

Boston University School of Law

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Boston University School of Law

Study Abroad Final Reports



Bucerius Law School
Hamburg, Germany

FINAL STUDY ABROAD REPORT

INSTRUCTIONS:

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 - a) Will you share your personal email address with students who request to contact former program participants?
YES
NO

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YES
NO

Please write your Final Study Abroad Report below.

Name:

Semester/Institution: Fall 2022/ Bucerius Law School

REPORT:

My time both in Bucerius Law School and the city of Hamburg was wonderful.

Starting with the school—the International Study Abroad Office at Bucerius is incredibly helpful. Particularly Saskia and Anna who are the main points of contact were always available to answer questions and to help with administrative issues that would crop up. The University

itself is incredibly collegial, and holds a lot of on-campus events for their students to bond during the school year, which gives a person a great opportunity to not only meet people from their program but from the other legal programs that Bucerius holds. The International Office also planned “excursions” to nearby towns to learn more about Germany like: Lübeck for the Christmas markets, Luneberg and its salt preserves, and the concentration camp: Neungammen. These excursions were free and incredibly informational.

As for the academic program, Bucerius hires some of the best professors in Europe to teach their courses—both in English and in German. As per the English speaking courses, they are on a variety of topics, touching either broader international law or particularly European law. None of the courses workloads are beyond the scope of what is expected i.e., a final exam or a paper at the end of each class with maybe a presentation added a long at most.

The classes were very well taught and due to the fact that people within the study abroad program take classes amongst each other, you’re not “left to the wolves” so to speak in trying to keep up with German students who have been studying in Bucerius for several years.

Hamburg itself is a very nice place to live, the public transportation system is incredibly thorough and the city is beautiful especially during the Christmas time when a bunch of lights go up and they have the famous Christmas markets.

However, it can get incredibly cold, much like Boston can and the people in Hamburg don’t speak English as well as one may expect from a more tourist-y city e.g., Berlin, Paris, Rome, etc.

The administration of getting a residence permit can also be incredibly tedious as wait times are long and they require quite a bit of documentation. It would be prudent to do that early on. Moreover, the University has a deal with a local bank to set up a German bank account which would also be advisable in order to avoid foreign transaction fees or atm withdrawal fees as quite a few places are cash only in some parts of the city while other places are card only in other parts of the city.

As for living, if you can find housing on the Eastern side that would be better as it is closer to the University—either in the St. Pauli or Sternschanze neighborhoods. The University provides a website for student sublets where you can sublet from current Bucerius students which would make it very convenient.

Overall, the experience was a great one, both academically and socially. I would highly recommend taking the Law and Music course as well as the International Commercial Contracts course (taught by a former member of the CISG advisory). The Professors are all incredibly nice and helpful and will give great career advice. One of the people from my time at Bucerius even got a job from them and will be staying in Hamburg for an extra six months.

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Name:

Semester/Institution: Fall/ Bucerius Law School (Hamburg, Germany)

REPORT:

Now that I am back from Germany, I can honestly say that study abroad has been a definitive highlight of my law school experience. This is an opportunity to travel and learn that doesn't come around very often and may not come again, so I am happy that I was able to take advantage of it.

Germany, and Hamburg in particular, is an excellent city to live in as the quality of life for money is quite high. The cost of living is much less than in Boston, so you can get more for your money in terms of housing, food, going out, etc. Beer is especially inexpensive and pretty much everyone speaks English. Additionally, public transit is free through the school, so you have every reason to explore the city and take advantage of what it has to offer, which is a little of everything. A highlight for me are the Christmas markets that start around Thanksgiving. They are all around the city and are unlike anything that you can find in the US. Another highlight was Oktoberfest, which was crazy fun and occurred at the start of the program so it was a good chance to meet people. The trains in Germany are also quite comprehensive, making it very easy to travel throughout Germany and Europe as well. I visited Berlin, Munich, and Cologne during the exchange and each city has its charms and quirks, so I definitely would recommend traveling within the country.

A couple of downsides of Hamburg: it is *extremely* cold in the winter. Like, colder than Boston is at this time of year. Additionally, because it is northern Germany, the population is homogenous. Pretty much everyone is tall and blond, and though they are generally open-minded, the people clearly are not used to seeing more diverse people, and so I (an Asian woman) received *lots* of stares. People will stare at you brazenly and when you catch them they don't stop, which was a bit alarming. Also, I was on the receiving end of more microaggressions than I've experienced in Boston. This is just something to be aware of and consider if you know it will bother you. Finally, the food in Hamburg, in my opinion, leaves much to be desired. They have bad international food (i.e., Mexican, Asian, etc.) and their diet is very meat heavy.

The single most valuable aspect of the program was my ability to travel. The curriculum is structured so that you have a *lot* of free time in chunks (think five-day weekends, weeks off at a time, etc.), so everyone travels. Some people (like me) travel almost every chance they get, and some stayed in town more. There's a good number of people who do both so you won't be lonely either way, as the program has about 100 students. During the semester I was able to visit Prague, Vienna, Salzburg, Budapest, Venice, Florence, Rome, Athens, Santorini, Amsterdam, Paris, London, Brussels, Bruges, Strasbourg, Porto, and Marrakech. I never had the chance to travel until now, so this was amazing and I learned so much about myself in the process.

The program itself is great because you take more courses in the semester than you would at BU. This is because the semester is divided into two sections with a weeklong break in between. I took four classes per session, so in total I was able to take eight classes. I was able to experience subjects ranging from international M&A to Negotiation to Law and Music. The breadth of academic options is awesome, and there are a lot of courses to choose from. The only class that everyone is required take is Intro to German Law. Another thing to note is that most of the classes are taught by practitioners who come into town for a few days at a time, so your class may consist of three straight days of the same class for the entire day (like 9-5), but then the class is over. I really liked this because, as I mentioned before, it left large chunks of time for travel. The other side of taking so many different courses is that none of them were particularly in-depth because they met for only half a semester. I felt that I was able to get a good overview of the subjects I took which allowed me to delve further into my favorites back at BU.

As far as rigor, the courses are honestly much easier than at BU. The majority of the program consists of Erasmus students from throughout Europe. In most European countries, a law degree is the equivalent of an undergrad major, so the classes are catering to an average age of about 20. Thus, the classes require much less work than you are probably used to as a BU student. None of the classes involve cold-calling, and most don't even have readings to prepare for class. That being said, you definitely do much more work *during* the class, and the classes are longer than what you are probably used to, with the minimum class duration of two hours, and they can last the entire day. The faculty are very passionate about their topics and are usually practicing attorneys which makes their perspectives interesting. We did have some issues with a member of the faculty saying multiple offensive things to students of color, though I am not sure how this was addressed or resolved. As I mentioned before, generally awareness of problematic behavior or comments towards people of color is not present among Hamburgers, most likely due to the fact that they have very limited interactions with diverse peoples. Still, it was upsetting.

