

John Boccacino:

Hello and welcome back to the 'Cuse Conversations podcast. I'm John Boccacino, senior internal communications specialist at Syracuse University.

Nicole Collins:

We are seeing a shift to more students going in the fall than in recent years. We think that's been in large part due to success and students realizing the amazing opportunities that are in the fall versus the spring. As far as finances go, fall is absolutely the best time to study abroad. We have great scholarship opportunities available for students, both need-based and merit-based for the fall semester that we do not have in the spring, simply because we have more flexibility in the fall, there's less demand in the fall, which allows for us to be more flexible with finances.

John Boccacino:

Well, as part of Syracuse University's academic strategic plan, the university is encouraging undergraduate students to participate in a study abroad or a study away experience before they graduate with their degrees. Now, the university has an outstanding history of offering students a chance to explore the world through one of its Syracuse Abroad centers. And on this episode of the 'Cuse Conversations Podcast, we are going to explore and highlight the many benefits of studying abroad during the fall semester. This episode is going to feature two great guests from our campus community. The first is Nicole Collins, director of Strategic Partnerships and Outreach with Syracuse Abroad, who will explain why from an increased access to opportunities and increased access to financial aid and more flexibility with its programs, the fall is really the ideal time to study abroad. We're also going to hear from a talented senior, Sophia Moore, who did a transformative fall 2023 Syracuse Abroad experience at the Santiago Center for Syracuse. But let's start off with Nicole. Nicole, thanks for making the time to join us.

Nicole Collins:

Yeah, thank you. I'm thrilled to talk about study abroad today.

John Boccacino:

From your perspective, how have you seen this whole push for studying abroad kind of grow and expand over the years?

Nicole Collins:

I studied abroad more years ago than I would like to acknowledge, but back when I studied abroad, it was more of an abnormal thing to do. Now we're seeing really a drive from parents, from students, from university partners all over the place that we really want to see our students go abroad. It gives you an edge in your future career. It's a transformational experience we hear over and over again, and so we're thrilled to be in a place where most students come into Syracuse University expecting to study abroad, and it's just a question of where and when they'll go.

John Boccacino:

And how great is it to know, I mentioned earlier the strategic plan, but a key tenant of that plan is offering and, not only offering, but encouraging our students to take advantage. What does that say about how the university values and cherishes that holistic development piece through studying abroad?

Nicole Collins:

Absolutely. That's actually why I'm here at Syracuse. I am thrilled to be at a university that really truly values study abroad. We have one of the longest standing study abroad programs in the country. We are thrilled to have Syracuse centers spread out across Europe and in South America. It's such a unique experience for Syracuse students to be at a university where we not only talk about study abroad, but have our own centers with our own faculty that are meeting the specific needs of our students all over the world. It's an amazing opportunity for Syracuse students, one that they take advantage of while they're here, and hopefully even more will do so in the future.

John Boccacino:

There's over a hundred programs in 60 locations around the world, so really it's something for everybody no matter where you want to go. What do you say is when it comes to the development of a student, just how important is getting away from campus and experiencing a new culture to fueling that development of individuals that we create here on campus?

Nicole Collins:

I believe it is a critical part of forming not just your own personal growth, but your professional development, your opportunities for the future. The number one thing that we hear from students who've studied abroad over and over again is that it was a life-changing experience. That's quite a trope, but it exists for a reason. Students get the opportunity to gain intercultural skills that follow them for the rest of their life. It awakens a better understanding of the world around them. It gives you language skills and the ability to adapt to unexpected surroundings. Most importantly, I think for a lot of our students at this time in their career, it gives you amazing opportunities to go into and launch an amazing career with lifelong potential for global connection. We have amazing opportunities at each of our centers that benefit different types of students in very unique ways. Syracuse University has one of the broadest and most extensive global networks that I've ever had the opportunity to witness, and we have an amazing ability to leverage that network to benefit students in ways that I never thought possible before coming to Syracuse.

