Director's Letter

The autumn quarter of the academic year is always a special time at Stanford University. In addition to offering the sheer pleasure of the fall in Northern California, autumn brings an opportunity for reflection on what we have achieved, while also giving us a moment to anticipate what lies ahead. This is true for all of us at the Bing Overseas Studies Program office also as new programs and initiatives come online, and as we work to strengthen those already in place.

Reflecting on what has been achieved, our last academic year, 2013-14, saw continued increases in student participation at our Overseas Centers and Overseas Seminars. We opened our first full-quarter summer program in over four decades, in Santiago, Chile. The past year also saw the transition to new leadership at our Centers in Kyoto and Cape Town, and the expansion of collaborations with other Stanford groups involved in international education. The Centers in Berlin and Madrid served as the pilot sites for a new way to review the effectiveness of our overseas programs by hosting onsite visiting faculty review committees conducting intense and focused assessments of the respective programs.

Looking forward, the new academic year brings with it a new, full-quarter summer program next June in Cape Town and the opening of our much-anticipated newest program, with the January 2015 start-date of the Center in Istanbul. With the reopening of our newly remodeled Thomas and Janet Montag Centre for Overseas Studies in Oxford, also in January 2015, the doubling in size of the very successful pilot program in Oaxaca, Mexico, and an increase in the numbers of the oversubscribed Overseas Seminars that we will offer in Summer 2015, BOSP continues its strategy of increasing capacity and opportunities overseas by targeting those areas that Stanford faculty and students have endorsed as vital to the academic and curricular goals of our educational community. With each of these enhancements our hope is to expand the accessibility of BOSP centers and seminars to all students, particularly to those who have difficult schedules or heavy degree requirements in their majors.

We are especially excited about two new initiatives that will open up opportunities for engineering and science majors in general.

Overseas Seminars Offer More Opportunities for Students

Melanie Centeno, Coordinator of BOSP Seminars, manages the details, large and small, of launching and completing BOSP’s array of overseas seminars. Here she brings Abroad’s readers up to date.

Overseas Seminars are three-week, two-unit courses abroad that take place over the summer and provide alternative overseas opportunities for students. The summer of 2014 marked another successful year of Overseas Seminars. Students participated in eight Seminars in Brazil, Ecuador, Ghana, Italy, Netherlands, England and France. In addition to Seminars, we are proud to offer two other “Special Programs”: a Community Health in Oaxaca program and a partnership with the School of Engineering which offers two locations (China and India).

For the summer of 2015, BOSP is focused on expanding the opportunities available to students and will be offering nine Overseas Seminars and two Faculty-Initiated Programs in Mexico. In an effort to enhance the relationship between on-campus learning and on-site field experience BOSP will collaborate with the School of Engineering and the
first is a set of collaborations with the School of Engineering that has produced two concrete results. Partnering with Professor Pamela Hinds and the Technology and Engineering China Study Tour program (TECS), BOSP and TECS developed a program that gives Stanford University engineering students a window to understand technology and engineering in China, and soon expanding to India as well. A second collaboration with Professor Brad Osgood, Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs in the School of Engineering, led to the opening of a select group of advanced engineering courses to BOSP students via the online program of the Stanford Center for Professional Development (SCPD). Next in line for this joint effort is the creation of a new course to be offered to BOSP students at our overseas centers in Spring 2015 on “The Internet in Global Context.” This course is aimed to allow engineering students to fulfill degree requirements while participating in overseas studies.

Both of these programs targeted at engineering students offer excellent models for future developments at BOSP aimed at students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) broadly. An example of this broader outreach to STEM students is an initiative planned for Winter quarter 2016 to offer a course in “Biochemical Principles” suited toward preparation for a newly designed Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). BOSP is currently working with Biology Professor and Senior Associate Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education Liz Hadly on this and other opportunities to explore further prospects for lab research in and around Paris.

This quick sketch of recent BOSP activities reminds me of the immense amount of work that it takes to keep existing programs and centers functioning optimally and of the even greater effort it takes to make new programs successful. The success of BOSP in accomplishing both missions of reanimating existing programs and implementing exciting new opportunities depends on course on the enthusiasm and passion that our students bring to each of the overseas programs. And none of these successes could even begin to be contemplated without the generous and profound commitment of the many faculty who work eagerly to contribute to the tradition of excellence that has characterized BOSP throughout its history at Stanford. I cannot end my letter to you without also pointing to the work of the BOSP staff, who are on call twenty-four/seven to ensure the safety, well-being, and academic success of our students. From dealing with rabies in the Amazon, earthquakes in Chile, ebola virus in West Africa, and the less dramatic but every bit as important everyday challenges that our students face overseas, the BOSP staff ensures that BOSP offers students the magnificent opportunities that have been its hallmark since the beginning.

