Hello, friends of FSU Valencia and of the amazing EWM program. Wow! This academic year has been “something” at FSU Valencia. We had a record number of students, courses taught, and faculty: more than 700 students. As you may remember, last year marked 20 years of Florida State University having a permanent program in Spain. It made us think and remember how we started with 250 students per year and what growth we have had! In fact, this year we also marked having had 10,000 students pass by our program in Valencia.

Can you imagine all that has happened to the students and faculty in the program during these years? Yes! All that you are thinking and more, we have lived and experienced through the years. Most are good experiences; there are a few sad and bad situations; and of course, there are a lot of shared life moments. The FSU Valencia program has been there for good and bad, and we are proud to speak about how much we have helped and how much we have shared.

Speaking about sharing, we have a couple of stories that we want to tell you about. One of them is related to the beautiful volunteering program that we started almost 10 years ago. Volunteering while in the FSU Valencia program has all of the same good things of any volunteer activity, plus the incredible reward of volunteering/helping with people of a different culture and country. Our students mingle with Spanish society and people during these volunteering activities, and they immerse themselves in a learning environment and experience personal situations that they will remember forever. Maybe more than what was learned in a classroom?

In this program, our FSU students help kids with a hearing impairment learn and practice English language skills. Unfortunately, society puts these kids behind in their learning of a second language due to their hearing problem. But we want to help solve that. Our students immerse themselves in those kids’ families and homes (supervised by FSU Valencia) and in most cases have the experience of their lives and gain a family/friend/brother/sister forever! As you can imagine, the personal stories behind this volunteering are beautiful and offer invaluable growth in learning.

The other story that we want to finish with is about our students K & M who met in the program some years ago and, if things go as planned, will marry in Valencia (maybe even at the FSU study center) in a few months. After that, we will be able to say even louder that we are a family at FSU Valencia!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FACES OF THE PROGRAM
6 FSU Valencia crew leader Gemma Pascual ensures students are cared for and feel at home.
10 Associate Professor of Spanish Carolina González teaches students: Learn the language, learn the culture.
16 Valencian Gemma Acovedo redirected her career path after Spain’s crisis knocked her off track.
32 International Programs directors offer their perspectives on London, Florence, and Panama.

STUDY CENTER IN FOCUS
8 Cool course alert: Students find the fire for Valencia’s history of the ceramic arts.
12 Students have resource options when mental health issues arise while studying abroad.
18 When homesickness hits, students rely on these tips to deal with that common feeling.

BEYOND THE STUDY CENTER
4 FSU Valencia students flip the roles to teach English to hearing-impaired Spanish kids.
14 Oh, the places they’ll go. Students share their travel insights to maximize weekend breaks.
20 Café Lavin is close to FSU Valencia and close to the hearts of students, faculty, and staff.
26 FSU student has a transformative experience cycling through the most beautiful city in Spain.
28 Valencia’s Colón Street is where shopping is a pleasure for students looking to spend the day.
30 Rebajas season means a summer stretch of discounts and deals on hot items.

EDITING, WRITING, AND MEDIA ALUMNAE PROFILES
22 Jenna Kelley
From Valencia to San Angelo, Texas
23 Ashley Tressel
From Valencia to Washington, D.C.
24 Gail Levy
From Valencia to Panama City, Florida
25 Victoria Messina
From Valencia to New York City

Photo credits
Cover photo by Lauren Martin
This page, top, courtesy of Taylor Zylicz
Middle, courtesy of Allison Notari
Bottom, courtesy of Jenna Kelley
Nomadic Noles // Summer 2018

Tutor time with t-oigo

Seminole volunteer and teach English to hearing-impaired Spanish kids

By Ashley Gray

That might they use in a future career. Moreover, this program educates the volunteers about the variety of sessions they can choose from in the working world and adds credibility to their résumés. Professionals in careers such as medicine, pediatrics, communications, and the like often get their start in this kind of volunteer work. A sense of leadership and a multicultural perspective are just a couple benefits that FSU students gain through working with t-oigo. t-oigo, which roughly translates to “I hear,” was founded in Madrid, and has partnered with FSU Valencia for about seven years, with about three to four FSU students volunteering per semester. The partnership began when Cristina Santín, coordinator of t-oigo’s Allies in English program in Valencia, contacted the campus. Santín realized it would be an opportunity for students to tackle some volunteer work, as well as help the local community.

First Year Abroad student Taylor Zylicz and t-oigo student Marta are as close as sisters, bonding through fun at Gulliver Park (right and bottom left) and fellaritas events. Photos courtesy of Taylor Zylicz

Nikolai Tonello (top photo, left), now an FSU alumnus, and t-oigo student Mar Trille Vercher (top photo, right) were happy to be reunited at the Valencia study center in the summer of 2018, three years after the end of their tutoring sessions. Photos by Ashley Gray

No amount of Google Translate could teach someone what 14-year-old Mar Trille Vercher of Valencia learned through a few games of Monopoly against Florida State University’s Nikolai Tonello. Tonello was volunteering with t-oigo’s Allies in English, a program that specializes in tutoring English to hearing-impaired Spanish students. Through the program, FSU students who are studying abroad and volunteering with t-oigo are paired with a Valencian family and go to the family’s home to tutor the student. "It was too inside the American community in Spain," says Tonello, a French native, now an FSU alumnus, who tutored Mar in 2015 through Allies in English. "The program was a way to add to the immersion in Spanish culture, not to mention the fulfilling feeling."

Another FSU student who volunteered with Allies in English is Taylor Zylicz. In fall 2017, the Texas native began her freshman year at FSU in Valencia through the university’s First Year Abroad (FYA) program, and as a result of the program, will have the advantage of in-state tuition on the main Tallahassee campus.

Initially, Zylicz, who hopes to become a physician, chose t-oigo’s Allies in English program to fulfill the required volunteer hours for her pre-clinical major, but soon realized that the program was a perfect fit for her interests.

Zylicz and Marta, the 9-year-old Spanish girl she tutored, bonded instantly. Marta was born with hearing loss and has a cochlear implant, but that doesn’t stop her from being a “ball of energy and imagination,” Zylicz says.

“From different board games to having her give me a new hairstyle accompanied by face paint, we are constantly having conversations,” Zylicz said in summer 2018, when she was still tutoring Marta.

t-oigo’s main focus is on students who have hearing aids or cochlear implants, and students at FSU Valencia have the opportunity to sign up as volunteers for Allies in English. These student volunteers then teach English to Spanish children, whose grade levels range anywhere from kindergarten to high school. According to T-Oigo’s website, FSU isn’t the only participating university. Others include New York University, Johns Hopkins, Boston University, Duke, and more. Volunteers of all educational backgrounds, ethnicities, and ages can teach.

For FSU students, working in a cross-cultural environment with children who have a physical disability helps the student tutors develop skills that they might use in a future career. Moreover, this program educates the students about the variety of sessions they can choose from in the working world and adds credibility to their resumes. Professionals in careers such as medicine, pediatrics, communications, and the like often get their start in this kind of volunteer work. A sense of leadership and a multicultural perspective are just a couple benefits that FSU students gain through working with t-oigo. t-oigo, which roughly translates to “I hear,” was founded in Madrid, and has partnered with FSU Valencia for about seven years, with about three to four FSU students volunteering per semester. The partnership began when Cristina Santín, coordinator of t-oigo’s Allies in English program in Valencia, contacted the campus. Santín realized it would be an opportunity for students to tackle some volunteer work, as well as help the local community.

On one hand, Maria Sierra, a member of the FSU Valencia team since 2002, knew this would not be an easy-breezy task. Volunteers would need to learn how to overcome cultural barriers and obstacles stemming from language differences. A lot of bridging the gap occurs through Allies in English, such as the gaps between age and physical ability. But once those gaps are bridged, the outcome is rewarding.

“It’s already hard for [the children] to speak one language, so it would be very good for them to feel that they can know not only one language, but know two—and speak it,” Sierra says.

On the other hand, Zylicz thinks the tutoring sessions are quite easy—and a lot of fun. “The hardest part is getting out of the car when [Marta’s family] drops me off at the FSU study center,” Zylicz says. “Marta has a super strong hug to where it makes it almost impossible to leave her.”

Tutoring sessions occur once a week for a few hours, creating a lasting bond not only with the student, but with the family as well. Allies in English emphasizes the need for closeness between the tutor, the student, and the student’s family. For some, it comes naturally.

“In a way, it was like every week I get to go see my Spanish little sister,” says Zylicz, who has sisters Marta’s age, and in the Houston area. “For others, such as Tonello and Mar, the bond materializes over time. Mar admitted that she was not happy when she first discovered that her mother had signed her up for t-oigo and that Tonello would be her once-a-week chore for the next three months. But who could blame her after she had recently finished learning French, her second language?”

However, things proved better than Mar expected, and after about a month of tedious and awkward sessions, they found their flow. Tonello would arrive at Mar’s flat and break out the board games, magazines, and family photos.

“She started liking it because it was a game, having a conversation [with Nikolai],” says Mirisa, Mar’s 17-year-old sister.

Sure enough, some Monopoly and family history helped the two achieve the friendship that t-oigo hopes for. In 2018, three years after their sessions, Tonello, at age 23, stopped in Valencia on his way back from the World Cup in Russia. He ended up staying for a few nights with Mar’s family, who were happy to see him again.

First Year Abroad student Taylor Zylicz and t-oigo volunteer and teach English to hearing-impaired Spanish kids.

Nikolai Tonello (top photo, left), now an FSU alumnus, and t-oigo student Mar Trille Vercher (top photo, right) were happy to be reunited at the Valencia study center in the summer of 2018, three years after the end of their tutoring sessions. Photos by Ashley Gray

The friendships formed through Allies in English are truly reciprocal in the sense that one side of the relationship doesn’t benefit more than the other. Rather, the student-to-tutor relationship is interdependent. The student gets help learning a new language, while the tutor is rewarded with a deeper understanding of Spanish culture and that warm, fuzzy feeling of doing a good deed.

Moreover, the program continues to give back to both Mar and Tonello. When asked in 2018 what the best part of the experience was, the 14-year-old Mar answered confidently in English: “Now is my favorite part.”

Nikolai agreed that coming back after three years and seeing Mar converse fluently in English was the best part of the program for him, too.
Support
with a
smile

Crew leader Gemma Pascual ensures that Valencia students are kept safe, well cared for.

Dean and Director Ignacio Messana and crew leader Gemma Pascual have known each other for the past 13 years.

“Support with a smile”

By Meg Croney-Clark

Editor’s note: Program Assistant Daniella Vivar served as a translator for Meg’s interview with Gemma Pascual.

Any factors go into keeping the FSU Valencia program running smoothly for students on a daily basis. But they likely are not aware of everything done for their benefit.

For example, students’ apartments are cleaned weekly; bilingual receptionists are available in both study centers and the other apartment buildings; and—should there be a plumbing or air conditioning problem with an apartment—a maintenance crew will soon be on site to fix it.

Who is the person who orchestrates these tasks and the people who perform them? Gemma Pascual.

Pascual is FSU Valencia’s director of the reception, cleaning, and maintenance crews, and she goes above and beyond with her behind-the-scenes work at the Valencia campus. Pascual strives to provide the best environment for the students because, as she says, “I would want the same for my children in an unfamiliar place, like each student is here at FSU Valencia.”

Even though a lot of her tasks go unnoticed, she “feels fulfilled making a difference here.” Being a Valencia native, Pascual is familiar with the city and the surrounding area. She and FSU Valencia’s Dean and Director Ignacio Messana have known each other for 13 years, and they have become familiar with each other’s work habits. As a result, they have learned how to communicate efficiently with each other to keep the program running smoothly.

She “takes her job and responsibilities very seriously,” says Messana, who had many kind words about Pascual as a person and her strong work ethic.

They began working together while Pascual was at the Universitat Politècnica de València (UPV). Having heard about the new FSU Valencia program, Pascual was interested in joining the endeavor because she wanted to work with college-aged students. From the beginning, she says, she found the program to have an important mission. Messana knew Pascual was a hard worker. He described how new the program was then, and while he wasn’t sure right away where Pascual would fit in, he knew she would be quick to credit the team she leads.

“Support with a smile”

that caring relationship she builds with the students. While she doesn’t like telling students to clean their rooms more often or to quiet down after hours, “it must be done.”

Despite all that Pascual does for the program, she doesn’t seek expressions of gratitude from students. Still, a student once wrote her a letter thanking her for all her hard work. That, she says, “makes my job worth it.”

Hailey Conston practices her Spanish-speaking skills with a reception crew member in FSU Garnet.

The entrance to FSU’s Garnet building, where Gemma Pascual works and where students live and take classes.

Photo by Meg Croney-Clark

The entrance to FSU Garnet building, where Gemma Pascual works and where students live and take classes.

Photo by Meg Croney-Clark

Support with a smile

Crew leader Gemma Pascual ensures that Valencia students are kept safe, well cared for.

