



JOHNSON & WALES
UNIVERSITY

STUDY ABROAD RE-ENTRY



Readjusting
Staying Involved
Marketing Your Experience

Johnson & Wales University

International Center

Experiential Education & Career Services

INTRODUCTION & CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Studying abroad is more than taking classes in a new setting. It is more than having a good time with friends while exploring a new country. It is truly a profound, life-changing experience. Your perceptions of the world have changed, and your perception of yourself has probably changed as well. That is normal. It is one of the benefits of going abroad. Now, you are looking at bringing that experience home.

Just like there were challenges and opportunities that you faced when going abroad on your program, there are also challenges and opportunities for you after completing the program and returning home. How do you, with your new experiences and worldview, adjust to being home? What do you do with this amazing experience that you have had? How can you fit it into your life in your home culture? Are there ways to continue to have these experiences in your career? How do you use this experience to help get a job?

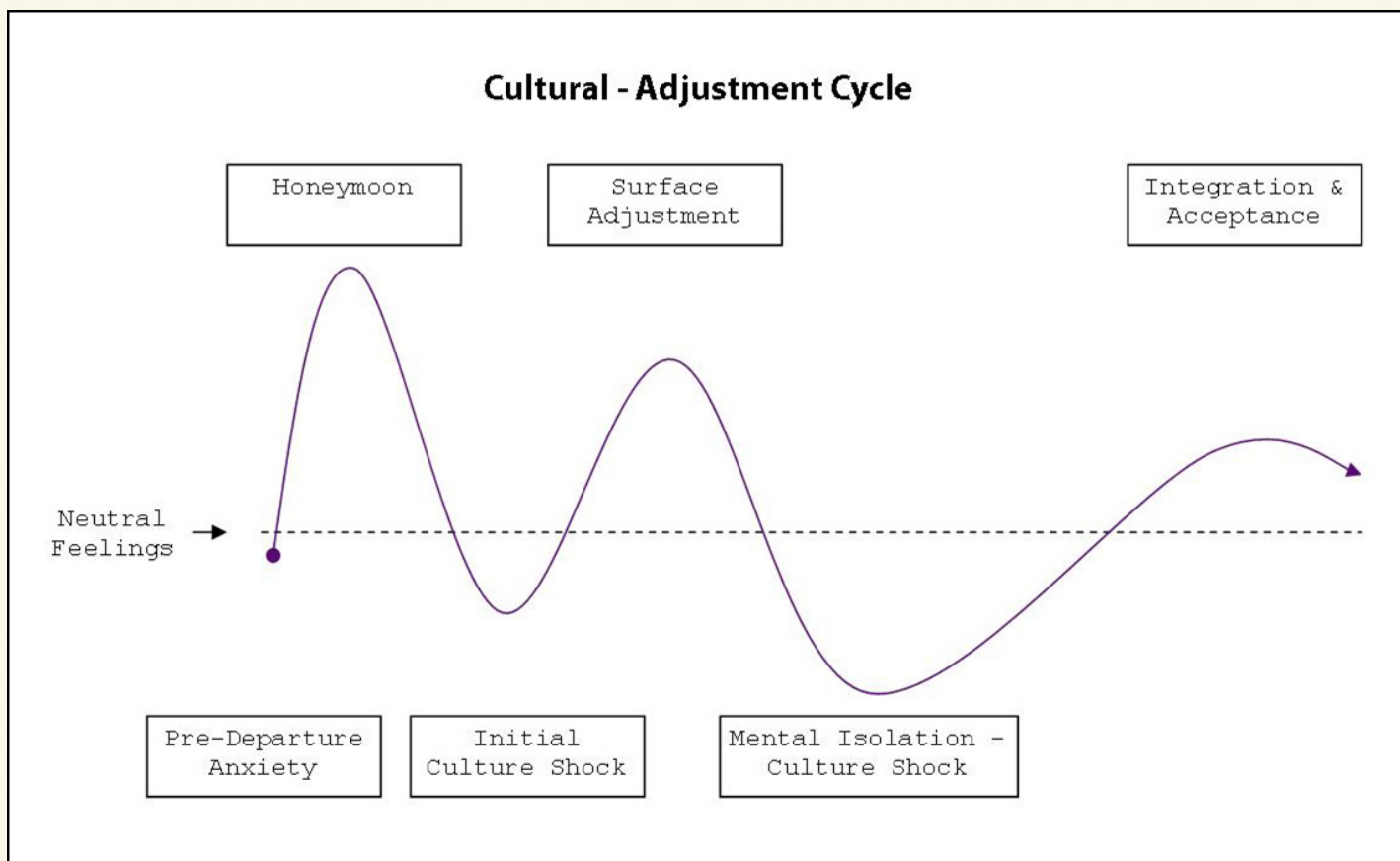
This booklet is designed to assist you in addressing those challenges and seizing the opportunities that you have. It is not meant as an academic publication, but as a simple guide to provide basic information that you need as you re-enter your home country. It focuses on three aspects of the re-entry process: reintegrating, building on your international experience, and using your international experience as you plan your career.