John Boccacino:

What percentage of our student population participates in a study abroad experience?

Nicole Collins:

About 55% of our students currently participate in a study abroad experience. We also have students who take advantage of some of our study away locations, which are amazing, and again, we're seeing that number increasing really by the year as students realize the amazing depth of opportunities. For students, for example, that have a hard time studying abroad during a semester, we have summer programs. We have short-term faculty-led programs that they can take advantage of during the year. We have world partner programs that are all over different parts of the globe. We have our center in Santiago. If you have a difficult major, I guarantee that we have a program where we can make it work one way or the other. It may require some planning, it may require talking to your academic advisor, but we are in a unique position at Syracuse that you absolutely can and should study abroad, and we're seeing that reflected in the numbers.

John Boccacino:

Have we seen a spike in fall participation?

Nicole Collins:

That's a good question. We are seeing a shift to more students going in the fall than in recent years. We think that's been in large part due to success and students realizing the amazing opportunities that are in

the fall versus the spring. We have some fall-specific programs that run such as, for example, our pre-health program in Madrid where we offer difficult to get courses abroad like o-chem one and molecular and cellular biology. Those are Syracuse courses that students don't have to worry about them transferring back, and if they go to Madrid in the fall, they can meet critical course requirements, get ahead for their graduation requirements and spend a semester in Madrid. We're seeing a lot of success in programs like that that are specific to certain majors and pre-health students. We also have some great programs that run in the fall that are picking up quite a bit of steam.

Nicole Collins:

One of my favorites, they're all my favorite, but one of my favorites is Central Europe. It's a fall only program where students are based in Wroclaw, Poland, but they're actually traveling all over Western Europe. They're visiting major urban sites, major historical sites, and really getting into the nitty-gritty of borders of identity of some really critical, big questions for society right now. And what students are finding is that it offers amazing opportunities to dive into their own personal interests and gain real-world skills. One of the opportunities for Central Europe students is that they are part of Urban Labs, which is a published website where students do what we call living research, and they look at different topics across their areas of travel for the semester, and at the end of the semester, they have published pieces on urban labs related to very strong, interesting topics in their areas of interest, in their areas of study, so that when they graduate and when they go to look for a job, they have actual publications, actual writing skills, and really interesting critical topics that they have grappled with in a public forum in a really unique setting.

John Boccacino:

What are some other reasons you feel the fall is the perfect time for our students to get out there, go see the world and do one of these study abroad experiences?

Nicole Collins:

One of the highlights that I think students don't often think of are some of the actual events that happen in the fall in different parts of the world that do not happen at other times of the year. So one of the things I hear from students who want to go to Florence is that they're really excited about the food, as they should be. The food in Florence is amazing. In the fall, that is when a lot of the food related events are happening. There are local wine festivals, grape harvesting, wine harvesting, all that fun stuff. Truffle hunting happens in the fall, mushroom foraging happens in the fall. Olive oil harvesting happens in the fall. These are all things that are happening right in Tuscany, right in the heart of where our study abroad experience takes place.

Nicole Collins:

Strasbourg is a great location. Not only do they have fantastic fall opportunities and you're just a skip hop and a jump away from Oktoberfest, but you also have these really amazing world-renowned Christmas markets that happen in December while students are there. It is a tourist attraction across Europe, across the globe, and students have a front seat to all of the action and the opportunity to showcase that to parents who might want to visit at the end of the semester, to families, and just to really experience that local culture from the firsthand perspective.

John Boccacino:

When it comes to the academic side of things, what is it about scholarship and financial aid, because we all know how important of a role that plays, how does the university help to maybe make it more affordable to study abroad during the fall?

Nicole Collins:

As far as finances go, fall is absolutely the best time to study abroad. We have location grants right now for fall 2025, for example, \$2,000 per semester. It is not need-based, it is not merit-based. It is just automatic for any students who apply and are accepted to Central Europe and Santiago. So that's a good example of funding that is just automatically available for students who want to go to those two programs in the fall. But outside of Santiago and Central Europe, we have great scholarship opportunities available for students, both need-based and merit-based for the fall semester that we do not have in the spring, simply because we have more flexibility in the fall. There's less demand in the fall, which allows for us to be more flexible with finances. I would say to any student who has any concerns about finances that taking a close look at the fall is worth doing.