By Meg Croney-Clark

Editors’ note: Program Assistant Daniella Vivar served as a translator for Meg’s interview with Gemma Pascual.

Any factors go into keeping the FSU Valencia program running smoothly for students on a daily basis. But they likely are not aware of everything done for their benefit.

For example, students’ apartments are cleaned weekly; bilingual receptionists are available in both study centers and the other apartment buildings; and—should there be a plumbing or air conditioning problem with an apartment—a maintenance crew will soon be on site to fix it.

Who is the person who orchestrates these tasks and the people who perform them? Gemma Pascual.

Pascual is FSU Valencia’s director of the reception, cleaning, and maintenance crews, and she goes above and beyond with her behind-the-scenes work at the Valencia campus. Pascual strives to provide the best environment for the students because, as she says, “I would want the same for my children in an unfamiliar place, like each student is here at FSU Valencia.”

Even though a lot of her tasks go unnoticed, she “feels fulfilled making a difference here.” Being a Valencia native, Pascual is familiar with the city and the surrounding area. She and FSU Valencia’s Dean and Director Ignacio Messana have known each other for 13 years, and they have become familiar with each other’s work habits. As a result, they have learned how to communicate efficiently with each other to keep the program running smoothly.

She “takes her job and responsibilities very seriously,” says Messana, who had many kind words about Pascual as a person and her strong work ethic.

They began working together while Pascual was at the Universitat Politècnica de València (UPV). Having heard about the new FSU Valencia program, Pascual was interested in joining the endeavor because she wanted to work with college-aged students. From the beginning, she says, she found the program to have an important mission. Messana knew Pascual was a hard worker. He described how new the program was then, and while he wasn’t sure right away where Pascual would fit in, he knew she would be quick to credit the team she leads.

“I think it is important that the students learn as much Spanish while they’re here as possible, and to be as much a part of the culture as they can.” — Gemma Pascual

During the 2018 summer C session. “Five problems came up, and she was quick to credit the team she leads. “This is not a one-person job, and if it was, nothing would get done,” she says, stressing the importance of each crew working together to ensure that the jobs get done properly and with little disruption to students’ lives. Most maintenance issues that arise are fixed within the day of the malfunction so that students are as comfortable as possible.

Pascual has her own family—two sons, 38 and 35 years old—and she puts in time and care for both her family and FSU students, balancing both with affection. She says creating a bond with the students is important to her; she cares about each and every one of them.

In her free time, Pascual enjoys going to the gym, where she does yoga and takes spinning and dance classes. She likes to read and loves to travel. But, she loves working around college students as well, and says, “Every day is a new experience.”

“I think it is important that the students learn as much Spanish while they’re here as possible, and to be as much a part of the culture as they can.” — Gemma Pascual
Combining culture and art of ceramics

Students embark on an exciting artistic journey through Spain's history in the arts

By Lauren Martin

A short white building that most people probably don't think anything of hides a world of art history, culture, and adventure. Upon walking through the door, FSU students are thrust into a bustling of activity. Wheels are turning, people are painting, and dust is flying everywhere.

Inma Juan and Ximo Pascual, the two Valencians who call this building home, greet everyone with a bright and cheerful “Hola.” Despite their not speaking the slightest bit of English, you can tell they are excited to start the day.

However, on subsequent mornings, students are up to their elbows in clay. “Working with local artists is awesome because they have welcomed us into their workshop and taught us not only technique, but the history and significance of tradition for each style of creation,” says FSU junior Claudia Stevens about working in the studio.

Professor Holly Hanessian teaches The Ceramics of Valencia (ART3930). The summer course was split between lecture-style classes, in which students mainly learned about the history of ceramics through outings to local museums and tours of the city, and studio-based classes in which the students got hands-on experience building the materials they were learning about.

Hanessian, who is the area head of ceramics in Tallahassee, has been teaching ceramics full-time for the past 20 years, with another 10 years of part-time experience before that, credentials that make her perfect for this job. No need at least a degree in art to succeed in this field.

“City of Porcelain” museum that students visit during class, and Hanessian incorporated going around town—we go to a lot of museums, says sophomore and international affairs major Taylor Mackin.

“This history can be seen at the local Lladro ‘City of Porcelain’ museum that students visit with the class.” The nearby town of Manises is even home to its own kind of reflective ware, which is still respected across the world today. It is called lusterware, a type of pottery that has a metallic glaze.

“After the Middle East exported their knowledge to Spain, Spain was the bomb,” Hanessian says.

“Working with local artists is awesome because they have welcomed us into their workshop and taught us not only technique, but the history and significance of tradition for each style of creation.” — Claudia Stevens

For students wondering if this course will be offered in the future, FSU Valencia academic coordinator Isabel Pico says, “We certainly hope so.”

Keep an eye out on the International Programs webpage for more information.

Using photos that she took of pots in Valencia’s Museo Nacional de Cerámica y Artes Suntuarias “González Martí” museum as inspiration, Sari Stein (left) begins designing her own pot.

Vivar says that translating always has her on her toes.

“Working with local artists is awesome because they have welcomed us into their workshop and taught us not only technique, but the history and significance of tradition for each style of creation.” — Claudia Stevens

Photo by Lauren Martin

Photo by Sari Stein
Speaking their language

I can sympathize with FSU students who come to a country where another language is spoken. — Carolina González

 Carolina González talks about her newfound appreciation and enjoyment for flamenco

Dancing and singing for fun

More recently I have taken up flamenco singing. I have learned a lot from both. I enjoy flamenco for many reasons: The rhythms are haunting, the lyrics are typically very poet- ic, and the synergy between singer, dancer and guitar player is amazing. I’ve always been into dancing. When I lived in Los Angeles I learned salsa, swing, and ballroom dancing. Although I really liked all of them, somehow I was a terrible ballroom dancer. But I had fun and I never intended to enter any competition, so I did not mind.

I am from the Basque country in the north of Spain, and flamenco is not very popular there. However, when I lived in North Carolina, I saw a flamen- coco show as part of a bigger event, and it made a big impression on me. When I came to Tallahassee, one day I searched online and saw that there was a flamenco class starting, and I’ve been hooked ever since.

Associate Professor Carolina González finds common ground with study abroad students

By Dani Brown

González is a native of Spain, and she grew up in Muskiz, a small town near Bilbao, a Spanish courses in Valencia. “So I can sympathize with FSU students who come to a country where another language is spoken,” says González, who lived in Muskiz with her parents and her five younger siblings. “But, I really liked the experience of being abroad and being in a different country, being part of a different culture.”

Teaching those two courses in Valencia provided opportunities that González does not get when she teaches FSU students in Tallahassee. The class lessons allow for immediate applications of what is learned in class and an opportunity for students to hear sounds that are not as frequent in America.

“I like to bring a lot of the expressions and colloquialisms to the course,” she says, referring to Reading and Conversation. The second course she teaches is Spanish Phonetics. “I point out differences because most of the Spanish students at FSU hear, especially if they are from Florida, is Latin American Spanish, which is beautiful. But here in Valencia, I tell them ‘Look, here in Spain people say this’.

In turn, FSU Valencia students learning Spanish have advantages that Tallahassee’s campus cannot easily provide. The cultural immersion aspect helps students take what they learn in class and practice speaking in their day-to-day lives while living in Valencia. Carlile Bahmandeji, a student in González’s Phonetics class, appreciates the student interaction in class.

“She wants a lot of participation in class, which is nice because I came here to practice my Spanish,” Bahmandeji says. “I definitely use it more in Tallahassee. [In Tallahassee] I speak it in the classroom, and then when I leave the classroom—I’m done. Here, I get to speak with everybody in Spanish, which is so helpful.”

The classes in study abroad programs can often be smaller than classes in the U.S., which encourages teacher-student interactions and participation in the classroom. González appreciates the opportunity to have more one-on-one teaching and for students to feel more confident learning a second lan- guage. As helpful as that can be, González wishes that the students had more time than the five-week session to learn and apply their language skills.

“There is very little time for reflection,” González says. “The classes are long, the students do a lot of activities, and there is so much to explore. You can only cover so much in a class, without the students feeling overwhelmed.

The time constraint is a minor obstacle to González’s teaching, however, as she finds it is valuable for everyone to learn the home language if they are going to visit a country for an extended period. She recommends taking a language course to all future study-abroad students.

“It really makes a huge difference in [the students’] experience,” she says. “If you go to Italy, take Italian. If you go to France, obviously, take French. At any level.”

González teaches in the appropriate de- partment to back up her suggestion, of course. As of 2017, González was named the Spanish and Portuguese coordinator in the Department of Modern Language and Linguistics. In this role, she oversees course schedules at the upper and graduate levels, as well as organizes faculty meetings that look to improve the program at FSU. In the future, González hopes to offer additional inclusive courses and programs for heritage speakers, those who grew up with Spanish around them but have varying levels of true Spanish proficiency. “I really feel in love with sounds and wanted to contribute more in that area,” she says.

Her doctoral dissertation is titled The effect of stress and foot structure on consonantal pro- cesses, but her recent studies involve record- ing people and analyzing how they speak. For González, she enjoys the discovery aspect of research and the directions it leads her.

“Every time I interviewed someone on the Panoan languages, she started with the sounds. She then realized that the data she was looking at need to do with morphology, or how you divide the words up. She did not know much about morphology, but that’s what the data told her.”

“It’s a challenge, but you have to do it or you won’t find out what is going on, she says. “You keep on learning. So, I am a student. I’m teaching but I am learning. González believes that understanding how the Spanish and Portuguese coordinator in the Department of Modern Language and Linguistics. In this role, she oversees course schedules at the upper and graduate levels, as well as organizes faculty meetings that look to improve the program at FSU. In the future, González hopes to offer additional inclusive courses and programs for heritage speakers, those who grew up with Spanish around them but have varying levels of true Spanish proficiency. “I really feel in love with sounds and wanted to contribute more in that area,” she says.

Her doctoral dissertation is titled The effect of stress and foot structure on consonantal pro- cesses, but her recent studies involve record- ing people and analyzing how they speak. For González, she enjoys the discovery aspect of research and the directions it leads her.

“Every time I interviewed someone on the Panoan languages, she started with the sounds. She then realized that the data she was looking at need to do with morphology, or how you divide the words up. She did not know much about morphology, but that’s what the data told her.”

“It’s a challenge, but you have to do it or you won’t find out what is going on, she says. “You keep on learning. So, I am a student. I’m teaching but I am learning. González believes that understanding how the Spanish and Portuguese coordinator in the Department of Modern Language and Linguistics. In this role, she oversees course schedules at the upper and graduate levels, as well as organizes faculty meetings that look to improve the program at FSU. In the future, González hopes to offer additional inclusive courses and programs for heritage speakers, those who grew up with Spanish around them but have varying levels of true Spanish proficiency. “I really feel in love with sounds and wanted to contribute more in that area,” she says.

Her doctoral dissertation is titled The effect of stress and foot structure on consonantal pro- cesses, but her recent studies involve record- ing people and analyzing how they speak. For González, she enjoys the discovery aspect of research and the directions it leads her.

“Every time I interviewed someone on the Panoan languages, she started with the sounds. She then realized that the data she was looking at need to do with morphology, or how you divide the words up. She did not know much about morphology, but that’s what the data told her.”

“It’s a challenge, but you have to do it or you won’t find out what is going on, she says. “You keep on learning. So, I am a student. I’m teaching but I am learning. González believes that understanding how the
Anxiety abroad

FSU International Programs offers resources to study abroad students struggling with mental health issues

By Allison Notari

Most study abroad students know what to do if they suffer a broken leg or get the flu. But the majority of students may not be aware of the resources available if they develop anxiety or fall into a depression while away from home.

Traveling to another country, where the language is different and the customs are new, can be intimidating for college students, especially when some are as young as 17 years old. So it is no surprise that many students schedule appointments as needed.”

Louisa Blenman, director of enrollment and program management of International Programs at FSU. “We work with providers and insurers to help students schedule appointments as needed.”

A female student who studied at FSU Valencia in 2018 identified large crowds and unfamiliar places as a source of anxiety for her. Due to the nature of the program and the city itself, facing these were inevitable.”

“You want to try to push yourself further than your comfort zone and need to find a balance of going out and interacting with people,” she says. “But you also need to know when to take care of your mental and physical health.”

The anxiety she suffered persisted, but she was able to manage it by surrounding herself with the right friends. “One of my roommates told me that sometimes you just need encouragement from your friends to get out there,” she says.

“Don’t feel bad when everyone is going out but you’re not feeling up for it,” she says. “Even though we are here for a short time, there is always time to take care of yourself.”

However, had she neglected to take care of herself and had these issues grown worse, she would have been able to rely on resources similar to those students can receive in Tallahassee.

For one thing, students at the Valencia study center have the option to see a therapist, which is covered by CISI. Maria Sierra, who works in the Student Services Office at FSU Valencia, acts as an intermediary between students and the therapist, setting up appointments for students who request it. Moreover, the therapist used by Valencia students conducts sessions in English, eliminating the need for a translator.