One last thing to note is that, as I mentioned, the average age of the cohort is about 20 years old. Of course, the students from the US and Canada are older because they are in grad school, but most of the European students are quite young. This can be fun and refreshing in a lot of ways, but also can be annoying or the students may be harder to relate to. This is just something to consider if you are an older student. For the most part, the students are very friendly, though often their young age is apparent. One great thing is that the program is very diverse and you will meet people from all over the world.

All-in-all, if you are thinking about studying abroad, especially if you have post-grad employment secured, you should go for it. You will learn things about yourself that you didn't expect to discover just by nature of being in an uncomfortable place with new people. I learned that I am much more independent than I thought and that I love being alone just as much as I love being around other people. I know that I will look back on my time in Germany fondly as one of my most formative experiences during law school.

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Name:

Semester/Institution: _____ **Bucerius Fall 2022** _____

REPORT:

I am going into corporate law therefore I wanted to be able to take some business classes during my exchange. Aside from academics, the three big factors at play were, I wanted to go to Europe (I wanted to be able to travel during my free time), I wanted an English-speaking program, and I only wanted to go for one semester. That left me with Hamburg, Liden or England. I did my undergrad exchange in the Netherlands and England was going to be more expensive and had

shorter semesters, therefore I went with Hamburg. Hamburg is also a business orientated law school, so it seemed like a perfect fit.

Bucerius: In Europe, law degrees are undergraduate degrees so the students at the school were younger. However, international students take classes with only other international students, they tend to be a little older but not much. The school has tons of on campus events such as **Oktoberfest** (this event is actually really fun definitely recommend), wine night, and other parties.

The semester is broken up into two terms so you will end up taking more classes than at BU. This was nice because you got a little taste of everything. Attendance is mandatory for most classes and most classes have an end of semester essay or test which determines your grade. Classes will not resemble the same rigor of BU. You only need to pass so this was a phenomenal opportunity for genuine low pressure learning. Classes tend to be longer and less frequent than what you are used to. Classes will meet for anywhere between 2-6. The professors were all great (someone even got a job through one of the profesors) with the exception of Christopher Bisping (C.B.), who teaches a mandatory Intro to German Law class. He made several antisemitic and racially charged comments during class. Several students mentioned the comments in their reviews of the class and informed the international office. As far as I know, no actions were taken against him as he is tenured and the dean of the LLM program. Unfortunately, things like this happen in American universities too but I thought it was important to note.

The international office is very helpful and will answer any question you have! They really want you to have a positive experience and will answer all your questions! We were the first in person exchange since the pandemic started and you could tell they wanted us to have a good time. Our classes were spaced out nicely to allow for lots of travel which I took full advantage of.

BIPOC: Hamburg is pretty homogeneous, so people stare A LOT. I had mostly friends of color and people stared at us a lot. The only BIPOC's at the school are the international students.

Housing/living: My advice, if you are looking for the most affordable housing, I would jump on a sublet from a Bucerius student (Bucerius staff will email you about the postings). All Bucerius students have to do a semester exchange so there is a limited number of apartments. This option could run you about \$400-\$600. I brought my dog with me and waited until June to look so I had a hard time finding housing, but I lived at the HAVENS young professional housing (completely independent from the school), and it was very nice! The location is super central, only two stops from the school, three stops to downtown. The apartment came furnished and they had beautiful facilities (there was a grocery store attached to the building)! When I left, they were building a spa on one of the floors. It is essentially a "luxury building" but at Boston room pricing. I paid about \$1350 for my own, very spacious, studio with all utilities included (Europe is going through an energy crisis right now making heating super expensive). They had a community aspect too which was nice for making friends outside of school! I loved this apartment but as you can see this option is twice as expensive as something else you can probably find. Germany has not been hit as hard by inflation as the U.S. therefore the overall cost of living in Germany is

lower. I never spent more than \$20-\$30 on groceries for a trip that would usually cost me twice as much here. If you are going during the Spring please note there is no AC anywhere.

Bottom Line: I would not hesitate to do this program again! I learned so much about myself, other cultures, and law school styles. I was able to travel to over 20 cities and still manage my workload. Even if you do not choose Hamburg, I HIGHLY recommend studying abroad, it will be one of your most formative educational experiences you'll have!

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Name:

Semester/Institution: Fall 2019 / Bucerius Law School

REPORT:

My experience studying at Bucerius Law School in Hamburg, Germany during the fall of 2019 was nothing short of remarkable. Nearly all of the professors were extremely talented. Hamburg is a fantastic city with loads of culture, food, and nightlife. The courses offered are

plentiful, and I was able to enroll in nearly all of my first-choice classes. Bucerius does a fantastic job helping the international students meet one another, consequently, making the program very friendly and enjoyable. The school puts on numerous social events, especially early on in the program.

At the start of the semester, as required, I laid out educational objectives. Since Bucerius' program is focused on international business, it was my goal to hone my legal and business acumen, specifically from an international standpoint. Through the various course offerings at Bucerius (most of which are business focused), such as: International M&A, International Commercial Transactions, and European Capital Markets, I gained an international business perspective, in turn, furthering my legal and business acumen. The courses did an excellent job of comparing and contrasting the laws and norms of various jurisdictions. Moreover, since Germany is a civil law system, in contrast to the United States' common law system, I hoped to improve my critical thinking skills by studying a different type of legal system. Through classes such as Introduction to EU Law and Introduction to German Law I was able to do just that, while at the same time learning about the respective jurisdictions' laws and political systems.

In addition to my education-related objectives, it was my goal to travel throughout Germany and the rest of Europe. The program's unique structure, in which the majority of the professors are visiting professors, made traveling extremely doable. Since most professors do not reside in Germany, the classes tend to be scheduled in blocks, rather than on a continuous, consistent weekly schedule. Therefore, my schedule naturally lent itself to having large breaks where I could travel for up to approximately one week at a time. Moreover, there was a one-week semester break when no classes were held, which provided another opportunity for travel.

A few other miscellaneous notes. Bucerius facilitates the housing process by connecting you with German students spending the semester abroad who are looking to sublet their apartments in Hamburg and by providing dorm-type options as well. I sublet an apartment from a Bucerius student, but I had friends who lived in the dorms and found housing on their own. The cost of housing is significantly cheaper in Hamburg than in Boston. The general cost of living is also less, for example, beers are usually only the equivalent of one or two dollars. As a result, without spending more money than you would during a semester in Boston, you can travel throughout Europe.

