

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS OFFICE NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2023

This Issue

**Study Abroad Statistics:
Winter/Spring Programs**

Page 02

**Student Spotlight:
Shreya Dhital**

Page 03

**Holiday
Celebration/Photo
Contest Winners**

Pages 04-05

**Faculty-Led Spotlight:
Colombia**

Page 06

**Diversity Resources -
Religion**

Page 07

**Dingle Art Exhibit/
Contact Us**

Page 08



Looking Forward to Studying Abroad

50+ students
attending 14
Spring
programs

25 students
attending 9
winter
programs



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: SHREYA DHITAL

Tell us about your home country and culture.

I am from Nepal, a country in South Asia located between China and India. The Nepalese culture places a strong emphasis on community and collective identity. During our holidays and cultural events, we often celebrate with large groups of friends and family. Since two of our biggest festivals, Dashain and Tihar, fall during October and November, I celebrated them outside of Nepal for the first time.

What made you want to study in the US?

Personally, I believe teenagers should not be pressured to declare their majors right out of high school. In Nepalese universities, there is no concept of “changing majors.” I would have to take an entrance exam for a major and then enroll in a university. After that, if I changed my mind, I would have to drop out and start all over again. The flexibility of the education system attracted me to U.S. universities because I have a wide range of interests that I would like to include in my academic journey.



Congrats to Shreya for winning Popular Choice in the “Capture the Moment” category of our photo contest!

Why do you think it is important for students to experience international education?

In my first semester here, I have met several people from diverse ethnicities and nationalities. From them, I have been exposed to different perspectives and ideas. I believe cultural competency and humility is essential for every career. Pursuing an international education truly helps develop such cultural and linguistic skills. Last but not least, you get to travel! I cannot describe the surge of joy and independence I felt during my first week in the US. When I visited New York City and Ithaca, both trips were with people I had never really met before. It was nerve-wracking and empowering at the same time.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

On Friday, December 8, 2023 the International Programs Office (IPO) hosted its annual **International Student Holiday Celebration** at the SUNY Cortland Alumni House. Exchange & visiting students from all over the world studying at SUNY Cortland experienced a holiday celebration which included dinner, decorating a Christmas tree, raffle with prizes, the Alumni House decorated for the holidays, and an awards presentation. Additionally, in attendance were President Erik Bitterbaum, his wife Ellen Howard Burton, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Ann McClellan, and Assistant Vice Provost for Student Achievement Mary Schlarb .



The IPO wishes all students happy holidays and safe travels!

Congratulations to our photo contest winners!

World As Your Classroom
Maya Iwanejko



The Faces of Study Abroad
Meghan Goparaju



Capture the Moment

Claas Hebenstreit



World of Wonder
Johannes Betz



Live Like a Local

Sebastian Nauta



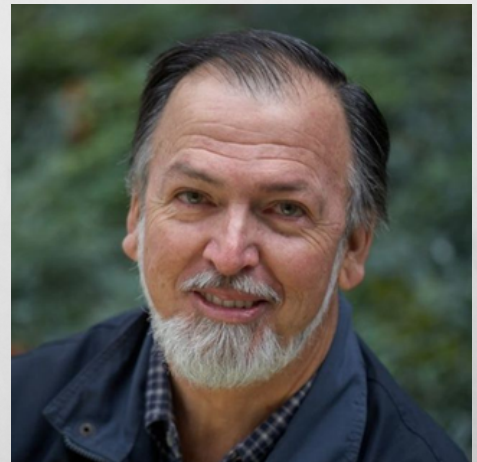
Faculty Led Spotlight: Colombia

The International Programs Office is thrilled to announce a new program running for the first time through SUNY Cortland in Summer 2024. Dr. Ben Wilson of SUNY Cortland's economics department, in partnership with Dr. Kelly Wessell from TC3 and Dr. Jorge Orejuela from Universidad Autónoma de Occidente, will run an interdisciplinary program in Colombia. This program will primarily focus on ecosystems, culture, and the effect of the environment on economic practices. Dr. Orejuela and Dr. Wessell are both trained biologists and have been working together to bring students to some of Colombia's most ecologically diverse centers for several years; now they're teaming up with Dr. Wilson to further engage students with the practical effects of ecology on a community's work and economic practices.

