Accounting’s Future, Present, and Past
Winter 2014 Study Abroad Trip to NYC, London, and Florence

Purpose of the Trip

The intent of this 3-credit course was for a group of Accounting majors to learn about upcoming changes to accounting regulations, the history of accounting, and ultimately to expand our networks by visiting places that play or have played a significant role in the public accounting profession.

Over a span of two and a half weeks in January 2014, our class of 17 students had over 18 professional visits to Big Four firms New York and London as well as organizations such as the Federal Accounting Standards Board (FASB), the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), and the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW). Whilst in Italy, we traveled outside of Florence to a small town called Sansepolcro where the father of double-entry bookkeeping was born. We also took a day trip to Venice. At each location we had down time to visit historical sites such as the Tower of London and the Basilica di Santa Croce where Galileo and Leonardo Da Vinci are buried. When the Spring semester started, we took trips to D.C. to visit the SEC, Center for Audit Quality (CAQ), and the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB).

Learning Outcome

Professionally:

- During recent and upcoming interviews with Accounting firms, I can knowledgeably talk about them and impress recruiters because of the series of quizzes we had to take on PowerPoints we took turns creating regarding the places we visited.

- Knowing about the origins of double-entry bookkeeping makes for excellent conversation during professional dinners or interviews.

- Recruiters, employees, and especially University of Maryland Alumni, were very eager to give us their business cards so that we could expand our network and establish helpful connections.

- I am able to stimulate a more intellectual conversation during interviews about upcoming changes and issues in the Accounting profession, including the ongoing issue revolving around Leases. I can also discuss how Sarbanes-Oxley has changed the Accounting profession over the past decade because we heard personal anecdotes of how it affected people’s careers.

Personally:

- This was my first time going to Europe and a place where the majority of people do not speak English. It was definitely a learning experience when we befriended strangers in London and ordered food at places where waiters mainly spoke Italian.

- I made a group of new friends who are highly motivated and taking all the same classes as I am so I have people to study with. When you are around the same group of people for two and a half weeks 24/7, lasting memories and friendships are made.

- Going to London sparked a new life goal of mine: I want my career to work in London for at least a or to even move there permanently. While London is still a busy city, it is far less hectic than the New York lifestyle; shops will close down early so employees can relax and one of the recruiters showed up in jeans and a hoodie.

- This trip has taught me to open myself up to new opportunities and be more adventurous.

Thanks to Dr. James McKinney for organizing this trip and giving me the opportunity be a part of this unforgettable experience.