Welcome back to campus! It is a great honor to serve as the leadership of OUS and work daily with our outstanding group of scholars. OUS represents Colgate at its very best. We are a true family of scholars, and consistently demonstrate our intellect, creativity, and determination to not only succeed at the highest level at Colgate, but also to make a real difference in our community, the nation, and the world.

Last year we began to tell the wonderful success stories of our students through the newsletter and website (www.colgate.edu/OUS). As you’ll see in this issue, we are continuing to celebrate our students. Our OUS community is strong and multifaceted. You’ll find us in every academic building pursuing a diversity of majors, engaging in world-class independent research, excelling on a variety of division I and club sports teams, scattered all over the world on study abroad and extended study, participating in as well as leading numerous clubs and organizations, and being agents of positive change on our campus. We listen to and respect one another, thrive off the success of our family members, and rally to support one another at a moment’s notice. This is a truly special group of students, and we are excited to have the Class of 2018 as our newest members.

We are fully committed to individually supporting all OUS students in their pursuit of excellence. As an office, we will continue to increase our visibility on campus, encourage students to participate in off-campus study, independent research, and internship opportunities, and facilitate greater partnerships with alumni and career networks. We welcome the continued engagement of our entire community, especially our OUS alumni, in helping to shape our vision.

2014-2015 is going to be a banner year for OUS. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Frank Frey and Frank Kuan
The 39 Class of 2018 OUS Scholars spent five weeks as part of the Summer Institute from late June to early August to begin their transition to Colgate’s rigorous academic curriculum by immersing into two assigned classes. The courses offered were PHIL 201 - Introduction to Philosophical Problems (with Professor Maura Tumulty), BIOL 101 - Topics in Organismal Biology (with Professor Frank Frey), HUMN 220 - Literatures of Oppression (with Professor Jeff Spires), BIOL 102 - Topics in Human Health (with Professor Jason Meyers), FREN 222 - Francophone Literature from Africa (with Professor Hélène Julien), and HIST 209 - The Atlantic World, 1492-1800 (with Professor Antonio Barrera).
Syndi Bond ’18 offered the following poem as an apt reflection on the experience:

Each day was 9am sharp
no time to eat, sleepy like Harp.
4 hours each day, 2 hours each class
wow, time flew by fast.
Complete with finals and looking back,
it was only yesterday that I had boxes to unpack;
thinking, “What in the world have I got myself into?
no summer break and only college work to do?!’’
Times were hard and tears were shed,
theses were long and some o’ us were dead.
But hey, we all made it through
the O.U.S. Summer Institute.
Only champs can do this:
Squeeze 15 into 5 & still not miss
all that was normally needed;
trust me, R.A.C.s were heeded.
You’ll be a family and family we are.
Who else will brave the rain that far?
from ‘Gate House to ALANA to Lathrop to Ho,
Not much else to say, I’m sad to see y’all go.
We ride together, we cry together.
Six flags, Wal-Mart, whenever, wherever.
O.U.S. in our hearts with our eyes ahead,
we all represent Colgate - Maroon, not red.
So to end this shorter and sweeter
I’ve got one last thing to say:
O.U.S. Summer Institute of 2014,
we made it and we are well on our way.
This summer Colgate’s Spanish Debate team traveled to Mexico to compete in the global tournament CMUDE (Campeonato Mundial de Debate en Español). The following is Roxanne Maduro’s reflection on the trip.

I stared at him in complete disbelief. “¿Qué?” I said, wanting to believe that I had only misheard him. He leaned in a little closer, opening his eyes wider, as if that would somehow surely make me understand what he was saying, and slowly repeated “Do ju speak Espanish?” in choppy English. I looked back at my Spanish Debate teammate who was standing in line behind me waiting to register for the “Campeonato Mundial Universitario De Debate”, or “Global University Competition of Debate” just like me, and he had the same dumbfounded look on his face. Clearly, if I flew all the way out to Mexico, signed up to be in a Global Spanish Debate tournament, and was in line waiting to register for the tournament, I better know how to speak Spanish, at least for my own sake. I considered saying all of this to the man, who was about my age, and most likely also competing, but instead simply said “Sí”, and walked away to the next station.