Ramón Saldívar, Director of the Bing Overseas Studies Program, Photo by L.A. Cicero, Stanford News Service

Ramón Saldívar
Burke Family Director,
Bing Overseas Studies Program
Freeman Spogli Institute to offer specialized programs. The Seminars this year include a mix of entirely new programs, repeat programs, and two courses that have been taught before but will now be facilitated in new locations: Tasmania and Denmark/Sweden. Additional new program locations include Cambodia, Croatia, England/Wales, and Germany. On this page is the list of Seminar titles and the names of the faculty members leading the programs.

The seminars offer academically rigorous, location-based learning. Many of the seminars begin with a pre-seminar course that takes place in Winter or Spring Quarter (depending on the program). The pre-seminar classes serve to introduce students to the culture and topic that they will be studying in depth.

Community Health in Oaxaca requires a course in Spring Quarter in which students will study Oaxacan history, culture, politics, community leadership, and health practices. Students will also look at the health challenges that migrants face in the region. The course will enable students to gain knowledge that will assist them in making connections between their experiences in Oaxaca and their own health-related work back home.

Overseas Seminars were first offered in the summer of 2002 and constitute a key component of the alternatives to full-quarter study. Not only are they shorter—generally students are at the site three weeks—but they also provide a significant set of offerings to make BOSP’s programs accessible to as many students as possible. Overall hundreds of students have taken part in an overseas seminar. Because the number of applicants typically exceeds the number of spaces by significant factors, BOSP is consistently seeking ways to grow these opportunities.
New Summer Quarter, 2014

by Iván Jaksic, Director, Stanford Program in Santiago

The Santiago program inaugurated a new full-summer-quarter session in response to the recommendations of the Study of Undergraduate Education at Stanford University (SUES) in order to help respond to the needs of students who for a variety of reasons cannot attend a study-abroad program during the regular academic year. Students were attracted not only by the opportunity to study with BOSP during the summer, but also by the range of opportunities available to them, from courses taught by leading Chilean professors, to internships, cultural activities, volunteering, and program-sponsored travel around the country.

Course offerings emphasized ecology and biodiversity, Latin American fiction, international relations, the history of Chile, second-year Spanish, and energy management. This latter course was offered for the first time and resulted in two faculty-student joint publications.

Cultural activities included a piano recital by the Czech performer, Lukáš Vondráček, at the elegant Municipal Theater and a visit to the home of Nobel-prize winner Pablo Neruda in Isla Negra. Students enjoyed excursions to national parks in the surroundings of Santiago and visited the North of Chile (La Serena city and the Elqui Valley) to take advantage of the warmer weather in the region as well as the stunning Punta de Choros nature preserve, which has one of the densest concentrations of wildlife in the country.

The Distinguished Speaker Series hosted Antonio Skarmeta, author of many novels but known internationally for the film Il Postino, based on his novel Ardiente Paciencia. Summer-quarter students engaged him in informal conversation after a delightful presentation about his life and career. Four days after his talk at the Center, Skarmeta won the 2014 national literature prize, an award given every four years in the narrative-fiction category.

In an effort to address the complex recent history of Chile, students discussed the book, A Nation of Enemies, by Arturo Valenzuela and Pamela Constable, and visited the National Cemetery and the Museum of Memory and Human Rights. A leading specialist on human-rights memorials, Katherine Hite, the Frederick Ferris Thompson Professor of Political Science at Vassar College, led a visit to the Museum and responded to students’ questions during and after the visit.

While the months of June through August are part of the winter season in the Southern hemisphere, temperatures rarely fall below freezing, and the surrounding Andes mountains offer a great variety of winter sports. We hope that many students will be attracted to this new offering of BOSP.
A New Home for Stanford in Santiago

Santiago Director Iván Jaksic tells Abroad about the new location for the center.

The Santiago Program moved to new facilities in Spring Quarter 2014. After an extensive search involving ten properties, the unanimous choice fell on a large beautiful house on Condell Street, in the heart of the historic Providencia district. In addition to considerations such as access to the main metro line, housing, and a variety of commercial and banking services, BOSP staff took into account the proximity of the Condell house to other academic institutions, green areas, cultural centers, and the historic sixteenth-century city center.

Three groups of Stanford students have now occupied the premises, taking advantage of comfortable classrooms, relaxation areas, and a large backyard. The house is more accessible to Chilean students, allowing for increased contact with the local community. Our talks and events now take place in a pleasant environment that brings back some of the ambiance of the elegant Santiago architecture of the 1930s. Recent student Gloria Chua Jia Min says, “I really loved the Center, with its grand marble stairway, cozy classrooms and common lounge where we would share our experiences about the various adventures we had over the weekend.”

