

This, our second in a series of Special Issues highlighting undergraduate research abroad, continues a fruitful collaboration between *Frontiers* and the Forum on Education Abroad. Our purpose is to publish what we believe are some of the very best examples of study abroad learning. Our shared hope is that students, faculty, and education abroad professionals will find inspiration in these pages and consider ways that they might incorporate research into study abroad programming.

The selection of the papers for this volume began with the Forum's Undergraduate Research Award. The two winners of the award were Emily Kanstrom and Colin Smith, and they were invited to submit their papers to *Frontiers* for consideration. An additional 12 students who were ranked highly by the selection committee were also asked to submit their papers to *Frontiers*. The *Frontiers* editorial board recommended those included in this volume for publication.

This volume includes impressive articles that reflect the variety of learning experiences in which our students abroad are engaged. The research paradigm is a powerful one for engaging students actively in a host culture and society. The students represented in this volume utilized a wide range of interpersonal, intercultural and analytical skills to carry out their research, and in the process it is clear that they learned a tremendous amount about their topics, the host nationals with whom they lived, and about themselves. What comes through in reading these papers is the way in which study abroad can be a process of maturation during which students discover confidence in themselves as learners.

Readers will recall that in our first Special Issue we asked on-campus faculty advisors to write about the importance of the students' research within the context of the home campus curriculum and the students' academic major. For this volume we wanted to take a different approach and ask on-site directors and faculty familiar with the students' work to write about the research from their perspective. These reflections appear after each student article, and together they help us to understand the framework for each student's research.

We are committed to tracing the outcomes of these students' learning by asking previous student authors to provide updates about their lives and how their experience abroad continues to impact them. As we might have predicted, these students have continued to engage the world in very interesting and valuable ways. We hope that you enjoy these updates and the ones that will appear in future volumes.

Special thanks to Lee Miller of Sam Houston State University who coordinated the Undergraduate Research Awards and the mentoring of the students who presented at the 2005 Forum conference. Lee worked with the selection

committee that chose the winners and that nominated the other students who were invited to submit their papers. A full description of the selection process is available on the Forum web site at [www.forumea.org](http://www.forumea.org).

Thanks also to Paul Houlihan of the School for Field Studies for his thoughtful introduction to this volume, which helps us to look at study abroad from the perspective of the on-site faculty and staff who receive students. Paul points out several useful ways in which home campuses can better prepare students for research abroad

The Forum Undergraduate Research Awards are now in their third year and is a project of the Forum's Committee on Outcomes Assessment. We believe that honoring students for their research and publishing fine examples of study abroad academic work helps both to raise the bar for rigorous study abroad and to document learning outcomes. The Committee welcomes nominations and applications for the Undergraduate Research Awards from all Forum member institutions.

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