

STUDY ABROAD REENTRY



**Readjusting
Staying Involved
Marketing Your Experience**

Johnson & Wales University

International Center

Experiential Education & Career Services

INTRODUCTION & REINTEGRATION

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 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 world view, 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 reenter your home country. It focuses on three aspects of the reentry 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.

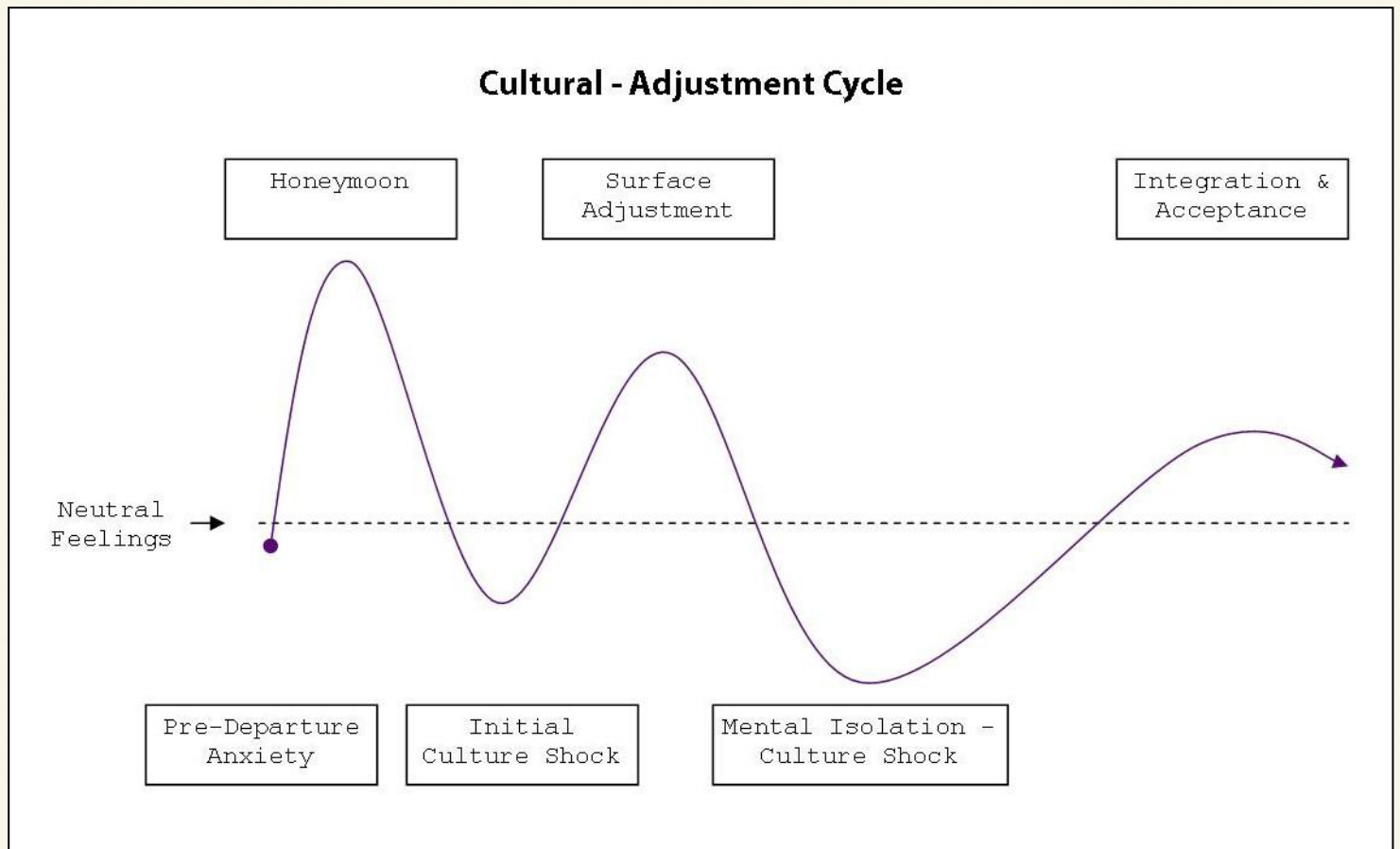
REINTEGRATION

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 below 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



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 following statement:

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.

REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK

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.
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.



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.

WHY REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK?



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. During this process you become accustomed to new ways of thinking, interacting with people, and living. While making those adjustments and adaptations, 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.

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 COMPLAINTS

COMMON COMPLAINTS & CHALLENGES

Returnees going through reverse culture shock often have similar complaints and challenges that both flow from reverse culture shock and reinforce it. The following are common complaints and challenges that some returnees have 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).
- 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.



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.

COPING STRATEGIES



COUNSELING CENTERS AT JWU:

The Counseling Center (Providence):

(401)-598-1016

Kalen Hezard (North Miami):

(305)-892-7073

Health & Counseling Services (Denver):

(303)-256-9448

Counseling Services (Charlotte):

(980)-598-1700

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.

COMING HOME

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. Take photos of even 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, and you will realize that. It may not be a photo that people in your home country will want to see, but it is a photo that you will want to see.
- ☐ Get people's phone numbers and other 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.
- ☐ 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.
- ☐ Get books from local authors or that are set in your host country.



International Festival, JWU Goes Global Week

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, helps you explore your interests, helps you build your résumé, and helps you develop new personal and professional goal paths that you had not thought available.