We hope this guide will help you more easily pass into the next stage of your adventure. You cannot see all of the challenges and opportunities ahead, but this will help prepare you.

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REINTEGRATION

It is normal to face challenges after returning home from another country. Almost everyone who goes abroad experiences it.

You may remember the Cultural-Adjustment Cycle chart above from your Study Abroad Pre-departure Orientation. If you kept a journal, diary, or blog of your experiences abroad, you could mark each entry at a point on the chart. Most likely, your emotional experience was chronologically very similar to the chart.

All students go through at least part of that cycle, and most of them are able to make adjustments to have a successful study abroad experience. After making those adjustments and rising to the challenges of being in another culture, you may not give much thought to the challenges you face when you return home. After all, home is where you know what time to arrive at an event, where you know in what order you will receive your salad and entrée, where you know how to navigate the bathrooms, where your family and good friends are, and where you understand people and they understand you. At least, that may be how you remember it.

REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK

REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK

Just as you faced some challenges when going abroad, you should expect to face some challenges when returning home. Most of these challenges contribute to or are the result of reverse culture shock. There are many definitions of reverse culture shock, but they can be synthesized into the statement below.

Reverse culture shock is:

- (a) The process of readjusting to living in your home culture after living in another culture and
- (b) The emotional and physical response of that readjustment process.

STAGES

There are stages of reverse culture shock:

1. **Disengagement:** While still in your host culture, you may already begin to miss friends that you have made or your host family in the host country. You may be hesitant to leave and are not ready for the adventure to end.
2. **Initial Euphoria:** This typically begins while still in the host culture as well. However, at this stage, often immediately leading up to your return, you become excited about going home. You may have an idealized version of what awaits you. You may be ready to relax in the familiarity of home without the stresses that you faced while abroad. You may even think that your time abroad has been fun but that it is time to return to “normal” life. This stage can even extend into the first days back in your home culture.



It is common to still feel a little out of place.

3. **Irritability & Hostility:** After returning home, you may feel out of place and disoriented. Perhaps you are more irritable, or you are frustrated or depressed. Things may not seem like how you remembered them while you were abroad.
4. **Readjustment & Adaptation:** Gradually, you readjust and find some comfort in the old routines while also acknowledging that you have changed and are not the same person you were before you left. You begin to bring together the positive aspects of your experience abroad with the positive aspects of being home.

REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK



Stay connected with the friends
you made abroad.

HOW YOU EXPERIENCE IT

People experience reverse culture shock differently. Typically, the more profound your experiences abroad were, the more difficult you may find adjusting to life back home. Three factors that contribute to this are:

- Length of stay
- Relationships
- How much your host culture/s changed you

Other factors after returning home can also cause differences in people's experiences, such as opportunities they have to interact with people from their former host culture, the opportunities they have to share their experience with others, and their own unique personalities.

