A Front Row Seat to History

W. Robert (Bob) (A.B. ’61, MBA ’64) Moore was a student in Group II at Stanford in Germany, Beutelsbach, January-June, 1959. He married Margaret Reedy, (University of Oregon, AB ’61; University of Washington, M.Ed. ’79), immediately after graduation, and just a few days later—forgetting the usual honeymoon—they returned to Beutelsbach where Bob was Assistant to the Director for Groups VII, VIII, and IX in 1961 and 1962. Here they tell us something of their experiences.

Stanford in Germany—a life shaping experience! One October morning in 1957 my Wilbur Hall roommate, Wil Kohl, burst into our dorm room with the news that Stanford was starting an overseas campus in Germany. We were especially interested as both of us were descendants of German immigrants and curios about our heritage. We were selected to attend Stanford-in-Germany Group II in winter and spring of 1959. After several orientation sessions and armed with one quarter of German language, we landed in Stuttgart, Germany—arriving on New Year’s Eve, just 14 years after the end of WWII. We only faintly understood Stanford had placed us in front-row seats for the theater of European history in the last half of the twentieth century, profoundly influencing most of our adult lives.

West Germany was in the midst of the Economic Miracle (Wirtschaftswunder), the enormous reconstruction of that young democracy. Everywhere remnants of the war remained—Mediterranean “guest workers” filled the labor void and Berlin lay in ruins while authorities tried to find vanished property owners. We were also confronted with the early stages of the Cold War, living and studying in a divided Germany, traveling the air corridor between Hanover and West Berlin and meeting with West Berlin’s Mayor, Willy Brandt.

Two years later Margaret and I returned as part of the administration and witnessed live on German television the building of the Berlin Wall. Later we visited Check Point Charlie, where American and Russian tanks tensely faced each other’s pointed guns. Seeing the wall come down in 1989 was a promising sequel to this indelible experience.

We also traveled to Luxembourg and Brussels, where the seeds of the European Union were being sown. The dream was a United States of Europe, seemingly an impossible vision given the fractured history of that region. And now we know that out of this effort most of the EU thrives today.

In Italy we were exposed to the fantastic economic miracle of that region. And now we know that out of the early stages of the European Union were being sown. The dream was a United States of Europe, seemingly an impossible vision given the fractured history of that region. And now we know that out of this effort most of the EU thrives today.

In June of 1958 sixty-three Stanford undergraduates left San Francisco Airport in a chartered, propeller-driven plane to launch the first Stanford Overseas Studies Program at Landgut Burg, an estate near Beutelsbach, Germany. They were accompanied by university President Wallace Sterling, Professors Robert Walker, Willi Strothmann, and Kurt Steiner.

While the educational mission of study abroad remains a valued part of the Stanford undergraduate experience, many things have changed about study-abroad opportunities in the last fifty years. While there are currently ten established centers, programs have opened and closed in response to faculty and student interest, moved from rural locations to city environments, and housed students in a range of accommodations from villas and estates to hotels and dormitories and most recently with local families.

Endowed by Helen and Peter (’55) Bing in 2005, the Bing Overseas Studies Program plans to celebrate this 50th anniversary with a campus event on Saturday, May 3, 2008. Alumni, faculty, students, and distinguished speakers will come together to celebrate the 50-year legacy of fostering world citizens and creating experiences that last—and in many cases have defined—a lifetime.

The all-day event will offer opportunities to gain uncommon insights into current and emerging global issues at a world-affairs panel featuring Coin Blacker, Director of the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies; Michael McFaul, Director of the Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law, former Secretary of Defense William Perry, and John B. Taylor, Mary and Robert Raymond Professor of Economics. President Emeritus Gerhard Casper will serve as moderator.

A ringside seat as the history of the twenty-first century unfolds. No substitute for tomorrow’s leaders having a ringside seat as the history of the twenty-first century is shaped around the globe.
The experiences of Stanford in Austria Group I continue to provide nuances, challenges and excitement in my life, perhaps even more so than my medical training. My career in medicine was something planned and in which I knew that I could excel. Stanford in Austria was an unexpected opportunity for discovery and redirection.

Growing up in rural northern California during the 1950s and early 60s allowed one time to dream. It was a heady period in history that inspired wonderful imaginations—with ventures into space becoming common and miraculous discoveries in medicine and science providing the background for what could be achieved. Simultaneously, I recognized that it might take years of hard work to spark the realization of such imaginations.

For some years before coming to Stanford, I had an interest in my German roots, leading to a desire to learn German; but that language was not available at my local school. Travel to Europe seemed prohibitively distant and expensive, making the desire to travel there, which had been stimulated by earlier experiences within the USA, only a future possibility.

At Stanford, the load of pre-med and other required courses left little time to study German, precluding participation in the existing overseas campus programs. Then the opening of the Austrian Campus was announced—nearly simultaneously with the release of the “Sound of Music” film. For Group I, only one quarter of German language would be required, i.e., summer class for me. It seemed to be a program designed especially to accommodate me. Once accepted and surviving the ten weeks of necessary vaccinations, I would be off to the Seat of the Holy Roman Empire and such grandeur and adventures—a thought that would keep me awake at night for months before we left.

The dream was nearly smashed when I got a call in my motel room near the San Francisco airport the night before we left. The Overseas Campuses Office was looking for me because I had forgotten to check-in. The implied threat of failure to check-in was expulsion from the flight. I was so scared. I did not sleep again until we got to our rooms at the Hotel Parini's in the mountain village of Sammering. Those six months were everything that I could have wanted or desired. My closest and most solid friends for over 40 years came from Austria I. The Austrian family that accepted me into their confidences is my second family, and I still visit periodically. Group I penetrated the Iron Curtain—reaching Poland where we thought we would freeze at Auschwitz and be lost in the salt mines of Kraków. Exploring Athens, the home of the poets and philosophers, surrounded by the ruins of centuries, was humbling. This non-American experience only stimulated my desire to embrace other countries and cultures.

But what made all of this a defining moment was my Austrian family. In my youth, I was taught that those people who supported the German war machine, the Japanese expansion, or the domination of communism were evil and should be avoided. My Austrian family, which clearly had ties to the German war effort, accepted me for what I was, without prejudice. I learned from them that people throughout the world have certain identical goals of safely raising healthy children, educating the population, doing meaningful work, enjoying the bounties of the world, and living a long peaceful life in spite of, at times, significant differences in political views and past activities. These concepts of sameness and tolerance were an explosive enlightenment given the superiority and narrow patriotic view of the world from which I had evolved.

This gift broadened my world vision and political ideas and directed me beyond medicine into activities exploring different cultures, community and international service, teaching in China, Japan and Siberia, an Irish wife, and hosting a variety of students from around the world. It is now my belief that any international experiences would have occurred in my life without Stanford in Austria. Austria I is my Stanford Education.

Laura Stephenson Canciamilla (A.B. English ’68, A.M. Education ’70) regales us with tales of the first Stanford group in Britain. The eighty pioneers lived in Harlaxton Manor near Grantham, Lincolnshire, about 110 miles north of London.