STUDY ABROAD OFFICE



2010-2011 Study Abroad Photo
Contest Winner

ACADEMICALLY

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

Find professors who have similar international interests. Communicate and work with them.

Select courses that offer an international focus. As you talk to your department chairperson, faculty advisor, professors, and student academic advisor, mention your international interests and ask which courses would best suit you.

Talk to your professors and advisors about integrating your experiences abroad with your course work.

When possible, connect your university assignments or research to your host country.

There are many opportunities to stay involved with JWU's Study Abroad:

Share your e-mail address 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 Charlotte, Denver, and North Miami campuses)
- New Student Orientation (incoming freshmen!)
- Info Booths
- Info Sessions
- Class Visits

Submit your photos to the Study Abroad Photo Contest (You could win a prize!).

Submit stories, photos, thoughts, and/or impressions to be published on the website, in booklets, and on fact sheets or that Study Abroad can just 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.

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

ON THE PROVIDENCE CAMPUS

The I-Club brings together international and domestic students through a variety of cultural events and trips and maintains a membership of about 65 students each term.

Between 20-50 students attend Coffee Hours, which are fun, informal meetings where students from all over the globe get to know each other and the university by playing games and participating in activities.

Tertulias are weekly meetings to discuss global topics.

International Ambassador Program matches new international students with returning JWU students to assist international students integrate into JWU and Providence.

Culture in Motion consists of visits to local schools for informative and engaging presentations on specific countries.

The International Center runs an International Leadership Program with the Leadership Development Center

Model clothes from your host country in the International Fashion show and participate in other JWU Goes Global week events.

For more information on these opportunities, contact **Lindsay Tarnoff**, International Community Coordinator, at ltarnoff@jwu.edu or 401-598-1855.



Persian New Year

MAKING CONNECTIONS

So you are back on campus and have your regular course schedule. There are still ways to build on your international experience:

- Get to know international students on campus.
- Go to international students' clubs' events.
- Take language courses, in a JWU class or with international groups offering them.
- Join international groups/organizations.
- Tutor English to non-native English speakers. You could even get CSL credit!
- Write an article for campus publications, such as your campus' newspaper.
- Do you know of any other opportunities on your campus? Share them with Study Abroad so that we can get the word out to other students.

Contact your campus' Student Activities:
Charlotte: 980-598-1810
Denver: 303-256-9400
North Miami: 305-892-5363
Providence: 401-598-1195

SURROUNDING COMMUNITY



GET PUBLISHED

Having publication credit can look good on a résumé, scholarship, or graduate school application. Furthermore, it is a good way to share your important experiences. These are some options to explore:

- Once again, submit articles to your campus or city newspaper.
- Write a short piece that Study Abroad can publish in its materials.

Abroad View

(<http://www.abroadview.org/avmag/>)

Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study

Abroad: (<http://www.frontiersjournal.com/>)

Glimpse Abroad: (<http://glimpse.org/>)

Transitions Abroad:

(<http://www.transitionsabroad.com/>)

Verge Magazine:

(<http://www.vergemagazine.com>)

EXPAND YOURSELF

Why limit yourself to campus activities?

- Connect with educators from your local school district to show videos or photos of your experience.
- Connect with immigrant groups in your area, perhaps through volunteering or interning.
- Find a language partner from your host country.
- Volunteer with organizations that need the language skills that you gained.
- Visit restaurants that serve cuisine from your host country. Take your family and friends with you and use the experience as a way to introduce them to your host culture.
- Write for your local newspaper and other community media resources.

Contact your campus' Community Services team to get involved:

- Charlotte: 980-598-1005
- Denver: 303-256-9505
- North Miami: 305-892-7567 (Student Affairs Office)
- Providence: 401-598-2989

GO ABROAD AGAIN!

GO ABROAD MULTIPLE TIMES

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

- Make plans to go back and visit. Reconnect with the friends that you made abroad.
- Talk to Experiential Education & Career Services about international internships and employment opportunities.
- Study abroad again! Talk to Study Abroad to find out if you can study abroad again to fulfill more graduation requirements.
- Volunteer or work abroad with a wide variety of organizations.

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. Furthermore, they are great ways to keep adding impressive information to your résumé.



Students talking to other students about their study abroad experiences is immensely helpful to the entire university community. You get to tell your stories. They get to hear about their opportunities from the perspective of a fellow student. Contact Study Abroad at studyabroad@jwu.edu or 401-598-1418 to get involved.

MARKETING YOUR STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE ON YOUR RESUME



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, improved interview skills, identifying internship opportunities, career fairs and on-campus interviews.

MARKETING YOUR EXPERIENCE

Congratulations on your study abroad experience! Did you know that you can incorporate the skills & experience gained during study abroad into your resume?

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 résumé 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, 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 – GLOBAL CITIZEN



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 ask yourself these questions:

- 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 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

Cover Letter Sample

**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

Resume Sample

**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

CONNECT WITH STUDY ABROAD

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

Take advantage of every opportunity to explore the world before you graduate by considering our range of study abroad programs. Study Abroad offers you the chance to study overseas while earning credits towards graduation.

Study Abroad Office

Student Services Center
274 Pine Street
Providence, RI 02903
Phone: 401-598-1406
Email: studyabroad@jwu.edu

Lindsay Tarnoff

International Community
Coordinator at JWU Providence
ltarnoff@jwu.edu
401-598-1855.

Find us on Facebook at
"Jwu Study Abroad Office"



CONNECT WITH EX ED & CAREER SERVICES



Visit Experiential Education & Career Services for resume help, mock interviews, or to search for a job

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

jwuLink



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