Checking in on students who may be displaying behaviors indicative of mental health issues can be difficult without offending them or stepping on toes. However, in Sierra’s experience, students are generally very receptive when approached and recommended to see the counselor. “I think that all of the students are pretty open to therapy,” Sierra says. “I mean when you use the word ‘psychology’ or ‘psychiatric’ instead of ‘therapy’ or ‘counselor’; they are pretty much open.”

Unsurprisingly, students and parents will be worried about mental health when students are preparing to leave home for an extended time. For this reason, students with ongoing mental health issues are encouraged to speak with their doctor and family before departing and come up with a plan should the student face any of these issues while abroad. Another component to look at ahead of time is medication. Many medications are not legally prescribed or available outside of the U.S., so students taking any medications should secure a vacation prescription with their doctor before leaving the country.

“Students who struggle with emotional and psychological stress while studying abroad can find resources through FSU.”

— Louisa Blenman

Tallahassee support team

FSU International Programs’s risk management team works closely with each study abroad location to provide resources to students struggling with mental health issues.

Photo courtesy of International Programs

Christina Carroll
director of emergency and risk management

Tina Brooks
assistant director, risk management

Louisa Blenman
director of enrollment and program management

Students who struggle with emotional and psychological stress while studying abroad can find resources through FSU.
Weekend wanderlust

From assignments to airplanes, FSU Valencia students use their weekends to venture to other European locales

By Mia Dennergy

Considering that your post-college years will probably be devoted to building a career and beginning adulthood, studying abroad in college is the perfect time to see as much of the world as you can. Florida State University’s International Programs offers students interested in studying abroad several locations to choose from. While the summer sessions are more compact, your schedule will leave plenty of free weekends perfect for outside travel.

Although there are only a few days permitted for each weekend trip, many students in Valencia, Spain proved to be quite effective at making the most of their time in a new city or country. With the right attitude and planning, you too can explore a whole city in as little as two days.

For example, Lauren Martin and Audrey Caraher studied in the Editing, Writing, and Media (EWM) in Valencia Program during the second 2018 summer session, and they visited Paris during their stay in Valencia. By scheduling their days in advance and taking advantage of the city’s metro system, Martin and Caraher saw several of Paris’s most iconic landmarks in one day, including the Eiffel Tower, the Palace of Versailles, and the Louvre.

“It was exhausting but totally worth it because we managed to get so much done,” Caraher says.

Other FSU students interviewed for this article have plenty of tips on how to maximize a mini vacation when planning weekend adventures. Begin by picking a destination that meets your budget and time restrictions. For example, cities such as Copenhagen, Denmark and Stockholm are known to be expensive in terms of food and lodging. But, cities such as Prague and Budapest are more budget friendly.

Because many popular European cities have dozens of well-known tourist attractions, decide early on which attractions to prioritize.

“If there is a site far away and expensive, it is not worth your time,” says FSU student and mechanical engineering major Jordan Noyes.

One mistake to avoid is booking a place to stay outside of the city you plan to visit because it is cheaper. Instead, make sure you calculate the costs of transportation in and around the city to make sure your low-cost lodging is not, in fact, more expensive. AirBnb and Hostel World offer apartments and homes in desirable locations at an affordable price, although sometimes the best deals are snapped up weeks in advance.

Another mistake to avoid is assuming that you will be able to take a U.S.-styled carry-on suitcase for free into the main cabin of a flight within Europe. Often, such a suitcase must instead be checked for an extra fee, which can be much higher on the day of the flight than if paid when booking the flight. To avoid any last-minute surprises, check the airline’s baggage rules when booking the flight.

That said, once you and your friends have agreed on a city to visit, it’s time to figure out how to get there. FSU students interviewed for this article agreed that skyscanner—a global search engine that compares flight, hotel, and car rental prices—is the most efficient comparison site for purchasing plane tickets. For those traveling throughout Spain, students recommend GoEuro for purchasing affordable train and bus tickets to cities such as Barcelona, Seville, and Madrid.

FSU International Programs requires students to fill out an independent travel form but allows them the freedom and opportunity to explore Europe while studying abroad.

In Professor Candace Ward’s summer 2018 Tourist Trap class, for example, 20 of her 21 students reported during their fourth week that they had traveled out of Valencia more than twice since the start of their five-week program.

“It’s a safe estimation that over 50 percent of the students travel every weekend,” says Ignacio Messana, dean and director of FSU’s Valencia program.

Some places that summer students typically visit outside of Spain include Paris, Amsterdam, Rome, and Prague. Inside Spain, some famous typical places include Barcelona, Ibiza, Pamplona, and Seville.

During your trips, it is important to travel with extra money students spend saving on airplane tickets. FSU students had mixed opinions about the most ideal group size to travel with.

“The magic number is four because it is the most cost efficient for cabins,” says Lexi Wendling, a student in the summer 2018 EWM program. During some friendly banter on the topic, her classmate, Allison Notari, disagreed.

“The perfect number is one other person because you don’t have to wait for a group of people to be ready,” Notari says.

Regardless of group size, remember to choose people you mesh well with. Trips can be tarnished when too much time is wasted on indecision and on meeting the wants and needs of each member of the group.

“There were a few attractions I was dying to see, but when I was the minority, we went with the group’s wishes,” says Amanda Walser, a hospitality student studying in FSU’s Switzerland program.

Every little purchase adds up, so budgeting is a major component of these weekend excursions. If you are not careful, you may end up spending 200 euros in Paris on three days’ worth of food alone. However, spending that much on a weekend’s worth of food in a country known for its cuisine might not be an issue for everyone. In fact, in terms of splurging, most students admitted they are more likely to spend their money on pricier foods than on pricier lodging and shopping.

“Food is different everywhere you go—shopping is usually about the same,” Noyes says.

Walser was clearly enthused with her food choices.

“I loved Spanish tapas; of course, German bratwurst,” she says. “I tried trdelnik [a Czech dessert] in Prague, which is a must for anyone who ever goes there.”

Ultimately, despite the extra money students spend on their weekend travels, their experiences are nothing short of life-changing.

“I’m pretty broke now, but the experiences I’ve had are priceless,” says FSU student and chemical engineering major Emily Rini. Messana encourages students to take those opportunities now.

“I think it’s wonderful for your education if you travel to other cities with an eye-opening attitude of seeing things, of meeting people, of seeing how they eat, behave, and act,” he says. “I will always recommend it with all of the safest possible environments.”

FSU Valencia students use a 360-degree camera in Capri, Italy.

Photo courtesy of Maria Velez

A group of FSU students stop in Amsterdam for the weekend.

Photo courtesy of Emily Rini

Kayla Azoy takes the plunge as she paraglides in Interlaken, Switzerland on her weekend off.

Photo courtesy of Kayla Azoy
Article and photos by Tomas Cabezas

16

path maker

it’s time to make it on my own, to be a journalist by myself,” she says.

news station when the station closed due to financial issues in 2013.

global recession affecting other Eurozone countries. The crisis lagged

past five years.

Gema Acevedo (left) talks to editing, writing, and media students about being confident and showcasing their strengths in the communications field to potential employers. Seated from left: instructor Susan Hellstrom, Maria Velez, and Lindsay Mead.

Gema Acevedo (right) shows EWM student Lauren Martin the Instagram account she manages for one of her clients.

Meanwhile, a woman that worked in health marketing gave Acevedo her first client, after Acevedo met her at a networking seminar. “I gave my card to a woman journalist and talked with her for a while. I told her that I can write and edit,” Acevedo says. “She called me a few months later, and I started to work with her.”

During her presentation to the EWM students in summer 2018, she talked about her journey to find a job and regain financial stability. Her energetic personality meshed well with the students.

“She relates very well with the students in terms of social media and the idea that today’s work ethic is not about having just one responsibility,” EWM program instructor Jack Clifford says. “Her enthusiasm for speaking with the students has not changed at all since the first year she visited the classroom. She really cares about the students and that shows in how she speaks to the class as a group and, at times, to individual students.”

Acevedo, whose clients are in the medical field, specializes in health communication. She showed EWM students how she manages two of her clients—one a dentist and the other a cosmetic surgeon—on social media and through their websites.

“I like to show a lot of before-and-after pictures—the clients and patients love seeing those photos on Instagram,” Acevedo says. These are before-and-after photos of patients connected to whitened smiles and graphic videos of plastic surgery procedures that might seem too intense for a picturesque platform like Instagram. However, Acevedo realized that she could use Instagram to advertise for her clients.

“She taught herself and gained all this experience, and then decided to go up to businesses and say ‘Hey, you need me,’” EWM student Allison Notari says.

For students looking to get into social media or go toward a path of entrepreneurship in competitive times, Acevedo’s perseverance through grim circumstances offered hope.

Yet she had one final bit of advice for the students. “You must remember, though, that work is not the most important thing,” she says. “The most important thing is your family, your life, and your time.”

A risk taker and path maker

Valencian Gema Acevedo encourages students to create the career they want

17

Nomadic Noles // Summer 2018

Nomadic Noles // Summer 2018

global recession affecting other Eurozone countries. The crisis lagged on, and as a result, Acevedo lost her job as a reporter for a Valencian news station when the station closed due to financial issues in 2013. “When I got fired from the TV station, I cried a lot, but I thought ‘OK, it’s time to make it on my own, to be a journalist by myself,’” she says.

Born and raised in Valencia, she didn’t want to leave the city she loved. Thus, she began her journey toward molding a successful future. She taught herself English by watching popular shows in English like Lost and continued to practice with shows such as The Walking Dead and The Handmaid’s Tale. She achieved her goal by listening, reading English subtitles, and conversing with native English speakers.

“I couldn’t pay for a master’s, and my parents were also affected by the crisis, so they couldn’t help me either,” Acevedo says. “I improved my English every day by listening and watching the subtitles; I don’t always understand everything. I think with technology that we have now, work needs to evolve. It doesn’t make any sense to be in the office writing if you can go somewhere else.”

Valencian Gema Acevedo encourages students to create the career they want.

Meanwhile, a woman that worked in health marketing gave Acevedo her first client, after Acevedo met her at a networking seminar. “I gave my card to a woman journalist and talked with her for a while. I told her that I can write and edit,” Acevedo says. “She called me a few months later, and I started to work with her.”

During her presentation to the EWM students in summer 2018, she talked about her journey to find a job and regain financial stability. Her energetic personality meshed well with the students.

“She relates very well with the students in terms of social media and the idea that today’s work ethic is not about having just one responsibility,” EWM program instructor Jack Clifford says. “Her enthusiasm for speaking with the students has not changed at all since the first year she visited the classroom. She really cares about the students and that shows in how she speaks to the class as a group and, at times, to individual students.”

Acevedo, whose clients are in the medical field, specializes in health communication. She showed EWM students how she manages two of her clients—one a dentist and the other a cosmetic surgeon—on social media and through their websites.

“I like to show a lot of before-and-after pictures—the clients and patients love seeing those photos on Instagram,” Acevedo says. These are before-and-after photos of patients connected to whitened smiles and graphic videos of plastic surgery procedures that might seem too intense for a picturesque platform like Instagram. However, Acevedo realized that she could use Instagram to advertise for her clients.

“She taught herself and gained all this experience, and then decided to go up to businesses and say ‘Hey, you need me,’” EWM student Allison Notari says.

For students looking to get into social media or go toward a path of entrepreneurship in competitive times, Acevedo’s perseverance through grim circumstances offered hope.

Yet she had one final bit of advice for the students. “You must remember, though, that work is not the most important thing,” she says. “The most important thing is your family, your life, and your time.”

A risk taker and path maker

Valencian Gema Acevedo encourages students to create the career they want.

Article and photos by Tomas Cabezas

Meanwhile, a woman that worked in health marketing gave Acevedo her first client, after Acevedo met her at a networking seminar. “I gave my card to a woman journalist and talked with her for a while. I told her that I can write and edit,” Acevedo says. “She called me a few months later, and I started to work with her.”

During her presentation to the EWM students in summer 2018, she talked about her journey to find a job and regain financial stability. Her energetic personality meshed well with the students.

“She relates very well with the students in terms of social media and the idea that today’s work ethic is not about having just one responsibility,” EWM program instructor Jack Clifford says. “Her enthusiasm for speaking with the students has not changed at all since the first year she visited the classroom. She really cares about the students and that shows in how she speaks to the class as a group and, at times, to individual students.”

Acevedo, whose clients are in the medical field, specializes in health communication. She showed EWM students how she manages two of her clients—one a dentist and the other a cosmetic surgeon—on social media and through their websites.

“I like to show a lot of before-and-after pictures—the clients and patients love seeing those photos on Instagram,” Acevedo says. These are before-and-after photos of patients connected to whitened smiles and graphic videos of plastic surgery procedures that might seem too intense for a picturesque platform like Instagram. However, Acevedo realized that she could use Instagram to advertise for her clients.

“She taught herself and gained all this experience, and then decided to go up to businesses and say ‘Hey, you need me,’” EWM student Allison Notari says.

