

Change is scary. In nearly every situation, it is easier and safer to stick with what you know than it is to take a chance on a new situation. There is always a risk with change and there is no doubt that studying abroad will change me. There is no way that I could spend three months walking the streets of another country—breathing the air off a different ocean, learning the rhythms of a whole different culture—and walk away unaltered. It is an inescapable fact that I will not leave study abroad the same person that I am now – but I think it would change me for the better.

The very act of leaving behind everything I've ever known, and every person who has ever known me, will teach me to be truly independent and self-reliant. In the same way that moving across the country for Caltech allowed me to open myself up and become a more confident version of myself, spending a term abroad will give me the opportunity to become a better version of myself. Being far from home makes me more aware of how I am interacting with the world around me – in the sense that I need to be more careful about making good first impression, but also that I am freer to be who I want to be, without getting caught up in everyone else's expectations.

Beyond that, I cannot imagine spending an entire term living alongside the people of another country and not learning to sympathize and care about their problems on a deeper level than I can from afar. Living on a campus as busy and demanding as Caltech's, it is easy to get caught up in the minutiae of what is going around me and forget the larger world; easy to focus only on the news that pertains to me and forget that there is a whole world with different problems beyond our troubled borders. So, I think that living in a new country would necessarily widen my perspectives and make me more empathetic to the tribulations of the wider world.

Being abroad will change how I see the world, as it did the one previous time I had left the country. Though brief, my mission trip to Haiti revealed all of the stereotypes and bias' that I had grown up with and showed me how wrong they were. There were so many things I had been taught to expect of third world countries and nearly all of them were false. It was impossible for me then to continue to believe in the stereotypes after I had met the wonderfully varied population and I know that a similar thing will happen with a term abroad. It is very easy to internalize the stereotypes that are presented by the media and our peers, to take these simplified and often skewed perspectives on other cultures and treat them as fact. Though I hope I do not go into the situation with many biases, I know that I will have a better, truer, understanding of the world afterward.

Nor will my academic beliefs escape unscathed either. By nature of studying biology and history at another institution, I will be exposed to new ways of thinking, new methods of problem solving, new types of learning that will hopefully make me a better student for the future.

To be completely honest, the thought of studying abroad is terrifying. I know that spending three months in another country, an ocean away from home, will require stepping outside of my comfort zone – but I also know that if I can dig deep and find the courage to make that step, that I will be stronger for it. So yes, I am scared – but it is specifically because of the fact that I am scared, that I want to do it even more.

1. UCL has a diverse range of biology courses that would allow me to dive into the study of evolution and vertebrates with greater depth than is possible at Caltech. Though I have enjoyed a lot of the biology classes taught at Caltech, Caltech professors tend to focus on the molecular, cellular, or micro biology, these are all wonderful things, but I want the opportunity to explore more macro biology. Studying at UCL provides an amazing opportunity to take biology courses that I would not otherwise be able to take.

Additionally, I have a strong interest in Medieval History and have always wanted to study Latin. Unfortunately, Caltech only offers intermediate Latin. Thus, studying abroad would allow me to learn the basics of Latin, which I cannot do here.

Total ECTS/UCL Credits (30 ECTS /2 UCL Units): 2

Total ECTS/UCL Credits in Admitting Dept. (50% of coursework): 1

Total CIT Units: 45

Course by Correspondence/Units: H 99a History Thesis Senior Research Tutorial/9

For each course, please list the following in this order.