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6

Semester/Institution: **Fall 2019 – Bucerius Law School** _____

REPORT:

I spent the fall 2019 semester at Bucerius Law School in Hamburg, Germany. I had an excellent experience while in Hamburg and am extremely glad that I chose to participate in the program. This is especially true in light of the goals I outlined prior to the semester, which

included furthering my interest in comparative business law, enhancing the skills I will use as a corporate lawyer, and learning more about German culture and history.

First, this was an ideal program in which to explore comparative business/financial law. Not only did the program offer such courses as comparative corporate law with strict comparative aims, but nearly every other course integrated comparative elements into the curriculum to add context and help the students from a variety of backgrounds relate to the material. Thus, comparative elements were added to a large number of topics, including arbitration, capital markets, commercial transactions, and negotiation. This speaks to both the number and variety of courses offered and the intellectual prowess of the program's professors.

Second, I hoped to sharpen the skills I would need as a corporate lawyer upon my graduation from BU Law. Once again, the international program at Bucerius proved to be an ideal fit. Almost every class had a direct business/financial focus, and even those that did not had useful information that could be applied in a business setting. For example, arbitration laid useful groundwork on the most important elements of an arbitration clause, how such clauses should be drafted, and how to proceed if a clause is improperly drafted. Additionally, some of our instructors were industry leaders in the field of business law, including practicing lawyers and esteemed members of academia.

Finally, the program's flexibility allowed myself and the other participants to travel and experience important elements of German and European culture. Specifically, our program seemed to have extra time built into the first half of its programming, which allowed us time to travel. I took advantage of this opportunity and visited additional German cities such as Berlin, Munich, Essen, Stade, Dortmund, and Lubeck. Each city offered different elements of German culture and history, such as the crucial political events of Berlin, the preservation of art and culture in Munich, and the key economic history of Lubeck. Additionally, I found Hamburg to be an excellent launching point when addressing this goal. The German people of Hamburg are exceptionally kind and willing to discuss their country's history with Americans, and its status as a popular travel destination within the country means that you can meet people of many backgrounds within it. It is also an excellent source of German cultural icons, including vast Christmas markets and a close proximity to many interesting day-trip cities (such as Stade and Lubeck). Bucerius even arranged program events around these focuses, including trips to Berlin and Lubeck, time spent at the Christmas markets, and a visit to a WWII old labor camp outside the city. Overall, I feel as though my goal here was accomplished because of (rather than in spite of) Bucerius's program and its location in Hamburg.

In addition to the above discussion about my goals entering the semester, I will now also touch on my experience at Bucerius generally.

Over the course of this semester I came to greatly appreciate the administrative support, quality faculty, and general organization provided to all of us international students at Bucerius. Faced with an abundance of questions, the administrative staff at Bucerius maintained their patience and helped us avoid major roadblocks. That allowed us to spend our time traveling and taking care of classes, which were taught by true industry leaders. It is clear that Bucerius attracts

top teaching talent, even for us international students. We also rarely experienced a shortage of activities through which we could meet other internationals or actual German students at the school.

I would also say that the quality of life in Hamburg is quite good. The city is cheaper than Boston and seems to have a wider range of activities than the ones found here as well. The weather could be better (it rains a lot throughout northern Europe), but even that does not detract from the friendly and positive nature of Hamburg locals. Given that most Germans seem to speak very good English, locals are happy to talk with foreign students and offer tips on activities and restaurants. On the whole, I consider it to be an outstanding place to live for a semester.

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Semester/Institution: Fall 2018/Bucerius

REPORT:

My educational objectives were to increase my working knowledge on international business law while focusing on EU policies. I generally wanted to expand my understanding of international legal systems and how they interact with the US in order to have a better background for my career and any cross-border deals I may be a part of. Overall, I found that these desires were more than satisfied by my time at Bucerius. The institution itself is

fantastically run, and the team dedicated to helping out the international students were all wonderful. They were there for any issue you may have, from organizing our visas to finding restaurants to eat at. When we had any concerns, personal or administrative, the door was always open and we were able to discuss everything at length. I never felt adrift during my time at Bucerius because of the easy access to resources and people that were willing to sit on the phone to walk with and translate any issues. They provided access to resources like doctors that speak English, how to navigate landlord situations, or even getting a refund when your train was cancelled (which sadly happened to me more than once). The teaching staff at Bucerius was full of professionals and visiting professors. This gave us a significant amount of insight into the professional legal world of Germany, as well as other EU member states. We were able to hear a number of different perspectives, and I feel that it was truly valuable to my legal education. The courses were taught over two distinct sessions, which allowed me to take 8 different courses during my time in Hamburg. This allowed for a lot of variety, and ensured that a topic never got stale.

I found that the German style of teaching involves significantly more classroom learning time than at home. Although I spent less time outside of class reading, I spent more time in class as a single class session was minimum 2 hours, up to 6. The courses themselves were very interesting, as they taught international business concepts without a US focus. It allowed me a great deal of insight into some of the cultural differences that will actually play into a deal, whether contract negotiations or in an arbitration, as well as the differences arising from legal systems. There was also some practical learning that helped enforce some of the drafting principles I had previously come across. I feel that my educational goals were also satisfied simply by speaking with classmates. One course, Essential Themes and Trends in Comparative Corporate Law, actually required students to present different approaches to a base concept from our home jurisdictions. It was intriguing to learn how a non-common law country approaches issues that we have addressed in the US. I think it gave me a deeper appreciation for nuances that exist between legal systems and how other lawyers may approach the same legal questions. Some courses I did not take allowed for more experiential learning, and though I cannot speak from personal attendance, they were well regarded by other students. I found Bucerius did not lack for interesting course options.

From a personal perspective, it was interesting to be with younger students again. As in many EU countries a law degree is the equivalent of an undergraduate degree, there were students as young as 18 in many of my classes. I also found the program did a great job of ensuring there were events where we mixed with other international students. I have forged a number of friendships, and hope to visit many of my fellow students in their home countries. Hamburg itself is a fantastic city! That being said, the bulk of the 100 internationals (it is an extremely robust international program) were from the US. I immediately had travel friends, and my social life, between the planned events and impromptu get-togethers, was very robust.

The public transit is free to the Bucerius international students (they gave us a card that spanned our entire stay), and with it you can easily access the entire city. If you are less inclined to public transit, MyTaxi is a great replacement for Uber, and walking is always available. I lived

about a 12-minute walk from school so I put a lot of miles on my shoes. The city is very green with almost 1 tree per person and is the biggest non-capital city in Europe! I could recreate the tour, but needless to say there is a lot of interest and beauty in this northern German city. People were very friendly, and I never had trouble using English (and my broken beginner level German) when navigating all aspects of life in Hamburg. I opened a bank account at the local branch, which was entirely coordinated by Bucerius, and found that it made transactions very simple across all my travels in Europe (as it was an EC card and no transaction fees if used within the EU). I would recommend using the bank, unless you have a bank in the US that has sister-banks in Germany. Traveling from Hamburg was very easy, as there was a nearby airport, and trains/busses could get you pretty much anywhere in continental Europe. Even with a few cancelled trains, I never felt nervous about my safety or ability to make it back to Hamburg.