For students looking to get into social media or go toward a path of entrepreneurship in competitive times, Acevedo’s perseverance through grim circumstances offered hope.

Yet she had one final bit of advice for the students. “You must remember, though, that work is not the most important thing,” she says. “The most important thing is your family, your life, and your time.”

A risk taker and path maker

Valencian Gema Acevedo encourages students to create the career they want.

Article and photos by Tomas Cabezas

Meanwhile, a woman that worked in health marketing gave Acevedo her first client, after Acevedo met her at a networking seminar. “I gave my card to a woman journalist and talked with her for a while. I told her that I can write and edit,” Acevedo says. “She called me a few months later, and I started to work with her.”

During her presentation to the EWM students in summer 2018, she talked about her journey to find a job and regain financial stability. Her energetic personality meshed well with the students.

“She relates very well with the students in terms of social media and the idea that today’s work ethic is not about having just one responsibility,” EWM program instructor Jack Clifford says. “Her enthusiasm for speaking with the students has not changed at all since the first year she visited the classroom. She really cares about the students and that shows in how she speaks to the class as a group and, at times, to individual students.”

Acevedo, whose clients are in the medical field, specializes in health communication. She showed EWM students how she manages two of her clients—one a dentist and the other a cosmetic surgeon—on social media and through their websites.

“I like to show a lot of before-and-after pictures—the clients and patients love seeing those photos on Instagram,” Acevedo says. These are before-and-after photos of patients connected to whitened smiles and graphic videos of plastic surgery procedures that might seem too intense for a picturesque platform like Instagram. However, Acevedo realized that she could use Instagram to advertise for her clients.

“She taught herself and gained all this experience, and then decided to go up to businesses and say ‘Hey, you need me,’” EWM student Allison Notari says.

For students looking to get into social media or go toward a path of entrepreneurship in competitive times, Acevedo’s perseverance through grim circumstances offered hope.

Yet she had one final bit of advice for the students. “You must remember, though, that work is not the most important thing,” she says. “The most important thing is your family, your life, and your time.”

A risk taker and path maker

Valencian Gema Acevedo encourages students to create the career they want.

Article and photos by Tomas Cabezas

Meanwhile, a woman that worked in health marketing gave Acevedo her first client, after Acevedo met her at a networking seminar. “I gave my card to a woman journalist and talked with her for a while. I told her that I can write and edit,” Acevedo says. “She called me a few months later, and I started to work with her.”

During her presentation to the EWM students in summer 2018, she talked about her journey to find a job and regain financial stability. Her energetic personality meshed well with the students.

“She relates very well with the students in terms of social media and the idea that today’s work ethic is not about having just one responsibility,” EWM program instructor Jack Clifford says. “Her enthusiasm for speaking with the students has not changed at all since the first year she visited the classroom. She really cares about the students and that shows in how she speaks to the class as a group and, at times, to individual students.”

Acevedo, whose clients are in the medical field, specializes in health communication. She showed EWM students how she manages two of her clients—one a dentist and the other a cosmetic surgeon—on social media and through their websites.

“I like to show a lot of before-and-after pictures—the clients and patients love seeing those photos on Instagram,” Acevedo says. These are before-and-after photos of patients connected to whitened smiles and graphic videos of plastic surgery procedures that might seem too intense for a picturesque platform like Instagram. However, Acevedo realized that she could use Instagram to advertise for her clients.

“She taught herself and gained all this experience, and then decided to go up to businesses and say ‘Hey, you need me,’” EWM student Allison Notari says.

For students looking to get into social media or go toward a path of entrepreneurship in competitive times, Acevedo’s perseverance through grim circumstances offered hope.

Yet she had one final bit of advice for the students. “You must remember, though, that work is not the most important thing,” she says. “The most important thing is your family, your life, and your time.”

A risk taker and path maker

Valencian Gema Acevedo encourages students to create the career they want.
photo courtesy of Meg Croney-Clark

Conston, and Shelly Perry.

friends, (from left) Taylor Noyes, Hailey
Meg Croney-Clark (far right) visits Lisbon,
each other at Fourth of July pool party.

photo courtesy

“Oh crap, I'm here for three more weeks.”” says. “Then week two is slower and you
during week two.

summer session may find themselves
abroad for extended periods of time, say
ence: a full year, a full semester, or a sum-
when planning a study abroad experi-

Martin agrees with these observations,

has that annoying little tic: homesickness.

“Don't wish to go anywhere. I can’t always come back
home because you can always go home, but you
can’t always come home back here,” Abel says.

Williams shares an

“Time is of the es-

Christina
Williams takes a
walk around the
Roncagli Towers—a
monument just outside
of the Garnet
building.

photo courtesy of Christina
Williams

Most of those who spend a year im-
merse in a foreign country are part of
FSU’s First Year Abroad (FYA) program. A
student Christina Abel found that remind-
ing themselves of the start of their time abroad: “I didn’t talk very
much in the beginning, I didn’t want to try
anything new.”

Advice from students and PAs
So, do students struggle with
homesickness? How do they
prevent those emotions from getting in the way of having fun? Several FSU students were
willing to share how homesickness affected them and how they dealt with it.
In addition, the program assistants (PAs) of FSU Valencia shared how they help students
work through homesickness.

“I don’t really leave their apartments, they stay put,” Avery Abel says. “They
don’t really push themselves anymore. They
don’t try new restaurants or try new things.
A fellow PA, Chelsi Chang, also noticed this behavior in students suffering from
homesickness.

“Are there usually the kids that are sitting in
their room all day and don’t really want to talk
to people,” the says.

Martin agrees with these observations,

In addition, the program assistants (PAs)
of FSU Valencia shared how they help students
work through homesickness.

“Initially, those insights can help future
students combat what is a common
occurrence.

“Home” away from home
FSU has had a presence in Valencia for
nearly 20 years, so many students have
studied in this beautiful city. A student
can choose from several lengths of time
when planning a study abroad experience:
a full year, a full semester, or a sum-
ermative.

“Don’t be afraid to be independent,”

Parents’ peace of mind

Sierra, who herself is a parent to four children—one of whom studies in California and another
of whom studied in France—has some advice for parents.

“You don’t need to be calling your children
all the time and telling them what to do,” Si-

Part of not being afraid of your homesick-
ness is also not being afraid to talk about it.

Parents’ peace of mind

Sierra, who herself is a parent to four children—one of whom studies in California and another
of whom studied in France—has some advice for parents.

“You don’t need to be calling your children
all the time and telling them what to do,” Si-

Part of not being afraid of your homesick-
ness is also not being afraid to talk about it.

Parents’ peace of mind

Sierra, who herself is a parent to four children—one of whom studies in California and another
of whom studied in France—has some advice for parents.

“You don’t need to be calling your children
all the time and telling them what to do,” Si-

Part of not being afraid of your homesick-
ness is also not being afraid to talk about it.

Parents’ peace of mind

Sierra, who herself is a parent to four children—one of whom studies in California and another
of whom studied in France—has some advice for parents.

“You don’t need to be calling your children
all the time and telling them what to do,” Si-

Part of not being afraid of your homesick-
ness is also not being afraid to talk about it.

Parents’ peace of mind

Sierra, who herself is a parent to four children—one of whom studies in California and another
of whom studied in France—has some advice for parents.

“You don’t need to be calling your children
all the time and telling them what to do,” Si-
A server who customers know as Nacho brings popular espresso drinks to guests.

Paola and Patricio Lavin’s niece Danka works the café’s inside counter, calculating the price of an FSU student’s order.

The heart behind the corner cafe

After a full day of traveling from the U.S. to Valencia, luggage in hand and a big tower overhead, Florida State students have finally arrived at their home for the summer. Program assistants show the new arrivals to their apartments, so they can unpack and relax before FSU Valencia’s welcome dinner.

Students’ excitement is accompanied by hunger, but the apartment refrigerators are empty. After such a long trip overseas, the energy required to go grocery shopping is nonexistent. Instead, a student could ask for a quick snack to hold her over until dinner.

Voila. Only a few steps from the Garnet building is a small café on the street corner: Café Lavin.

Café Lavin, named after its hard-working Chilean owners, opened in 2009 when Paola and Patricio Lavin moved from Santiago, Chile, to Valencia for business purposes. Besides Paola and Patricio, other family members at Café Lavin are Catalina, their daughter, and Danka, their niece, who work as servers at Café Lavin.

The Lavins also employ servers who are not family members. As at many family restaurants, the hours at Café Lavin are generally long. In the summer, the café works day can run 16 hours or so.

At 7 a.m., Patricio generally sweeps and mops the patio in front of the café. The Lavins decided that Café Lavin was a perfect fit for Chef Gourmets, a meal plan provided to FSU students. For five years, Café Lavin has accepted Chequé Gourmets, a voucher worth seven euros. With seven euros, a student could purchase a Caesar salad and tea, or a pizza and coffee.

Daniel Hasty, a senior entrepreneurship major from Miami, uses the system by ordering a double-chicken-cheese sandwich and sparkling water with one Chequé.

“The servers know my go-to order and always remember that I like hot sauce with my sandwich,” Hasty says.

Another FSU student, while eating a fresh chicken empanada and wondering what to do with the rest of the day, overhears the servers’ plans to check out a local establishment not far from the café after their shift ends.

“France plays Belgium at 8 tonight,” the server says. “Let’s get a good spot after you’re done eating. All the FSU kids are going.”

The employees at Café Lavin interact with students, and the small talk exemplifies the mutual fondness between the Lavins family and students. Although the first language of all of the employees is Spanish, students put forth effort in getting to know their servers. Curiosity about the future sparks conversation, especially when socializing with servers who are also in their 20s.

“Have you ever been to America?” one student asks a server.

“How long have you been living in Valencia?”

“Since 2000,” the server replies.

“Are you a student here as well?”

“I got my degree from the Politecnica de Valencia to its own study center two years older than us.”

Although the owners of Café Lavin are originally from Chile, they are able to provide new study abroad students with advice on how to get around Valencia. Moreover, with almost 10 years of experience, the Lavin family has learned to adapt to FSU students’ schedules and needs. For example, Americans are accustomed to busy weekdays and generally visit restaurants just to order food and leave. At Café Lavin, cost efficiency and a quick pace keep students coming.

When working the morning shift, employees are prepared for students to ask for a coffee or croissant “to-go,” or para llevar. Students can expect to get a pastry and beverage for less than five euros. But in the Valencian dining culture, lunch is the biggest meal of the day, so employees are prepared for customers to sit for longer periods and to enjoy their meal and some conversation with their lunch companions.

The building in which Café Lavin is housed has been next-door neighbors with FSU since FSU moved to the neighborhood. In the fall of 2007, the Valencia study abroad program relocated from the dorms in the Universitat Politecnica de Valencia to its own study center near the Torres de Serranos, making the current FSU study center two years older than Café Lavin.

As a result, Dean and Program Director Ignacio Messana has watched Café Lavin grow throughout the years.

“Even though Café Lavin is a successful enterprise, Patricio does not expect the younger members of his family to continue the business. Instead, Patricio has different plans for Catalina, age 24, and Danka, age 22. “When working the morning shift, employees are prepared for students to ask for a coffee or croissant “to-go,” or para llevar. Students can expect to get a pastry and beverage for less than five euros. But in the Valencian dining culture, lunch is the biggest meal of the day, so employees are prepared for customers to sit for longer periods and to enjoy their meal and some conversation with their lunch companions.

The building in which Café Lavin is housed has been next-door neighbors with FSU since FSU moved to the neighborhood. In the fall of 2007, the Valencia study abroad program relocated from the dorms in the Universitat Politecnica de Valencia to its own study center near the Torres de Serranos, making the current FSU study center two years older than Café Lavin.

As a result, Dean and Program Director Ignacio Messana has watched Café Lavin grow throughout the years.

“Even though Café Lavin is a successful enterprise, Patricio does not expect the younger members of his family to continue the business. Instead, Patricio has different plans for Catalina, age 24, and Danka, age 22. “Once the final university bill is paid off, we will sell Café Lavin,” Patricio says.

Café Lavin’s clientele is generally a combination of locals, FSU students, and tourists. Business increases in the summer because many tourists visit the Torres de Serranos—a signature Valencian monument across the street from Café Lavin and the FSU Garnet building.

On a typical day, students and employees introduce themselves to one another and talk about their weekend plans and the different lifestyle back in Tallahassee. Meanwhile, FSU instructors are often spotted grading papers or having meetings with students at Café Lavin. The shaded corner location brings a cool breeze and offers relief from the intense Mediterranean summer sun.

Larry Gerber, an FSU emeritus music professor, takes advantage of the comfortable setting when indulging in the moderately priced, yet delicious, food. Gerber has taught periodically in Valencia since 2000 and has become well acquainted with the Lavins.

“They are committed, hard-working, and wonderful,” he said in summer 2018. “The pride they have in Café Lavin is reflected in the cleanliness, professionalism, and quality of their café.”