1965-1966—there could have been a better time to start Stanford in Britain. It was the time of the British Invasion (except that we were going there, rather than the other way around). It was a new renaissance for the British with music, fashion (who can forget Camaby Street and the Beatle…??)…and we got to be a part of it! Harlaxton Manor was just outside of Grantham—in the pre-Margaret Thatcher world. The Manor was an incredible building that was a testament to a new wealth and excess of the Industrial Revolution, but we loved it. It had gargoyles outside and “vomiting lions” in the chapel (our lecture hall) on the inside. There were secret passageways and wonderful history that surrounded that old building. The library had a secret door and caused quite a stir the first time it cracked open and a student walked out!

When we arrived, the Manor had just emerged from years of use as a Jesuit seminary and it was a bit worn around the edges. The library and common areas were still quite grand, but the bedroom areas were spartan Spartan. The men’s floor had partitioned cubicles that foreshadowed what many of our offices now look like. The women’s floor had bedraggled iron beds with sunken straw mattresses. We could throw two pillows into that central abyss and we still rolled down into the mattress. Those seminar-"4ians must have been heavy……and still we loved it.

Time magazine ran an article about the opening of Stanford in Britain. Many of us claimed to be “the leggy blonde at the bar the stags exclaimed, ‘Wow, nobody, but nobody, lives in a house like this!’” We felt like we were a part of history ourselves and determined to be a successful and good group.

We came together and bonded over nightly dinners with Brussels sprouts and potatoes and breakfasts of cereal and warm milk. The women in the group immortalized the food and many of our group adventures in a Valentine’s Day show that included the songs “Food, Glorious Food” in honor of the nightly menus, and “Smoke Gets In Your Eyes” for Professor Evans’ ever persistent cigarettes! We had classes four days a week, “Top of the Pop” on the telly on Thursday evenings, and then wonderful 3-day weekends to explore our new world (their old world). We would roar off to Scotland, Wales, or London to explore and learn. Many of us would rush back to Grantham and Harlaxton on Sundays just to enjoy Sunday dinners with local families that had adopted us. Along the way there were also many trips to local pubs (with the Armo down at the end of the lane our favorite and closest) and even a fox hunt that stopped by the Manor to bring us another bit of England’s culture.

Professor George Knies and Professor J. Martin Evans taught us English history and literature. They guided us both intellectually and personally as we lived and learned as a community. At that point there were no coed dorms on campus at home, so it was a revelation to learn that the guys could be miserable at breakfast after being so macho the night before at the pub! We learned that we were all very human and we had the chance to make real friends. Not an evening went by without some of our classmates sitting together and sharing in the library or on the stairwells.

There were two major field trips during our time there: one to Paris and one to Rome. In Paris we all learned ruefully about being careful about the water. About half of the group came down with “Napoleon’s Revenge” and the sound of pounding fists on the WC doors down the hall reverberated throughout the first evening that we were there. In Rome, we learned about incredible history and art—but only after recovering from the train ride—and the enhanced oranges. Spring break allowed all 80 of us to create our own adventures and we went everywhere. Some went to Prague, others to Athens, still others to Istanbul, and everyone had amazing adventures. Somehow, we all made it back to the Manor, mostly on time!

The campus was officially dedicated in a local ceremony, the Duke of Gloucester, and President Sterling in attendance. It was a grand day for us all to see us all get to our feet in respect at the entrance of the high-table dignitaries. Truly, it was an adventure and another world altogether. Gee…..nobody, but nobody gets to live in a house like this or have an adventure like this…unless you are lucky enough to go to Stanford!
The First Eight Days of Stanford in Germany

June 16 (Monday)
Right now we’re sitting in the plane at SFO, ready at any minute to take off for Chicago. It’s 11:58 p.m., and the prevailing spirit is...one of a carnival-like expectation and subdued excitement.

June 17 (Tuesday)
Somewhere over the North Atlantic. Am sitting next to Dick Turpin from the L.A. Times. He is covering the opening of Stanford in Germany, and will be with us through the official opening next Tuesday. All photographers were taking our pictures before we left from Chicago at 5:30 am today...Excitement growing.

June 18 (Wednesday)
...A few reporters at August Burg, 12 miles outside Stuttgart; this is our home for the next six months! This is a beautiful country...

June 24 (Tuesday)
...We are now officially opened...Dr. Boerner (Director) acted as sort of M.C., and made a very short opening speech of welcome, then introduced the Bürgermeister of Bietigheim...then the mayor of Stuttgart...then the Minister of Justice for Baden-Württemberg, who was representing the state’s [governor]...He closed by praising the Stanford General Studies Program (as if he could even understand it, more than likely)....

Dr. Boerner...then introduced Dr. Strothmann, who spoke in English, and who delivered a short speech in which he discussed Stanford’s...philosophy, commenting that Stanford seeks not just to train “specialists”, but also to train its students to be “mature individuals”, and he saw this new program as greatly aiding this goal...We come here “as learn- ers, not as missionaries”, he concluded aptly. Then...the last speaker, President Sterling. He observed the importance of this simple ceremony, beginning an undertaking expected to last for many years.” He stressed the program was “not an experiment but already an established fact.”...He closed by mentioning the Stanford Sequoia sapling that he had brought with him to plant here “as a symbol of our long-lasting hopes and foundations.”

Then everyone went outside, and Dr. Sterling and I shoveled the dirt in; he re-marked that he had learned how to use a shovel when he was a lad. With the tree planted, the ceremony ended with our singing of the Stanford Hymn...

Jim Garrett (’61, A.B. Political Science) was one of sixty-three beginner students, the very first to go overseas with Stanford. Here he offers some very slightly edited excerpts from his diary, reflecting the excitement and enthusiasm of those first days in June, 1958. The Stanford News Service captured the Germany I students departing from Chicago.

Stanford Trailblazers

Pat Mahoney Santa Cruz (’63, A.B. History) writes about her journey to Florence and six months in the first group at Villa San Paolo.

In the fall of 1960, 160 students embarked, literally, on the SS Ascania, bound for Le Havre and thence Tours, France, or Florence, Italy. It took us two days to cross the Atlantic, and all of us made great lifelong friends aboard that ship. I think that our crossing was smooth—so much so that we chaperones decided a direct flight was the best way to transport future groups abroad. The Italy group spent two days in Paris, then the second floor of the contingent from Tours got settled.

Our first sight of Villa San Paolo was breathtaking. We were really going to be able to live in this incredible man-sion tucked into a hillside in Fiesole, just up the road from central Florence. The ceilings were filled with incredible frescos and the sweeping staircase was impres-sive. The women occupied the third floor, the men the second floor. The top two floors of the buildings were rented to a military firm and the women were not allowed in those parts.

Our first day was spent getting accustomed to our place and our lives. We had our first day of classes on Tuesday morning and our first field trip to—Vienna! We didn’t have our first trip to Florence for another week. Back in Vienna we decided to walk into the city and wander the streets. The city is quite different from Italy, and the architecture is very different as well. We ended up walking into the central square and saw a statue of a famous composer, Beethoven. We found this very interesting because he is one of my favorite composers. We then decided to have lunch at a local restaurant and try some of the local cuisine. The food was delicious and we enjoyed talking about music and art with each other. We ended the day by taking a walk along the Danube river and admiring the beautiful scenery.