Finding housing was a simple process because Bucerius requires its own students to do a semester abroad, and has a system for letting their flats to the incoming internationals. I chose this method, and did take one of the more expensive apartments, which was still less than housing in Boston. There were also significantly cheaper shared dorms, or options with roommates. As I mentioned, I was close to school and lived across from one of the expansive parks that extend throughout Hamburg. Safety was really never a concern, and even after dark you would see families pushing strollers around the park and surrounding areas I walked through. I found this highly encouraging, as some of my classes did let out after sunset. Germany is considered one of the more expensive countries in the EU, though I did not find the prices to be at all unreasonable, and in fact was often cheaper than eating out in an American city. I did cook a fair bit at home, and while I needed to translate to figure out groceries the first few times around, and some of my standard ingredients were not available, it was relatively easy to adapt and I didn't feel nervous after the first go. I shopped at either Edeka or Rewe, which are very similar to grocery stores at home. One thing to note on groceries, bring your own shopping bags, and start bagging your items immediately after they are scanned. Germans are all about efficiency and want you to walk away once you pay; if your still bagging items you hold up the whole process and it feels somewhat excruciating. For a cell phone I used Vodafone's SIM monthly sim card plan. You needed a passport and an address in Germany to open it, but once that was done, topping up was easy and it worked seamlessly across the 12 countries I traveled in Europe. Overall, the experience was absolutely incredible, and I cannot recommend this program more highly. I already miss Germany, and hope to visit again soon. Bucerius is a fantastic institution and is incredibly well organized, your hand is held through all administrative issues and I never felt like I was out of my element, which took out a significant amount of pressure off of moving across the ocean. The classes are fantastic, traveling is accessible and encourage by both faculty and staff, and Hamburg is a perfect place to spend a few months gaining exposure to the world of international business law and in general.

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Semester/Institution: Fall 2017, Bucerius Law

REPORT:

My semester at Bucerius Law was an incredible addition to my law school years. My interest in international corporate law lead me to apply to this program and I was not disappointed. My educational objectives for this semester abroad were more general, revolving around me becoming a more well-rounded professional rather than gaining specific knowledge. During this semester, I wanted to learn more about corporate law through an international lens and to gain a more international perspective from my peers. I definitely feel like I met my educational objectives. The courses at Bucerius focus mainly on corporate, finance, and intellectual property law all though an international or comparative lens. The classes were very accessible and typically were foundational classes but the differing perspectives in the classroom and the study of varying national law kept even topics that had been previously studied fresh and interesting.

The faculty at Bucerius were often experts in their respective fields and incredibly interesting. One aspect that was both a benefit and slight detriment was that many of the exchange program's professors are practicing attorneys. This means that they are knowledgeable about current practices but also means that courses were scheduled for completely random and sometimes inconvenient times each week and that professors were typically only available by e-mail outside of class. This was only a slight inconvenience but the irregular scheduling should be noted.

In addition to the interesting courses, the international office at Bucerius is absolutely phenomenal. The administrators handling the exchange program are incredibly responsive, helpful, and on top of anything a student may have an issue with. Often the international administrators would provide a solution to a problem before any of the exchange students even

knew the problem existed. I found the availability of classes to be very good with only a few courses having large waitlists.

The quality of life in Hamburg is much better than New York or Boston. The city is incredibly clean, groceries are more affordable, going out to dinner will be about the same as any other city but housing could also be found much cheaper. The school also provides a semester pass to ride the city's public transport for free which may be one of the best train and bus system's that I have ever used. In addition, there are bicycle hubs all over the city and you can ride for free for the first 30 minutes. If travelling to cities via the long-distance train more than a couple of times, then the Deutsche Bahn Card will actually save you a ton of money in the long run so I recommend getting that. The school also facilitates opening bank accounts with a local bank there which many people took advantage of. I would suggest using N26 through Transferwise instead though, you can get money out at many local stores through an app on your phone as well as ATMs and you can get money out 5 times per month all over Europe without any fees. I also recommend getting a prepaid sim card through Vodafone rather than T-Mobile or any of the other companies because it allows roaming all over Europe without extra fees. That was incredibly helpful.

With regards to housing, the school provides a portal for incoming exchange students to sublet an apartment or room from German Bucerius students while they are abroad elsewhere. The program announces when that portal will be up and running and I suggest having that date marked in your calendar because this housing goes incredibly quickly. I wasn't able to secure housing through this portal but it would have been much easier if I had. Rental prices vary depending upon how many roommates you have and what neighborhood you live in as they do in any city but are much cheaper than Boston or New York. There are some dorms as well but some

are much farther away than others and I know students at the Kiwittsmoor dorm regretted their choice to live so far from campus and the city center. If the portal doesn't work out, then there is also a Facebook group called BLS Marketplace that you can request to join. Someone within the group has to accept you to be able to post, but this is another great way to find housing by subletting from another BLS student.

Overall my experience at Bucerius was phenomenal and I wish that I could go back. I would be happy to give any more advice or answer any questions that an incoming Bucerius exchange student might have.

MID-SEMESTER STUDY ABROAD REPORT

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1) Write a one page report assessing your experience abroad, in light of your academic and personal goals. Topics to consider:

Courses	Professors	Housing
Social Activities	City Life	Money Matters

- 2) Please indicate whether we can share your information with current BU Law students interested in participating in study abroad programs.

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YES NO

- b) Will you share your mid-semester report (with any indentifying information redacted) in a binder housed in the OGIP?

YES NO

Please write your Mid-Semester Study Abroad Report below.

PROGRAM NAME & SEMESTER: Bucerius Law School - Fall 2014

Overall, my experience studying at Bucerius Law School and living in Hamburg has been incredible. First, I must say that I have enjoyed the coursework here. Bucerius offers a great selection of courses, especially for students who want to specialize in Corporate Law, or who are interested in comparative law topics. The program is organized into two sessions, so I could take twice as many classes as I normally could at BU Law. So far, my favorite course has been Negotiation, which provided me with a hands-on approach to learning the art of negotiation. I particularly enjoyed doing simulations with individuals from all over the world, as this allowed for a cross-cultural prospective of negotiating.

My only complaint about the course work is that the courses are rather easy compared to the courses I take at BU, and they do not require nearly as much time and effort as I expected. With that being said, I should also mention that the professors here at Bucerius are excellent. Some professors are visiting professors from other prestigious law schools in the United States, while others are practicing lawyers with expertise in the field that they teach. All of the professors here are passionate about the subject matter that they teach, and are more than capable in terms of their expertise and knowledge to teach each course.