Going in, I made sure that I had no preconceptions about what Mexico, Mexicans, or Latinos in general were going to be like. The biases and stereotypes that had many times been related to me about different nationalities of people in Latin America have played a large role for most of my life in terms of how people interact with me. Many have assumed that because I do not have a Spanish accent, do not wear hoop earrings, am dark-skinned, and am not loud, I cannot possibly be Dominican. Even though it is wrong to automatically assume things, I know that I do look African-American, and therefore take these misconceptions in stride, simply correcting people when they get it wrong.
A small misconception is something I can understand; but there’s no excuse for completely blatant ignorance. To start from the beginning, I joined the Colgate Spanish Debate team spring semester of my freshman year. I was not the best, but I worked hard, went to every practice, and eventually was granted the opportunity to attend a global Spanish Debate Tournament called CMUDE in Mexico, as a judge. There were teams from all over the world coming from Spain, Costa Rica, Peru, and many other countries. Therefore, it would be assumed that curators and volunteers from the Mexican University hosting the tournament would have an open mind about different types of people coming in. And I would have brushed off this first incident if it hadn’t been for the multiple others that followed in similar suit. Maybe not even two days after the first incident, I was signing up for a CMUDE event, when the registrar asked for my name. I said “Roxanne Maduro”, both very common names in Latin America. The man, who had easily signed up people with five last names and triple hyphenations before me was suddenly at a complete loss. “Repitelo otra vez” he asked, and halfway through my repetition, he exclaimed “Ay no” and just handed the paper over for me to write it myself. After looking at what I had written, he said in Spanish “Oh Roxanne Maduro! Why didn’t you just say that?” and apologized something about his hearing not working well. If it hadn’t been for the same exact thing with the same exact guy happening only an hour later, I may have been more inclined to believe him.

These experiences were some of the first ones I had in Mexico amongst fellow debaters from other countries. But throughout the competition, I was never let to forget how I looked.

Even while I was in a debate room judging arguments, my fellow judges, before anything else, would ask me if I spoke Spanish. I was not expecting this to happen, because never once did race and stereotypes about certain kinds of people come into my mind when I thought of going abroad. I thought of the culture, the food, the sites, and the history -- all of the good things that come with exploring a new country, and all of the good things that I was lucky enough to experience in Mexico. But of course there are always downsides, and one of them happens to be that if you are, or even look like a racial minority in a country, you’ll be treated differently. The surprising thing with my experience was that it was not the natives or townspeople that asked me these questions or looked at me funny. In fact, whenever I walked down the streets, I was never stared at, and when I went into local grocery stores, the vendors spoke Spanish to me without any hesitation or doubt. The only ones who doubted my proficiency in Spanish were the ones who knew I was engaging in a world tournament for Spanish debate: the college-educated, high-class, and wide-spread knowledge knowing Spanish debaters. That is what makes me the most frustrated about my experience. It was not for lack of knowledge or logic that these intelligent people so easily pushed me aside, but ignorance in the highest sense. They simply assumed, even after having all of the signs clearly posted in front of them about my speaking abilities. It would not matter if I had fluorescent neon signs blinking around me that said “I SPEAK SPANISH”, because undoubtedly, someone would come up to me and so innocently ask, “Do you speak espanish?” once again.
My study abroad experience, which included a semester in Italy and extended study to South Africa, was life changing — in far more complicated ways than I had expected. My two experiences were drastically different, but both informed the reasons for conducting my research and are deeply embedded within my project.

As a student of color, while I was in Italy, I faced marginalization within a group of American students; while in South Africa, I was forced to navigate my national identity and privilege. My time abroad was complicated, hard, and spoke to larger systemic issues. Not finding any critical literature representing experiences similar to mine, I conducted independent research this summer on the experiences of undergraduate students of color who participate in study abroad programs with predominantly white institutions (PWIs).