At Christmas everyone took off for a variety of destinations, and when we reconvened in January there was much to share and discuss. As most young people do, we looked for the similarities in people living abroad, as well as noting the differences. Music, as always, was the universal language. That year one of the most popular songs was “Volare” and we sang it with gusto, in faltering Italian. Our spring field trip was to Sicily, and we all had such a great time. We thought we spotted Mafia guys all over the place, the blood oranges from Taormina a limbed part of Mt. Etna, and tried the pizza in Palermo. During the year, most of us took weekend trips to Rome, Naples, Venice, Siena, and many villages surrounding Florence. We became expert quaffers of Chianti and birra. Our “studies” were really 24/7. Everything was so different from home and we tried to assimilate all the sights, sounds and smells before we had to leave. Most of the people in our group have said that our stay in Florence was truly life-changing. It influenced our way of thinking about other people and made us much less apt to make snap judgments where differences were encountered. The friendships made during our time there have endured to the present and there will always be a special bond between us. Living in Europe back then was a very ex-otic thing for students to do, unlike today where many take the “junior year abroad” as a matter of course. I am so grateful to Stanford for providing the opportunity to see another culture and to share the experience with fellow students. Upon our return to Stanford, many of us continued our Italian, reading Dante’s Inferno in the original. Since Dante really invented pres-ent-day Italian, we were lucky to learn the language in its most pure and lyrical form. I know that without my time in Florence, my life would never have been so rich.
A Stone in the Stomach

Larry Friedlander is Professor of English Emeritus and has been a stalwart participant in teaching overseas. He has taught four quarters in Berlin, four in Cliveden, four September Seminars, and one quarter each in Florence and Paris. Here he tells us about the special personal meaning of his teaching in Berlin.

"Do you know how many members of our family the Nazis killed?"

I was at my father’s funeral, having flown in post-haste from teaching at the overseas center. The speaker was my favorite relative, Uncle Sam, a bristling, witty, hyper-intelligent, with a habit of standing on his head when it suited him. There we were, right in front of my father’s casket, and I could sense the room getting quiet as everyone present took in the truth of what I was saying my time in Germany.

Did I know how many died? Yes, I did. How could I not? In my grandfather’s last book on Talmudic law, an eminent rabbi—there is a page outlined in black with the printed names of each of his brothers and sisters, their husbands, wives, children and grandchildren, and the dates of their death. And then the grand total: eight. Eighty dead including my great grandmother, aged 94, dragged from her bed and shot in the back seat of a man in the quantity of the properly ski-resort town in the south of Poland where my ancestors had lived for many centuries.

Not only did I know but that knowledge was precisely the reason for my presence in Berlin. I had lived the Holocaust on a daily basis; why, you did not buy their stories right into the family dining room. So Germany was the land, you experienced the Nazi past. Uncle Sam was active in refugee work, and his brothers served our school lunches. My grandmother was an active in refugee work, and her house was a way station for many right off the boat, bringing their cares and their stories right into the family dining room. So Germany was the land, you were touched by the Nazi past. Uncle Sam was active in refugee work, and his brothers were situated away from the metropolitan areas and spending six months living and spending six months living and teaching students to concentration camps and Gestapo headquarters, and walking that story through with them. Though it was initially a hard, perhaps masochistic choice, encountering and grasping at that history with twenty bright and open minded Stanford students was extraordinary. The next step up the ladder and reimagined it from their viewpoint and refactored it back to me. I felt like both teacher and a part of the movement. Teacher that course helped me trace the history as it had twisted its way into the contemporary scene, in the way we sneaked the city, the political and cultural scars visible all around me. The staff at the center gave me access to points of view of Germans in a way that would never have been possible if I just had visited. They helped me digest the enormity and increasingly fascinating reality I was encountering. On a daily basis I could share my often intense encounters with people who wanted too to bring the past out into the open, to find a way through. I don’t have the space in this little article to summarize my experiences, and my increasing fondness for the people and country, but to tell the story of the power of facing and living through what is hidden and forbidden. The program gave me, and the students, entrance into the secret life of the city, escorting us across the borders in the east, providing a firm knowledge and confidence in which the essence of Berlin could be viewed and refashioned.

So what did I say to Uncle Sam? I told him of one of the teachers I worked with at the center (Lochen) who had spent time as a volunteer in Israel and Poland as part of a movement of reconciliation that sent German youths to poor cities in countries touched by the Nazi past. Uncle Sam was not impressed, digesting what I had told him, then said and said, “Thank you. I did not know that.”

Hey, a mensch is a mensch.

In 1982, deciding I needed to change tactics by actuating the ancestral enemy in its lair, I applied to teach in our program in Berlin. The speaking engagement was the greatest gift and ever given myself. Since then I have taught four times in Berlin, worked there in the university for some research projects, and made some of the most long-lasting friendships of my life. There came to confront and work through my past, I found a country intent on doing the same. It was a city that history had battered and freed, where every corner spoke of past horrors and present hopes, a bewildering and vital swirl of past and present, and future, where the country and the century’s contradictions, its tragedy and its energy, seemed to meet.

To pay my dues to the past, I decided to teach a six-week course for Holocaust survivors in Berlin. I found them in Berlin. I found students to concentration camps and Gestapo headquarters, and walking that story through with them. Though it was initially a hard, perhaps masochistic choice, encountering and grasping at that history with twenty bright and open minded Stanford students was extraordinary. The next step up the ladder and reimagined it from their viewpoint and refactored it back to me. I felt like both teacher and a part of the movement. Teacher that course helped me trace the history as it had twisted its way into the contemporary scene, in the way we sneaked the city, the political and cultural scars visible all around me. The staff at the center gave me access to points of view of Germans in a way that would never have been possible if I just had visited. They helped me digest the enormity and increasingly fascinating reality I was encountering. On a daily basis I could share my often intense encounters with people who wanted too to bring the past out into the open, to find a way through. I don’t have the space in this little article to summarize my experiences, and my increasing fondness for the people and country, but to tell the story of the power of facing and living through what is hidden and forbidden. The program gave me, and the students, entrance into the secret life of the city, escorting us across the borders in the east, providing a firm knowledge and confidence in which the essence of Berlin could be viewed and refashioned.

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Words from the Beginning by a Gentleman of 100 Years

Former students from France I recently joined together to file one of their faculty, Professor George H. Knoles, in honor of his forthcoming one hundredth birthday (see Abroad, Fall/Winter, 2006-07). Now Professor Knoles really is 100 years old and sends us (by e-mail!) his thoughts about overseas studies. He is Margaret Byrne Professor of American History, Emeritus, and taught at Stanford in France with Group I when it opened in 1960, and later with Britain I, France VII, and Germany XXIX and XXX. With Rexford Snyder, Professor Knoles authored the famous Readings in Western Civilization that thousands of students read as freshmen. Abroad salutes him and his accomplishments.

Traveling to France nearly a half century ago with eighty Stanford undergraduates equally divided between men and women and spending six months living and studying together proved to be a challenging and very rewarding experience for Mrs. Knoles and me. We were privileged to serve additional OSP assignments to France (1963-64), England (1966), and Germany (1972-73). While each center developed its own character, the overall success was a testament to the principles established by the founders.

An understanding of the circumstances operating at the university in the 1950’s and 1960’s would help to explain some aspects of the program that prevailed in the early years of the overseas campuses. Stanford’s framework for undergraduate education at the time—lower and upper division—envisioned first- and second-year students completing prescribed course work prior to declaring at which time they came under departmental direction. The OSP courses abroad were designed primarily to aid lower-division students to complete lower-division requirements rather than helping them to satisfy departmental major prescriptions.