In terms of logistics such as housing and money matters, I will say that I was pleasantly surprised to find that the cost of living in Hamburg is much cheaper than it is in Boston. Even with the unfavorable conversion rate between the euro and the dollar, I have found that my month to month expenses here are more manageable. Housing here, once found, is generally nice and affordable, with many of the housing options being close to campus. The only problem is that like Boston, housing opportunities go fast once they are on the market. It took me some time to find the apartment that I have now, so I would recommend that future exchange students start looking for housing well in advance of traveling to Hamburg. I will say also that future exchange students should not trust Craigslist ads when searching for an apartment here, as I encountered two scam rentals on Craigslist, and heard similar stories from some of my friends in the program.

I found that the social activities here at Bucerius are valuable, not only because of the pleasure that you get from socializing, but also because they encourage sharing cultural backgrounds and experiences. My favorite social activity so far was the International Dinner, where everyone cooked and brought a dish from their home country. I really enjoyed trying the cuisine from all over the world, and in doing so, getting a taste of so many different cultures. Finally, Hamburg is an absolutely wonderful city. I arrived here in July, so I was lucky to have more time in this great city than most of the other exchange students. Hamburg provides a variety of different neighborhoods, from the very posh, to more hipster, but every neighborhood in Hamburg feels, and is, safe. The people here are welcoming and happy to help with any questions that you may have as a visitor. Also, even though I have been improving my German language abilities, I was happy to find that everyone here in Hamburg speaks English relatively well.

In addition to everything that I have mentioned above, I should note that the most valuable part of studying abroad is not just the courses you take or intermingling with other exchange students. For me, the most valuable aspect of this program has been learning the culture and live style of Germany, and specifically, learning the similarities and differences between the German legal system and the US legal system. Sometimes as US natives, we can become trapped in the way we think, and the perspective we have on the world. As an exchange student, it has been incredibly valuable to learn that the US way of doing things is not the only way. And moreover, neither system is necessarily right or wrong, but as a law student in an increasingly globalized economy and world, it is important to understand the differences between systems.

Overall, I have found my time in Germany to be incredibly valuable. I have no regrets about coming here, and I would absolutely recommend this experience to future students.

BUCERIUS 2005: Four Months in Germany

There is something about living in a foreign country for over a month that's a substantially different experience than traveling abroad for a lesser period. As a tourist the place you visit is on display; as a resident it becomes your home.

Hamburg was a nice place to call home. The city is very orderly: clean, safe, and easy to traverse. Well, at least by mass transit... The streetplan is quite labyrinth. It was a happy day when I finally could figure out how to get to other parts of the city than just home and school...

I shared an apartment with another girl in the international program. It was a nice apartment in an older building in the Eimsbuettel section of the city. It had been modernized and had a full kitchen, a bathroom with shower, and we each had our own rooms. The girl we rented it from was a med student who spent the term in Australia.

She also lent me her bike, which was fun to ride around town (except for the labyrinth streets - see above). Hamburg is an easy town to bike around - everyone does it, there's tons of places to lock up bikes, and you can even ride on the sidewalks.

My days were mostly spent at school, even on weekends. (It was the only place where I had Internet access.) The building was open to us 24/7 with our card key. It was a nice building, with nice grounds and a renovated interior. Classrooms also were outfitted with some of the latest AV technology. The building also had a cafeteria that served reasonably edible and affordable lunches (although perhaps not as edible or affordable as the University of Hamburg cafeteria where we could also eat at a discount.) Other cheap places were the Essen und Trinken food hall at nearby Gaensemarkt and the various Doner-kebab shops around town. There was nothing in the immediate vicinity of the school, which was a problem on weekends when the school was closed, but the Dammtor train station was an easy walk in one direction and the Gaensemarkt area in the other. Gaensemarkt also had a town square area where various civic events would take place, like political rallies (I saw the one for the Green Party, but managed to miss the one by the Nazi Party...) and seasonal markets.

It was not necessary to speak German to get around town, though it helped. When I first got there I hardly knew any, and it was weird being functionally illiterate. I could see signs with admonitions not to do things, for instance, but I couldn't figure out what it was that I wasn't supposed to do... There were also smaller shops, like bike shops, where it was hard to do business without the German. German was not required at all, however, for anything connected to school. All staff, faculty, and students spoke English. The German students in particular spoke incredibly fluent English, including figures of speech and slang.

But there were opportunities to learn the language. The school arranged for several series of classes and negotiated discounts with another language institute in the neighborhood. I

also did my own self-study and review. The result of all this effort was that by the time I left, I could function in German when I needed to.

This I did on top of all my classes (all but one of which were in English). The way the program worked is that all the international students were offered a choice of about 12 courses to take over the course of the semester. In theory they followed three scheduling patterns, running either the first half of the term, the second half, or over both halves. (All classes were worth two ABA credits, so the ones that ran longer just met less frequently.) In reality however they tended to begin and end on a staggered basis.

Most classes were taken with other international students (there were about 70, two-thirds of whom were American and the other third from other countries around the world), but a few were taken with other German students. Their schedule was different from ours, however, starting about a month later in the semester. But we were still able to take some of their classes if we wanted. I did a French class (in French) and a moot court class (in English, dealing with the Vis Moot Court for international arbitration).

The class schedule was a little complicated - classes wouldn't necessarily meet at the same time, week by week - but they tended to cluster around the middle so that people would have time to travel. Lots of people traveled quite a bit - my roommate was gone practically every weekend - but I ended up only taking two trips: a quick one to Ireland before I came home, and a long weekend one to Poland. That last trip was particularly profound for me as I went to the town where part of my family is from. It made me feel particularly rooted to Europe in a way I hadn't before, walking in the footsteps of my great-grandma (for whom I'd been named) 100 years after her.

There was also a school trip to Berlin, though I didn't go on it. In retrospect I probably should have - it sounded like a good trip - but I did other things to connect with the people I was spending my time with. Every week the school would have various speakers and other events at the school. Some of these events were in English, which made it easy to attend, but sometimes I went even when they were in German. One such event was a showing of a Holocaust propaganda movie, something allowed in Germany only when it could be presented in an educational way. It was interesting: I couldn't understand a word of what I was hearing, and yet I understood plenty.

I also got involved with extracurricular activities, like playing soccer. I played with the men in pick-up games and on the women's team they sent to the inter-mural sports competition at another private college in Germany, WHU. Schools from all over Europe sent teams there for a weekend of sports and partying. I took a pass on the partying, but it was nice to use it as an opportunity to get out of Hamburg and see a bit more of Germany - though not like a tourist. It was better than being a tourist, because rather than seeing Germany through its museums, you could come to know Germany through seeing how Germans actually lived.

