

Postscript

My fieldwork in Mongolia, combined with a semester spent abroad in Turkey, has unquestionably affected my current interests and goals. In part because of my experiences abroad studying both geology and international relations, I am now interested in working and researching in the fields of hydrogeology and water resources management, specifically in developing countries and in regions where water resources are shared by multiple states. In these areas, a lack of knowledge or communication about what water is available and how it is being used and developed can lead to environmental, social, and national security problems.

Completing research abroad helped me to recognize the challenges involved with translating ideas between different languages, institutional cultures, and geographic regions. It also helped me to realize how important these translations are to collecting information and developing theories that accurately reflect this world. So far as I can tell, this is as true in almost any other field as it is in geology. With so much research being done in the US, and so much literature available in English, it is easy for American college students to overlook the missing or inaccurate data that results from poor communication between regions and countries. The best way for students to see these challenges, and their practical and academic effects, is to study abroad.