Very few Stanford students in those first years had ever been out of the United States by attending overseas courses, they were indeed innocents abroad. The program actively promoted interaction between students and the local community at several levels. Students became acquainted with individual families as well as learning the language and something of the customs and culture of the localities surrounding them. All of the first centers were situated away from the metropolitan centers of the host countries, so both students and hosts faced off the anonymity so characteristic of life in large cities. While we were at [Harlaxton] near Grantham, England, for example our students befriended Nottingham and Lincoln university undergraduates. They learned about “pub” culture, they found out that a sort of democracy prevailed in the “pub”, but that the same class-levelling atmosphere in the “pub” did not extend beyond to the class lines prevailing away from its premises.

On two occasions at our Harlaxton center we experienced events that we think of as distinctively English—a shoot and a hunt. A small private shooting club had gone on recounting events that occurred at Tours, France—visiting a wine fair held in one of the numerous wine caves of the Loire Valley—and at Beutelsbach, Germany—attending the local Oktober Fest—demonstrative of the ways our students socialized with locals and learned more about the language and cultures of the host countries.

Then there were the “field trips,” while we were in France to London, Madrid, and Rome, while in Beutelsbach, to Rome and Berlin. These excursions further contributed to developing closer personal relationships with our fellow faculty members, their wives, students, and resident staffs. You absorb a good deal while berthed overnight in a six-bed couchette along with four undergraduates! All of these excursions had been carefully planned and implemented to extract a maximum benefit to the foreign travelers. During these assignments we made many friends among faculty and students—many friendships over the years. Moreover, Mrs. Knoles and I had opportunities to travel widely that would not have been possible if we had not moved to the university in France. We really is 100 years old and sends us (by e-mail!) his thoughts about overseas studies. He is Margaret Byrne Professor of American History, Emeritus, and taught at Stanford in France with Group I when it opened in 1960, and later with Britain I, France VII, and Germany XXIX and XXX. With Rexford Snyder, Professor Knoles authored the famous Readings in Western Civilization that thousands of students read as freshmen. Abroad salutes him and his accomplishments.
It Changed the Way I Look at the World

Scott Delp ('87 M.S. and '90 Ph.D., Mechanical Engineering) belongs to a virtually exclusive club: he went to Stanford in Italy as a graduate student, became a member of Stanford's faculty (he's The Charles Lee Powell Foundation Professor of Engineering), and recently taught at Stanford in Florence.

When an institution has such a long life, it creates its own traditions and its own values and this is what appeals to the students who come from Florence. To provide an academic curriculum respectful of the Florentine culture and history Florence has an incredible collection of artistic works such as few other towns in Europe can boast.

We always take advantage of this tremen-

dous opportunity to explore the tradition of Art and Culture have always occupied a very important position in our program. Our teachers are accomplished professionals of communicating to the student the spirit and the philosophy expressed by the tradition of Florence which is one of the most important contribution to the culture of Europe; a tradition which is not exclu-

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sively a literary and an intellectual one but is based on the human roots in the social and cultural milieu: good connection with the local realities and developing friendship with our transplanted professors.
Nothing replaces being there. We have a saying in Spanish: “Ahora que fuí, ya no me cuento cuentos.” The translation might be: “Now that I have been there, nobody can tell me tales about it.” Only by being there, one can begin to grasp the luminosity; feel the proportions of the spaces, buildings, distances; sense the pace of activity and the mood of those around us; and perceive the uniqueness of foreign lands and their peoples.

Anyone can, money and time permitting, just go there. Then, after returning, we can say confidently which place was most memorable, and compare many aspects of the experience to previous trips, as well as to what we have at home. This does not require being there for very long. Some might decide to consult others who know the country, and might get a map and a guidebook. They would make a conscious effort to know some of the history, the cultural expressions, and unique details about the place. With an open mind and a constructive attitude, this sort of trip can provide a rich new set of emotions and memories. That’s closer to being there.

Then there are those who yearn to understand. For them, a longer stay is needed—and the chance to participate in common, everyday activities. They value the insights of facilitators, persons who have lived there and who have an understanding of the most common pre-conceptions. The host families, local “experts”, our professors and staff, and local friends do much more than just welcome, guide, or organize activities; they guide students’ observation and absorption of the surroundings and the culture and help students to specify what they have seen and learned.

In most cases, an experience abroad involves understanding and speaking a different language. “What if they interpret what I just said differently from how I meant it?” Well, a language is a tool and requires practice to be handled skillfully. Often, the exercise even includes scrutinizing our own mother tongue and introducing us to the fact that language has a life of its own, offering not only cases and conjunctions, but also insights into ways of thinking and approaching problems.

Stanford University, through the Bing Overseas Studies Program (BOSP), has aimed to provide an overseas learning experience for students who are travelers and language learners, and particularly for those who want to try to understand, not only from their own perspective, but from a broader angle. In the years I have worked with the program, many students have risen to this challenge magnificently, and I have often been impressed by the striking difference between the stance of some students at their arrival and the newfound breadth of character of these same students at their departure from the program. Every generation brings a new set of eyes and expectations, and I am moved as I watch each new unveiling and sharpening of intellectual and emotional skills.

One thing nobody can take from us is our experience of an entire life.”

Revision of Records of Attendance at Stanford Overseas

In the last issue of Abroad you read that BOSP knows much of the data in the University’s records regarding participation in overseas programs are inaccurate. In fact, we’ve been working steadily on correcting the mistakes and have compiled the records for all of BOSP’s approximately 23,000 alumni. As this issue of Abroad was being prepared, the corrections had not yet been uploaded, but we anticipate doing so shortly after this issue is in your hands.

We have, however, in any case made our mailing list for this issue more complete by incorporating some 1,500 names of former students who did go overseas, whose records previously did not indicate that. If you hear of an alum who did not receive this issue, please ask him or her to communicate with Bob Hamrila, Editor, hamrila@stanford.edu about that anomaly, and we’ll fix it.

Donors for 2006-07

As of August 11, 2007

We gratefully acknowledge our contributing alumni and alumnae, parents, students, and friends for their generous gifts in support of the Bing Overseas Studies Program.

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Santiago Tejerina-Canal, Director of Stanford’s new center in Madrid
**Staying in Touch at the Speed of Light**

John Chao, ’99, BOSP’s Technology Manager, tells how Stanford students are using technology to communicate with friends, family, and professors during their time abroad.

Staying in touch with friends, family, and professors through sharing memorable academic and cultural experiences has long been a delightful part of studying abroad. During and before the 1970s, social media was an inspired students’ method to write eloquent prose and postcards to be delivered ten days or two weeks later by ‘International Air Mail Only.’

Electronic communication reached new heights in the 1980s with the fax machine. Widely used for business correspondence, facsimile enabled students to attend to important academic matters without delay. In the 1990s, E-mail allowed all participants to contribute instant gratification and acted as an economical substitute for international stamps and phone calls.

Staying-in-touch technologies took a monumental leap in the 21st century as über-fast telecommunication networks and a plethora of Internet technologies became interwoven with the study-abroad experience. So, while students are physically an ocean apart from the Farm, virtually, they are only 299,792,458 meters per second away.

Here is a rundown of popular technological trends sweeping Overseas Studies today.

