University of New South Wales, Australia

1. Describe how participation on this program will contribute to your academic goals. Specifically, how will this study abroad program build upon your education to date and connect to your studies when you return to campus? Please describe the classes you plan to take abroad and how the academic focus of this program relates to your major, minor and/or demonstrated academic interests.

As a student who plans on graduating a year early from DU, it is vital that I take classes within my major to stay on track once I get back from my study abroad. The broad range of classes offered at University of New South Wales makes it the perfect fit for me because it offers classes which are exact matches to some of the business classes offered here at DU. This is one major reason I chose the University of New South Wales over other study abroad programs because not many universities offer management classes that I could take to be on track of my graduation plan once I return to DU in January 2014.

A typical course load at UNSW would include taking three classes and an internship. The three classes I have received approval for and thus hope to take at UNSW are International Human Resource Management Practice (MGMT3702), Managing Organizational Behavior (MGMT1002)-which are two Management Major requirements-and International Business and Multinational Operation (MGMT2101) which is a Management elective. I believe taking MGMT3702 (International Human Resource Management Practice) would enable me to better understand the Australian approach to Human Resource Management, thus enabling me to make comparisons between practices that are used in the US, Australia and my home country Sri Lanka. This would give me the opportunity to analyze and evaluate some of the best techniques used by these three nations and identify which ones would work best under different circumstances. I decided to take MGMT1002 (Managing Organizational Behavior) in UNSW because the course depicts a major focus on organizational structures, role of control, gender and social responsibility, which are some topics that I am passionate about. Taking this class in Australia would enable me to understand the cultural and perceptual differences that exist around the world in relation to these topics. The third class MGMT 2101 (International Business and Multinational Operation) would give me the opportunity to learn more about multinational enterprise and cross-border operations. The focus on international investment and trade would help me obtain a better understanding about why certain companies in different parts of the world choose to operate the way they do. This would better enable me to compare and contrast the characteristics of cross-border operations in the US, Australia and Sri Lanka.

In terms of the internship I hope to take up while at UNSW, I will receive the list of employers after I have been nominated. However, I hope to apply for an internship which would grant me the opportunity to experience Australian culture at the workplace and apply what I learn in the classroom to the real world. I have a great desire and passion for applying what I learn in the classroom to the work environment; hence I believe taking these three classes and an internship would enable me to do so, making my study abroad experience truly unforgettable, enriching and educational.
Essays for CIEE in Istanbul, Turkey

Essay #1

Three years ago, I found a passion for Middle East politics while traveling in Israel. After spending four months in Israel, I struggled to make sense of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and I started trying to piece together an understanding of the broader Middle East. I had a love for writing and an interest in people’s stories and experiences, and I had already considered a career in journalism. My curiosity about the Middle East and international politics gave me direction; in my senior year of high school, I decided to pursue my dream to become an international journalist in the Middle East.

At the University of Denver, I picked areas of study that are related to my passions and dreams. I am currently majoring in International Studies and Journalism Studies with a minor in History. In my classes, I strive to develop as a journalist and gain perspective of pressing global issues and world history. I continue to explore my interest in Middle East culture and politics by taking courses related to the Middle East, such as “Introduction to Middle East/Islamic Politics” and “United States’ Involvement in the Middle East: 1945-Present.”

Studying abroad in Turkey would give me the opportunity to travel a country that is at the crossroads between Europe and Asia. Turkey’s growing regional influence has made it a key actor in problems facing the Middle East today. It has grappled with larger world powers to find a solution to the Iranian nuclear question, it has dealt with the growing number of Syrian refugees along its border, and it played a crucial part in the November ceasefire negotiations between Israel and Hamas. I believe that Turkey and the legacy of
the Ottoman Empire have played a historical part in shaping the Middle East, and I want to study Turkey’s significant role in the direction of Middle East relations.

In Turkey, I could study relevant topics that are not offered at the University of Denver. Courses such as “Turkish Foreign Policy” and “Government and Politics of the Middle East” would give me the chance to examine essential topics through a Turkish perspective. Additionally, courses like “Turkish Culture and History” would enable me to better understand a country that is a significant power in Middle East relations.

By exploring specific topics and issues related to the Middle East and Turkish affairs, my studies in Turkey would be invaluable to the work I do at the University of Denver. I would return to the university for my senior year with a deepened understanding of one of the most complicated and fascinating regions of the world, and my knowledge of Turkish history and culture would give me an edge both in my studies and in my potential career as an international journalist.
1. Describe how participation on this program will contribute to your academic goals. Specifically, how will this study abroad program build upon your education to date and connect to your studies when you return to campus? Please describe the classes you plan to take abroad and how the academic focus of this program relates to your major, minor, and/or demonstrated academic interests.