SYMPTOMS

Despite the different ways that people experience reverse culture shock, many returnees experience similar symptoms of it:

- Alienation or withdrawal
- Feelings of resistance toward family and friends
- Boredom, frustration, or uncertainty
- Reverse homesickness
- Negativity toward behaviors of their home culture

WHY REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK?

You may notice that some of these symptoms are similar to the symptoms of culture shock when first going abroad. Looking back on your experience going to your host country helps to understand some of the reasons why.

As part of the initial culture shock cycle, the home culture that you carry with you may conflict with the host culture. You go through a process of making adjustments and adapting to the host culture: You become accustomed to new ways of thinking, interacting with people, and living. You internalize some of those new ways. Then, when returning home, you carry aspects of that host culture with you that may conflict with your home culture. In this way, reverse culture shock is similar to the initial culture shock when going abroad: a sense of clashing values, worldviews, and behaviors.

COMMON CHALLENGES

This, of course, is not completely explanatory of what you may experience when returning home. There are other factors involved. Here are a few of them:

- While abroad, it is much easier to think of every day as being full of adventure and offering things to learn.
- While abroad, it is easier to feel important: People give you more attention because you are a foreigner, and people give more weight to your words because they see you as a representative of an entire country or culture, whereas, upon returning home, people may see you as just another person.
- Those who knew you before you left may want, expect, or see you to be the same person you were before you left, but they may think that you are acting strangely and that you just need to stop thinking about that international experience and move on with life.

COMMON CHALLENGES

Returnees going through reverse culture shock often have similar complaints and challenges that both flow from reverse culture shock and reinforce it. These are some that you may share:

- Upon returning, you find that things are different from how you left them.
- Your friends and family have a lack of interest in your experiences abroad (or they do not think it is as important as you do).



Being abroad may have seemed to offer a new adventure every day.

- Family, friends, and you have changed while you were away, which leads to changes in the dynamic of your relationships.
- You find it difficult to articulate important experiences to people who have not had similar experiences. They may listen, but they just don't get it.
- Boredom.
- People misunderstand changes in your behavior and ideas, and people may sometimes interpret you as being condescending.
- You may find yourself being more critical of the U.S.A. or your home culture while also viewing your host country abroad more favorably.
- It is difficult to find opportunities to apply skills that you gained while abroad.

COPING STRATEGIES



Share your favorite recipes from your host country with family and friends.

COPING STRATEGIES

There are strategies for coping with reverse culture shock:

- Acknowledge that there is an adjustment. Just like with the initial culture shock, acknowledging reverse culture shock and recognizing it for what it is helps to mitigate it.
- Plug into a network of returning Study Abroad participants.
- Share your experiences with others.
- Stay connected with your host country: magazines, movies, books, newspapers, RSS feeds, etc.
- Communicate with friends you made while abroad.
- Take time to acclimate to being home, both physically and psychologically.

- Maintain a sense of humor.
- Remind yourself that being home is a cross-cultural experience and utilize the strategies that you learned while abroad.
- Acknowledge the new set of values and beliefs you adopted while in your host country while continuing to celebrate your own cultural heritage.
- Choose which values from abroad you want to integrate with those from home.
- Make use of Johnson & Wales University's counselors, especially if you profoundly feel that reverse culture shock is having a big impact on your life or has exacerbated a pre-existing emotional or mental condition.

COUNSELING CENTERS AT JWU

Providence:

Student Counseling Center (401-598-1016)

North Miami:

The Counseling Center (305-892-7013)

Denver:

Health & Counseling Services (303-256-9448)

Charlotte:

Health & Counseling Services (980-598-1700)