- Internationally capable cell phones. 90% of BOSP students have country-specific cell phones. Convenience, affordable call rates, and text messaging capabilities make the cell phone a must have.
- Wireless hotspots. Students can access hundreds of wireless hotspots in every BOSP city to perform online research, take distance courses, and meet registrar’s deadlines any time of the day.
- Facebook. No, it’s not the book you received in your freshman year. This social-networking website allows students to post their overseas experiences and get instantaneous feedback from friends.
- Voice and video over the Internet. Armed with a headset and webcam, students place international phone and video calls over the Internet for a few pennies per minute via Skype.
- Web Albums. Friends and family need no longer wait for 10 weeks to view the hundreds of photos taken throughout the quarter. Students keep a photo journal of their indelible overseas experience by uploading digital images to web albums.

In addition to the Internet technologies, there is a dazing array of Internet and telecommunication technologies, it may be tempting for students to be constantly on their laptops and surf the Internet instead of walking along the Banks and steps. Luckily, cell phones such as the Director (Geoffrey Tyack’s Art and Society) in Britain and numerous enriching cultural interactions across all centers still give students an opportunity to enjoy their cities the way readers of Abroad did in the past.

* A fun Exercise: try deciphering this text message. Use a mirror to view the translated text.

**MAMMA, N VRNA ONS BNG TRP**
**MILS N W I N T N 2 DVB OF DA RBN PTH**
**@TEOTD. SPKN ITLN LIKE A PRO AND FELN LSIS LK A 4NR EVDY!**
**WLL CLL LTBRZ EUGH USN SKYP. LVN, JHN,
**

**A BE R I T M E X R A N D E R L A N D**
**TO T H E ON E A Y 
**

**CR A F S A M E A N D R I L Y R A Y I N **

**THE P O L T R I F T D O N A M S A N D T H E M A S**

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**Germany XVIII Celebrates 40th Anniversary in Beutelsbach**

Lara Smith (A.B. Psychology ’69) tells us about her group’s reunion at Landgut Burg in Beutelsbach, the site of Stanford’s first overseas campus.

Twenty-five people, including family and guests, gathered at Landgut Burg, our former Stanford-in-Germany home (Winter and Spring Quarters, 1966-67) for our 40th reunion. We booked three nights there—Landgut Burg now offers hotel accommodation—and our days were filled with fun and laughter. We were warmly welcomed by everyone at the Burg, and by the town of Weinstadt, with a reception by Bürgermeister Jürgen Oswald. One member of our group is now famous for a comment made in response to the mayor’s question as to what had changed since 1967. “Die Mistwagens sind nicht mehr da!” This pungent observation was picked up and quoted in the Stuttgarter Zeitung, which next month published an article about the return of our group to our former home, together with a group photo. (For those of you perished about why the comment attracted attention, the translation is “the manure wagons aren’t here any more!” Ed.)

Our days there were filled with walks in the vineyards (which now cover all the hills around the town), a guided tour of the historic buildings of Beutelsbach, a wine-tasting at the Rostmakellerl, explorations by car, a visit to the Mercedes museum nearby, and lots of talking! In the evening we enjoyed excellent food and wine at the Burg. We were joined one evening for a slide-show of our old photos by Frau Dr. Kintfi, the Burg’s administrator and owner when we were students, and by several Beutelsbach residents, whose families had hosted Stanford students way back then. One of these wonderful people even helped us find a member of our group who had been lost—Stanford had no record of her, but Herr Mack had stayed in touch with her all these years, and gave us her phone number. All in all, it was a wonderful reunion. We were all very happy we did it and are planning another for our 45th! All agreed that the Stanford-in-Germany experience was the highlight of our Stanford years.

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**Britain I to Return to Harlaxton!**

Be a part of Britain I’s triumphant return to Harlaxton planned for August 3 to August 8, 2009. Enjoy an English traditional breakfast in the refectory, dinner and a pint of bitter ale at the Gregory Arms, and a farewell dinner in the Great Ridgeway Hall (where we attended classes minus the wooden benches) with music from the 60’s. Lodging to be provided in the student dorms. For more information please contact Joanne Freitag Wysock at jwycock@yahoo.com or 408-287-6979.

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**Gifts to the Bing Overseas Studies Program**

If you would like to join the list of donors below, we offer this coupon as a way to do so. Just clip it out and send it to the address indicated. The Bing Overseas Studies Program places high priority on maximizing the effectiveness of gifts for the benefit of our students’ experiences overseas and pledges to honor the generous spirit behind them.

Name (first, middle, last)
Mailing Address:
Expiration:
Signature:
Mail to: Irene Kennedy, Executive Director, Bing Overseas Studies Program
Box 45, Stanford University
Stanford, CA 94305-3098

Please accept our apologies for any errors in this translated text.
This picture, from the spring of 1972, documents the Vienna campus field trip to Sicily. Italy was preparing for an election. The previous evening the streets had filled with partisan demonstrations—megaphones, people, and signs. Somehow two students in our group made off with one of the banners. Even more surprisingly, we obtained permission from the Austrian Program Director for a group photo behind it.

The Director, Herr Straub, is second from right, up front. Note his jacket, tie, hat and formal Austrian demeanor. Also providing adult supervision was Walter Lohnes, Professor of German, standing skinny guy in the white shirt standing next to Herr Straub, to his right. I can identify by name only a few others. In the fourth row up, left hand in pocket, wearing dark glasses and a Fu-Manchu mustache, just in front of the chief dressed in lederhosen. He is an attorney in Irvine, CA, David Rodríguez, presently a science teacher in the Bay Area, is standing behind the “TR” in “VOTK”.

Unfortunately I cannot remember the full names of the others pictured—including the two students holding the banner, who I suspect were the perpetrators of the heist. I have fond memories of all and their indigence of my relative youth. I was a Freshman—picked to fill a slot at a time when the Vienna campus was having trouble with enrollments. They called me Young Adam and did their best to corrupt me. They encouraged a taste for Kaffee mit Schokolade, Glühwein, and chocolate-covered orange peels. They taught me how to play poker, using Schillings for chips. Devin one memorable late-night game, with the stereo blasting the one-two beat violin coda at the end of Baba O’Reilly, Professor of History Wayne Vucinich (not pictured—he arrived for the summer quarter) suddenly jumped to his feet for a wipe, solo Yugoslavian folk dance, to much applause.

Tempering my degeneracy, they gave me the Stehparterm, the low-priced standing-room spots at the back of the Wiener Staatsoper. We made regular visits to Belvedere to marvel at the gardens and wander the galleries filled with Klmit and Schiele. The Austrian woman who served as the secretary in the office of the Ileinsaal campus—I believe her name was Janni—introduced me to Viennese high-society. She is the tall lady wearing a scarf in the second row, behind the “O”. An Austrian aristocrat, she talked me into accepting tickets to a Viennese ball right as spring quarter ended. Dressed in borrowed tweed and shoes, I stood beside her on the balcony overlook- ing the main floor of the Rathaus. The crowd at the periphery waited patiently as debutantes marched in for presenta- tion, escorts at their side. Music started and a dozen pairs began spinning around the floor. The pairs split and picked new partners from the attendees at the edge. Then they picked new partners. Within minutes the room was filled with swirls of pastel colors to the buoyant strains of the hand drumming of the street bands.

Near the end of the break things changed. She appreciated my hard work and left me to do the landscaping unsupervised. On the last day she even requested my advice on how to maintain the shed down by the dock. We stood watching the sun set over the Wurthensee. It was the signa- ture moment for my Freshman year as I gave her my opinion—auf Deutsch.