Students will have an opportunity to travel all over Colombia. First, they will stay at Dr. Orejuela's own private nature reserve, learning about how people use art to connect with nature and what nature can teach us about art; they'll also work with Indigenous basket makers, learning about the different plants and vines that can be harvested for basket making and students will have a chance to make their own baskets. Then, they'll travel to the Amazon, where they'll explore an economy primarily based on birdwatching and ecotourism. Students can learn about botany and medicinal plants, go fishing in the Amazon, and attend a river fish market. From there they'll travel to the Caribbean coast, where they'll visit one of the most famous national parks in Colombia and learn from the local Indigenous peoples about their worldview and environmental work. Finally, they'll end the course in Cartagena, an old Spanish walled city, and contrast the economic development of the natural areas they visited to the more traditional ideas of economic development found in the city.

Dr. Wilson hopes the program will give students the opportunity to envision the world in ways they couldn't from the classroom: "I'm always trying to cultivate a hunger and desire to be lifelong learners, and I think going to new places helps with that." Dr. Wessell hopes that students from all disciplines will join the program and contribute their knowledge to the learning experience. As for Dr. Orejuela? He and his community are thrilled for the next batch of students to arrive and learn about his beautiful country.

If you are interested in the program or have any questions, reach out to Dr. Wilson at bcw@cortland.edu or the International Programs Office at study.abroad@cortland.edu.



DIVERSITY RESOURCES

RELIGION

This semester, our newsletters will highlight diversity resources the International Programs Office has compiled for marginalized students studying abroad. For more information, reach out to us at studyabroad@cortland.edu

Religion is often a large part of a country's culture and identity. It is important to do research prior to studying abroad to become aware of how religion can impact your study abroad experience in a particular country.

If you are religious yourself, it is important to think through how your experience abroad may be impacted by your faith. If you plan to worship while abroad, it's important to learn more about the area you'll be living in and the places of worship available to you there. Not all countries have a culture of religious plurality—some in fact have a state-sponsored religion—and may not be tolerant of you openly practicing your faith.

Studying abroad is an opportunity to learn more about, and grow in, all aspects of yourself, including your faith. As you continue the study abroad research process, here are some questions for you to think through regarding religion and spirituality.

- What is the dominant religion in your host country? Are all religions tolerated? To what degree?
- How is your religion similar to the primary religion of your host country? Does it share similar roots?
- Do you plan to practice your religion while abroad? If so, are there any places of worship particular to your religion in your host city? If not, how do you plan to practice your religion?
- Do you have religious dietary restrictions? Can they be accommodated in your host city/country?
- Are there any places of worship you plan to visit as part of your study abroad program? If so, what do you need to know prior to visiting (such as dress code)?
- Is it safe for you to wear religious symbols and clothing?

Resources

Kahal: Jewish
Communities Abroad



Halal Trip



Feeding My Faith as a
Global Citizen



The Catholic
Directory





Dingle Art Exhibit!

Check out art from the Dingle, Ireland summer program in the library by Advisement and Transition! Led by Professor Stephen Clark from the Art and Art History department, students take courses in painting/drawing or photography/printmaking.

If you're interested in the program, reach out to our office at studyabroad@cortland.edu!



CONTACT US

LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

International Programs Office

Old Main, Room 219

P.O. Box 2000

Cortland, NY 13045

Phone: +1-607-753-2209

Fax: +1-607-753-5989

studyabroad@cortland.edu

cortland.edu/international

Contact us to schedule an appointment with an advisor or to learn more. We look forward to hearing from you!

OFFICE HOURS

EMAIL US TO SCHEDULE AN ADVISING APPOINTMENT

MONDAY-FRIDAY

8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Old Main, Room 219

Have general questions? Talk to our grad assistant!

Walk in Advising:

Tuesday 9:30-4

Wednesday 9:30-3

Thursday 9-4

FOLLOW US



@cortlandstudyabroad



SUNY Cortland Study Abroad