CHECKLIST – BEFORE YOU RETURN

- ☐ Get local music. Even if you are not a fan of the popular music where you are, you should get a copy of the songs you often hear there. Listening to it will be very therapeutic after you return home.
- ☐ Take many photos, even of the most mundane places. Is there a food stand that you often visit? Even if there does not seem to be anything special about it, it is special to you. It may not be a photo that others will want to see, but it is a photo that you will want to see.
- ☐ Get people's contact information. Stay in touch with the people you met while abroad. After returning home, contact them regularly.
- ☐ Get some clothing that is unique to your host country or that has your host country's writing on it, such as shirt with your host university's logo, the jersey of a local sports team, or even traditional dress.
- ☐ Learn (or simply get) the recipes for your favorite host-country foods so that you can cook and share them after returning home.
- ☐ Get souvenirs and gifts that have a story that you can share. A transit token from the time you accidentally went three hours the wrong way and made a new friend on the train who helped you get to your destination will probably be more cherished than a trinket from a tourist shop.
- ☐ Get books from local authors or that are set in your host country (and read them).
- ☐ Reflect on and make a list of what you accomplished personally, academically, and professionally, along with relevant anecdotes.



Your experience abroad was a big moment in your life. However, when others who did not have that experience view it from afar, it may not seem as big to them.

BRINGING THE EXPERIENCE HOME



2011 Study Abroad Photo
Contest Winner

BRINGING THE EXPERIENCE HOME

While reintegrating and readjusting to life at home, it is very tempting to “shoebox” your experience abroad. It is easy to not engage and build on your international experience, to just treat it as a good memory that you store away and visit occasionally. Don’t shoebox your experience. Share it. Draw from it. Build on it.

Sharing and building on the experience is beneficial in that it helps you cope with the readjustment process, explore your interests, develop and demonstrate important skills, build your résumé, and develop new personal and professional goals and paths that you may not have thought available.

ACADEMICALLY

Find ways to integrate your newly acquired knowledge, skills, and interests abroad with your academic experience at home:

- Visit with your Department Chair to identify professors who have similar international interests. Communicate and work with them.
- Select courses that offer an international focus. As you talk to your Department Chair, faculty advisor, professors, and student academic advisor, mention your interests and ask which courses would best suit you.
- Talk to your professors about integrating your experiences abroad with your course work and projects. When possible, connect your university assignments or research to your host country.
- Inform the International Center and your college that you would like to meet with incoming exchange faculty.

**Become a Study
Abroad Ambassador!
Share your
international
experience and
encourage others to
pursue international
opportunities.**

STAY INVOLVED ON CAMPUS

INTERNATIONAL CENTER

There are many opportunities to stay involved through JWU's International Center.

Study Abroad

Share your e-mail address with Study Abroad so you can be a contact person for students interested in studying abroad, especially those interested in the same program in which you participated.

Assist in programs & events such as:

- Study Abroad Ambassadors
- Study Abroad Fair (first Wednesday of October on Providence campus)
- Study Abroad Weeks (in October on all four campuses)
- New Student Orientation (talk to incoming freshmen in the summer)
- Info Booths
- Study Abroad 101s

Submit stories, photos, thoughts, and/or impressions to be published on the website, in booklets, and on fact sheets or that Study Abroad can share with students who want more information about the programs. What would you tell someone who is interested in your program?

Study abroad again! Most majors give students at least 3 chances to go abroad for credit toward graduation.



Returnees talking to students at Study Abroad Fair

International Student Services

The Global Citizen Program connects current JWU students with new international students and helps in the transition to life at JWU.

Volunteer during international students' Arrival Services. Welcome students as they arrive. Help students navigate on-campus and community resources.

Participate in student events and activities, such as International Festival, sporting events, outdoor activities, and cultural trips.

Join the Cultural Connections Club, a student club.

Contact International Student Services at isa@jwu.edu for up-to-date listings on activities and opportunities.

BUILD ON THE EXPERIENCE



Connecting at The BRIDGE Center

The BRIDGE Center

In support of the university's goal of practicing and modeling local, national, and global citizenship, The BRIDGE Center offers programming such as the following:

- Coffee Hour – A weekly social event featuring discussions and activities that bring the JWU Community together and allow participants to share their own cultures and ideas.
- Identity Dialogues - Weekly discussions and activities designed to explore our own cultural identities, how we respond to bias, and how we can more effectively communicate with diverse individuals.
- Geography Series – Monthly presentations given by JWU students to share their culture and cuisine with the JWU community.