I expanded on preliminary research I conducted during the spring semester of my junior year with Professor John Palmer through the Department of Educational Studies, and I received support from my faculty advisors Professor Mark Stern and Professor Anna Ríos.

I asked my participants questions that were born out of the questions that I ask of myself. A crucial component of my research is to complicate the notion that study abroad is a homogeneous experience. My research asks that we consider how factors such as race, class, and gender affect students’ experiences and ability to become “immersed” in the host country’s culture.
Colgate’s Spanish Debate Team
This summer I conducted in-depth interviews in hopes of learning how other students of marginalized backgrounds navigated their identities during their time abroad. Although each student negotiated his or her identity differently, notions of race, class, and gender were weaved throughout each narrative. Themes within my findings were related to nationalism, more specifically how students navigated their nationality as Americans versus racial identities during their time abroad. Students also expressed the notions of portable culture — the manner in which the culture of the PWI transferred over to the host country during the student’s time abroad.

This opportunity has allowed me to fuse my interests in comparative education and feminist theories. The process has not only allowed me to understand my own experiences abroad, but more importantly, this research has provided an obligatory opening for critically examining how the narratives of these students can be addressed through programming, curriculum, director training, and student preparation to better serve students of color.

I plan on presenting my findings to faculty and administration this fall and continuing this work for my senior honors thesis in educational studies.

“I asked my participants questions that were born out of the questions that I ask of myself.”
This summer, I had the opportunity to travel to La Selva Biological Research Station in Costa Rica with Professors Catherine Cardelùs and Carrie Woods from Colgate’s Biology Department. I was there for 5 ½ weeks, and conducted research with my professors, three other Colgate students, and two field assistants from Costa Rica.
The research we were working on was the last year of a five-year study that asked: How are epiphytic plants (plants that grow on top of other plants, and are not rooted in the ground) in the tropical rain forest affected by nutrient deposition and climate change? This is important because the continuation of climate change predicts an increase in nutrient levels in the atmosphere; because epiphytes in the canopy obtain their nutrients solely from rain water and the atmosphere, they will be among the first species to experience the effects of predicted climate change.

In order to investigate this question, we had to do a lot of fieldwork in the rainforest canopy. Every day, we'd set up free line and pulley systems in one of our experimental trees, and climb anywhere from 90 to 120 feet to get to the branches of the tree. Two or three people climbed each tree, and spent about four hours in the tree collecting samples and taking measurements of different plants. Climbing was by far one of the most difficult things I've ever done. At the start of the summer, it took me 45 minutes to climb a tree. By the end, I was climbing trees in 20 minutes, and the other students and I were rigging trees and climbing on our own!

We also had some chances to do other things during our time in Costa Rica that weren't directly linked to our research project. Towards the end of our trip, we did a seven-hour perimeter hike of the research station. We also went on a few night hikes with a Ph.D. student that we met. He took us out into the field at night, where we helped him with data collection for a project he was working on. The rainforest is so much different at night; partially because things look so different when your only source of light is a headlamp, but mostly because the majority of the venomous snakes in Costa Rica are active at nighttime. This made night hikes interesting and unique, but also really intense.

I consider myself to be really lucky; I never thought I'd have an opportunity to travel abroad and do research on a topic that I'm passionate about. Being a part of this research has allowed me to engage in environmental activism centered on climate change, while working on a project that will be influential in discovering exactly how climate change is going to impact different ecosystems in the neotropics. I was able to spend my summer interacting with scientists from all different disciplines and all corners of the world, while engaging in learning about a huge array of topics that center on scientific discovery, reason, understanding and activism.