The house was extensively renovated, thus contributing to the revival of the neighborhood. The Condell property is close to some of the main avenues in the city, and yet it has a character of its own. The tree-lined neighborhood houses several beautifully renovated buildings, including historical monuments, and the trendy Barrio Italia. Students have free access to municipal literary cafes and can spend time relaxing in such parks as Balmaceda and Bustamante. The Mapocho River and San Cristóbal Hill are within walking distance of the Center.

Converting the house to up-to-date facilities for educational purposes was a challenge, but many of the issues have been resolved thanks to students’ comments. There is still room to convert some of the space into expanded areas for study, computing, and relaxation. The patio has already been used to invite Chilean students to share an afternoon of conversation and to celebrate a lovely Thanksgiving dinner.

Classes at the Center begin at 9:30 a.m. and end by 7 p.m., giving students a chance to select any course they wish to take without schedule conflicts. The convenient location of the new Center permits outings and excursions throughout the city, usually on Fridays. We are looking forward to introducing our facilities to many more Stanford students!
From Service to Engagement: Why BOSP Cape Town Is talking ‘Community-Engaged Learning’

There is little agreement on the exact meaning of the terms “service-learning”, “community engagement”, “community-engaged learning”, and “engaged scholarship”. As early as 1990 Jane Kendall had identified 140 definitions related to service-learning used only within the English Language. With many commonalities across these terms, differences tend to centre upon emphasis in terms of intellectual or ethical leanings.

Here at BOSP Cape Town we have made a decision to explicitly move away from the term, “Service Learning”, in favour of the term “Community-Engaged Learning”. We are attempting to define a learning activity that—first—can be said to be a collaborative act between students and community-based organisations that meets the goals of the community. Second, this activity must be deliberately organized with explicit links to learning content. Third, there must be an interaction between theory, research and practice. This act cannot be merely welfare, aid, volunteering, helping or doing for. It must be doing with and it must benefit both partners. Ideally, as well as benefiting students’ learning in terms of deepening the content of curriculum and providing professional development, it can have the added benefit of helping students in terms of personal development and the community in terms of human development. In the words of the South African Minister for Science and Technology, Naledi Pandor, we must remember the “inextricable link between human development and intellectual rigour”.

Professor Neives Tapia, Director of the Latin American Centre for Service Learning, has written about the complexities of the word, ‘service’, and the difficulties with that word, especially in North-South community-engagement activities. She explains that in Latin America the word ‘solidarity’ more accurately describes community-university partnerships and that this word has tended to be translated as ‘service’ in North America and Western Europe. In Latin America the term “aprendizaje-servicio solidario” is more commonly used than service-learning. The addition of the term “solidario” (solidarity) functions to highlight the interconnectedness between the two partners in the interaction instead of a paternalistic, one-sided, aid-type of service.

At BOSP Cape Town we are particularly keen to highlight the interdependence between our students and our community partners. We are very conscious that our community members act as partners in educating our students and that students’ community-engagement activities should be designed to enhance their learning.

Maya Yamane, who took the photo above, was placed with the Emergency First Aid Responders where they assisted at emergency scenes in their community before ambulances arrive. She considers the experience with these dedicated volunteers to have been an honor.

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Community-based activities without explicit learning outcomes that are linked to course content and the educational trajectory of our students cannot be deemed community-engaged learning and might be more accurately described as volunteerism. We do not want our students to come here to ‘help’, we want them to come here to LEARN. The word ‘service’ has the danger of misrepresenting the balance in the community-university partnership towards the students’ giving their time and helping the community. However, the balance of benefit is more tilted in the opposite direction as community partners give their time to provide learning opportunities for our students. Acknowledging these benefits forces us to move away from a benevolent discourse towards a democratic discourse. Moving from the word ‘service’ towards ‘engaged learning’ facilitates this shift in discursive practices.

When we speak of engagement we ask our students and community partners to meet each other in a horizontal relationship where each group of individuals brings with it things they know and things they are ignorant about, things they have and things they need, things they are able to do and things they are not able to do, and things they can give and things they receive. No one side of the engagement is too incapable, too disabled, too young, too uneducated, too poor, to be able to contribute something of equal value to the other.

This takes us to a point about poverty. Traditional hierarchical service-heavy engagements assume that the community partners are the ones in poverty and in need. However, the term, engagement, forces us to question our assumptions about poverty. What are the poverties that students bring with them? What are the gaps in their knowledge and experience that the community partners can assist in filling? What are the learning needs of the student and how will these be met by structured engagement with the community partners? Both sides of the partnership have needs and poverties and both can benefit from a mutual and respectful engagement that values, honours and acknowledges the assets that both bring to the partnership.