FINAL STUDY ABROAD REPORT

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1) Write a one page report assessing your experience abroad, in light of your academic and personal goals. Topics to consider:

Courses	Professors	Housing
Social Activities	City Life	Money Matters

- 2) Please indicate whether we can share your information with current BU Law students interested in participating in study abroad programs.
- a) Will you share your personal email address with students who request to contact former program participants?
- YES NO
- b) Will you share your final study abroad report (with any identifying information redacted) in a binder housed in the OGIP?
- YES NO

Please write your Final Study Abroad Report below.

PROGRAM NAME & SEMESTER: Bucerius Law School – Fall 2014

My time in Hamburg was definitely the most rewarding and enjoyable time I have had in law school so far. I would recommend this experience to anyone who has an interest in practicing corporate law or private international law. I miss Germany already, and I am very sad that such an incredible experience has ended. I will start by discussing the program academically, and finish my report with how the program was culturally.

I really appreciated that there were two sessions of classes, so that I could take seven law classes in one semester. I found that some of the courses in the program were both educational and practical for my future career goals. I particularly enjoyed the International Commercial Arbitration, Negotiation and Corporate Governance courses. All of these featured class work that allowed us to practice some of the more practical aspects of lawyering. For example, we held a mock arbitration in the International Commercial Arbitration course, for which I was selected as an arbitrator. I was happy to have the experience of preparing an arbitral award with two fellow students. The faculty at Bucerius is also excellent. All of the professors are fiercely intelligent, passionate, and understanding with their students. I think the academic program at Bucerius is

less demanding than the program here at BU, but the school does this intentionally so that the exchange students can have more time to learn from travelling and their other cultural experiences.

In terms of the cultural aspects of studying at Bucerius, I really think that Hamburg is a great place to live, not just for Germany, but also for all of Europe. The cost of living in Hamburg is much lower than it is here in Boston, which was a nice break financially for one semester. Hamburg is a metropolitan city, and has great selection for shopping, dining out, having a night out, or just having a coffee. The element of the port city is really lovely because there are canals Hamburg and these make for gorgeous photo opportunities. The housing is surprisingly well priced and normally decent sized. I would recommend that any future students planning to study in Hamburg start their search for housing early, as the market in Hamburg moves quickly, and it may take you a few attempts before you find a place that works. I find that people are generally welcoming in Hamburg, and will be polite with you even if your German isn't the best. Bucerius also planned some social activities that contributed immensely to my time in Hamburg. One of my favorites was ice-skating at an outdoor rink nearby. But the most rewarding social activity during study abroad is traveling around Europe with your fellow students. Weekend trips serve to either strengthen your bond as friends, or tear you apart. I think it is valuable life experience to travel with people coming from so many different backgrounds, you can learn a lot about human behavior and dealing with cultural differences.

Overall, I would say that the study abroad program at Bucerius is of excellent quality, and I have no regrets deciding to spend a semester in Hamburg. I am thankful that I had the opportunity to learn more about civil law, practice my German, see more of Europe, and gain a little perspective by interacting with individuals from all over the world. I would do the whole thing over again if I could, no questions asked.

MID-SEMESTER STUDY ABROAD REPORT

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Courses

Professors

Housing

Social Activities

City Life

Money Matters

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YES NO

Will you share your mid-semester report (with any identifying information redacted) in a binder housed in the OGIP?

YES NO

Please write your Mid-Semester Study Abroad Report below.

PROGRAM NAME & SEMESTER: Bucerius Law School - Fall 2014

My time thus far studying at Bucerius Law School has been fantastic. The program, the Bucerius administrators, the German Bucerius students, and my peers in the international program are great. I honestly cannot imagine having done another program, because I do not believe any other program could be as good or as well suited to me as this one. (I'm so very grateful that Dean Riccardi pointed me in this direction even though I originally thought I wanted a different program!)

The program is very focused on business law, which means that there are far more courses that I want to take than I actually have time to take. This also means that the students are largely interested in business law – though not everyone is even certain they wish to pursue law. This means that there is a variety of individuals here with whom one can have intelligent and informed conversations about areas in which we are all interested – but coming from many backgrounds. The people have made this program even better for me. I first met others in the program before orientation, got to know Hamburg with them, and now have studied and traveled with them. This adds another layer that is quite different from peer relationships back home. While I know that we will not all keep in touch forever, as that is simply not how life works, I am confident that I will remain close with many from the program after we all leave Hamburg.

I signed up for more courses than I needed, but that has allowed me to have wiggle room for dropping courses. Of course, even with courses that I think I might drop, I have gone to the first session and liked it so much that I stayed! I know of some that I will be dropping second session, though, particularly due to timing of the courses. That is another thing here that is odd but very useful – the course schedule changes from week to week. This is due to having many professors coming in from different areas, but the result is that some weeks are very busy and others are open – allowing me to explore the area or travel. By having different schedules, we are able to be on campus at different times and get to know more people rather than settling into an easy routine.

The courses here are very interesting. Even though they are mainly survey courses, I think the material I have learned will be beneficial to my future career. The professors tell us about many different approaches to the laws, including often comparing the laws of different countries on the same topics. Other students will sometimes chime in with a discussion about the laws from their countries, which adds even more to the discussion. I have also learned a great deal about European Union law – beyond the basics I had learned on my own in the past, I now have an understanding of how the EU laws are passed and enforced in practice. Learning about the German legal system and the EU legal system overall – particularly from academics focusing on it and lawyers practicing in it – adds a layer of understanding that cannot be obtained otherwise and will be very helpful in my future career.

In terms of travel, I have spent a lot more time in Hamburg than I originally anticipated. Hamburg is a great city to explore – plus, it is nice to be able to really feel at home there! I was able to travel around with a friend for a few weeks before the program, which helped me feel less like I was wasting travel opportunities by staying in Hamburg, which truly feels like home now. This also made the transition from Boston to Hamburg a bit easier. I have taken some weekends for travel while staying here others. In this way, the travel has not gotten overwhelming and I've been able to get a better feel for Hamburg and make more friends here.

With the week break for travel, I had some difficulty finding someone to travel with, as many people signed up for the Berlin trip. I did not do the Berlin trip, since I figured I could go farther away with the longer break. I think a lot of people regretted signing up for the Berlin trip, though I'm sure they are having fun on it! I went to Berlin with some others in the program for a long weekend (over German Unity Day) instead. While I was not able to find someone to travel to Greece with this week, as had been my plan, I did find someone to go with later in the semester – freeing up this week! A friend in the program was looking for a travel buddy, so we joined forces. I looked at some different options, compared prices and where we each wanted to/could go (she is from India so must remain within Schengen), and ultimately came up with a travel plan of: Frankfurt, Luxembourg, Brussels/Ghent/Bruges, The Hague, and Amsterdam (where a group from the program will be meeting up towards the end of the week break). These are all nearby places but far enough away that they are not quite worth (or we are not sure if they are worth) the long bus ride and cost on their own. By joining them together, we are saving many weekend trips – and will probably take one or two of those weekends to go to other places!

