

Summer 2010 Faculty Led Study Abroad
Faculty: Assistant Professor, Diane Guerrazzi

Middle Eastern Media Exchange

Most Americans form perceptions of people in the Middle East based on what they see and hear in the media. This study-abroad program aims at lifting the veil that obscures understanding between the two cultures. SJSU students will study alongside their counterparts who indeed do wear veils, at the all-female campus of Zayed University in Dubai. We intend to have students swap living situations for a complete understanding of each other's worlds.

SJSU students will travel to the United Arab Emirates in late May while Zayed is still in session. Every effort will be made ahead of time to place the Americans with Zayed students' families. During the home-stay, Americans will keep journals and participate in a documentary, keeping pace with their reactions to the foreign culture. They will also interview UAE students and media representatives, assessing their impressions of Americans and US media. Since Dubai is the media hub of the Middle East, it will provide an optimal vantage point from which to study the regulations that governments impose on news outlets. The reciprocal trip will take place in late June/early July, when Zayed students stay with SJSU students' families. SJSU students will serve as hosts, and document the impressions of students from both universities. SJSU students will receive 3 credits under Mass Comm 180, independent study.

This is more than a study of media differences. This is an examination of a cultural divide, perceptions and misperceptions.

It is a rare opportunity for foreigners to be invited to Zayed University. Our contact is Dr. Richard Gross, an American who has taught in Dubai for two years. In addition to teaching, he works as a Middle East correspondent for United Press International and Global Journalist. I also am a working journalist, with 30-years of experience. I currently report for KTVU-TV, and I am using my contacts to arrange for Zayed students to visit Bay Area news outlets.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will gain understanding of Middle Eastern history and culture.
- Students will examine the restrictions under which different media organizations operate, and how those rules may dictate content.
- Students will develop the tools to become critical media consumers.
- Students will explore the traits and aspirations of foreign students whose lives appear much different than their own.
- Students will learn to create a video and Internet documentary on the experience.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria:

- Daily journals on media coverage and personal impressions: 40%
- Video interviews for documentary: 30%
- Final reflection paper on media portrayals and cultural perception: 30%

Itinerary for 28 days (*subject to change*):

DUBAI:

Sat. 5/29: Depart SFO (15 hour flight, time change)
Sun. 5/30: Arrive in Dubai
M. 5/31: Orientation meeting at Zayed University, city tour,
including Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest building
Tu. 6/1: SJSU class, media studies lecture, initial student interviews
W. 6/2: SJSU Class, tour of *Khaleej Times* newspaper
Th. 6/3: SJSU Class, history & culture lecture, visit to market
Fri/Sat: Visit to Jumeriah Beach and Mall of the Emirates, Indoor Ski Slope in
Mall of the Emirates (Slope is open to skiers only, otherwise skiing classes are
required)
Visit to Dubai Mall, the largest mall in the world, huge aquarium
Visit to Al-Nakhla Island and Atlantis Hotel at the tip of this man-built island

(The school week begins on Sunday in Dubai)

Sun. 6/6: Visit to Internet and Media City, in-field media interviews
M. 6/7: SJSU Class, government lecture, student interviews
Tu. 6/8: Water taxi to the Spice Souk and Gold Souk
Wed. 6/9: SJSU Class, visit to Dubai Museum
Th. 6/10: SJSU Class, final student video interviews for Dubai leg of trip,
Fri/ Sat: Overnight desert safari trip, including camel riding
and optional sand surfing. Final Dubai dinner
Sunday 6/13: Depart Dubai/Arrive at SFO

(Hiatus while Zayed students finish their spring semester)

SAN JOSE:

Mon 6/28: Zayed students arrive at SFO, are greeted by host families, settle
into living situations.
Tu. 6/29: Lecture at SJSU: Middle Easterners in the US: Guest speaker from
the Muslim Community Center of the Bay Area. Tour of SJSU
campus and downtown SJ. Visit to Tech Museum.
Interviews with students and speaker.
W. 6/30: Drive to San Francisco (45 min.), Alcatraz tour.
Lunch on Fisherman's Wharf. View Golden Gate Bridge.
Afternoon: Meet with producer at San Francisco office of *Link TV*.
Cross Bay Bridge, watch KTVU *Five O'Clock News* live in studio.
Th. 7/1: Comparative government lecture at SJSU
Meet with SJ government official at City Hall
Ice skating at the Sharks Ice. Picnic dinner, followed by
San Jose Giants baseball game at 6:30.
Fri: 7/2: Morning: Tour of *SJ Mercury News*, meeting with editorial staff
Tour of radio station *KBAY* in downtown SJ, meet with staff
Afternoon: Visit to Santa Cruz beach and Surf Museum.
Dinner and free concert at the Beach Boardwalk
Sat: 7/3 Optional day of rest, worship, reflection.

- Sun: 7/4 Traditional 4th of July Celebration and fireworks at Santa Clara's Central Park
- M. 7/5 Visit San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, Academy of Sciences, Japanese Tea Garden, Cliff House
- Tu. 7/6 Visit Google, Yahoo or Adobe in San Jose
Conduct interviews with students and high-tech professionals
- W. 7/7 Visit Steinbeck Museum in Salinas (town where John Steinbeck grew up), Cannery Row, Monterey Bay Aquarium, and Carmel
- Th. 7/8 Travel to Yosemite (3 hours). Sightsee. Spend night.
- F. 7/9 See more Yosemite sights. Depart mid-afternoon.
- Sat. 7/10 Optional day of rest, worship, reflection.
Those interested: *High School Musical II* at the California Theater in downtown San Jose
- Sun. 7/11 Final trip to San Francisco to see desired sites. Farewell dinner.
- Mon. 7/12 Departure

Cost:

\$2,640

Includes:

- SJSU Tuition
- Lodging (either hotel room or living with families)
- Fees
- Health insurance
- Excursions in Dubai and California
- Farewell dinners in Dubai and California

Does not include: Airfare and most meals

- Approx. airfare, roundtrip SFO to Dubai: \$1400
This is the price your intrepid professor is paying to travel to Dubai in March, but it could be more or less when booked at the optimum time, two months before. You are free to book your flight on your own and use air miles.
- Meals: To be safe, plan on \$200 a week in Dubai, but expect the cost to be less.
From Wikitravel: *Some of the best and cheapest food in the city can be found at its many Indian restaurants. Portions are almost always generous, prices low, and quality excellent. Set meals of rice, fish curry, lentil curry (dhal), peppery soup (rasam), a vegetable side dish and perhaps a small fried fish, served on a large steel tray (thali) with little steel bowls for the accompaniments, can go for as low as Dhs.5. (About \$1.30)*

Deadlines:

Attached application: Early-bird deadline: March 1.

Drop-dead deadline: March 15

Both of the following are included in your overall cost of \$2640, but must be paid by these dates:

Deposit \$500: due March 31. Deposit is not refundable unless the class is cancelled.

Tuition \$750: due May 1st.

Balance due one week before departure to Dubai.