When it is time for FSU students to pack up and go back to the States, they know that they will greatly miss the conversations they had with the Lavins family and the servers at the café. Yet both the FSU students and the Lavin family are excited to see what the future holds and will always look back fondly to the memories they made at the corner café.

Top: Before opening hours, Café Lavin’s patio remains empty until sunrise.

Middle: Valencian locals at prime lunchtime hours.

Bottom: FSU Valencia students take a break from classes and studying.
Where are they now?

All articles and interviews on pages 22-25 by Lindsay Mead

Jenna Kelley

From Valencia student to weekend anchor

Jenna Kelley studied in the EWM Valencia program in 2016, and she graduated from FSU in the spring of 2018. She began her career as a weekend news anchor and weekday reporter at KLST in San Angelo, Texas in May 2018. Kelley was a theater kid in high school and she never really considered journalism as a career. After obtaining applicable internships throughout college, however, she realized that her love for writing and entertainment, plus her desire to be on air, could land her a successful career in broadcast journalism.

“It’s fun for me—and you can also change people’s lives in weird ways by telling people things they didn’t know before,” Kelley says. “It’s just I keep feeling like I’m doing things I enjoy and using my talent as much as possible. It’s a very one-person band,” Kelley says.

During the five-week program, students work together to create Nomadic Noles, the student-produced magazine for Valencia’s study abroad program (and the one you are now reading). Students in the program aspire to be writers, editors, news or entertainment broadcasters, and more. Meanwhile, some of the program’s alumni are already off to a strong start with their media careers. Among those are alumnae Jenna Kelley, Ashley Tressel, Gail Levy, and Victoria Messina. Their stories are told on the next four pages.

Q&A with Jenna Kelley

How did the Valencia EWM program prepare you for success in your career?

Was the Valencia EWM program what you thought it would be or was it different?

Was it what you thought it was going to be in the sense that it was better. It was more than what I expected because the classes show you all aspects of journalism through print, media, and that was something I really wanted to do. And it’s so much fun, I actually liked going to class, and the finished product is the coolest part of it all.

What advice would you give to students in the Valencia EWM program?

If you really like it, stick with it. You are not going to get paid a million dollars in your first job, but if you work really hard to get in the industry and you really like it, then be persistent and get involved with everything you possibly can. Build your resume. Make sure you have a website going with all your published work. Know your stuff, ask questions.

Q&A with Ashley Tressel

Why did you choose the EWM program?

Why did you choose the EWM program? Definitely because it gave me a chance to study in a different country. I knew I needed to get some of my extracurricular activities going in terms of different experiences.

What made your time in Valencia so memorable?

The culminating trip to Segovia. That was my first time overseas, and just getting to see a whole different world, seeing Europe and Spain itself—self-experiencing the food and the people and the buildings; it was all amazing.

Did you travel much on the weekends?

I did, yes. My friends and I went to Portugal, Amsterdam, and Brussels, Belgium. Portugal was my favorite but I liked Brussels a lot—it was a close second. We took a really fun waffle cooking class, which was really fun. I did, yes. My friends and I went to Portugal, Amsterdam, and Brussels, Belgium. Portugal was my favorite but I liked Brussels a lot—it was a close second. We took a really fun waffle cooking class, which was really fun.

What was your topic for the EWM magazine?

The culminating trip to Segovia. That was my first time overseas, and just getting to see a whole different world, seeing Europe and Spain itself—self-experiencing the food and the people and the buildings; it was all amazing.

Where are they now?

Jenna Kelley

From Valencia student to weekend anchor

Jenna Kelley during her time in Valencia, in front of the Plaza de la Virgen fountain.

Ashley Tressel

From Valencia student to the Pentagon

Ashley Tressel during her time as weekend anchor for news station KLST in San Angelo, Texas.

Ashley Tressel, right, with friends during FSU Valencia’s trip to Segovia, Spain.

F or Ashley Tressel, FSU’s Valencia EWM program in 2015 was her first time overseas, and the experience also was the first real reporting experience that she had.

“It was more than I thought it would be,” Tressel says. “I knew I was going there to get writing experience, but I had no idea that my teachers would have so much experience and so many things to teach us that are different from the traditional classroom.”

Tressel got her first taste of what her future career would look like when she wrote a political piece for Nomadic Noles about the mayoral election that took place in 2015 in València. Her first job after graduating from FSU in 2016 was with a twice-weekly newspaper in Mendocino County, California. After writing for a second daily newspaper in northern California, Tressel moved to Washington, D.C., where she works as an associate editor for Inside Defense, an independent, subscription-based newsletter that covers the U.S. military.

The publication’s audience is not the general public, she says, but is more defense contractors, lobbyists, and people in the services, “because they like to know what we are writing about.” She reports from the Pentagon and Capitol Hill, specifically on the U.S. Army at the Department of Defense.

“It’s not anything I thought I ever would be doing even a year ago,” Tressel says. “When I was in California, I thought I would take me five years to get to D.C., and it only took me a year.”

She moved to D.C. to be a political reporter but finds it interesting her career has shifted more toward national security, which she can see herself in for some time.

“I will definitely be doing my current job for a while,” she says. “I came to D.C. to be a political reporter, but now that I am closer to that environment, I am not sure it is the type of work I want. I think it’s interesting that I fell into the field of national security because that is something I think I could stick with. Maybe I could go work in intelligence or government business, and once I started doing internships, I realized I do want to be on-air,” she says. “News wasn’t always that interesting to me, but I realized if I’m the one on-air and the one being the storyteller, I may be interested in it. Now I am actually interested in it.”

Q&A with Ashley Tressel

Why did you choose the EWM program?

Definitely because it gave me a chance to study in a different country. I knew I needed to get some of my extracurricular activities going in terms of different experiences.

What was your topic for the EWM magazine?

The culminating trip to Segovia. That was my first time overseas, and just getting to see a whole different world, seeing Europe and Spain itself—self-experiencing the food and the people and the buildings; it was all amazing.

Did you travel much on the weekends?

Oh, definitely. I learned what goes into the story, how to craft a lead, how to write out the rest of your story. Also I learned how to take your research and your interviews and plan everything. I had zero knowledge whatsoever of being an actual reporter and the program gave me that first go at it. From spelling and grammar to Associated Press style, to the ethics of interviewing someone, I owe Susan and Jack so much for being able to go into my next internship with more knowledge.

Why did you choose to go in your direction with your career?

I had an inkling before I went to Spain that I wanted to be a journalist. But going through the program, I thought, “Yeah, this is definitely what I want.” I was sitting in the classes with people who wanted to go into public relations or any career that isn’t journalism. That’s what I wanted to do journalism.

What advice would you give to students in the Valencia EWM program?

Take advantage of the opportunity and just ask whatever questions you may have. Take in the local drink, eat patatas bravas, travel anywhere you want—really enjoy your time. And live like a local.
Gail Levy
From Valencia student to TV reporter

Levy, who graduated in May 2018. “I don’t know what I’m going to get when I head into that station.”

Her job consists of more than what most people imagine, people imagine, she says, including pitching her own stories, carrying her own equipment—70 pounds of gear. “Being an expert on the topic she is reporting on, and choosing the most important information to give to the public. That is the hardest part, she says. “I’m constantly talking to people and figuring out what he is saying that I need to know? while I’m interviewing that person,” Levy says. “I like it a lot, but it’s a very challenging job.”

After her two-year contract in Panama City Beach comes to a close, she hopes to be a TV reporter in her hometown, and then eventually become a national journalist. She knows making connections in her business is important for her future. “It’s all about connections you make because that’s how you get somewhere,” Levy says with a laugh. “I hopefully will meet somebody who wants to give me my own show.”

Did you learn anything in the program you apply to your career? Learning Photoshop really helped me learn about color balancing, because working in news reporting, you’re your own camera person and you are your own editor. It’s really easy for a camera to be too yellow or too blue, so that allowed me to recognize that.

Why did you decide to go in the direction of your career? Literally, since I was in fourth grade I knew this was what I wanted to do. I loved being in front of the camera. Eventually I would like to host my own talk show. The news aspect is a really good foot in the door for me and I’m learning all about the production end. But, I picked EWM as my focus because I knew the track is really broad, and I’ve always liked English. I also was able to take courses through the communication school that were geared toward news reporting.

What made you study abroad experience memorable? I loved the traveling. Traveling all over was something that was important to me because through that is you are also able to build your confidence. You realize “OK, I can get myself to Amsterdam, and I can get myself to France, and I’m going to be OK.” You don’t have to rely on your parents anymore. While in France, we were in Nice and we were able to go to Monaco, which are two of my favorite places in the world.

Why did you choose to participate in the program? The program went hand-in-hand with my EWM application, it knocked some credits out of the way. But I knew I wanted to study abroad, and if I were able to go back and do it again, I would stay for the full summer.

How was your experience of creating an issue of Nomadic Noles? I had the best experience with Nomadic Noles. I was able to work with Jack and Susan on my article and learn more about grammar and writing. Whatever I learned in elementary school, it’s just horrible. To get that time outside together really helped me. I recommend that to all students because that’s when they really take the time to be with you. When you’re in class, you have things going on after, and you want to get out right away, but taking that time outside of class to meet with them helped me with my article and really with my overall education.

One of the many views Gail Levy enjoyed during her travels abroad.

Q&A with Gail Levy
How did the EWM program prepare you for your career? Being in classes with Jack and Susan definitely helped me because they gave me a lot more confidence. I did a story on FSU archaeology Professor Juan Salazar when I was in Valencia. To actually get out and talk with Professor Salazar really helped me. I knew I wanted to be a journalist when I took the classes, but going through everything made me super proud. Then after, I thought, “You know what, I can do this. I’m done.” I’ve done this before; now I’ve just got to do it with a camera.” It’s always good to have people who believe in you, and Jack and Susan believe in me.

Victoria Messina
From Valencia student to POPSUGAR in New York City

Victoria Messina took a different path than the other three featured Valencia alumnae and the student abroad in the summer of 2014 through FSU’s rival school, the University of Florida. That summer was the start of her International Programs office, the EWM program, and Messina wrote an article about the history of FSU’s Valley study center buildings. Messina, who moved to New York City after her spring 2016 graduation, landed a job at POPSUGAR, an online magazine, where her title is assistant editor of trending and viral features. At work, she covers a wide range of topics from food to celebrities to fashion and popular TV shows, such as The Bachelorette.

“Every day, I write anywhere from two to five articles, depending on how popparsi things are, and I have to keep my eyes peeled on the internet at all times—think: Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and a few other sources for my next story opportunity,” she says. “I really have to have my finger on the pulse of what’s Trending each day, and if it’s something our readers will care about, I write about it. Once I get an article pitch approved by a higher-up editor, I write it.

In about an hour, Messina will write the copy, decide on a catchy headline, track down photos that the site is legally allowed to publish, and compile it up with writing when for the articles get shared on POPSUGAR’s official Facebook and Twitter pages. Messina, a New York through and through, student, saying that while her friends in high school dreamed English essay assignments, she “looked forward to writing my own words and quirky writing style on paper.”

The Long Island native, a journalism from UF and her work with her thesis over her time in college, Messina program in the summer of 2016 with EWM, the incoming magazine editor, and was a student reporter and editor for WJXT, Gainesville’s public television station.

“As nerdy as it sounds, crafting creative sentences that flow and paint a picture for the reader is something that gives me a lot of joy.”

When she was editor of POPSUGAR during her time there. She really worked hard to explore both Valencia and the surrounding area, saying that while her friends in high school dreamed American history essays, she “looked forward to writing my own words and quirky writing style on paper.”

“The Bachelorette”

It blew my mind that so many college students and it was memorable for so many reasons. Besides the fact that I had the opportunity to explore a beautiful city and was surrounded by such rich culture (and amazing food) for an entire month, it was so fascinating to go to class and live in such historic buildings. Also, it was really gratifying to get the print version of the newsletter a few months later because you can flip through the program just by flipping through the pages.

Why should FSU Valencia continue to offer the EWM program for students? I did a lot of research before deciding on the EWM program, and it’s one of the few options out there—or at least it was in 2014— that offers a writing-focused study abroad course. I appreciated that the EWM program was specifically made for students who were in EWM—or in my case, journalism—because you get so much out of school, saying that while her friends in high school dreamed American history essays, she “looked forward to writing my own words and quirky writing style on paper.”

Q&A with Victoria Messina
How did the Valencia EWM program help you for success in your career? The EWM program gave me a huge confidence boost in my writing and interviewing skills as I headed into my last year of college. I don’t think I would have made it to the Big Apple if I hadn’t picked EWM as my focus because I knew the program enough—it’s one of the few opportunities for immersing in the local culture. The location is so ideal because students are able to explore both Valencia and the surrounding area, saying that while her friends in high school dreamed American history essays, she “looked forward to writing my own words and quirky writing style on paper.”

Why do you think Valencia is an ideal location for the program to be held? Standing in the middle of Plaza de la Virgen.