In summary, at BOSP Cape Town we want to avoid “philanthropic” or “assistance only” versions of service in favour of a “horizontal partnership”. Within this frame of community-engaged learning, students and community members become co-protagonists in an activity that provides a contextualised learning environment for students whilst promoting the community’s ability to meet its goals. After all we are in South Africa, home of Ubuntu (“I am because you are”). Stanford in Cape Town does not offer a volunteer opportunity or a one-sided “picnic to poverty”. The program in Cape Town offers a contextualised learning environment and exposure to educational partners from our diverse communities who can share their life skills and knowledges to support educational and career-development goals—that is, if we choose to engage deeply—rather than only serve.

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Louis Lambiollot photographed students at Parkfields School, Hanover Park, Cape Town, where he participated in BOSP’s community-engaged learning.
### Quarter Programs

“[This Overseas Seminar] opened my eyes in so many different ways and inherently changed me, so that every aspect of my life is changed. I’m not in this world to make money; I’m in this world to make the world a better place and understand humanity.” CAYMAN SIMPSON | Math and Computational Science | participant in the seminar *Evolution of Life in Neotropical Forests of Ecuador*

“Doing research on the education gap between indigenous and non-indigenous students of Australia reignited my interest in education and its disparities. It definitely has pushed me to pursue more opportunities involving education post-Australia and I’m thankful for that.” MAYA FAISON | Human Biology | Australia Program participant

### Seminars

“During my internship at Fujitsu, I applied my engineering background to help develop the next generation of car radar and automatic braking systems. I took the opportunity to network, providing me diverse perspectives from which to grow as a researcher and individual.” VINCENT SPARACIO | Electrical Engineering | Kyoto Program and Internship participant

### Internships

“Taking courses in Cape Town forced me to analyze my own preconceived notions about public service, social justice, and the effects of foreign aid. My professors challenged me to reflect on my own identity as an outsider coming into a new cultural context and think about my “Americanness” as an asset rather than a liability in order to engage with the issues in this country.” MARCUS LEAKS | Psychology | Cape Town Program participant

### Community-Engaged Learning

“By learning about the Oaxacan public health system and the emphasis on prevention, my Stanford peers and I have gained academic and cultural competencies with the health circumstances that Oaxacan migrants experience before they have even immigrated to the United States. Now that is upstream public health!” JUAN REYNOSO | Human Biology | Community Health in Oaxaca participant

### Special Programs

“I left Barcelona incredibly satisfied and proud of everything I’d explored, discovered, pursued, struggled with, and come to love during my time abroad.” KATIE WALKER | Science, Technology and Society | Consortium for Advanced Studies in Barcelona participant

### Consortium Programs
Over the course of the 50-plus years of study abroad at Stanford, programming and advising have changed just like the needs of students. Early on students going overseas were required to go abroad for two quarters; now most students go for one quarter. BOSP now has 11 different quarter-length programs and numerous shorter study-abroad options. With more diverse programming on the way, the question becomes, which program is right for me?

The advising team within BOSP is here to help answer that question as well as many others. Can I do an internship abroad? How does this fit in with my major? What is a tutorial in Oxford? Can I take local university classes? Financially how do I make this feasible? How competitive is the program? These are all relevant questions for which students need an answer—often before they have even applied and been accepted to the program. The platform for answering these questions is also diverse: drop-in advising, one-on-one appointments, peer-to-peer advising, informational group sessions. But sometimes the hardest task is controlling the myths that emerge surrounding study abroad. Any student that says, “I can’t study abroad because I am an Engineering Major” is someone we would like to talk to, and during the course of an advising session we can usually show ways to make it possible and also set out the advantages and benefits of studying abroad.

Student athletes are another special cohort that we would like to work with more closely. Summer study-abroad options are now a possible solution (Cape Town and Santiago) as well as considering studying abroad after their eligibility to continue in their sport lapses. We have had many 5th-year seniors from the football team study abroad and leave directly from their bowl game to their abroad location.

The advising doesn’t stop after admission to a program. We take pride in continuing our contact during the intervening months before the students’ experience abroad, helping them prepare for their abroad location. We are happy to talk about anything from logistical information, to the more important philosophical approach, to being exposed to a different culture, as the last is where the real learning happens. Bringing in past students as part of this orientation is key to helping students prepare, and we have a team of peer advisors who act as mentors in the orientation process. Often insights and personal stories from peers have a greater impact on students than our advising wisdom!