Living the Dream

Linda Cook Hickman (’64 A.B. History, ’65 A.M. Education) went to Stanford in Germany in Beutelsbach in Group VII. Here she writes not only of her stay there, but how the decision to go overseas with Stanford changed her life in ways she could not have imagined.

Dreams of travelling and studying in Europe began in German language classes with the beguiling travel posters on the walls at Palo Alto Senior High School. Once at Stanford, as soon as the applica- tions for Stanford Overseas programmes were announced, I applied in my fresh- man year. I still remember vividly seeing my name on the list of students for Group VII posted on a bulletin board outside the Overseas Campus office. Little did I know that it was only the beginning of a dream coming true.

The long flight to Germany (with fueling stopovers required), a winding drive up to Landgut Burg and the initial flurry of contacts. An invitation to go to a German research center whetted my appetite, but the software company (Oracle), but the amazing changes in the IT industry led to a global position, working and travelling in over 30 countries. The most important part of my career came with the historical changes in the European and world landscape, when the Berlin Wall came down. In that summer of 1989, no one could even begin to imag- ine how life would change for millions. It was a privilege to be able to participate in the transformation and with real poetic circumstance to be able to go back to a re-united Germany.

Karen Kramer (A.B. ’67 English, P’84 German Studies), Director of Stanford’s Center in Berlin, recently stayed at the Hotel Panhans in Seemorg, Austria; she was a student at Stanford’s first group there in 1965.

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Initially, my aim was to work in England with the BBC, having attended many classes, but the amazing changes in the IT industry led to a global position, working and travelling in over 30 countries. The most important part of my career came with the historical changes in the European and world landscape, when the Berlin Wall came down. In that summer of 1989, no one could even begin to imagine how life would change for millions. It was a privilege to be able to participate in the transformation and with real poetic circumstance to be able to go back to a re-united Germany.

If one asks, ‘how did your experience in the Overseas Studies programme affect your life?’ I can only respond—it provided the springboard for my life, fulfilled many dreams and it is a constant source of renewal for me to remain connected to Stanford as an alumnus.

Questions about the Bing Overseas Studies Program? See our website http://bing.stanford.edu or contact:
For alumni and friends of Overseas Studies: Irene Kennedy, Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director 650-725-0230; 650-725-0233; hamrdla@stanford.edu For students: Heidi Schuman, Program and Administrative Associate 650-725-0230; hschuman@stanford.edu Editor-in-chief: Bob Hamrdla ’59 650-723-0743; imk@stanford.edu Design: Chris Cutlin, 650-949-3336, www.Visible-Results.com Do you have a story or photo to contribute? Contact Bob Hamrdla at hamrdla@stanford.edu.
Overseas Studies Today

Today, we have ten overseas centers (we don’t call them overseas campuses any more): Oxford, Berlin, Paris, Florence, Moscow, Kyoto, Beijing, Santiago, Brisbane ... It focuses on Iberian Studies, Mediterranean Studies, the new Europe, and relations between Spain and Latin America.

We also run between six and ten seminars every year in places as diverse as Bhutan, Switzerland, Tanzania, Mongolia, and the Baja peninsula. This past fall, one of our seminars took Stanford undergraduates into the outback of Australia with anthropologists Doug and Rebecca Bird to live, hunt, dig for grubs, and share the life of the aboriginal Martu people. The reports back from the students about the intensity of their learning experiences have been just amazing. These are three-week-long, two-unit seminars that take place before the beginning of fall quarter. Students’ response has been overwhelmingly positive to these incredible opportunities to work closely with a faculty member on topics of their specializations in a variety of fascinating locations.

In addition, we have big plans for South Africa. The Overseas Studies Program has run four seminars there, plus a quarter-long seminar focusing on health care and service learning. Tim Stanton, former director of Stanford’s Haas Center, will direct this program again in the spring of 2008 for us. Together with the African Studies Center we have developed a proposal for a full-scale program in Cape Town that will have a strong service-learning component. We are in the midst of looking for funding to get the program started.

In general, the number of students who apply to study abroad is going up, as are applications from faculty to teach in overseas studies. At this point, thirty-eight percent of Stanford students attend one of our overseas centers; forty-three percent enroll in one of our centers or seminars. We would like more students to go and for them to go for a longer period. But it is hard for some majors, especially in engineering and the sciences. There is serious “major creep” in the university, double-majors and increasing major requirements can make it difficult for students in the sciences and even in the humanities to go abroad during their undergraduate years. It is also often difficult for Stanford intercollegiate athletes, some 800 or so of our undergraduate population, to go abroad to one of our centers, though we are working on some innovative ways to make more opportunities available for them to do so. We are pleased that minority students go overseas in roughly the same numbers as they are represented in the overall student population and that very few students report that they don’t go because of financial considerations.

It is worth noting that we are working hard to increase opportunities for overseas internships as a way to attract students to the overseas centers and to deepen their cultural experiences while abroad. The highly successful Krupp Internship Program, run out of our Berlin center, has been in existence for twenty-five years and has given hundreds of Stanford students the opportu-
From today’s perspective, one might well ask why Germany was the target for the first overseas campus and not France, Italy, or England, which were to follow in fairly quick succession. Part of the answer was no doubt Strothmann’s influence and his determined Germanophilia. But the main consideration was the perceived centrality of studying German in those days. Since the men who studied science and engineering—and they were always identified in the documents from that time as “men” — needed German to round out their education, Beutelsbach would serve their needs perfectly. At the same time, it would be worth reiterating that Walker was determined that study abroad at the overseas campuses would meet General Studies requirements, meaning that students in all disciplines and schools would be equally welcome to apply and would “maintain normal progress toward graduation.” By the end of the 1950s, Germany was a very friendly and pro-American country. It was also extremely inexpensive, a fact that would later contribute to the choice as well.

One might also ask—again from our perspective, not from theirs—why a group eventually of eighty Stanford students on top of a rolling hill in the Swabian countryside among all those gorgeous vineyards and beer gardens. There were no German students around; it was a long walk or a ride in a rickety VW bus down the winding road to catch a train to ... to a museum or catch a concert. Local villagers spoke a Swabian dialect difficult for even Germans to understand. On the surface, it seems as if this was in loco parentis with a vengeance: students actually being protected from the culture around them rather than being introduced to it. The answers weren’t there at all. The community to work in German business, cultural, governmental, and social organizations. The program was just renewed by Krupp for an additional six years. We have instituted a strong program of internships in Kyoto.

Bonn by the West German government and received a free rail pass to travel anywhere in Germany he chose. Apparently, he went around the country looking for likely loca- tions for a Stanford campus. The number of facilities that could provide housing, dining, and teaching facilities was not large especially since the recent world war had destroyed many potential sites. Just by chance, he heard about Landgut Burg, a thirty-acre estate with a large manor house at the top of a towering hill overlooking Beutelsbach, Endersbach, Schnait, and other picturesque Swabian villages twelve miles east of Stuttgart. It had previously been the location of a branch of the Goethe Institute, and the facility itself seemed a perfect spot to locate a Stanford “campus,” as they were then called. During the fall of 1957, a team of four Stanford officials returned to Beutelsbach to nail down a deal to lease the facility for Stanford for its first overseas campus. Before the program could open, a small dormitory for men had to be constructed to complete the complex; it became known as Stanford Haus. The larger manor house, Grosses Haus, served as lodging for the women and for the dining facilities, while the so-called Kleines Haus (small house) accommodated the faculty and their families.

