Africa (27), Asia (20), and Central/South America (6). 21 students voluntarily opted to stay abroad.

Exchange at Penn

The spring semester Exchange at Penn (EAP) program started off with a record-breaking 134 exchange students attending Penn, but their time on campus lasted only eight weeks. Upon the University's announcement to shift to remote instruction at the conclusion of spring break, Penn Abroad assisted with the departure of all exchange students. The EAP team interfaced with Residential Services to ensure that students could reunite with their belongings, worked with Student Registration & Financial Services to facilitate reimbursements, and partnered with the undergraduate Schools to support the transition to online learning. By the time remote instruction commenced on March 23rd, all but four exchange students had departed Penn.

Penn Global Seminars

By early March, the seven Spring 2020 Penn Global Seminars (PGS) were well-underway in course instruction and were preparing for their upcoming travel components. In response to COVID-19, the Penn Abroad team made a series of thoughtful and timely decisions in accordance with University protocols and CDC guidance, making the difficult decision to cancel all PGS travel components before any travel had commenced. In addition to coordinating the full refund of program fees to students, the PGS team supported faculty leaders in the rapid transition to remote instruction and found creative ways to infuse global elements into the virtual classroom.

Global Research and Internship Program

In January and February of 2020, the Global Research & Internship Program (GRIP) was in the midst of managing a truly phenomenal admission cycle while closely monitoring the COVID-19 developments in each of the 27 internship host countries around the world. The team originally chose to eliminate placements in countries which reached a CDC Level 3 and to redirect those applicants to alternative locations. By March 17th, however, in accordance with University protocols and CDC guidance, the GRIP team made the difficult decision to suspend the Summer 2020 GRIP program worldwide. The team then moved quickly to develop a pilot program of virtual global internships, allowing a small cohort of students to participate in fully-funded remote internships during the summer.

INNOVATIONS IN EDUCATION ABROAD

The global pandemic has profoundly changed how we work, live, and learn, and it has become more important than ever to meet students where they are to ensure that they can still access meaningful global experiences. The Penn Abroad team recognizes the importance of creativity and innovation in the development of new global opportunities for both the current and post-COVID environment and is preparing to provide several exciting modifications to its programming over the coming year.

Global Education in a Virtual Space

Despite the suspension of the Global Research and Internship Program (GRIP) in Summer 2020, Penn Abroad quickly pivoted to build a small pilot program of virtual global internships. A total of 20 students received full funding from Penn Abroad to support their remote summer internships with employers based in nine different countries. When combined with robust training, mentorship, and cultural programming, remote internships proved to offer students both valuable work experience in their field of interest and an opportunity for immersion into a host community and culture. After the successful pilot, Penn Abroad looks forward to offering Virtual Internships Abroad (VIA) again in Summer 2021.

Despite the suspension of course travel, students enrolled in Spring 2020 Penn Global Seminar (PGS) courses still had opportunities to engage with the course content abroad through virtual site visits, international guest speakers and lectures, and augmented reality (AR). Looking ahead, enhanced collaborations are being explored between language and area studies departments at Penn and partner institutions abroad to bring added depth to a student's global educational experiences even while physical travel remains restricted. The PGS team will utilize the lessons learned from these experiences to explore models for ongoing collaborative online learning with students, faculty, and experts around the world.



Jacob Robbins, a VIA pilot program student in Summer 2020

Virtual Student Outreach

Early in the Fall 2020 semester, Penn Abroad will hold a study abroad fair offering students an exciting opportunity to explore global programming at Penn in a virtual way. Students will connect directly with the Penn Abroad team, student ambassadors, and overseas partners in a dynamic virtual exhibit hall, featuring information sessions, chat rooms, and customized booths.

Throughout the year, Penn Abroad will continue to engage with students remotely through multiple avenues of outreach. Penn Abroad will advise students virtually and offer pre-recorded Penn Abroad 101 information sessions for students to access asynchronously. Returnee and ambassador students will meet virtually with one another through social events and offer peer advising to prospective students. Penn Abroad will also launch a new series of blog posts geared toward students and parents, encouraging a broader conversation about planning for global programming experiences at Penn during a pandemic environment.

While the year ahead will look different at Penn Abroad, and indeed at Penn overall, the team remains committed to providing meaningful global experiences and are excited to innovate in the year ahead and beyond.