Victoria Messina at Park Güell in Barcelona during a weekend adventure.

Q&A with Victoria Messina
What type of skillsets do you need to succeed in the program? You definitely have to work fast so you can meet those quick deadlines because the program flies by in five short but sweet weeks. You should definitely bring a camera because students are students are able to explore both Valencia and the surrounding area, saying that while her friends in high school dreamed American history essays, she “looked forward to writing my own words and quirky writing style on paper.”

How do students who attended the conference wanted you to meet people and explore a beautiful city and was surrounded by such rich culture. Also, it was really gratifying to get the print version of the newsletter a few months later because you can flip through the program just by flipping through the pages.

Why should FSU Valencia continue to offer the EWM program for students? I did a lot of research before deciding on the EWM program, and it’s one of the few options out there—or at least it was in 2014—thot offers a writing-focused study abroad course. I appreciated that the EWM program was specifically made for students who were in EWM—or in my case, journalism—because you get so much out of school, saying that while her friends in high school dreamed American history essays, she “looked forward to writing my own words and quirky writing style on paper.”

Why do you think Valencia is an ideal location for the program to be held? Standing in the middle of Plaza de la Virgen.

Victoria Messina at Park Güell in Barcelona during a weekend adventure.

Q&A with Victoria Messina
What type of skillsets do you need to succeed in the program? You definitely have to work fast so you can meet those quick deadlines because the program flies by in five short but sweet weeks. You should definitely bring a camera because students are students are able to explore both Valencia and the surrounding area, saying that while her friends in high school dreamed American history essays, she “looked forward to writing my own words and quirky writing style on paper.”

What type of skillsets do you need to succeed in the program? You definitely have to work fast so you can meet those quick deadlines because the program flies by in five short but sweet weeks. You should definitely bring a camera because students are students are able to explore both Valencia and the surrounding area, saying that while her friends in high school dreamed American history essays, she “looked forward to writing my own words and quirky writing style on paper.”

Nomadic Noles // Summer 2018
Nomadic Noles // Summer 2018
Cycling in the city

Experience Valencia the wheel way

By Alejandra Guzman

After arriving in Valencia, one of the first things I noticed was the number of people on bicycles. It seemed that they were all on different wavelengths; some coasting on the sidewalks, others speeding down busy streets and some coasting on the sidewalks, others speeding down busy streets and others speeding down busy streets and others speeding down busy streets and others speeding down busy streets and others speeding down busy streets and others speeding down busy streets. This is how I found myself gripping onto the handlebars for dear life, making my way toward the Playa de la Malvarrosa. Valencia is one of the fastest-growing cities in Spain and a major tourist hot spot. The area where FSU International Programs resides, El Carmen, is home to many cafes, shops, and–to my friends' delight, but my dismay– bicycle rental businesses.

One of these is PassionBike. Pier Leonardi owns this business, which is a couple of doors down from the Gold building, an FSU classroom and apartment building. For the bold and brave, renting bikes from Leonardi's shop only costs €8 for four hours. That's €8 to travel freely through the city, exploring the crevices you can't get to in a larger vehicle.

Or, you can even ride beyond the city. “Albufera is a very relaxed area, and you can only get there on a bicycle. It's guaranteed to be a beautiful day,” says Leonardi about L'Albufera de València, a natural park about seven kilometers south of the city with a freshwater lagoon that attracts thousands of migratory birds. “It’s no wonder that renting a bike is listed on TripAdvisor as one of the most popular things to do in Valencia. The city, which is flat, has over 120 kilometers of bike lanes, with most of them stretching to about 8 kilometers, a calming statistic for wimps like me. While I can personally vouch for PassionBike, there are bike shops on every street for whenever someone gets the urge to take off. The small neighborhood of El Carmen alone has more than a dozen rental shops within a couple of kilometers, as seen when one zooms out of a GPS application.

One has to wonder what has brought upon this surge in cycling when other systems of transit have existed efficiently for such a long time. Leonardi, a native of Italy who has lived in Valencia for 15 years and has been part of the rental sector for more than five years, says the cycling culture of Valencia has change drastically, associating the change with the dramatic increase in tourism in Valencia.

He's not wrong. Alcante Today, a local newspaper in a nearby Spanish city, states that from 2011 to 2015, tourism in Valencia went from 14 million visitors to 16 million, about a 15 percent increase in just four years. In this coastal beach city with its old Spanish architecture and lively night life, a breezy ride down the river bank calls the name of visitors and locals alike.

Many FSU students choose to travel through the bike lanes in the Turia Gardens, Valencia's beautiful riverbed that was transformed into a park and officially opened in 1986. It's a longer path compared to the lanes along the streets, and it's often congested with other cyclists, but the views cannot be beat.

For example, if students decide to rent a bike on a hot July day without a cloud in the sky, they'll come across several Valencian landmarks. Starting at the Torres de Serranos, students will pass the tempting smells coming from the Fira de Juliol, the soccer pitch inhabited by young boys dreaming of Lo Ligo, and the City of Arts and Sciences–a collection of buildings that propels visitors head-first into the future.

On one hand, cycling is the cheapest way to get lost in Valencia and enjoy it. On the other hand, when in a foreign country thousands of miles away from home base, it's important to remain vigilant. Leonardi affectionately describes many tourists as having their “head in the clouds,” as they explore the Mediterranean paradise.

But this paradise is not without its faults, he says. As with any large city, petty theft is an issue, and it's easy to leave a bicycle without locking it on a rack, believing the best of the locals. “Valencia is a very tranquil city, but tourists sometimes think that they can leave their bikes anywhere and nothing is going to happen,” Leonardi says. Rose-colored glasses are a very real phenomenon when on vacation, but we can't lose sight of the realities of most metropolitan areas.

Davis Crayner, a student who spent his entire summer in Valencia, experienced a scare when he rented bikes from Leonardi. “My friends and I made sure to pay attention to all the stoplights,” says Crayner, who still had to avoid an accident with a vehicle, an experience anyone who has ridden a bike knows is a possibility.

Reminders like this serve to keep tourists and study abroad students in check. No one wants to be preoccupied with reality when they are on vacation or studying abroad, but regardless of the beautiful scenery, anything can happen. Luckily, most rental shops also have helmets available, and business owners are happy to route customizers through the safest ways to their destination.

Despite the issues that surround the cycling culture in Valencia, many students highly recommend exploring the area on a bike.

PSU Valencia student Sabrina Janeiro took advantage of every opportunity she had to rent bike. “Riding bikes in Valencia just feels like the most appropriate way to get around here,” she said in summer 2018. “I studied abroad to be adventurous and do things I usually wouldn't do, so why would I sit in a taxi for 15 minutes when I could cycle and figure out my own way around this beautiful city?”

Although he might be a little biased, Leonardi believes the pros of having a bike heavily outweigh the cons, listing things such as the freedom it offers for the environment. There truly is something to be said about getting to your destination on your own accord while enjoying the open air.

EWM student Megan Crone-Clark considers cycling her favorite pastime in Valencia. “It’s a beautiful way to see the city while burning a couple of calories,” Crone-Clark says. “It’s definitely something I want to continue to do back home, maybe discover parts of my hometown that I’ve never seen before.”

There's no better feeling than that of being pleasantly surprised. As I pedaled out toward the former riverbed in the Mediterranean heat without a cloud in the sky, I began to see the appeal of the more arduous transit system. I could see the city from a perspective I hadn't before, freely flying by streets that I was beginning to recognize.

Most impressively, the bike lanes were wider than I'd ever seen in the U.S., and the more seasoned cyclists went around my clumsy pedaling. People say it's important to face your fears because the experiences that are worth it are never easy. So, not only did I rent a bike in Valencia—but I lived to tell the tale.

Bicyclists can ride their bikes to the western edge of the Turia greenway. The entire park is 9 kilometers in length.

Photo by Nomadic Noles staff
Students find retail therapy

Valencia’s main shopping area proves to be a comfort zone for some FSU students

By Erin Groves

If you are looking for a relaxed shopping day, Carrer de Colón is not the place for you. Located in the heart of Valencia, the Colón shopping street is the busiest beehive of all shopping districts in the city. If you do not know where you are going while on Colón Street, you must move aside because the locals and shopping veterans will rush past you.

“Many of my friends live above the stores on Carrer de Colón and have to navigate through the crowds of people to get to their daily jobs,” says Sofia Nordlund, an FSU program assistant (PA) who grew up at alternating times in Valencia and California. Added to the daily hustle and bustle of the Valencian locals getting to their respective jobs are the large numbers of tourists and shoppers looking to visit the shops and restaurants on Colón Street.

Valencia is the third largest city in Spain and has the shopping district to prove it. With a population of 822,000 people (according to worldpopulation.com), Valencia holds about the same number of people as Charlotte, North Carolina or San Francisco, California. As you can imagine, the shopping district gets quite crazy in Valencia.

“The shopping is very similar on Colón Street to back at home in California. I’m very glad because it makes me feel like I am back at home,” says Charlotte, North Carolina or San Francisco, California. As you can imagine, the shopping district gets quite crazy in Valencia.

“The shopping is very similar on Colón Street to back at home in California. I’m very glad because it makes me feel like I am back at home,” says Charlotte, North Carolina or San Francisco, California. As you can imagine, the shopping district gets quite crazy in Valencia.
S
ome Americans find the holidays in Novem-
ber and December to be the most wond-
erful of the year. But for anyone in Spain
during the months of July and August, the
rebajas season—or summer sales—may be the
best time.

Students who study abroad in Valencia during
the summer rebajas have plenty of options to replace
something they left behind in the U.S. or that they
ran out of while in their temporary home. Or, maybe
they just want to stock up on good buys. Whatever
the case, Valencia stores are flooded with essential
or extra products, ready to sell at prices likely not
found find elsewhere.

The rebajas season can be overwhelming to stu-
dents because there are so many stores that are
new to them. Those students who are in Valencia
for only half the summer might feel pressure to pur-
chase as many items as they can before their time
is up. “An item is almost like a souvenir, like wherever
you wear that shirt or dress you get, you will always
think of this trip,” says Jayla Butler, a junior market-
ing major who studied in Valencia during Summer
session of 2018 and who admits she felt pressured
by time constraints when shopping.

One thing to remember is that the most popular
items will sell out first, so if you’ve had your eyes on
a specific item it’s best to purchase it right away.

The rebajas season is an important time for retail-
ers because it gives them the opportunity not only
for extra cash flow but also to sell last season’s stock
and make room for the new season’s items. From
the little boutique at the corner of the street to big
department stores such as El Corte Ingles, store-
wide sales start from the beginning of July until the
end of August.

Stores advertise the season with big, red banners
and commercials, says Professor Jose-Luis Her-
vas-Oliver, who taught Basic Marketing Concepts
during the 2018 summer session in Valen-
cia. “But people know when rebajas are coming.”
Hervas-Oliver also is a professor at the Universidad
Politecnica de Valencia, where he teaches strategic
management and innovation studies.

A common mistake study-abroad students make
when shopping is thinking of an item’s price in dol-
ars instead of euros when looking at a potential
purchase. By not taking the conversion rate into ac-
count, they believe they are getting a steal, which
might not be the case. Hervas-Oliver says stores
help the customers by showing the original price
of the item along with the discount price, making it
easier for one to realize if they are getting a good
deal or not.

Still, remembering the conversion rate is impor-
tant. For example, on July 1, 2018, the amount of 50
euros was worth $58.37 in U.S. dollars.

Students scoop up buys during the summer sales

Another difference between sales in the
U.S. and sales in Spain is the taxes. In Flor-
da, when considering the final price of an
item, one has to calculate an additional 6 to 8
percent of what the price tag shows. But in
Spain, the tax is included in the final price.
This included tax is referred to by U.S. travel-
ers as the value added tax (VAT), while in
Spain the tax is officially known as IVA, or im-
uestos sobre el valor añadido. It amounts to
21 percent of the final price.

Students traveling in Spain can recover the
taxes incurred if the total bill is more than
90.15 euros, saving them a total of 21 per-
cent of the amount they spent. This refund
applies only to items you bring back to the
U.S. and not to consumable purchases such as
hotels, restaurants, and rentals.

When shopping, the best way to receive a
refund is to ask the clerk if the store is part of
the tax-free Spain refund service before
purchasing. The store will then fill out a form,
which can then be used to claim a refund
at the airport or sometimes even the store
itself. But these procedures can be compli-
cated, so students should consult a travel
website such as Rick Steves (https://www.
ricksteves.com) for more explanation and to
help them plan ahead.

To take a break from sightseeing to go shopping,
the Colón area in Valencia offers fa-
rous designers as well as affordable shops,
such as Pull and Bear, Zara, and Mango. With
the right approach, you can leave Colón
with a new wardrobe in just one afternoon.

With many stores to choose from, the ex-
pense can cause an adrenaline rush.
“I was super excited to shop because I
love shopping,” says Lauren Eustace, an FSU
marketing major. “When it comes to a sale, it
encourages me to shop even more. So yes, I
was excited.”