In June 1958, sixty-three students from Stanford climbed aboard a chartered prop- eller airplane from San Francisco to Germany, along with President Wallace Sterling, Professor Walker (now designated the first Director of Overseas Campuses), Professor Strothmann, Professor Kurt Steiner from the Department of Political Science, and several other Stanford officials, to inaugurate The size of the group was determined to some extent by the size of the chartered airplane as well as the facilities in Beutelsbach. (Overseas Campuses used charters until 1973.) When the office could not fill the plane, entrepreneurial adminis- trators would sell the extra seats to Stanford faculty and staff! Eventually the planes, by the end 747s, would be flown to major cities in London (for Cliveden) and on to Stuttgart.

Quick History

Like every organization that has managed to survive challenges over time and profit from them, Stanford Overseas Studies has had a fascinating history.2 I won’t try to cover over the entire fifty-year period in equal measure. Instead, I would like to concentrate on two important moments: first, the creation of the program in 1958, and, second, its attempt to “reinvent” itself in 1973.

Periodically the university goes through the process of reviewing undergraduate education. In 1956, one of those cyclical reviews took place, and it emphasized the importance of “General Education” to the development of well-rounded students. Professor Robert Walker of the Department of Political Science was put in charge of the powerful Committee on General Studies and he, along with Professor Friedrich Wilhelm (Willi) Strothmann of the Department of Modern European Languages, worked on the idea of sending Stanford students abroad for the purpose of widening their perspectives on the world and on themselves through coursework in and interaction with a foreign country. The Ford Foundation awarded an exploratory grant of $15,000 to Stanford for setting up the program. That was a lot of money in those days, if one recalls the fact that Stanford’s tuition was 250 dollars a quarter. Walker, it is important to emphasize, was a genu- ine educational visionary, as well as a very effective political inﬂighter at the university. One needed both traits to start a program like Overseas Studies from scratch. During the summer of 1957, Professor Strothmann was invited to a seminar in

2 I want to thank in particular Bob Hamrdla, who has read the manuscript more than once, and provided valuable insights along the way. Thanks, too, to Mag- ge Kumball, Director of Special Collections at Green Library, who helped provide me with the appropriate archival sources for study.
had just begun, but it had not yet really reached the villages of the Rems valley, where the students had host families. Life was not easy for the folks in the region, yet their hospitality was overwhelming. That combination—with the delicious home-cooked meals and Kuchen fresh from the oven—proved magical for thousands of Stanford students.

Beutelsbach was so successful with Stanford students (and faculty) that there was immediate expansion to the gorgeous Villa San Paolo in Fiesole on the outskirts of Florence and to a former monastery in the university in provincial Tours. Eighty students signed on to each campus in the fall of 1960, taking a Curund steamship to Europe. Hamrdla recalls that Walker hosted a faculty-staff cocktail party almost every evening of the nine-day voyage (he should know; he was the bartender). Stanford-in-Austria followed in September 1965 in a portion of the Semmerring hotel, the Panhans, just over fifty miles from Vienna. The students had their own skis and ski lifts provided by the hotel, and apparently the staff polished the students’ shoes left out at night. The new British campus, opened in January 1966, was located at sprawling Harlaxton Manor, near Grantham in Lincolnshire, and was even harder to reach than the Austrian campus. It was twenty-three miles south of Nottingham and the train connections to London, some 110 miles away, were difficult and could be covered by their regular tuition and room and board, and they would continue to get the same financial aid as the students on campus.

Ten-day-long educational field trips every quarter were free as was the transportation to the site. Only the return trip had to be paid by the students. They could go abroad, while graduating on time and still receiving a quality Stanford education. This responded to many worries in those days that European educational institutions were not up to American and particularly Stanford standards. The same kinds of considerations led the university to send Stanford professors to the overseas campuses, instead of taking advantage of local academic talent. We now send Stanford professor to each center every quarter, but local scholars shoulder the bulk of the curriculum. Meanwhile, the university administration was glad to have pressure on campus housing relieved by students going abroad. The formula of overseas studies in


Walker and his colleagues provided a fundamental concept of overseas studies—California with no time limit. The students lived with and socialized in a relaxed Mediterranean environment.

Except for language instruction, Stanford faculty initially taught all the courses at the overseas campus. For many students (and faculty), this was the first real opportunity to get to know each other as people. Over the fifty years of Overseas Studies, we have constantly heard from faculty members that their teaching experience abroad was among the best in their careers. Faculty profited in their own work, as well, something we tend to forget when we talk about Overseas Studies. They were exposed to new stimuli for research and new source materials. The examples are legion. The beloved Stanford anthropologist, George and Louise Spindler, used the Beutelsbach location to test ideas about rural life in Germany. Later, the specialist on social-cultural change, Robert Textor, authored a book on the future of Austria, derived from interviews conducted by himself and his students at the Vienna campus.

Walker and his colleagues provided a fundamental concept of overseas studies—that was to last until today. His was a pioneering educational vision in a number of ways. Students would take courses that would fully apply to their programs back on campus. Texts could be covered by their regular tuition and room and board, and they would continue to get the same financial aid as the students on campus. Ten-day-long educational field trips every quarter were free as was the transportation to the site. Only the return trip had to be paid by the students. They could go abroad, while graduating on time and still receiving a quality Stanford education. This responded to many worries in those days that European educational institutions were not up to American and particularly Stanford standards. The same kinds of considerations led the university to send Stanford professors to the overseas campuses, instead of taking advantage of local academic talent. We now send Stanford professor to each center every quarter, but local scholars shoulder the bulk of the curriculum. Meanwhile, the university administration was glad to have pressure on campus housing relieved by students going abroad. The formula of overseas studies in

Overseas Studies reached the highest level of student participation in its history, the full impact of the late 1960s overseas programs in Nantes, Salamanca, and Hamburg—aimed specifically at study of the languages—were added to the established campuses. Overseas Campuses was a “one-man operation” before the opening of the Florence campus. There were even arguments made at the time that one could study French or Spanish and attend the Florence campus. Instead, Italian and Italian studies were built up on campus to departmental status as an important component of Stanford’s program in the humanities.

At the very same time that Overseas Studies reached the highest level of student participation in its history, the full impact of the late 1960s was being felt on campus. Faculty and students were asking questions about the validity and relative importance of the Overseas Campuses, just as they were asking questions about many fundamental aspects of society and the university. There was a sense on campus that momentous changes were going on in American culture; why go abroad to study another one? The action was at home, not abroad.

Our educational living had come to campus in 1967. Mark Manelli recalled that
the subcommittee that he was “bothered” by the notion that “this was a program in which there has been little innovation, no change made, and comments about falling into positions of defensiveness.”

A political battle was brewing on campus between an old guard, as it was, led by Robert Walker, which defended the system as it was and called for small changes, and a group of younger faculty, which underlined the need for a massive overhaul of Overseas Campuses to meet the needs of the times. A Presidential Commission on Overseas Campuses issued a report in December 1972, critical of the administration of the program for being overly rigid (this meant, pointedly, Walker), and of the content of the program for bearing “little relationship to the site” and “lacking academic coherence.” Professor John Merryman of the Law School, chair of the commission, stated that the central objection of the faculty group was that the campuses had “become enclaves which keep the local culture out.”