In terms of the international program specifically, everyone here is very helpful. From helping us with visas through doctor appointments and dry cleaners through good places to travel, everyone in the international office has been fantastic. I know that I can ask them – or my German “family” members – any questions, including about certain things in my apartment that are different from home. This definitely helps feel more settled in a new country (and continent). While I enjoy being independent, being in a country where I do not speak the primary language

MID-SEMESTER STUDY ABROAD REPORT

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Housing

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means that having a safety net is rather reassuring. Furthermore, because everyone is so open, I can have casual, friendly conversations with these people as well rather than only going to them with problems.

There is only one way that I do not think this program has been helping me. Since I am so focused over here and the atmosphere is much more relaxed, I have had difficulties keeping up with things back home, including my job search and networking. While I do not at all regret my decision to come here and the more difficult job search did not come as a surprise to me, I know that it is making my job search more difficult and think it is an important point for future students to consider. (Again, I do not consider it a deal breaker in the least but want to be sure future students know about it!) On the other hand, spending time over here has made me reevaluate some of my future plans, so it is a good thing (in some ways) that I did not set something up ahead of time!

Overall, I love the international program at Bucerius and highly recommend it for students in the future!

FINAL STUDY ABROAD REPORT

INSTRUCTIONS:

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Courses

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Housing

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- YES NO

Please write your Final Study Abroad Report below.

PROGRAM NAME & SEMESTER: Bucerius, Fall 2014

I absolutely loved my experience studying abroad at Bucerius Law School. I highly recommend the program to any students interested in it (particularly if their interests line up with business or IP, but even for other students, there are many interesting classes). I am very grateful that Dean Riccardi suggested this program to me over another than I was considering, because I do feel that this program was the perfect fit for me – the only thing that could have made it better is if it were for a full year rather than one semester!

The entire Bucerius program was well put together and I believe helped me for the future – both personally and professionally. The courses were on a variety of interesting topics. I had to narrow down the list, of course, but there were so many more that I wanted to take than fit into my schedule! The courses were mostly high level overviews of topics, due to the various baselines of the program participants (from different countries and some in undergraduate programs, others in graduate programs) and time. That said, some of the courses did delve more specifically into one or two narrow areas. I think this was a good balance, as well as a good base to potentially work with or in these other countries in the future. There were also classes that I would not have had the opportunity to take at BU

Law – especially when the courses were taught by non-US professors. (For example, Intro to EU Law from a practicing EU attorney and professor is a different course than Intro to EU Law taught by a US professor.)

The professors were varied, which added a lot to the classes and the program. Some were from Hamburg or other parts of Germany, some law professors from around the world. Some were practicing attorneys, some were judges, and some were academics. This added greatly to the program by bringing varied perspectives into the classroom. This also helped in expanding my network, particularly given that many of the professors are open to discussions with students and told us to contact them in the future. I have found that the professors at BU Law are wonderful – and so were the professors at Bucerius. Similar to the BU Law professors, those at Bucerius clearly wanted to help the students, as well as learning about the students' perspectives. The professors clearly have a deep care for Bucerius and the students, especially given how much many of them travel to teach.

Housing was a difficult matter at Bucerius. The dorms are an option, but I had always heard bad things about dorms abroad (much like dorms in the US) and decided not to go for that option. If future participants do choose the dorms, which are certainly a less expensive and much easier option, I would recommend Kiwittdsmoor over Gustav. Gustav is closer, but the rooms are not as nice and you are living very close with the others – thin walls, many students close together, and one kitchen per something like ten or twelve students. Kiwittdsmoor is about 40 minutes by S Bahn (the subway system), which is the major drawback. However, the community that formed there this year was wonderful – I think the community developed in large part due to being away from others. The dorms are apartment-style, with nice rooms and a maximum of four people per apartment (and thus kitchen), I believe. I looked for housing through the student exchange, facebook groups, housing websites, and the like. It was difficult and there were certainly more scams than I have found in the Boston area (though that may have been because I was coming from abroad). I did ultimately find a wonderful studio that was large and about a ten minute walk from the school. There were certainly issues with the apartment (it was furnished by not as furnished as I was told it would be, there was a stove but no oven, etc.), and it was more expensive than some other options, but living by Grindelhof is a wonderful choice, I believe.

I made many friends through the program (and am already trying to plan travel to visit with some of them). I think that, socially, the program went largely as expected of an international exchange. People were generally nice, though groups certainly formed and some people did not necessarily get along as well. Bucerius put together different programs for us to meet and explore the area, which was wonderful – especially since they were free for us! Bucerius also put together buddy families with some internationals and some German students, which I found useful, particularly in the beginning. Some buddy families had get togethers throughout (those typically grew in size as more internationals joined the events!) while others only met in the beginning but were still available for questions if you reached out to them. As with anything, it just depends on the individuals involved.

Hamburg as a city is wonderful. It is not necessarily somewhere that I would recommend to someone looking for touristy travel, but Hamburg is a city that I would love to live in long term. In fact, I am looking at going back to Hamburg in the future. While traveling, I found a big difference between the

different areas of Germany – and Hamburg was definitely the right place for me. As a note, I do not speak German, and I rarely had difficulties in Hamburg. Everyone was friendly and nice about it. For doctors, apothekes, dry cleaners, or anything else, I often would check with the international office for recommendations of an English speaking one, but even when I just wandered in off of the street, I rarely had any problems.

Overall, I wish I could go back and spend another semester at Bucerius Law School. I am already looking into the possibility of a fellowship in the future, something I likely would not have pursued without this study abroad program. I could discuss the program for many pages, but it is probably better than anyone with questions just contact me in the future!

MID-SEMESTER STUDY ABROAD REPORT

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1) Write a one page report assessing your experience abroad, in light of your academic and personal goals. Topics to consider:

Courses	Professors	Housing
Social Activities	City Life	Money Matters

- 2) Please indicate whether we can share your information with current BU Law students interested in participating in study abroad programs.
- a) Will you share your personal email address with students who request to contact former program participants?
- YES NO
- b) Will you share your mid-semester report (with any indentifying information redacted) in a binder housed in the OGIP?
- YES NO

Please write your Mid-Semester Study Abroad Report below.