The most impactful advising happens face-to-face and in one-on-one sessions; we firmly believe that is where the best advice is given and taken by the students. The largest challenge on our part is getting students into the office or engaged in a conversation like that. With various different ways to get information most students will peruse the website or get their questions answered via email without ever having to speak personally to an advisor. When students do come in we make sure they benefit from the conversation and leave with specific information. Our intent is that they are left thinking critically about how they are going to approach their abroad experience. This give-and-take in the end will only enhance their experience—the ultimate goal.
BEYOND THE CLASSROOM Students visited a farm in rural Sicily where they spent the afternoon tasting traditional products such as almonds, olive oil and ricotta cheese, produced by a young entrepreneur, a champion of farm-to-table culture, whose guiding philosophy is to live off the richness of the land, to be true to one’s roots, and to bring wealth and good food to the greater community.

CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION Three new classes, one in each quarter, focusing on variegated aspects of Italian design excellence, enable students to understand the myriad reasons Italy is the undisputed leader in the field of industrial design and why the Made in Italy label, whether it be associated with fashion, furniture, cars or food, is always synonymous with the highest level of aesthetics, quality and functionality.

PRIVILEGED ENCOUNTERS Before an opera performance where our attendance was sponsored by the Bing Cultural Fund, students were treated to a behind-the-scenes guided visit of Florence’s new opera house, an impressive post-modern architectural structure in the heart of the city. The theater’s artistic director led students through ample rehearsal and performance spaces, hidden corridors and secret spaces, and dressing rooms, as he spoke of the ambitious plans for the opera house’s future. Students were even able to catch a glimpse of and hear the performers as they were getting ready and warming up before going on stage.

SPEAKING THE LANGUAGE Christopher Middleton (Spring 2014) was awarded third place in the Paul Roberts and Nina Marton Prize for an Essay in Italian, given by Stanford’s Department of French and Italian. Chris worked closely with Program Director, Ermelinda Campani, and Language Instructor, Fiorenza Quercioli, on an essay he had written for his film class. The winning submission was entitled, *Ramona: un esame contemporaneo del concetto di “to-be-looked-at-ness”* (*Ramona: a Contemporary Examination of the Concept of “to-be-looked-at-ness”*). Reflecting on it, Chris stated that working on the essay was one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of his entire time in Florence.

SEMINAR IN FLORENCE This past summer, The Breyer Center for Overseas Studies in Florence had the pleasure of hosting Dean Richard Saller, Vernon R. & Lysbeth Warren Anderson Dean of the School of Humanities & Sciences, and a group of his students for a BOSP Summer Seminar entitled *The Roman Empire: Its Grandeur and its Cruelty*. It was a BOSP first, since seminars are typically held at locations where BOSP centers are not located. The experiment worked beautifully and the students enjoyed attending classes at Palazzo Capponi, as well as many site visits and field trips in both Florence and Rome.
BEYOND THE CLASSROOM  On November 9, Berlin celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Fall of the Wall. It was a wonderfully moving series of events. The installation that held countless mini-celebrations and media documentaries together was a 15-kilometer-long strip of bright white balloon lights, a Lichtgrenze (Light Wall) that zigzagged its way along the route of the old Wall through the inner city (back in the day, the real Wall was built 145 kilometers long around the entire periphery of West—not East—Berlin.) The power of the Lichtgrenze lay in the intense individual and collective remembering taking place along it in hundreds of thousands of individual minds: in the recollections of Berliners of the Wall era (whose impressions of that November weekend are forever vivid but who’ve lost, over time, the feel of blunt there-ness that was the dual society) and in the imagined projections of those who were not yet born or lived elsewhere, trying to conjure a city divided for an entire generation along this line of lights. Sheer “madness,” Wahnsinn, was the word Berliners stammered for weeks and months back then, as it gradually became clear that this city and this country could actually be one place instead of two.

New video  The Center produced a new video highlighting the academic program in Santiago. Local faculty appear in the video speaking about their courses and about the main issues concerning Chilean culture, politics, and economic development. The ten-minute video is available for viewing at the BOSP website, https://undergrad.stanford.edu/programs/bosp/explore/santiago.

Publications  Two Summer-quarter students published articles on renewable energy issues in Chile in collaboration with Cristián Muñoz, an associate professor in Energy Markets and Environmental Policies at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. Muñoz taught the course The Chilean Energy System: 30 Years of Market Reforms for the first time in the Santiago program, in an effort to expand curricular offerings and attract students interested in economics, engineering, and sustainable development.