- TED Talk Tuesdays – Bi-weekly screenings of globally and ethically themed talks to invite discussion and facilitate perspective exchange.
- Leadership in Multicultural Contexts – A seminar for JWU students from diverse curricular programs to develop knowledge and skills that can inform their own personal and professional development as members of a pluralistic society, and how to become effective allies as local, national, and global citizens.
- Conversation Partners – The BRIDGE Center can help connect you with the English as a Second Language Department's Conversation Partners program, in which you are paired with an English language learner to help her or him practice English and to make a new friend from a different country.
- Many more! There is always something going on in the BRIDGE Center, such as Global Citizenship Roundtables, cultural celebrations and art exhibits!

For more information regarding international and intercultural opportunities on the Providence campus, please contact The BRIDGE Center at 401-598-4776. The BRIDGE Center is also able to direct you to activities outside of their center.

GO ABROAD AGAIN!

GO ABROAD MULTIPLE TIMES

What better way to relive the excitement and adventure of studying abroad than to go abroad again?

- Go back and visit your host country.
- Talk to Experiential Education & Career Services about international internships and employment opportunities.
- Volunteer or work abroad with a wide variety of organizations.
- Apply for comprehensive international study scholarships, such as Fulbright Scholarships and Critical Language Scholarships.

OTHER OPTIONS

There are other ways to get involved in international and cross-cultural opportunities:

- Get to know international students on campus.
- Go to international and intercultural students' clubs' events. Join them.
- Take language courses, in a JWU class or with international groups offering them.
- Tutor English to non-native English speakers.
- Write an article for campus publications, such as your campus' newspaper.
- Publish your travel writings and photos in study-abroad focused publications, such as *Abroad View* or *Verge Magazine*. Search online for magazines and sites taking submissions.

Stay tuned to events on your campus!



Katherine studied abroad 3 times!

Contact your campus' Student Activities:

Providence: 401-598-1195

North Miami: 305-892-7567

Denver: 303-256-9400

Charlotte: 980-598-1810

THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE IS NOT OVER

All of these ways to bring your experience home, share it, and build upon it are great ways to cope with reverse culture shock. They give you a way to revisit your experiences and articulate them to others while demonstrating and developing valuable skills. Furthermore, they are great ways to keep adding impressive content to your résumé.

MARKETING YOUR STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE



EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION & CAREER SERVICES AT JWU

When it comes to pursuing a career and marketing yourself to potential employers, visit Experiential Education & Career Services.

Our career experts are ready to assist you through career advising, workshops, building your resume, improving your interviewing skills, identifying internship and job opportunities, career events, and related activities.

MARKETING YOUR EXPERIENCE

Congratulations on your study abroad experience! Did you know that you can incorporate the skills and experience gained during study abroad into your resume, cover letter, and job interview?

Even if you do not plan to pursue a career that involves international travel, it is almost a certainty that your career will involve interacting with people of different cultures. Your study abroad experience demonstrates your ability to do that. Furthermore, you were *studying* abroad. You were able to explore different perspectives and ideas within your field in a very broad setting.

What are some of the ideas that you gained and observations that you made that could be valuable in your career?

What personal qualities were you able to gain, develop, and demonstrate while abroad?

Thinking about this will help you use your study abroad experience to build a competitive resume and convincing cover letter. It will help you better answer interview questions with interesting, insightful, and relevant examples.

Your experience abroad is a great way to market yourself as you pursue your career.