“ I consider myself to be really lucky; I never thought I’d have an opportunity to travel abroad and do research on a topic that I’m passionate about. ”

Providence Ryan ’16, Shannon Young ’17, Lindsay McCulloch ’16 and Thomas Wobby ’15
It all started with a conversation. Something as simple as a conversation could prove to be the impetus for a profound experience, the pebble that creates ripples through time; the cauldron over which any boiling ideas are brought to surface. I am a true believer that every conversation is an opportunity in the making. And opportunities are not found, they are made. My past summer experience (and all prior) reflect the weight of that statement.
My interlocutor in this particular instance was Dr. Frank Frey, the current OUS director. We had spoken about my interests in being a part of research that was tailored towards cognition and the impact of language on thought. At that point in time, I had received an offer from one of my professors to work with zebra finches over the summer but I declined that offer in favor of what seemed, at the time, an unfounded and chimerical position in a cognition lab somewhere in America. Just like the ripple effect, one conversation led to the emergence of another and I found myself speaking with Dr. Kelly, the head of the psychology department. He and I found common interests on topics of gesture, processing of semantic information, and the neurological impacts of language on behavior and human interaction. We discussed current research in the field of psycholinguistics and these discussions further reaffirmed my decision in going out on a limb and pursuing my interests.

Soon thereafter I found myself in correspondence with Dr. Daniel Casasanto, the head of the experience and cognition lab at the University Chicago and my supervisor this past summer. I read many papers from the lab and quickly familiarized myself with his work before inquiring about a research assistant position. In the midst of these conversations, I was also applying for summer funding through career services; writing budget proposals; searching for apartments in Chicago; and familiarizing myself with the taverns and bistros in Hyde Park. Soon thereafter, I found myself in Chicago working in the cognition lab with a number of other graduate students. This was a bit intimidating at first since I was the only undergraduate student in the lab—I was told there was one other student but her project did not require her physical presence in the lab, so for all intents and purposes, it was just me.

To be quite honest, I had doubts about my abilities and what I had to offer to the lab. There were a few reasons as to why I was doubtful: I was inexperienced, I was the youngest member of the lab, and I was unfamiliar with the tools of the lab (in regards to software programs and coding). To make matters worse (or better, depending on your vantage point), I was working with some of the brightest minds, each of whom was working on projects of the highest scientific quality. Fortunately, one of my most valuable assets is my ability to adapt—like a changing shape of water, constantly shifting and readjusting. I read, I listened, and I made progress. Soon enough I began working on a project that involved coding various types of gestures and analyzing data sets based on those gestures. I also had the privilege of observing and being involved in other projects with other graduate students. I participated and helped conduct my first Electroencephalogram experiment as well. The experience was so intellectually stimulating that I began to contemplate a graduate career in a PhD program, so I impulsively decided to take the Graduate Record Exam while I was in Chicago. Let’s just say that I was feeling my intellectual self at this point. At the end of my time in Chicago, I realized that I had learned so much from so many. I also learned various life lessons, from a variety of characters, on Chicago’s renowned transportation system. Shout out to the red line and Garfield station.

All being told, this past summer must have been one of the most intellectually enriching experiences that I have ever had during my academic career. And it all started with a conversation; a conversation with (Dr. Frank Frey) a man of many parts—a professor, a mentor, a father-figure, and an accomplished scientist, to name a few. One important point to note: It is absolutely imperative that if you are interested in pursuing such rigorous internships that you start these conversations and the application process early on. I was abroad in Wales during the spring semester, so I made sure to fulfill aspects of the application that required my being on campus, during the fall semester. The earlier you start, the easier the journey. Most importantly, never doubt your abilities and have faith. Doubt kills. As OUS students, we have such an extensive network of support that we should never be afraid to connect and to ask for help. Please ask for help! No woman or man in history has ever achieved success by dint of their own faculties. Finally, I would like to leave you with a quote from the one and only Beyoncé Knowles. “If everything was perfect, you would never learn and you would never grow.” Let that marinate.
fantabulous
[fan-tab-yuh-luh s]

adjective, Slang.
1. extremely fine or desirable; excellent; wonderful.

Origin Expand
1955-1960
1955-60; blend of fantastic and fabulous

Dictionary.com Unabridged