1. Course Name and Number: Animal Biodiversity BIOL0012

Level/Normal year taken: Level 2

Faculty: Life Sciences

Department: Biological Sciences

Admitting Department

Term: Fall

UCL credits (.5): .5

Caltech units: 9

Type of Caltech credit (option, general, etc.): Option

State CIT equivalent course, if applicable:

Caltech evaluator: Bruce Hay

Course description (paste in)

The animal kingdom (Metazoa) is a vast grouping with over 1.3 million described species placed in 30-40 phyla encompassing organisms as diverse as sponges, worms and whales. This course focuses on animal systematics and their biology. As such, we will focus on the evolutionary relationships (phylogeny) and biological diversity of animals, and how they are adapted to different environments. Due to the sheer size

of the Metazoa we will focus on selected phyla, in order to obtain a broad understanding of the group. Teaching will consist of a combination of lectures, practicals in phylogenetic inference (in which you will reconstruct a phylogeny of some highly peculiar 'animals'), a problem based learning exercise based around a 'mystery' invertebrate specimen, and further practical classes that highlight key characteristics and adaptations within vertebrate groups based on observations of live exhibits at London Zoo, and museum specimens from UCLs Grant Museum.

2. Course Name and Number: Life on Earth BIOL0004

Level/Normal year taken: 1

Faculty: Life Sciences

Department: Biological Sciences

Admitting Department

Term: Fall

UCL credits (.5): .5

Caltech units: 9

Type of Caltech credit (option, general, etc.): Option

State CIT equivalent course, if applicable:

Caltech evaluator: Bruce Hay

Course description (paste in): This module offers an introduction to the diversity of life, evolution and development of body form in a wide variety of organisms. The module will cover the origins of life and eukaryotes, the tree of life, plant evolution, animal evolutionary relationships, body plans of invertebrates and vertebrates, evolutionary processes in a variety of organisms, plus the origin of vertebrates, mammals, primates and Homo sapiens.

3. Course Name and Number: Latin for Beginners A (LATN0034)

Level/Normal year taken: 1

Faculty: Arts and Humanities

Department: Greek and Latin (Classics/Ancient World)

Is this in your Admitting Department? No

Term: Fall

UCL credits (.5): .5

Caltech units: 9

Type of Caltech credit (option, general, etc.): general

Caltech evaluator: Christopher Hitchcock

Course description (paste in): An introduction to the classical Latin language, including the study of grammar, principles of sentence construction and the reading of selected texts. The module aims to provide students with a knowledge of classical Latin language and principles of sentence construction sufficient to translate simple passages of Latin prose into English and simple English phrases and sentences into Latin. Two classes per week will be split into three small groups, each group taught by a Postgraduate Teaching Assistant.

By the end of the module, students are expected to have reached a level approximately equivalent to sections 1-2 of P.V Jones and K.C. Sidwell, Reading Latin, Cambridge 1998.

4. Course Name and Number: Roman Empire from Augustus to Theodosius I (HIST0153)

Level/Normal year taken: 1

Faculty: Arts and Humanities

Department: History

Is this in your Admitting Department? No

Term: Fall

UCL credits (.5): .5

Caltech units: 9

Type of Caltech credit (option, general, etc.): 2nd Option

State CIT equivalent course, if applicable:

Caltech evaluator: Christopher Hitchcock

Course description (paste in): The world of imperial Rome, which stretched from the Forth and Clyde at one extreme to the Farasan islands of the southern Red Sea at the other, is the common heritage not just of Christendom (Catholic and Orthodox) but also of Islam. An understanding of Roman society thus provides fundamental background to much of medieval and modern history. This survey module serves to explain the main outlines of the social, political, economic, and religious history of the Roman world under the rule of the emperors from the creation of the new régime by Augustus (c. 31 BC) to the establishment of Christianity and the separation of the eastern and western empires at the death of Theodosius (AD 395).

State CIT equivalent course, if applicable

Course description (paste in): We look at what witchcraft meant for contemporaries from differing backgrounds, at the sort of stories that were likely to be believed and which not, at the relationship between religion and understandings of witchcraft, at possession and exorcism, at witchcraft and theatre and at the reasons for the repeal of the act which allowed the prosecution of people perceived as witches. Throughout this questions of gender will be implicit and some sessions will be devoted explicitly to address questions of why 90% of those persecuted as witches were women.