John Boccacino:

But the flexibility, go a little more in depth into what our academic offerings and what our program centers do to really meet the students where they are with that added flexibility in the fall.

Nicole Collins:

One of the great things about the fall is that we offer many of the same academic opportunities, the same courses, lots of options for students, again, from all different curricular backgrounds, all different majors. However, we have a higher likelihood that you will get the courses that you need, the courses that you're interested in, the housing that you want, and the location that you want in the fall compared to the spring. This is part of the reason we're seeing this shift to the fall is that students have realized that they can access opportunities. For example, in Madrid we have this really great signature seminar called Marine Ecology of the Mediterranean, where students in the weeks leading up to the start of the program travel with Dr. Monica Perez and they go to different locations along the coast in the Mediterranean. It is an amazing award-winning opportunity. Students simply cannot say enough good things about it, and the fall is the perfect time to go. You've got the great weather, you've got an amazing location, and we are more likely to be involved in those types of opportunities than you are in the spring.

John Boccacino:

I want to shine a light. Give us some examples of maybe some of the more under-the-radar fall centers for Syracuse Abroad, and maybe places that students should consider beyond just London, Madrid, Strasbourg, or Florence.

Nicole Collins:

I'm so glad you asked that question. Indeed, I like all of our centers equally, but I will say that as a student, you have an amazing opportunity that you will never again have in your life to go somewhere that is not easy to access, to access some of the amazing opportunities that you uniquely have as a Syracuse student. So you can absolutely go to some of the major cities in Europe. You can go to Florence, you can go to London, you can go to Madrid. Those are all amazing options. What I will say is that if it was me and I could go back in time again, I would again go to locations that are not as easy to access later in my life. One of my favorite programs, again, I love them all, is our Santiago program. It is amazing. Our center director there, Dr. Mauricio Paredes, is absolutely unbelievable.

Nicole Collins:

Him and his staff provide unbelievable support for students, and the program includes a trip to Buenos Aires that you can sign up for. That includes not just seeing the sights of Buenos Aires, but you meet community leaders, you are engaged in the local community. You get to see things and access areas that you will never again have access to as a Syracuse student. Within Santiago, they also visit Patagonia,

which again, I did all of my study abroad in Central and South America. I still have never made it to Patagonia. It's difficult to get to, but as a student in Santiago, you can access so much of South America and see so much of this amazing piece of the world that you will never again have as easy access to unless you choose to live abroad.

Nicole Collins:

I will also say that for future career opportunities, many employers hear from students that they did kind of the "typical experience" at a major hub in Europe, and again, that is the best option for a lot of students. But if you were looking for something to set you apart from others in your job search, in your career, going to Santiago or Central Europe or Strasbourg is an amazing way to boost your resume and give you something to talk about. In Santiago, for example, you have the opportunity to attend a local university, learn Spanish, take an internship, work at an internship. And imagine going in the fall to Santiago and by the spring when you are applying for your summer internships for the summer between your junior and senior year, and you can say, "I was in Santiago. I learned Spanish, I immersed myself in a culture. I went to two of the major economic hubs in South America, in the global south, and I can now speak in an articulate, educated way about this different part of the world that your company or your area may not know as much about." That's powerful.

Nicole Collins:

Another amazing opportunity in the fall is for students to go to Strasbourg and take advantage of the wonderful connections with the Council of Europe that we hold. Syracuse University holds an exclusive partnership with the Council of Europe. We are the only US institution that allows student internships within the Council of Europe, and those are amazing opportunities to work across different sectors within a major global player in Europe. We also have exclusive opportunities for students to serve at the World Forum for Democracy, which is hosted in Strasbourg every fall. Our students have the opportunity to participate as student repertoires and at the World Forum for Democracy where diplomats and government officials and non-government officials are convening from all over the world to talk about major global issues related to democracy and peace in the world.