Top photo: Michael Mezzatesta took this shot of students Conor May and Casey Stewart visiting the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin... “This site definitely made us quite somber.” Bottom photo: A remnant of the real Wall at Topografie des Terrors (Topography of Terror, the grounds of the headquarters of the Gestapo), illuminated in the lights erected to represent it 25 years later.
25 Years Young: Celebrating a Quarter Century of Stanford in Kyoto

Mike Hugh, Director of Stanford’s Program in Kyoto, Japan, tells Abroad and its readers about the Program’s 25th Anniversary.

Established in April, 1990, the Stanford Program in Kyoto will celebrate a landmark achievement in 2015: 25 years of experiential learning for Stanford undergraduates in this incredible city.

The underlying goal of the program has evolved significantly over this time. It was originally designed to train a cadre of engineers and scientists who spoke Japanese and who were adept at navigating the country’s distinctive cultural practices. This focus was in response to continuing anxiety in the U.S. that Japan would soon rival the former’s place as the world’s technology leader. Accordingly, the program had a strong emphasis on the sciences, as denoted in its original title: The Stanford Center for Technology and Innovation (SCTI).

However, over 25 years the world has changed, and so has the purpose of the program. Renamed in 2012 as the “BOSP Stanford Program in Kyoto”, our goal today is to provide students with a transformational experience through deep cultural immersion, allowing them to consider their own lives and actions through a new perspective. The program is now aimed not only at technology and engineering students, but also at liberal arts and humanities majors and everyone in between.

Kyoto is a jewel of a city. Its history is well known and unparalleled in Japan: it was the seat of imperial power for a thousand years, and the city is the birthplace of many of the ancient traditions that make Japanese culture so distinctive. Kyoto retains custodianship of Japanese culture and it has a special place in the hearts of the people of this country.

But there is much more to Kyoto than this: Kyoto is a resolutely dynamic and forward-looking city, and one of Japan’s leading high-tech and design hubs. This is not in spite of its heritage, but because of it. History is not discarded in Kyoto; it is carefully drawn upon to inspire the future. The city’s ancient culture is not viewed as at all distinct from modern innovation; it provides the latter’s very foundation.

Today, Stanford in Kyoto runs a two-quarter academic program, winter

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and spring, with an additional summer internship program. The winter quarter is a relatively new addition to the program, launched in 2012, giving students an opportunity to experience Kyoto’s New Year festivities and festivals, as well as to see the Golden Temple coated in snow. At the start of the spring quarter, the cherry blossoms bloom for two weeks and the city goes outside to marvel and celebrate.

Besides Japanese language courses, the program’s academic curriculum focuses on the role of Japanese religion in society, Japanese popular culture, and Japan’s current challenges in the fields of energy and environment. We will also be adding new courses looking at Japanese design and creativity, as well as innovation in both traditional and modern companies.

For many students, their time in Kyoto culminates in ten weeks interning in a Japanese company or organization. The learning impact on students is profound: they are totally immersed in the culture they have studied in their academic courses, and they learn new technical skills. Their Japanese and inter-cultural fluency improves markedly, as does their sense of personal reliance and self-confidence.

As the director of Stanford in Kyoto, I would like to gratefully acknowledge the many people that have and who continue to contribute to the program in many different ways. First and foremost I would like to thank Helen and Peter Bing for their incredible generosity—of time, energy and resources. I would also like to thank my colleagues in BOSP’s home office for their unswerving support; our visiting and local faculty for their dedication; our alumni in Japan who find incredible internships for our students; and the staff at the Stanford Japan Center for their hard work and for the sheer care they give to our students. Last but by no means least, I would like to thank our students themselves for their contagious enthusiasm and curiosity. Whilst it is right to celebrate the past achievements of the Stanford Program in Kyoto, it is also true to say that we can look forward to its next quarter century with confidence and excitement.
If you are one of the students selected to come to Australia for Stanford’s Program in Australian Coastal Studies, taught every Autumn Quarter, your 12-14 hour flight across the Pacific is just the start of a unique quarter during which you will travel to the rainforests of Tropical Far North Queensland, to the Great Barrier Reef, and to the hustle and bustle of Australia’s largest city, Sydney.

Stanford’s BOSP Australia Program is a travelling quarter of 2,500 kilometres by plane, bus, 4-wheel-drive vehicle and by foot.

The Australia program has just completed its eleventh Autumn Quarter as a partnership between Stanford and the University of Queensland. It is a logistically complex program with many highlights. I had a chance to reflect about this when, at the Bing Dinner this year, I was asked by a student what my favourite part of the program was. I must admit that I paused for a moment as it is quite difficult to nominate a singular element. I remembered greeting the students on Heron Island a few years ago, or spending time with the group in Sydney each year and of all the wonderful students that have come through the program. It actually turns out that my favourite part of the program wasn’t a location or an event. It is seeing a group come together as an extended family. The “cohort” experience of the Australia program is very strong because the groups are together 24/7 for nearly three months as they travel down the Eastern Australian coastline.