SKILLS EMPLOYERS SEEK

SKILLS EMPLOYERS SEEK

You are more than the technical skills represented by your degree. You bring other sets of skills that make you a well-rounded individual. Employers tell us that they will provide on-the-job training, but what they really want are students who possess soft skills such as:

- **Professionalism/Work Ethic:** The student has a positive attitude, carrying out work with a sense of responsibility and showing professional work behaviors in the workplace
- **Problem Solving:** The student is competent in assessing, analyzing, recommending and/or implementing suitable solutions to workplace problems
- **Communication:** The student is competent in listening and communicating verbally and in writing with co-workers and guests/clients (as appropriate to the work experience)
- **Collaboration:** The student is competent in working within a team and relating to others in the organization

Use the space to the side to reflect on your experience abroad. How did you gain, use, or demonstrate these skills (and others) during your Study Abroad experience?



WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR SKILLS?

YOUR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE



YOUR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Simply going abroad and experiencing life in a different country is a wonderful accomplishment. As a “global citizen” this experience provided you with additional skills and a competitive advantage in the job search process. In the global workplace, employers value and seek out recent graduates who have:

- **Cultural Competence:** The student has the ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures and adapt well in diverse settings.
- **Global Knowledge:** The student has knowledge of cultures beyond their own and has a basic understanding of issues affecting our world.

In order for you to capture these skill sets on your resume, ask yourself the following questions and be prepared to discuss them during the interviewing process:

- What did you study overseas?
- What did you do and learn outside the classroom?
- What were your goals for this program? Did you achieve them?
- What challenges did you face? How did you overcome these challenges?

Try to create specific points and short stories capturing what you learned and which skill sets you improved.

The following bullet statement examples should help you get started:

- Demonstrated strong communication and cross-cultural skills by achieving a conversational level of French
- Utilized leadership and teamwork skills by sharing knowledge and experiences with other students on the hospitality industry in France
- Gained an enhanced cultural awareness; sensitivity to French customs and differences as compared to the United States

EMPHASIZE YOUR GLOBAL EXPERIENCE

**John
Brown**

providence, ri
401.555.5555
resume@gmail.com
myportfolio.com

Edward Jones
Human Resources
Brilliant Designs
5 Main Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Mr. Jones

I am writing to you in regards to the entry-level Graphic Designer position that is available. This position was recommended through Mr. Jack Thompson, Dean of the Technology School at Johnson & Wales University. Dean Thompson believes that I would make an excellent candidate for the entry-level Graphic Designer position based on the required skills listed by your company.

Through my completed coursework **study abroad experience**, and extra-curricular involvement I have prepared myself well for the position at Brilliant Designs. This May, I will be graduating from Johnson & Wales University with my BS in Graphic Design & Digital Media. Brilliant Designs has caught my attention because of your modernist design style and strong work ethic.

While studying abroad in Florence, Italy at the Florence University of the Arts, I gained not only experience, knowledge, and cultural diversity, but also gained the necessary skills for dealing with potential clients. I completed a branding project for the FIAT Company. The objective of this project was to introduce the new FIAT 500 car into America. I completed a variety of branding elements including: company research, typestyle research, print production, marketing materials and exhibit designs.

I have enclosed my resume which further details my work and academic experience. I will also be sending my portfolio containing all relevant design work.

I strongly feel that an interview would help to further demonstrate my industry knowledge and experience, enthusiasm, and work skills. I am looking forward to hearing from you and will follow up this letter by next week. You can contact me at (401) 555-5555 or by email at resume@gmail.com. Thank you for your consideration for the Graphic Designer position.

Sincerely,



John Brown

EMPHASIZE YOUR GLOBAL EXPERIENCE

**John
Brown**

providence, ri
401.555.5555
resume@gmail.com
myportfolio.com

objective

Graphic Design Bachelor's candidate with a concentration in Print Media seeks to gain knowledge and experience through an internship in Graphic Arts.

education

Johnson & Wales University, Providence, RI // Graphic Design & Digital Media, B.S.
Candidate 2012 // G.P.A. 3.8/4.0 Dean's List '09-'11