Nicole Collins:

Our students are serving as student repertoires and reporting back to the Council of Europe, moderating sessions, and then going back to the Council of Europe and making recommendations for what they believe are the front-runners for the best topics at the World Forum for Democracy. I do not know of any other study abroad experience that provides an opportunity that is that well-connected and that amazing for students. And again, imagine going to your employer, so if you go in the fall, and then when you go to look for a job or look for an internship, imagine telling your future employer that I served as a student repertoire at the World Forum for Democracy and reported out to global leaders from across Europe on what I believe are some of the best practices happening for democracy in the world.

John Boccacino:

And I know we'll hear from Sophia Moore coming up later on, but she had such great things to say about host families and them acclimating themselves to the culture, pointing them in the right direction. I feel like, Nicole, that's also one of the parts I want to give you a chance to elaborate on. Just the benefit of you can choose your own adventure with a lot of these abroad locations, and having a host family is such a great way to indoctrinate yourself to the culture.

Nicole Collins:

It really is. I will say, I studied abroad many years ago and I stayed with a homestay family in Costa Rica and I am still in touch with them today. I never imagined as a student that that would be my favorite part of my study abroad experience, but it absolutely was. It gave me the opportunity to know a local family, experience local culture, the local food, the language. Everything about my experience was just that much better because I stayed with a homestay family. One of the concerns we hear from students over and over again is that they really want their independence, and that is why they do not want to stay with a homestay family.

Nicole Collins:

I would say to those students, please don't think that you will not have your independence if you stay with a homestay family. Our homestay families are there to make sure that you have an amazing experience, not to find out what time you're coming home at night, not to keep an eye on you. They know that you are an adult, and they are just excited to have you there. You are able to proceed as you normally would, but you have all the added benefits of having home-cooked meals and someone available to talk to you, and the, again, amazing opportunities to learn more about where you are and really embed yourself in the culture.

John Boccacino:

Are there any other of those misconceived thoughts about the abroad experience that you'd like to dispel here for our audience?

Nicole Collins:

I would say one of the things that students are most excited about when they study abroad is traveling on the weekends, and that is 100% an amazing experience and you should take advantage of being in amazing locations where you can travel. I will also say, our centers and all of the programs that we approve through World Partners provide amazing opportunities in your local location to really engage with your community, to see new and exciting things, and to experience the city where you are. The number one regret that we typically hear from students is that they didn't do more in the city where they chose to study. So I would say, of course travel. You should of course see the part of the world that you are in while you were there, but I would encourage students to take some time to enjoy where you are as well.

Nicole Collins:

Experience the local food, make yourself a local at a coffee shop. Go see not just the main sites, but go to the local festivals. Take advantage of the opportunities that your center is offering and go to a chocolate tasting or a pasta making session, or go with London to the theater and on the way, learn about the history of the city. These again are opportunities that you will never have again, and it's so easy to take them for granted when you're a student, but trust us from two people who've done this and would love to do it again, take advantage of what you have. You will never have this opportunity again. So enjoy where you are.

John Boccacino:

You will never get a chance to take three plus months off to go study and immerse yourself in another culture, another city, another continent, and it's not too late for our students. So Nicole, in closing, I kind of want to make a plug. With March 15th being the registration deadline for the fall 2025 semester, what do interested students need to do if they want to check out and learn more about the study abroad experiences?

Nicole Collins:

So the number one step I would say is to visit our website. Check out the Syracuse Abroad website. On that website, you'll find information for a couple of concrete steps that you can take. The first is to start an application to a program. If you've heard something today that you're excited about, if you have a particular course you're interested in, if you know where you want to go and when you want to go, and it should be the fall, then I encourage you to start an application today. You can also schedule an appointment to meet with one of our advisors. We have advisors on campus who are knowledgeable about all of our programs and are here just to help you decide where to go, how to make it work, what you need to do, and navigate all of the next steps. We have an office in Bird Library that you can stop into during our office hours and talk to someone in person.

