

CLIC's Rice-in-Country Study Abroad Programs Provide Unique Learning Experiences

By Elana Margosis

The Center for Languages and Intercultural Communication recently expanded its Rice-in-Country study abroad program to include Rice-faculty taught courses in Argentina, China, France, Germany, Japan, and Spain. This year, over \$200,000 were available in grants to students looking to study abroad through CLIC, and over sixty students were awarded full and partial scholarships, with an average grant of \$3,000.



Students in Japanese 142 discuss the upcoming Rice-in-Japan

Students who complete the program receive six credits through a combination of coursework, service work, and interaction with local language partners. The credit comes from Rice and is automatically applied to students' transcripts, unlike programs unaffiliated with the university, where credit may not be transferrable. Registrar David Tenney said that the Rice-in-Country credit holds an advantage over other programs' credit because it is run through Rice.

"Sometimes, particularly with language centers and foreign universities, there are some complexities in transferring credit back to Rice. The CLIC program takes away all the complexities. This is a Rice program, administered by Rice in a

foreign country."

-David Tenney

CLIC's programs offer a unique experience that students would be hard-pressed to find elsewhere, according to CLIC director Dr. Rafael Salaberry. Rice professors teach the classes, and students sign a language pledge promising to exclusively speak the language of the host country.

"Rice faculty teach programs in six different countries with the help of local universities. The students we take with us are always immersed in the language, and not every program does this."

-Dr. Rafael Salaberry

While studying abroad, students will also have the opportunity to immerse themselves in meaningful cultural opportunities. Service work will be an integral part of the experience, and several Rice-in-Country programs plan to volunteer in local schools and nursing homes. Students will also be paired with local language partners, students at universities in the host country, to gain a deeper understanding of the culture and language.



Rice students sharing a meal with their host family in Aix-en-Provence, France. (Photo: Linden Shih)

Professor of Japanese, Dr. Naoko Ozaki, who will lead the Rice-in-Japan trip this summer, said that while the students receive credit for second year languages, the immersive experience in the country is more valuable than just taking classes.



Students from the 2015 Rice-in-China program making dumplings with students from Nanjing University

“I do my best to bring culture into the classroom, but it’s better to experience a culture, rather than talk about it.”

-Dr. Naoko Ozaki

While the Argentina, China, France, Germany, and Japan programs replace the second year of the language sequences, the Rice-in-Spain program focuses on professional skills for the medical field, including medical Spanish.

Prof. Victoria Abad, who will lead the trip, said the program is a combination of Rice curriculum and an adaptation of a class for first year medical school students.

“We combine the Rice class Spanish for Medical Purposes (SPAN 321) with an apprenticeship class. Students will be doing hands-on work, shadowing doctors at the university hospital, and doing simulations and workshops in the school of medicine.”

-Prof. Victoria Abad

Freshman Sydney Stocks hopes to improve her medical Spanish enough to volunteer in Houston-area hospitals.

“I think I will speak Spanish so much better by the end of the program. I think it will also give me the skills I need to be able to do meaningful medical volunteer work back in Houston, given the large Spanish speaking population here.”

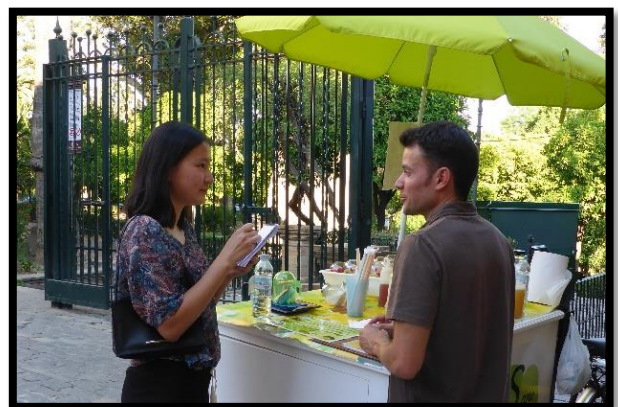
-Sydney Stocks

Over the six-week program, students complete two semesters’ worth of coursework, allowing students to accelerate their language acquisition. Erika Schumaker, a freshman who will travel to Germany with the Rice-in-Germany program, is excited to be able to take upper level courses after just one year of study at Rice.

“I hope to get enough mastery of the language to be able to take classes taught in German that aren’t focused on learning the language. I’m considering taking on the German Studies major, so I want to speed up that process as well.”

-Erika Schumaker

More information on the Rice-in-Country programs is available on the Center for Languages and Intercultural Communication website at clc.rice.edu.



Rice student Kalian Shi collects language data from a vendor in Seville, Spain, in 2015. (Photo: Victoria Abad)