“...the world has changed; Stanford has changed; Stanford students have changed,” the report noted. “Since the world cannot be turned back, we are faced with limited alternatives: abolition or renovation.”

11 A young China specialist and professor in the History Department, Mark Mancall, was both an influential member of that commission and, after Robert Walker’s inevitable resignation, the new Director. Mancall immediately went to work to implement a series of rapid-fire changes. The first thing he did was to close down those facilities where Stanford had to pay for a full house of students, even if fewer went. The low numbers of students had gotten so severe that Overseas Campuses had to recruit students from other schools, Mills College in particular. By the mid-1970s, the Tours and Florence programs were moved to facilities that were flexible about the number of students, since they no longer lived together or were housed in the same facility. Beutelsbach, the flagship of the system, was closed down in favor of Berlin, over the protests of many students and faculty. A “Keep Beutelsbach” petilion, signed by the faculty of Stanford in Germany (February 14, 1973), stated, “The report [of the Presidential Commission] says that students should get a real understanding of the host culture. The basis of German culture is rural rather than urban. Most of the great German poets and philosophers have lived and worked in small towns. This is particularly true of Swabia, the home of Schiller, Hölderlein, Hegel and Hesse.” The argument did not capture the day, needless to say, and, after two years of experimenting with students living in the villages below the Burg, Beutelsbach was closed.

Mancall was a proponent of smaller and more flexible programs, tied to major urban areas where the cultural and intellectual action was. He was responsible for renaming the study-abroad operations “centers” instead of campuses as a way to emphasize that students should use Stanford’s centers abroad to explore the surrounding cities and countries, rather than stay on a campus. There was a strong sentiment among the reformers on the home campus to eliminate the image of Stanford “enclaves” abroad. Mancall very much shared the view that the programs were too heavily tied to Western Europe. So he opened interesting and exciting, if not always perfect, opportunities for students to get to know the country, culture, and language the best they could within the limited amount of time available to them.


10 “Study of Education at Stanford” subcommittee report on Overseas Studies, bearing with Robert Walker, February 16, 1969,” Terman Papers, GLSC, Series 3, Box 52, Folder 1. See also Walker Papers, Box 1, Folder 1, p. 2.


14 In 1968, the overseas centers operated at ninety-six percent capacity; by 1972, the figure had fallen to sixty-seven percent. Theresa Johnston, “World Class,” Stanford Magazine (November/December 1996), p. 63.

the programs, subjecting each to sharp and rigorous critique and instituting important improvements in language study and in the shaping of curriculum. Both directors made the development of programs in Moscow and East Asia into high priorities. Nur was above all an innovator, who created the highly successful seminar program and provided committed science students with improved options for serious study abroad. Despite considerable innovation and change over time, it is striking how the centers today—for better and for worse—retain some of the characteristics of the campuses of old. This is less about nostalgia, as Heller once called it, than it is about the structure of a system of overseas education at Stanford that has fundamentally fit the needs of our undergraduates for nearly half a century.16

Students: then and now
As anyone who has been around the university for any length of time knows, students today represent much more diverse backgrounds ethnically and socially than fifty years ago. They are much better traveled and much more worldly. On the other hand, I doubt whether students are better kempt today and neater than they were in the early decades of the program. Overseas Studies just gets fewer complaints about the appearance of students these days than it did fifty years ago, when one notable alumna and donor complained bitterly to sympathetic university officials about men’s beards and their slovenly appearance.17 But we get just as many complaints about excess consumption of alcohol and a proclivity towards late-night partying. There was a lot more worrying about the moral dangers of sexual relations in those days than now. Responding to these complaints, one vice-provost wrote in 1959: “I believe there is some merit to the allegation that too much attention is paid to intellectual ability (in the selection process) and too little to maturity and good citizenship.”18 The same notable visitor to Beutelsbach mentioned above protested to university officials that two girls and two boys went off on motorcycles to Stuttgart, and this—of all things—without a chaperone.19 Actually, in 1970, travel by motorcycles and motor scooters was explicitly banned by Overseas Campuses as a consequence of a series of terrible accidents.

Fifty years ago there were twice as many men as women on campus and Overseas Campuses struggled to keep up a rough gender balance. Today, there are more men than women by 52 to 48 percent among Stanford undergraduates, yet we send a larger percentage of women abroad, 58 percent to 42 percent. This probably relates to the still heavy representation in the sciences and engineering of men and the difficulty that those majors have in attending one of our centers abroad. We also send more juniors abroad than any other class. Fifty years ago there were many more sophomores. In fact, some members of the administration supported the program in part because it was seen as a cure for “sophomore slump.”20 An interesting change that has occurred in the past fifty years is the extent of parental involvement in their children’s university education. We are inundated with calls from parents; they regularly show up at the overseas studies locations; and we have to be firm that parents are not invited on student field trips and for the special cultural events sponsored by the Bings. Some cultures now represented among our student body continue close parent-child educational relationships after high school. Perhaps it is simply the ease of communication and travel and changes in intergenerational behavior that foster continuous communication between student and parents. On campus, students routinely talk to their parents on cell phones between classes, something unthinkable fifty years ago. Some even continue these daily conversations while abroad. E-mail contacts are intense and ongoing. There is no question that students are also under more pressure than those in 1958. The pressures sometimes result in any number of psychological problems: depression, anxiety, and issues of self-esteem. It is possible we called these problems something else then—for example, homesickness. One could argue that the visibility of these problems today, along with the ready availability of psychological counseling, makes them more acceptable and better known. In any case, some twenty to twenty-five percent of Stanford students are under some kind of treatment, most involving medications. This poses real challenges to our Overseas Studies programs, where we have to be ready to help students who need it. Nowhere in the pages of the early history of the program was there any mention of this kind of problem or question. On the other hand, the early history of the program was marred by repeated examples of disciplinary problems. At that time, Overseas Campuses regularly submitted lists of applicants to the Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) and to the Dean of Students for review. Any Honor Code or Fundamental Standard conviction was grounds for keeping a student from going overseas, as was a questionable history with CAPS.

But, interestingly, what one sees now—and saw then—is what Alejandro Martinez, M.D., head of Psychological and Counseling Services at Vaden Health Center, calls an “enormous amount of care and commitment to other students.”21 Especially overseas, I would suggest, our students take care of each other. They look out for one another. And they bond with each other. In the end, I think it is this very human experience of sharing an unusual and culturally charged experience abroad that creates the kinds of deep and lasting friendships that we see among our overseas alumni. Just as Robert Walker noted fifty years ago, the students learn a lot about their own society and about the countries they study when abroad. But they also share an unforgettable experience with each other that they will carry with them through the rest of their lives. It is widely asserted that students point to their time overseas as the highlight of their undergraduate study at Stanford, and the evidence is plentiful that many indeed treasure what they often call a genuinely “life-changing experience.”

17 Sterling Papers, GLSC, Box A29, Folder 22.
18 Frederick Glover, December 9, 1959, Sterling Papers, GLSC, Box A29, Folder 22.
19 Ibid.
20 Robert Hind, April 19, 1963, Sterling Papers, Box A29, Folder 22.
21 Alejandro Martinez, M.D., Talk to the BOSP Directors’ Conference, September 5, 2006.