Still, the crush of people can be nerve-rack-
ing. And, as Hervas-Oliver points out, the
store associates get only quick, minimum
training for the rebajas season, “because
products sell themselves.” There is not
much customer service because of the large
crowds: “They do not ask questions, they just
take items,” he adds.

Eustace says she was nervous being in the
stores with so many people.
“The culture’s different, the language is
different,” she says. “It’s a little harder to get
what you’re looking for.”

A common mistake students make when
shopping is thinking about an item’s price in dol-
ars instead of euros when looking at a potential
purchase. By not taking the conversion rate into ac-
count, they believe they are getting a steal, which
might not be the case. Hervas-Oliver says stores
help the customers by showing the original price
of the item along with the discount price, making it
easier for one to realize if they are getting a good
deal or not.

Still, remembering the conversion rate is impor-
tant. For example, on July 1, 2018, the amount of 50
euros was worth $58.37 in U.S. dollars.

Locals and tourists shopping in and around El Corte Ingles on Carrer
de Colon. Students can find good deals with the right shopping tips.

Espadrilles have a Spanish history dating back to the early 14th century.
How has your academic experience in the U.S. influenced your life abroad?
My academic experience in Boston taught me the value of hard work. I was extremely fortunate in working with professors who were able to take the time to mentor me, people who helped me not only with the specific characteristics of my courses but also to encourage me to discover my own path. Later on, as a professor myself, I seek to emulate those instructors who did so much to shape my personal and professional development.

What do you like to do outside of work?
I try to remember how strange it all felt when (I first arrived in the U.S. in 1984). The city was so different, and I think that quite the reality check in that you're here for a definite period of time and that you can't (easily) go home. I encourage students not to run away from the differences between the two cultures but rather try to learn from them, and I try to participate in the local community as much as possible.

What changes have you seen changes in London?
There is a great deal of uncertainty as we approach the end of the Brexit negotiations. Whether that uncertainty is enough to prompt additional funds. And of course, we are all looking forward to seeing the Internship program grow. We have an amazing array of placements through which we can offer our students a wide range of experiences—whether interning in Parliament, at a Premier League football club, or in an internationally renowned museum or retail company, or at any of the 100+ opportunities available, our students participate in decision-making roles, take on additional responsibilities, and deliver work that will undeniably benefit them as they think through what they would like to do in the future and take control of their own lives.

What is the immigration process like for American students who have never been abroad?
We encourage students to immerse themselves in the local culture as much as possible in a number of ways. Walking around the city helps students gain an understanding of the different neighborhoods and how they fit together. This program is located in an English-speaking country, so what kind of cultural differences can the students expect?
This program is located in an English-speaking country, so what kind of cultural differences can the students expect?
It pays to know the local language, the U.K. and U.S. have much to discover about each other. Like any new arrival, our students come with a few stereotypes in mind, but it’s not long before the set expectations are gone. Students are able to work on increasing their vocabulary and language skills, which they can then use in their personal and professional lives. Whether that uncertainty is enough to prompt additional funds. And of course, we are all looking forward to seeing the Internship program grow. We have an amazing array of placements through which we can offer our students a wide range of experiences—whether interning in Parliament, at a Premier League football club, or in an internationally renowned museum or retail company, or at any of the 100+ opportunities available, our students participate in decision-making roles, take on additional responsibilities, and deliver work that will undeniably benefit them as they think through what they would like to do in the future and take control of their own lives.

What is the immigration process like for American students who have never been abroad?
We encourage students to immerse themselves in the local culture as much as possible in a number of ways. Walking around the city helps students gain an understanding of the different neighborhoods and how they fit together. This program is located in an English-speaking country, so what kind of cultural differences can the students expect?
This program is located in an English-speaking country, so what kind of cultural differences can the students expect?
It pays to know the local language, the U.K. and U.S. have much to discover about each other. Like any new arrival, our students come with a few stereotypes in mind, but it’s not long before the set expectations are gone. Students are able to work on increasing their vocabulary and language skills, which they can then use in their personal and professional lives. Whether that uncertainty is enough to prompt additional funds. And of course, we are all looking forward to seeing the Internship program grow. We have an amazing array of placements through which we can offer our students a wide range of experiences—whether interning in Parliament, at a Premier League football club, or in an internationally renowned museum or retail company, or at any of the 100+ opportunities available, our students participate in decision-making roles, take on additional responsibilities, and deliver work that will undeniably benefit them as they think through what they would like to do in the future and take control of their own lives.

What is the immigration process like for American students who have never been abroad?
We encourage students to immerse themselves in the local culture as much as possible in a number of ways. Walking around the city helps students gain an understanding of the different neighborhoods and how they fit together. This program is located in an English-speaking country, so what kind of cultural differences can the students expect?
This program is located in an English-speaking country, so what kind of cultural differences can the students expect?
It pays to know the local language, the U.K. and U.S. have much to discover about each other. Like any new arrival, our students come with a few stereotypes in mind, but it’s not long before the set expectations are gone. Students are able to work on increasing their vocabulary and language skills, which they can then use in their personal and professional lives. Whether that uncertainty is enough to prompt additional funds. And of course, we are all looking forward to seeing the Internship program grow. We have an amazing array of placements through which we can offer our students a wide range of experiences—whether interning in Parliament, at a Premier League football club, or in an internationally renowned museum or retail company, or at any of the 100+ opportunities available, our students participate in decision-making roles, take on additional responsibilities, and deliver work that will undeniably benefit them as they think through what they would like to do in the future and take control of their own lives.
Carlos Langoni, during a trip to Paestum, Italy, with his wife, Libelith.
interim rector, and a search for a new rector began. At the end of a nine-month search, my name surfaced among the top three candidates and, soon after, I was offered the position of rector of FSU Panama. I still remember my conversation with Dr. [James] Pitts when I told him I was still having second thoughts about accepting the position. He asked me to give it a try and, after a few years, I did not regret the decision. It was OK. Well, I believe I worked—I’ve been the rector since then.

How do you use your background in engineering and the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) fields to connect to your position at the Panama campus? Did you ever consider staying in the private sector?

I believe until I decided to go to graduate school, I had no plans for a career in academia. I started acquiring a taste for academia while working on my master’s, when I was given an opportunity to become a teaching assistant and eventually an instructor. After that, I realized I never had any thoughts about leaving academia.

When you first began at the Panama campus, did you foresee yourself becoming rector? What made you decide to pursue your position?

No, not at all. When I began, I was 100% focused on the teaching. Everything came naturally and gradually, little by little, getting involved in the planning, and then the decision-making. For quite some time, I was able to balance between academics and administration. It was not until about five years ago when I became a full-time administrator.

Your campus has students attending from over 100 countries. How do you ensure student success in mingling with each other from such different backgrounds?

Much has to do with being inclusive. We have an emphasis on issues related to diversity. Of course, there are cultural differences, even inside that group, but there are more similarities. Catering for the other groups, like U.S. students and Europeans, is a little more challenging. What makes it easier is that, among those, they all come to Panama with the excitement of immersing themselves into something new that they are eager to discover and, of most of the times, they come with an open mind. It’s a matter of controlling that excitement, assisting them through the process of adapting to a new society, a new culture. The more you have an open mind is essential for their success, the willingness to accept that others may think differently from you, yet you can learn from those experiences.

What is the current enrollment at FSU-ROP and how many of those students are study abroad students from FSU’s Tallahassee campus?

The current enrollment at FSU-Panama ranges between 400 to 480 students. Of those, only a few are from the Tallahassee campus. This fall we have only six; usually it ranges between six to 20.

What impact have your students had on you?

Dealing with students as a teacher, as a counselor, as a mentor has helped me to be more tolerant. It also helped me be more appreciative of the need to find alternative ways to get ideas across and to find a balance between challenging the more talented students but, at the same time, being supportive of others who might face difficulties.

How do you help integrate the Spanish language in the curriculum?

When I was appointed interim rector, bringing stability to the campus. Then, when I was ratified as rector at the end of the search, and the years that followed, we opened the university in the transition to the new campus in the City of the Knowledge and overseeing the construction of the new building in the City of the Knowledge. Still pending in our list are improvements to the current enrollment at FSU-ROP, making sure that the program remains viable for many years to come.

The U.S. invaded Panama in 1989, leading to Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega’s ouster. How did that affect the FSU-ROP campus?

That, of course, was a difficult period—actually, the two-year period preceding the invasion, living under an anti-democratic military regime and the constant confrontations between the Noriega regime and the U.S. that followed. I think the excitement of having Noriega out of the picture is what prevailed. The campus life was gradually restored to normalcy within a one-year period.

What hobbies and pastimes do you enjoy?

By far, the most enjoyable hobby nowadays is being a grandpa. I absolutely love spending time with my grandchildren [Gustavo and Fabiana], so that’s what I do whenever possible.

Could you describe the Panama program in one sentence?

Diversity.

Is there anything that you would like to add?

I would only add that I absolutely love my job—I wouldn’t do anything different. I am very grateful to FSU for all of the opportunities given to me, as well as for the opportunity to have my three sons [Gustavo, Diego, and Rodrigo] graduate as Seminoles.

Student editor Audrey Caraher conducted this email interview.
What are your official titles with Florida State and the Florence International Program? How long have you been with the Florence Program?

My official title is Director of Florida State University International University Programs, Italy. My affiliation with FSU’s Florence Program is a long one. Basically, I’m a true testament of how the Florence Program can change the direction of a student’s future. I was a major at FSU from 1990-94, and as an undergrad I decided to do the Florence program my senior year at the insistence of one of my humanities teachers. So, I’m an FSU alum from 1994. Then I came back as a graduate student in FSU’s Department of Art History in 2005 to teach the ARH 2000: Art, Architecture, and Artistic Vision classes. Since then I’ve worked here canonically as a graduate assistant in Florence for a short time and remained an adjunct faculty member since then. In spring 2016, our long-term former director retired, and I received a call from Tallahassee asking me if I’d be interested in the job. I’ll never forget it. I had taken a year off from teaching and was working as a kayak attendant in a national wildlife refuge on the Apalachicola River. I received the call while I was in the middle of kayaking in the mangrove forests of Tarpon Bay. I almost fell out of the boat.

How many students per year study with the Florence Program?

I think that this was the last calendar year or so, around 450 students will have studied at the Florence Program.

Where were you born? Do you have dual citizenship?

I’m just a blue-collar guy from the suburbs of New Jersey. Yes, I have dual citizenship. I was able to get it through my great-grandparents on my father’s side, who were both born in southern Italy in a region called Molise. They emigrated to New Jersey in 1912. It’s a funny story, really, about how I inherited my citizenship, which almost got by accident. Back in 2001, a friend and I took a road trip to my great-grandparents’ hometown, a stereotypical small Italian hilltop town with only a few hundred people and rundown buildings scorched by the sun with stray dogs laying around everywhere. I wanted to see the place that my grandmother had always talked to me about. This town is called San Buono in Italian means a rifle for shooting wolves. When we got there, there was only one café in the whole village, and while my friend dis- tracted the barista, I went in the phone booth and tore out the page in the phonebook that had all of the people with my same last name. And then basically we went door-to-door trying to find my great-grandparents. After getting many strange looks and doors slammed in our faces, I lost hope, and the whole town ended up being related to me in one way or another. They put us up for almost a week, and I think I gained at least a couple of pounds from all of the food they made for us. Anyway, we basically ended up there in the city hall, and he made official copies of all of my great-grandparents’ documents so I could bring them back and show my dad and grandfather. Years later, those documents were why I was able to get my dual citizenship, and they are really the reason why I can work in Italy for the program today.

Could you briefly describe your education background, including degrees, institutions, and dates?

Ph.D. candidate at FSU in the Department of Art History, because now we collaborate even more closely with the old department on campus, the Department of Art History, because now we collaborate even more closely with the old department on campus, the Department of Classics, who is one of the biggest space observatories; classes in Italian language and literature; and ed business classes, a psychology course, and an American novels I’ll probably never write. I like to cook sometimes too, or wander around the same streets where Galileo, Michelangelo, Mar- chiavelli, Donatello, Leonardo, Machiavelli, Gioc- ci, Amerigo Vespucci, and Dante walked. Even after all these years, it still gives me the chills.

Could you please describe the Florence personnel?

Our goal is to combat biases, combat mis-ceptions about difference, combat the things that divide us, and to use the experi- ence we’ve had in Florence (good and bad), to use the Florence program as a platform for new and language cultures and new cuisine we have learned to appreciate, on our own and through our professors and Florence- time friends, as something to bring back home to our students (in Florida State), friends, and family. We want to make sure everyone—our students, faculty, alumni—have the best experience possible. Like all families, there are difficul- ties, but they are always solved.

What changes have you already made and hope to make as the new director?

I myself haven’t made any changes. It truly is a collaborative effort between me, Lucia, and the rest of the staff, as well as International Programs. Another proactive change is that we are begin- ning to reach out more to our Florence alumni. We want them to be aware of how the program is doing, and we want them to know they will always have a home here. Former students are always coming back to Florence, and we are excited to get to know them.