Nicole Collins:

And the third thing I would say is feel free to reach out to one of our global ambassadors. On our website, we have a list of students, Syracuse students who studied abroad previously who are there to talk to you about what their experience was like. You don't have to take it from me, anything about these programs. You can talk to them, find out what benefited them. You can search for someone from your major, from your academic area, someone who went on the program you're interested in, and they are happy to share with you their experiences. Finally, I would just encourage you to think outside the box. Take a look at the website, but also think about is there a particular course that looks really exciting to you? And then look at the possibilities around that. It doesn't have to be a perfect fit, it doesn't have to be the ideal situation. I always tell students, there are no bad options available to you. You cannot pick wrong, so just go for it. Take a look at our website. We are here to talk to you, and come see us.

John Boccacino:

So I highly recommend going to [suabroad.syr.edu](http://suabroad.syr.edu) to learn how to tailor-make and customize your Syracuse Abroad experience, especially focusing on the opportunities available in that fall semester. I also can't thank enough, Nicole Collins, our director of strategic partnerships and outreach with Syracuse Abroad. Nicole, thanks for sharing your insights today.

Nicole Collins:

Thank you, John. I appreciate it.

Sophia Moore:

I kind of wanted a different perspective than a Eurocentric one. I figured that I would have an opportunity at some point in my life to be able to travel to Europe, but to travel to South America, I felt like that was a little bit rarer of an opportunity, and I really wanted the chance to immerse myself in a culture that I was completely unfamiliar with in a country that I was completely unfamiliar with, with the safety net of doing it through Syracuse Abroad. And I'm so glad that I made that decision.

John Boccacino:

Our next guest is senior Sophia Moore, who is currently pursuing bachelor's degrees in both television, radio, and film in the SI Newhouse School of Public Communications, and also sociology in the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. Moore enjoyed a transformative semester abroad at the Syracuse Santiago Center in the fall of 2023, and she's kind enough to join us here on the podcast to reflect on how her time in Chile changed her life. What was your motivation to go to Santiago?

Sophia Moore:

I was in Santiago a year ago in fall 2023 at the Syracuse Santiago Center, which was a decision that I made because I kind of wanted a different perspective than a Eurocentric one. I figured that I would have an opportunity at some point in my life to be able to travel to Europe, but to travel to South America, I felt like that was a little bit rarer of an opportunity, and I really wanted the chance to immerse myself in a culture that I was completely unfamiliar with in a country that I was completely unfamiliar with, with the sort of safety net of doing it through Syracuse Abroad. And I'm so glad that I made that decision because Mauricio Paredes, who's the program director of Santiago, he and Paula Lopehandia, who's the co-director, they are just so incredible. And if I could go back and do it again, I would do it just to be under their care because they rock. Chile's awesome too, of course, but it really came down to the fact that I wanted a non-European centric study abroad experience.

John Boccacino:

What was your living situation like in Santiago?

Sophia Moore:

I was living with a host family, so I had a host mom, Marisa. She's been with the program, the Santiago program for a long time, and I was living with her and then her daughter Katy, who herself had two daughters, so it was four, myself and then three generations of this family living in one house in La Reina, which is a suburb of Santiago. And I loved it. I really loved living with the host family. I really loved my host family that I was with because we were all women and so we had, they understood I was going through an experience that was very unique and I didn't really have any reference point for how to acclimate to studying abroad because I had never done it before. And so they were super supportive and caring and always asking if there was something that I wanted that would remind me of home or something that they could help me with or they could offer to help me acclimate to Chile.

Sophia Moore:

So very understanding, very caring, very funny. We would just sit around telling stories a lot of the time, and it was obviously a great way for me to practice my Spanish, but also to just get to know new people and to be living with new people and experiencing their culture in their own home was really incredible.