Thailand

The ISDSI program in Thailand combines my passion for science, social justice, and experiential learning under the umbrella of sustainable development. The courses stress experiential learning to bridge the biological concepts taught in the classroom to their impact on the community.

The bulk of my academic experience is in the areas of microbiology and biochemistry. I work several hours a week on independent research in Blankenship's cell-biology lab where I am working to create recombinant DNA and eventually insert them into flies.

Social justice has been an evolving life-long passion. I have a strong academic and experiential education with interfaith issues and gender, feminism, and LGBTQ rights. I have created numerous videos and presentations on the issues and am looking forward to attending the National Social Justice conference in Philadelphia this February.

The courses and program in Thailand are the next logical step in my scientific and social justice education. Microbiology and chemistry will form the foundation of my study of how the systems of ecology work in the fields, oceans, and forests. Fieldwork will allow me to observe the real world extension of microprocesses to the macro level in three distinct ecosystems; this will allow me to better understand applications of microbiology to sustainable development when I return to my studies at DU.

I am ready to expand my practical and theoretical social justice knowledge to include food justice and environmental justice. These issues are impacting Colorado: six areas have
already been labeled food deserts and lower income neighborhoods suffer from factory pollution. The agro-ecology class in the fields will provide me with valuable insights into community farming and sustainable food practices. It is important to find affordable and environmentally sound ways to develop areas. I will be anxious to share my experiences and knowledge acquired in Thailand both in informal and formal arenas, through conversations, presentations, and volunteer work with local organizations, such as the Growhaus. I would also love to continue my partnership with Redline, a nonprofit in downtown Denver, to explore the possibility of new programming and events related to sustainable development, environmental justice and land rights.

Cultural and value differences can interfere with global social justice projects. Studying abroad is vital to my development as a global citizen who can work effectively on an international level. The Thai foundations and culture class will give me intimate knowledge and perspective of another country to overcome barriers to cross-cultural understanding.

My past studies have been preparing me to enter the field of sustainable development. I want to work in a field where I can apply my knowledge of science in practical ways for the public good. The ISDSI Thailand program is a logical extension of my studies and will help fill a gap in my knowledge and experience. I will return to Denver having rounded out my studies and my new experiences and knowledge will shed new light and perspectives on my future studies and help me meet my personal and professional goals.
As an English minor at DU, I’ve had my fair share of discussions about foils: in literature, a character that contrasts the protagonist to highlight a certain characteristic of that character. This can be true of many contrasts within a story or poem, from subplots to symbols, colors to vowel sounds: the contrasts between characters and situations help us recognize the common truths between them.

I see parts of myself in story characters that are very different from me, from Carroll’s Alice to London’s Buck. These stories, and others, help young adults like me discover who they are and recognize their place in the world. In fact, the world around us, from the cellular dynamics of biology to the graphs and charts that describe our economic behavior, serve as mirrors through which we can see ourselves in a new and different light.

That’s why, after much exploration, I chose a career in media – “the mirror of society.” I hope to pursue a graduate degree in journalism. However, although I love the contemplation behind writing and the rush of breaking a story, I still value well-rounded education that helps me learn about different aspects of myself, which is reflected in my eclectic set of majors. Unfortunately, I can’t take journalism classes at DU – they are for majors only. That’s why I’m interested in pursuing my newly chosen vocation abroad in Hong Kong, where I can take classes such as journalistic ethics, business and financial journalism, media law, internet strategy for news organizations and investigative journalism in a global work.

At DU, I’ve mainly explored journalism hands-on, as the editor of the school paper and through internships at magazines. But I believe that a college education in journalism is valuable to explore the ethical role of the media in society, and to learn legal and technical skills that are essential to good practices. The University of Hong Kong is one of the best universities in Asia, making there no better place to learn from the brightest thinkers in the world. Further, HKU focuses on “whole student education,” making it an excellent fit for my wide variety of interests.

Further, Hong Kong is the financial headquarters for international journalists: each of the four U.S. newspapers (New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post and LA Times) that have
foreign bureaus in Hong Kong. Business journalism is a perfect way to use my economics major as a tool to advance my interest in journalism – and Hong Kong is the place that will set my resume apart.

However, the most important part of this experience will be to immerse myself in the aspect of writing that I value most: contrast. Experiencing Hong Kong’s unique culture will promise to teach me more about myself than about journalism, by showing me how much students across the globe have in common. Thus, traveling to Hong Kong will give me world-class faculty and an invaluable professional environment to build journalistic skills that I can’t pursue in the U.S., but will also help me build on my own dreams and ideals as a human being.