What is your favorite part about living in Florence?

I should say the art, but come on, it’s the food. The only problem is I’m starting to get a pizza and pasta belly. I have to get back in the gym.

What do you like to do outside of work?

Listen to old school Bruce [Springsteen] and [Frank] Sinatra—or think up all of the great American novels I probably never write. I like to cook sometimes too, or wander around the same streets where Galileo, Michelangelo, Ma- chiavelli, Donatello, Leonardo, Machiavelli, Gioc- ci, Amerigo Vespucci, and Dante walked. Even after all these years, it still gives me the chills.

Could you please describe the Florence program?

Our goal is to combat biases, combat mis-ceptions about difference, combat the things that divide us, and to use the experi- ence we’ve had in Florence (good and bad), to use the Florence program as a platform for new and language cultures and new cuisine we have learned to appreciate, on our own and through our professors and Florence- time friends, as something to bring back home to our students (in Florida State), friends, and family. We want to make sure everyone—our students, faculty, alumni—have the best experience possible. Like all families, there are difficul- ties, but they are always solved.

What challenges have you already faced as the new director?

“Unlucky lies the head that wears a crown.” I just want to make sure everyone—one—the students, staff, faculty, alumna—have the best experience possible. Like all families, there are difficul- ties, but they are always solved.

What changes have you already made and hope to make as the new director?

I myself haven’t made any changes. It truly is a collaborative effort between me, Lucia, and the rest of the staff, as well as International Programs. Another proactive change is that we are begin- ning to reach out more to our Florence alumni. We want them to be aware of how the program is doing, and we want them to know they will always have a home here. Former students are always coming back to Florence, and we are excited to get to know them.

What is your favorite part about living in Florence?

I should say the art, but come on, it’s the food. The only problem is I’m starting to get a pizza and pasta belly. I have to get back in the gym.

What do you like to do outside of work?

Listen to old school Bruce [Springsteen] and [Frank] Sinatra—or think up all of the great American novels I probably never write. I like to cook sometimes too, or wander around the same streets where Galileo, Michelangelo, Ma- chiavelli, Donatello, Leonardo, Machiavelli, Gioc- ci, Amerigo Vespucci, and Dante walked. Even after all these years, it still gives me the chills.

Could you please describe the Florence program?

Our goal is to combat biases, combat mis-ceptions about difference, combat the things that divide us, and to use the experi- ence we’ve had in Florence (good and bad), to use the Florence program as a platform for new and language cultures and new cuisine we have learned to appreciate, on our own and through our professors and Florence- time friends, as something to bring back home to our students (in Florida State), friends, and family. We want to make sure everyone—our students, faculty, alumni—have the best experience possible. Like all families, there are difficul- ties, but they are always solved.

What changes have you already made and hope to make as the new director?

I myself haven’t made any changes. It truly is a collaborative effort between me, Lucia, and the rest of the staff, as well as International Programs. Another proactive change is that we are begin- ning to reach out more to our Florence alumni. We want them to be aware of how the program is doing, and we want them to know they will always have a home here. Former students are always coming back to Florence, and we are excited to get to know them.

What is your favorite part about living in Florence?

I should say the art, but come on, it’s the food. The only problem is I’m starting to get a pizza and pasta belly. I have to get back in the gym.

What do you like to do outside of work?

Listen to old school Bruce [Springsteen] and [Frank] Sinatra—or think up all of the great American novels I probably never write. I like to cook sometimes too, or wander around the same streets where Galileo, Michelangelo, Ma- chiavelli, Donatello, Leonardo, Machiavelli, Gioc- ci, Amerigo Vespucci, and Dante walked. Even after all these years, it still gives me the chills.

Could you please describe the Florence program?

Our goal is to combat biases, combat mis-ceptions about difference, combat the things that divide us, and to use the experi- ence we’ve had in Florence (good and bad), to use the Florence program as a platform for new and language cultures and new cuisine we have learned to appreciate, on our own and through our professors and Florence- time friends, as something to bring back home to our students (in Florida State), friends, and family. We want to make sure everyone—our students, faculty, alumni—have the best experience possible. Like all families, there are difficul- ties, but they are always solved.

What changes have you already made and hope to make as the new director?

I myself haven’t made any changes. It truly is a collaborative effort between me, Lucia, and the rest of the staff, as well as International Programs. Another proactive change is that we are begin- ning to reach out more to our Florence alumni. We want them to be aware of how the program is doing, and we want them to know they will always have a home here. Former students are always coming back to Florence, and we are excited to get to know them.

What is your favorite part about living in Florence?

I should say the art, but come on, it’s the food. The only problem is I’m starting to get a pizza and pasta belly. I have to get back in the gym.

What do you like to do outside of work?

Listen to old school Bruce [Springsteen] and [Frank] Sinatra—or think up all of the great American novels I probably never write. I like to cook sometimes too, or wander around the same streets where Galileo, Michelangelo, Ma- chiavelli, Donatello, Leonardo, Machiavelli, Gioc- ci, Amerigo Vespucci, and Dante walked. Even after all these years, it still gives me the chills.

Could you please describe the Florence program?

Our goal is to combat biases, combat mis-ceptions about difference, combat the things that divide us, and to use the experi- ence we’ve had in Florence (good and bad), to use the Florence program as a platform for new and language cultures and new cuisine we have learned to appreciate, on our own and through our professors and Florence- time friends, as something to bring back home to our students (in Florida State), friends, and family. We want to make sure everyone—our students, faculty, alumni—have the best experience possible. Like all families, there are difficul-
THANKS TO FSU VALENCIA...
Florida State University students in the 2018 Summer Editing, Writing, and Media courses offer their views—in images and in words—on what made the study abroad experience memorable.

Thanks to FSU Valencia, I made the friends of a lifetime. As a senior, it’s hard to imagine you’ll meet any new people who will have an impact on your life, but the friends I made abroad will surely be friends for a long time.

Alejandra Guzman

Thanks to FSU Valencia, I immersed myself in a culture different from mine, alongside the best new friends I could have asked for.

Erin Groves

Thanks to FSU Valencia, I got to live right outside Plaza de la Virgen. I loved hanging around there in my free time, admiring centuries-old architecture and listening to local artists busk for tips.

Danielle Brown

Thanks to FSU Valencia, I was able to fulfill my dreams of traveling, trying new foods, experiencing new cultures, and seeing some of the most beautiful things this world has to offer.

Audrey Caraher

Thanks to FSU Valencia, I was able to eat some of the best food of my life, including waffles on a stick with chocolate drizzle and rainbow sprinkles.

Ashley Gray

Thanks to FSU Valencia, I made so many memories with friends that will last for a lifetime.

Lindsay Mead
THANKS TO FSU VALENCIA...

Florida State University students in the 2018 Summer Editing, Writing, and Media courses offer their views—in images and in words—on what made the study abroad experience memorable.

Thanks to FSU Valencia, I had the opportunity to experience life at a different pace and live next to architecture that looks even better at night than it does during the day.

Allison Notari

Thanks to FSU Valencia, I had the chance to see some beautiful terrain and possibly the biggest mountains I have ever seen.

Mia Dennery

Thanks to FSU Valencia, I enjoyed some of the best views in the world with some amazing new friends. These experiences are something I am so thankful for and will never forget.

Meg Croney-Clark

Thanks to FSU Valencia, I went from thinking I would never leave the East Coast to becoming obsessed with exploring new countries and experiencing new cultures.

Lauren Martin

Thanks to FSU Valencia, I went to visit main city centers in Spain such as Madrid and Toledo, but I treasured a visit to El Palmar, home to the Albufera, paella, and vast rice fields.

Tomas Cabezas

Thanks to FSU Valencia, I experienced my first Gay Pride Parade. Love and acceptance filled the air June 16, when locals, tourists, and FSU students walked in support of gay pride.

Alexandra Wendling

Thanks to FSU Valencia, I was able to explore the world with a great group of friends.

Maria Velez
ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

STUDENT EDITORS
Danielle Brown
Audrey Caraher
Mia Dennery

Danielle Brown
Danielle prefers the first name Dani, and she is a senior majoring in English on the editing, writing, and media (EWM) track, with a minor in psychology. In addition, she is a founding member, author, and editor in chief of Spire Magazine, a college-based web publication at FSU. She is a native Tallahasseean and spends her free time swing dancing with the Swing Dance Club at FSU.

Tomas Cabezas
Tomas is a junior double majoring in English (EWM) and media and communication studies and minorning in history. Born and raised in West Palm Beach, Florida, Tomas enjoys paddle boarding, kayaking, swimming, and everything outdoors when the heat and humidity aren’t boiling hot. He expects to graduate in spring 2020 and hopes to attend law school in California to study entertainment and mass media law.

Audrey Caraher
Audrey Caraher is a junior working toward a double major in English (EWM) and media/communication studies. Raised in the Fort Lauderdale, Florida suburb of Coral Springs, with three younger siblings, Audrey is passionate about her family and friends and loves going to the beach. After graduation in May 2020, Audrey hopes to move to Atlanta in search of a writing and/or an editing position for the lifestyle section of a publication.

Meg Coney-Clark
Meg Coney-Clark is a senior English (EWM) major, with a minor in communication. Raised in South Florida and of Haitian descent, Mia dreams of living on the beach one day.

Mia Dennery
Mia, a third-year English (EWM) major, worked as a writer and editor for this year’s Nomadic Nole. Minorning in communication, she hopes to develop her writing and marketing skills to thrive in the growing marketing industry. Raised in South Florida and of Haitian descent, Mia dreams of living on the beach one day.

Ashley Gray
Ashley is a senior and majoring in humanities with a communication focus. Born and raised in Saint Petersburg, Florida, she enjoys going to the beach and playing with her pup. After college, she hopes to return to the Tampa Bay area. While she is still unsure of her exact career path, she hopes to find a job in journalism or public relations.

Erin Groves
Erin is a senior majoring in English (EWM) and a minor in communication. She was raised in Sarasota, Florida, with her younger brother Michael. Erin is always looking to have the best time possible while rarely being serious. After graduation in spring 2019, Erin is uncertain of what the future holds but is certain that it will be bright.

Alejandra Guzman
Alejandra was born and raised in Miami, Florida. She is a senior double majoring in English (EWM) and advertising. She loves to binge watch bad television and hang out with her French bulldog, Kodak.

Lexi Wendling
Lexi, a third-year media/communication major from Fairfax, Virginia, strives for a career in sports broadcast journalism. At 19 years old, she became the youngest person to hold the public announcer job for FSU women’s volleyball. Her long-term goals include reporting for UFC Live and hosting American Ninja Warrior.

Lauren Martin
Lauren is an English major (EWM). She also is a writer and junior social media director for Her Campus FSU, as well as a key holder at The Copper Closet, her favorite local boutique. Lauren loves that her jobs allow her to combine her two passions, fashion and writing.

Lindsay Mead
Lindsay is a senior who is majoring in English (EWM) and minorning in communication. Upon graduation in December 2018, she plans to move back to her hometown of Jacksonville, Florida, to work in public relations and social media. Her favorite things are avocados, traveling, and The Bachelorette.

Allison Notari
Allison is a senior majoring in English (EWM) with a minor in communication. A Florida native, she hopes to attend law school after graduating in spring 2019. When not researching her next travel destination, she is drinking obscene amounts of coffee and re-watching John Mulaney’s standup specials on Netflix.

Maria Velez
Maria is a senior majoring in English (EWM) with a minor in communication. After graduating in spring 2019, Velez hopes to land a public relations position with a prominent fashion company. She has worked at Ann Taylor Loft for over two years, so Ann Inc. is her top choice.

Maria is a senior majoring in English (EWM) with a minor in communication. After graduating in spring 2019, Velez hopes to land a public relations position with a prominent fashion company. She has worked at Ann Taylor Loft for over two years, so Ann Inc. is her top choice.

Lauren Martin
Lauren is an English major (EWM). She also is a writer and junior social media director for Her Campus FSU, as well as a key holder at The Copper Closet, her favorite local boutique. Lauren loves that her jobs allow her to combine her two passions, fashion and writing.

Lindsay Mead
Lindsay is a senior who is majoring in English (EWM) and minorning in communication. Upon graduation in December 2018, she plans to move back to her hometown of Jacksonville, Florida, to work in public relations and social media. Her favorite things are avocados, traveling, and The Bachelorette.

Allison Notari
Allison is a senior majoring in English (EWM) with a minor in communication. A Florida native, she hopes to attend law school after graduating in spring 2019. When not researching her next travel destination, she is drinking obscene amounts of coffee and re-watching John Mulaney’s standup specials on Netflix.

Maria Velez
Maria is a senior majoring in English (EWM) with a minor in communication. After graduating in spring 2019, Velez hopes to land a public relations position with a prominent fashion company. She has worked at Ann Taylor Loft for over two years, so Ann Inc. is her top choice.