If you were to join the Australia term abroad you would arrive into Sydney and be met by the team from the University of Queensland (UQ). The program in Sydney includes Orientation and a course entitled Australian Studies taught by historian Dr. Chris Salisbury. Lectures each morning cover topics such as Australia’s colonial past, its political system, and its cultural diversity. These lessons are then supported with afternoon walking tours of historical significance, a visit to Parliament House, a walk down to the Opera House and the Harbour Bridge.

A 3-hour plane ride has the group disembarking into the tropical temperatures and humidity of Far North Queensland. Terrestrial Ecologist Dr. Claire Baker spends the next few weeks with the students, and during that time the group explore a diverse range of terrestrial ecosystems including the World-Heritage-listed rainforest, outback Australia and eventually the Great Barrier Reef. The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area has the highest diversity of endemic, rare and threatened animal species in Australia and for biology students is a real highlight of the trip.

One of the world’s truly unique wonders awaits the group as they start to Continued on facing page

Amy Ransoboff photographed students doing research and collecting data on Stradbroke Island, Australia, at the south of the Great Barrier Reef.
venture south down Australia’s east coast. Arriving into Gladstone the students board a ferry bound for Heron Island and the Great Barrier Reef. Heron Island is also the location of a University of Queensland research station which is the oldest and largest research facility on the Great Barrier Reef. Heron Island allows the group plenty of space to run experiments, snorkel and study under the watchful eye of Coral Reef Ecologist and Program Coordinator Dr. Selina Ward and Stanford Earth Systems Professor Kevin Arrigo.

Trekking further down the coast towards Brisbane the next location is North Stradbroke Island where UQ Professor Cath Lovelock leads a course in Coastal Marine Systems. Arriving at UQ’s St Lucia campus the group undertake their last course, Fresh Water Resource Management, with Dr. Brian McIntosh and Dr. Karen Benn.

One of the major highlights of the Australia Program is the opportunity to do an individual research project supervised by a UQ Faculty member. The last few weeks are taken up with finalising assessment, research projects and getting ready to go home. The Bing Dinner is the last event and is held at Customs House, a heritage listed building in the heart of Brisbane. Students spend the evening singing, making speeches and saying an appropriate goodbye to their faculty and support staff and most importantly their “family”. Going their separate ways is quite an emotional wrench after nearly three months together.

When I see past students the first words they say to me are “I miss Australia!”, a sentiment I can understand and feel myself when I have been away for a prolonged period. To put this feeling in context I often quote Australian poet Dorothea Mackellar at the Bing Dinner. Mackellar wrote a poem while homesick for regional Australia when visiting England. It is called My Country and talks about the experience of the Australian landscape and how it gets under your skin; I often use parts of this poem to show the students that Australia will always be with them. It is a sentiment 500 Stanford students have felt and one that many more will enjoy in years to come.

My Country
by Dorothea Mackellar, 1904

I love a sunburnt country,
A land of sweeping plains,
Of ragged mountain ranges,
Of droughts and flooding rains.

Core of my heart, my country!
Her pitiless blue sky,
When sick at heart, around us,
We see the cattle die -
But then the grey clouds gather,
And we can bless again
The drumming of an army,
The steady, soaking rain.

An opal-hearted country,
A wilful, lavish land -
All you who have not loved her,
You will not understand -
Though earth holds many splendours,
Wherever I may die,
I know to what brown country
My homing thoughts will fly.

Sometimes a fanciful idea hatches that has legs, and becomes an experience. During the 35th Reunion for the Class of ‘78, a number of people who attended the Stanford Overseas Studies Program in Tours, France discussed a return to visit Tours. A small group of us did just that during the last week of September 2014. John Eaton and his wife, Libby Dame, spearheaded the organization, as they lived in and worked in Tours for a couple of years. Marie Earl and Gretchen Welch (née Gerwe) also helped. Also in attendance were Peter Skinner (Marie’s husband), Larry and Judy Brownstein, Sara Grosvenor and her friend Andy Harris, Mary Palmer, and Lee Peterson. For a real treat, Dominique Vellozzi, who was our French program advisor, joined our group from Paris, where she currently lives. We spent a couple of days visiting Tours and the vicinity, reliving experiences real or imagined.