John Boccacino:

What role did your host family play to help you get acclimated to life in Chile?

Sophia Moore:

My host family served as sort of a educator of what's cool to do around Santiago, but also encouragement to go and actually do it. Every day, my host mom would check in and she'd say, "Hey, what are you doing this weekend? Do you have any plans? Here are a couple places you should check out if you don't know what you're going to do." She was always pushing me to get out of the house and just go explore the city because the opportunity to study abroad definitely is long. It's a semester, but that time is fleeting. It's important to take advantage of it at every moment. So I really am now looking back on it, I'm so appreciative that that's the way she was, because having someone who's saying, "Hey, here are places that I love to go, places that I recommend that you should go look at this weekend," that's invaluable. And the kind of cultural ambassadorship to Chile that I wouldn't have access to if I wasn't living with the host family.

John Boccacino:



Was there a moment when you realized, "All right, I'm home." Like, I feel like this place is not just a strange new country I'm exploring, but I've actually grown some roots and I know what I'm doing and I feel that sense of familiarity?

Sophia Moore:

I'm trying to think if there was one specific moment. I think it was more like a gradual feeling. It would set on, the feeling of being at home in the country would set on when I would meet up with the other people from the Santiago, Syracuse Santiago cohort. We were a group of 13 or 14 people, and so we all got to know each other very well, very quickly, and I think we, as everyone sort of latched on to their different components of the city that they were interested in or things that they were studying that felt relevant in Chile, we all gradually kind of came to this space of, wow, we're really here studying abroad together. We're living this experience together.

Sophia Moore:

And something that sort of solidified that were our group trips to the Atacama Desert, which is the driest desert in the world. It's in the north of Chile. That was a trip we took early on that really helped to solidify the, we were out there, we were exploring, we were having a great time and just learning about astronomy in the desert, and we went sandboarding. Like crazy, just crazy things that you would never get to do in your normal life. We were doing them, and it was part of this educational experience. So I think that made it feel like home that we were able to be learning so much so quickly in so many different spaces together.

John Boccacino:

How close did you become with your peers in the Santiago program?

Sophia Moore:

There's been just this camaraderie that is impossible to deny, impossible to ignore. We lived something so life-changing together and experienced so much culture and just were exposed to this lifestyle that's so different from the US. We still talk about it. One of my, my best friend that I met abroad, she actually lives downstairs in the same house as me, and it was a complete coincidence that we were living in the same house, but she lives downstairs. So we talk all the time and we always reminisce on the fact that we traveled together. We got a tattoo together, we lived a lot of life in this short amount of time. In five months, we became very close, and that's something that just is a bond for life.

John Boccacino:

And what did you learn about yourself from your time studying abroad?

Sophia Moore:

I think that I am resilient and I am able to find community wherever I go. Studying abroad somewhere where the language spoken is not my first language, I grew up around Spanish, but I didn't grow up speaking it with any fluency and have spent, I've learned it majority from school. So getting to stay in a country where Spanish is the language spoken and it's not the language that I'm most comfortable with was a real challenge. And every day, I would wake up and push myself to just do a little bit more, just a little bit more, speak a little longer, think a little harder, get myself a little more comfortable with the language and with the space. And that level of determination and resilience was really important for me to see, because there were days where it was tough. I wanted to come home and I was tired of struggling with the language or having to settle for being a less articulate version of myself because I didn't have the vocabulary to explain what I really meant in Spanish.

Sophia Moore:

But as time went on, just coaxing myself into doing a little bit more, trying a little bit harder, that showed me that I have a level of resilience that I don't even think I was aware of before I went abroad, and now is serving me so well because I know that I can do hard things. I know that I can get through difficult or challenging experiences. And then I learned that I can make community anywhere. I think fundamentally, there are so many things that people have in common across languages, across cultures. The relationships that I built in Chile are some of the most gratifying relationships I've ever made in my life.