Florence University of the Arts, Florence, Italy // Five week Summer study abroad program // Intermediate Graphic Design "The Italian Product" & History of Italian Design
-Demonstrated leadership & project management skills in a global setting, introducing the FIAT 500 to the U.S. market
-Created branding elements including: company profile research, typestyle research, printing research & print production
-Gained exposure to another country enhancing my cultural competency & global knowledge

skills

Adobe Creative Suites 5 // Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Dreamweaver, Flash, Premiere Pro
Microsoft // Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Visio
Google // SketchUp 8
Operating Systems // Windows 7, Vista, XP and OS X Leopard
Languages // HTML, XHTML, CSS, PHP

relevant experience

Freelance Designer; Providence, Rhode Island // *September 2009 to Present*

Developed personal logos for clients using Adobe Illustrator
Communicated with clients to create personal logos & business cards
Designed & developed website interfaces utilizing Adobe Illustrator and Dreamweaver, as well as written HTML & CSS

Freelance Photographer; Providence, Rhode Island // *July 2008 to Present*

Utilizing grayscale for landscape photography
Modified and edited photo's using Adobe Photoshop
Created, designed & hand crafted photo books using Adobe InDesign

Academic Projects; Providence, Rhode Island // *September 2009 to present*

Created, constructed packaging designs & branding for hypothetical companies using Adobe Illustrator
Illustrated & branded an immersive environment for a hypothetical restaurant using Google Sketch Up
Conceptualized, designed & branded a hypothetical city campaign utilizing Adobe Photoshop & Illustrator

honors, achievements, & associations

Recipient of JWU's Computer Graphics Emerging Leaders Award // May 2010 & 2011
JWU Faculty Scholarship Award // May 2011
President's Leadership Council // Treasurer '09-'11 and President '11 - present
Member of AIGA // Sept 2009 - present

campus activities

President's Leadership Council // September 2009 to present

Treasurer // October '09 – April '11 // serving as an Executive Board member; balanced and budgeted council's finances

President // April '11 – present // serving as an Executive Board member; managed, organized, and oversaw all council events and activities

Member of AIGA // Sept 2009 – present

T-shirt design competition for AIGA National Design Conference
Poster design and completion for a favorite unusual holiday

portfolio and referrals available upon request

Resume Sample

CONNECT WITH EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION & CAREER SERVICES



Visit Experiential Education & Career Services for resume help, mock interviews, internship, and job search related assistance.

Study abroad is more than just a destination. It's a life experience that hopefully fulfills your sense of adventure and learning. It also gives you skills for life that employer's value and can enhance your career.

Experiential Education & Career Services

- Providence: 401-598-1070
- North Miami: 305-892-7029
- Denver: 303-256-9790
- Charlotte: 980-598-1200



Follow us at "Experiential Education & Career Services JWU Providence"



Follow us @jwuprovcareers

CONNECT WITH THE INTERNATIONAL CENTER

STUDY ABROAD

Visit Study Abroad for more information about locations and programs offered at Johnson & Wales University.

Have a personal adventure. Fulfill academic credit and learn within your field. Develop and demonstrate valuable skills for the global workforce.

Physical address:

Study Abroad
International Center
274 Pine Street
Providence, RI 02903

Phone: 401-598-1406

Email: studyabroad@jwu.edu

North Miami:

Nicole Graham (305-892-7554)

Denver:

Student Academic Services (303-256-9500)

Charlotte:

Tracy Brener (980-598-1322)

THE BRIDGE CENTER

BRIDGE stands for Building Relationships, Intercultural Dialogue and Global Engagement.

The BRIDGE Center supports the university's goal of practicing and modeling local, national, and global citizenship by

- Providing educational programs, cultural events, and social activities designed to promote international and intercultural awareness
- Facilitating opportunities for engagement through cross-cultural interaction and exchange of ideas
- Holding events that promote and reflect various cultures and diversities
- Representing JWU's commitment to leadership through diversity

Physical address: The BRIDGE Center, Xavier Complex, 259 Pine Street, Providence, RI 02903

Phone: 401-598-4776

Blogs: <http://www.jwubridge.tumblr.com/>



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@jwubridge



Johnson & Wales University

International Center

Experiential Education & Career Services