Just like us, Tours has changed some, but not beyond recognition. Some of our favorite venues remain. Café L'Univers has changed its decors but still sits patrons inside and out. Place Plumereau in old Tours remains surrounded by cafes and diners, including our frequented Café Chaud. Jardins de Prebendes continues to be a nicely manicured park that sits along the route between the former Stanford villa at Rue de la Grandière and the dorms at Sanitas. And yes, even Sanitas still stands. Overseas alumni of a certain vintage will remember Sanitas as the dorm in Tours for foreign students that essentially was a high-rise version of the campus trailers. And finally, just across the street to the left of the train station, the brioche bakery welcomes visitors with its fresh and delicious brioche.

Some of the changes in Tours are very positive. First, getting there is much easier than when we were students. The trip between Tours and Paris is only an hour on the TGV, with some trains requiring a transfer at St. Pierre-des-Corps. A new light rail system

A return to where we began, 13 Rue De La Grandière

Continued on facing page
unifies the city: Rue Nationale with Avenue Grammont, including a stop at Sanitas. A new convention center is located across from the train station. And the city seems to be more alive with entertainment and cafes. It is a city well worth a visit in its own right.

Our class was in Tours during the 1975-76 school year. By then Stanford had moved its program from the large villa at Place Anatole France to a smaller villa at 11-13 Rue de La Grandière. One morning we visited that building. The property has now been divided into two, one a home and the other a law office. The owner of the home kindly opened the doors for us to visit, and let our memories roam. The stereo room, class rooms that we converted to dance areas for our "booms," the stairway to the few sleeping rooms, that small kitchen where we made sandwiches and omelettes, are all recognizable even though converted into very comfortable living spaces.

Afterwards, we continued the trip to visit Vieux Tours, and also the beautiful cruciform Cathédrale Saint-Gatien, Tours' late gothic archbishop’s seat. Built over many years, the structure reflects much French history, a history that includes not only various architectural forms of the building, but also the destruction of part of the statuary program on the façade surrounding the portals that occurred during the French Revolution. The former palace of the archbishop is now the Musée des Beaux Arts, and has a wonderful garden where we had sandwiches.

After lunch we visited a terrific Loire valley winery that John had arranged for us to see, that of Vouvray maker Marc Bredif. On the drive along the way we saw that the hills, opposite the Loire valley flood plains, are punctuated with caves where troglodytes lived. To this day, when I see them I have visions of the Morlocks from the film adaptation of H.G. Wells' The Time Machine. The spirit of those troglodytes, however, would be satisfied knowing some of their former homes have been repurposed as wine caves.

The trip to Tours was a fantastic journey back to a particular point in time. For many of us, Tours, like Stanford, represents a place where we began to explore the world with adult consciousness. On that point, T.S. Eliot says "we shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started, and know the place for the first time." Having visited Tours this year, we find that quote makes perfect sense. If we think of exploration more broadly, not being limited to a particular place, but to a process within ourselves, the same knowledge holds true for us and for the people with whom we have shared time and experience. We had a very tightly knit group of people in the Tours program. And many of us remain close friends. On this trip, it was nice to know the people who were once together in Tours again, in the same place and a different way, for the first time.
Kangaroo friend at Lone Pine Sanctuary, Brisbane Australia. Photo by Sharon Barazani.
Gratitude

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Please accept our apologies for any errors in this list; we will be grateful for your calling them to the attention of Irene Kennedy, Executive Director, imk@stanford.edu.

† deceased
Having just celebrated my 30th reunion, my amazing Stanford experience is very fresh in my mind. And to me, one of the key aspects of that experience was unquestionably the time spent in the overseas programs on the Florence and Cliveden campuses.

As a grateful and engaged BOSP alum, I have remained a strong supporter of the Program, and am currently a member of the BOSP Advisory Council. I am also a proud parent of a Stanford freshman already planning her overseas experience, hoping that her experience will be as pivotal as mine.

It’s remarkable to see how BOSP has grown in its last 50+ years: today there are over 11 centers and programs in places as far-reaching as Cape Town and Kyoto. Also exciting are the new study opportunities including summer seminars, internships, and interdisciplinary partner programs, aimed at reaching those students, namely STEM [Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics] majors and varsity athletes, for whom the expanded departmental requirements and athletic demands make leaving campus difficult. Over 50% of Stanford students currently take advantage of the BOSP Program but the challenge is to increase this percentage even more. If you ask BOSP’s leaders, they will say, why can’t we get to 100%?! Today’s Stanford students live in an unquestionably global world, and the overseas experience is more critical than ever to a student’s future success. To this end, BOSP is striving to expand its alternative programs and identify additional ways to deliver an international experience to an even broader group of students.

Take a look at this student video of the Florence center—a powerful example of how important the overseas experience remains! http://vimeo.com/107072647