Sophia Moore:

With my host mom, we built a bond where she said that I can come back and visit anytime and stay at her house anytime. And it's just that level of generosity and that level of love and care for another person transcends any kind of cultural barrier. And I think that's not something that just happened to me. That's something that we are all capable of. And so learning that and seeing that and knowing that people have a genuine interest in sharing things with others and creating community and relationships between and across cultures, that was really important for me to learn about myself.

John Boccacino:

There's been this groundswell where it seems like more and more are choosing the fall semester. Why was the fall the right time for you?

Sophia Moore:

Well, Chile's in the Southern Hemisphere, so their seasons are flipped, and it was kind of strategic. I wanted to be there for their spring and summer. I felt like it would be probably easier for me to acclimate if I had warmer weather, which ended up being so true. It was awesome to see the seasons change, because it doesn't get super cold there in winter. It's sort of like a mild 50-ish, 60-ish range of weather, which was great because I didn't have to worry about being in snow or anything. So yeah, I wanted to experience their spring and summer and it ended up being beautiful, and I also felt like it just made more sense for me to be away in the fall and come back in the spring. I don't really know that I have a reason why, it just felt like the right thing for me to do, and I think that I wanted that experience of having less people too.

John Boccacino:

What are some other favorite memories you're going to have with you from the trip?

Sophia Moore:

Well, one of my favorite memories that we just passed the year anniversary of is I went to Machu Picchu in Peru. It was amazing. I actually took that trip solo, so I solo traveled from Santiago to Cusco, which is kind of the jumping off point city in Peru that you can stay at if you want to go to Machu Picchu. And the crazy thing about accessing that site, it's a world wonder, a wonder of the world, so highly trafficked area. A lot of tourists going to Machu Picchu, of course to see it, but also a bunch of other Inca Citadel spots in the Sacred Valley are very touristy, so they have a lot of great travel agencies and things that are built out in Cusco and Peru for tourists to experience all that stuff. You're in the middle of the Peruvian Andes. It's this really lush jungle setting, and it was unlike anything I'd ever seen before, truly unlike anything I'd ever seen before, just with how green and lush, the rainforest is incredible.

Sophia Moore:

And I wasn't even in an area that is as dense as the jungle gets. It was all trimmed down for tourist consumption. But yeah, it was an awesome journey to get there. And then actually being in Machu Picchu was gorgeous and the history and the architecture and really looking at it as a site of humanity and a declaration of just how different cultures have established themselves around the world and the Inca culture is so storied and rich, and so to see it was really incredible and something that I will never forget. I look back at those pictures quite often because I almost can't believe that I went there.

John Boccacino:

And how can you describe your experiences in the classroom with your academic development?

Sophia Moore:

The Santiago program is unique in that there's a Syracuse Center, but students take classes through UCatolica, which is the local Chilean University. So I was in class with Chilean students as an international student, and it was challenging to be working with high level concepts that I would feel very comfortable with in the US in English. But working with them in Spanish was that extra layer of, I need to ask more questions. I need to get some extra help, just make sure that I'm understanding everything that I'm learning because I'm not learning it in my first language.

Sophia Moore:

So I took a sociology class while I was down there. And then I also, through the Syracuse Center, taught by Mauricio, I took a Latin American culture class, which is our signature seminar. And then I also took a Chilean history class, which was the best class I took the whole time. And he teaches both of those. He's an amazing teacher and professor. And then through the universities, I took a sociological development of Latin America class paraphrasing, and was also enrolled in a Baroque music history class, which was very difficult. So yeah, it was cool to see how class in Chile taught by Chilean professors differs from class in America, taught by American professors.

John Boccacino:

Sophia, I really want to thank you for making the time to come on the podcast and reflect on your beneficial Syracuse Abroad experiences. Best of luck with everything moving forward.

Sophia Moore:

Yes, and same to you. Thank you so much for including me in the project.

John Boccacino:

Thanks for checking out the latest installment of the 'Cuse Conversations podcast. My name is John Boccacino, signing off for the 'Cuse Conversations podcast.