



"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Prof. Margaret Mead, 1947

Dear prospective study-abroad student:

I would like to tell you more about a special study-abroad program with a difference. I'm adding my own personal note, beyond the usual details, because over the last ten years as a faculty leader this program has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my long career. **The Salzburg Academy for Media and Global Change** is a 3-UT-Austin-credit hour (Global Culture Flag) summer opportunity, offered in English, for the student who wants a global perspective--beyond a specialization in any one country. In a sense, the world comes to Salzburg, Austria, as our University of Texas students engage with other participants, visiting media experts, NGO professionals, and faculty from a number of international universities. It's a media literacy program for the global citizen.

Last summer my Salzburg colleagues and I took stock of the program, asking ourselves what keeps bringing us back and why students have found it so life-changing. Of course, the location in Austria offers great natural beauty, and the facility at Schloss Leopoldskron provides a special place apart, where we can think more clearly about important issues. We learn from each other as we engage with a diverse group of highly committed, idealistic, and intellectually curious colleagues. Beyond that, though, we all have become part of a larger network of the **Salzburg Global Seminar**, the host institution that offers the program. UT-Austin's Moody College of Communication is one of the partners with the Seminar, along with Maryland, USC, Miami, Emerson, and select other international universities from the UK, Middle East, China, and Latin America.

Founded in the wake of World War II, the **Salzburg Global Seminar** has become renowned around the world for bringing together emerging and established leaders from every region of the world to broaden thinking, challenge perspectives, encourage collaboration, and build networks that support future cooperation. The ethos of the Seminar is summed up in the quote above from the great anthropologist, and one of the first faculty members, Prof. Margaret Mead. The students accepted into the Academy program become **Seminar Fellows**, members of a special community--both globally and historically--that extends beyond the one-time experience and group connections of a single study-abroad course, no matter how excellent its quality.

I include below just a few testimonial comments from the UT-Austin students who have participated in the Academy in the last two years. Whether you are a student in the Moody College or not, I encourage you to take a look at the information provided about the program on our website:

<https://moody.utexas.edu/students/international/salzburg-academy-media-global-change>. And feel free to email me with further questions: steve.reese@utexas.edu.

Good luck with your study abroad experience, wherever it may take you, and best wishes,

Stephen D. Reese, Ph.D., Jesse H. Jones Professor of Journalism

Allison Ainsworth: *"The three weeks I spent attending the Salzburg Global Seminar were truly life changing. Hearing the stories and perspectives of so many students made every day worth showing up to class; however, being given the opportunity to witness how truly similar we all are will impact me forever...I look forward to sharing the testimonies I heard and working with people internationally to create a more unified, and less extreme, world."*

Ben Horton: *"While reflecting on the past three weeks at the Salzburg Global Seminar, I keep thinking about how I could possibly explain this experience to my friends and family. Calling it a study abroad program would be an injustice to the experience--the Academy cannot be equated to a friend's semester in Barcelona. It is impossible to put into words the relationships that have been built with both my peers and professors from around the world or to explain the level of creativity, brilliance, and mindfulness that culminates in Schloss Leopoldskron every year... the Academy has the ability to facilitate conversations and relationships that would not be possible elsewhere."*

Sierra Doll: *"We are more similar than we think. Through the human library and discussion, the academy taught me that even though people live in all different corners of the world, we are all fighting our own battles and are working toward fulfilling our desires. We should never make assumptions about others based on the way they look, their religion, or where they are from. You truly cannot judge a book by its cover..."*

Jane Butler: *"The Salzburg Academy on Media and Global Change changed my life in many ways. Being a part of an academy that welcomed students and professors from across the globe challenged me in areas I never knew existed."*

JD Alexander: *"Salzburg has given me a very small yet invaluable taste of what it means to be a global citizen. I have been inspired to partake in something so much greater... in something universal. For this reason, the greatest thing I have learned is a global perspective that is based on care, understanding, and love. I am beyond grateful for the opportunity I had to be a part of the Salzburg Academy on Media and Global Change. It has been nothing short of inspirational and goes above and beyond any classroom experience".*

Sarah Starr: *"I never expected Salzburg to change my life. I figured I would make a few friends, explore the city, and then head home...I could not have been more wrong. Over the course of the three weeks, I made more connections with people than I thought possible, I learned about my country as well as parts of the world that I had never heard of before, and I participated in something that I believe was truly bigger than myself."*

Catherine Vuyosevich: *"I believe that I have become more of a world citizen due to the fact that I now know people from around the world. These people were not only extremely intelligent, but also just normal college students. This program has helped me break down what I originally thought of as just different parts of the world, and changed my perceptions to realize that people are just people no matter where on the globe they are from."*

Ashley Horton: *"The first thing I learned was that getting out of your comfort zone is the best way to breed creativity. In both the group projects and also my solo studies, I found that being immersed in an environment other than the place I call home did wonders for the work I was able to produce. The second and probably most salient thing I learned at the Academy was that there is strength in numbers. If you can collect enough voices, you can truly influence*

people to make action.”

Katie Keenan: *“I truly enjoyed the experience and felt that I gained a lot of knowledge and understanding from people who have different backgrounds and cultures...I feel privileged to know that I was a part of creating something that could potentially make the world a better place.”*

Rachel Lew: *“The Salzburg Academy emphasized that global change starts within our own communities, and we are capable of starting the change wherever we live. I cannot fix the world’s problems overnight, but any action that I take will be better than having done nothing at all. Two problems that I consider especially pressing are human trafficking and domestic violence, and I know that there are organizations in Austin that address these problems. I plan to research ways to get involved and help put a stop to these crimes.”*

Paige Von Sprecken: *“Being a participant in the Salzburg Academy on Media and Global Change made me acutely aware of how the media shape and frame my opinions and ideas. Because of the diverse group of students and faculty, I was able to explore different perspectives and create new opinions for myself. The Academy has changed my life for the better and has rekindled my desire to make the world a better place. We were all given the tools to make change during those three weeks, and now it is up to us to put them into action.”*

Kristi Kamesch: *“A particularly impactful day was our trip to the Mauthausen Concentration Camp. I grew up reading novels about WW2 and the Holocaust, and I took classes throughout my education regarding the subject. However, the documentary we saw the night before and the visit to the camp made me imagine the people standing where I stood, in the barracks, in the cemeteries, outside the gas chamber...The Academy imparted perspectives and tools for communication that I will use in all of my professional, academic, and personal relationships. I appreciate the opportunity I was given to work with world-class faculty, and mingle with students from nearly every continent.”*

Sarah Paravesch: *“Now more than ever, media literacy and civic engagement is incredibly important. People need to understand that each media outlet and each story is framed to invoke a specific reaction, and it’s crucial to know that there will always be another side to the story. Unfortunately, the other side may not be able to share their story.”*

Daniel Vazquez: *“I truly believe that this academy has without a doubt been the most valuable experience of my entire academic career thus far. The most impactful aspect was my newfound understanding of the fact that regardless of our race, country of origin, or cultural background, we all have an innate desire to work together to solve common problems.”*