PROGRAM NAME & SEMESTER: Bucerius Law School (Hamburg, Germany) – Fall 2011

Academics

The academic program at Bucerius is geared toward business law, though there are a few courses available on more general subjects, such as EU law. For those used to American law school courses, the academic load per course should be fairly easy. Though the classes are supposed to be taught using the Socratic method, it does not actually happen in the majority of the courses. This might be because most of the professors are from countries other than the U.S. Professors generally assign less reading than a BU student would be used too. The exams are the easiest that I have taken in law school, possibly even when I was an undergrad. This is not to say that they are passable without studying, just that the same amount of preparation is not necessary. Although the classes are not difficult, that does not mean they are not rewarding. Getting taught international trade law or German corporate law from someone with a perspective from outside the U.S. certainly has its benefits. It is also interesting to debate issues or policy with classmates who also bring a non-U.S. perspective. You start to see how much culture plays a role in policy formation. So while the courses are easy, and one certainly could slack off and pass, for those

who take an interest in the classes they are taking, I believe the courses will provide rewarding insight in to the legal world that international businesses take part in.

Outside of School

First, it must be said that Hamburg is a great city to live in. Those accustomed to Boston's train system will find the Hamburg, and for that matter, all of Germany's, train system too good to be real. The neighborhoods are great, there are tons of dining options, and the night life is varied and terrific. The weather is comparable to Boston. Hamburg is not a tourist destination, but a great place to actually live for four months. Brushing up on some helpful German phrases before coming over would be suggested. Many Germans who work in hospitality or who are well educated speak enough English to communicate with you, but since you will be living here and dealing with everyday life, you will often come into contact with Germans who speak little or no English.

Because Hamburg is so centrally located and because the course load is not overwhelming, students find plenty of time to travel on the weekends or other breaks. It seems like every weekend, someone is arranging a trip to some European destination. Traveling by train or plane or even by car is relatively inexpensive. I would suggest that anyone interested in coming to Bucerius take advantage of traveling opportunities. Also, any student who would be interested in attending Oktoberfest should make hostel or hotel arrangements as far in advance as possible. It may be too late to find something if you wait until you are in Germany to start looking. There is no need to worry about finding someone to go with once you are here; almost everyone will be looking to go to Oktoberfest, so go ahead and book a few beds.

When not traveling, there is always something going on. The international program is comprised of over 100 students from around the world. Whether you enjoy eating out, going to bars or nightclubs, shopping, sightseeing, etc., you will always find plenty of company.

In short, between interacting with the student body, the professors, and Hamburg community, and traveling, the Bucerius study abroad offers a fantastic opportunity to experience the broad European culture.

FINAL STUDY ABROAD REPORT

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1) Write a one page report assessing your experience abroad, in light of your academic and personal goals. Topics to consider:

Courses	Professors	Housing
Social Activities	City Life	Money Matters

- 2) Please indicate whether we can share your information with current BU Law students interested in participating in study abroad programs.
- a) Will you share your personal email address with students who request to contact former program participants?
YES NO
- b) Will you share your final study abroad report (with any indentifying information redacted) in a binder housed in the OGIP?
YES NO

Please write your Final Study Abroad Report below.

PROGRAM NAME & SEMESTER:

Bucerius Law School, Fall 2013

The International Program at Bucerius is a great way to learn about legal systems and cultures all around the world. The courses offer a fantastic opportunity to study international and comparative law in a wide variety of business law areas. The program allowed me to concentrate on specific aspects of international business law and practice in greater detail than in most BU courses. Furthermore, since each class is only one or two credits, I was able to take a wider variety of courses than I would at BU.

The diversity of professors also enhances the international aspect of the courses.

Professors are often trained and practice in different legal systems so they can relate unique perspectives and experiences. Learning about the German approach to discovery, for example, from a German attorney allowed me to better understand civil law systems, as well as comparative differences from common law systems like the U.S. Practitioners also teach a great number of the courses, which allows those professors to speak to the realities of practicing in the international business field.

I really enjoyed learning from non-American law students about the legal systems and cultures in their home countries. Students would often share the approach in their home country to the legal issues we discussed in class, which allowed me to better understand areas of differing and similar approach. Spending time with other students on the program also allowed me to learn a great deal about legal education and practice in a variety of countries. Students on my program came from all over the world so I feel like I now have connections to a vast number of legal systems, as well as the ability to better understand other attorneys I meet from those countries. Students on the program also really enjoyed sharing other aspects of their home culture through international coffee breaks or meals at international restaurants in Hamburg.

As an American law student, learning from non-American attorneys and interacting with non-American law students enabled me to learn about legal systems around the world, while also gaining perspective on the American legal system. Questions posed by non-Americans forced me to think about the American legal system in new ways, which I believe enriched my own understanding. Moreover, both class discussions and other conversations with non-American professors and students gave me insight into international perceptions of the American legal system, which I think will greatly help me in future international dealings.

I am now better equipped to work with international attorneys, because I have an enhanced ability to identify and appreciate comparative differences. The International Program at Bucerius enabled me to gain legal as well as practical knowledge about issues I believe will be important in an international business career. The courses taught me substantive law and international approaches to legal issues in international business in a manner unique from anything available at BU. But perhaps most importantly, my interactions with international lawyers and law students will aid me in my future dealings with international attorneys, because I better understand a variety of legal systems, including my own.

FINAL STUDY ABROAD REPORT

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- 1) Write a one page report assessing your experience abroad, in light of your academic and personal goals. Topics to consider:

Courses

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Please write your Final Study Abroad Report below.

PROGRAM NAME & SEMESTER: Bucerius Law School (Hamburg, Germany) – Fall 2011

Academic Experience

The academic experience at Bucerius is very different than what a BU Law student would be used to. Classes are either one or two credits. The semester is split into two different terms and with the exception of a German Law Survey course, each class lasts one term, with either an exam or a paper required at the end. As with BU, the final grade for each course is determined by the paper or exam. The courses are less rigorous than at BU. This is not only because each course is only one or two credit hours, but also because the courses do not delve as deeply into the subject matter. This could be because the program caters to students from all over the world. For many of these students, English is their second language and everyone's law school experience has been different leading up to the program. In continental Europe, law is taught at the undergraduate level and the law in those countries is civil, not common. This means that students coming from those countries are not as academically experienced and are not accustomed to

reading cases and finding the law. As a result, the reading assignments are more similar to what you would be used to from undergraduate readings, not law school.

Professors at Bucerius come from various countries, and some are Bucerius professors. Teaching methods vary, but generally speaking, the Socratic method is not used (it was really only used in one course, Business and Human Rights, which was taught by an American lawyer). Most professors will lecture, and though they seek class participation; they do not cold call on students.

As would be expected, some courses are more rewarding than others. Personally, I found Corporate Governance to be the most rewarding. This is a three day seminar taught by one of the best lecturers at the school. As opposed to the majority of courses offered, class discussion talked a lot about policy, theory and the effectiveness of laws, as opposed to just the black letter law. On the other hand, International Business Transactions focused almost entirely on black letter law, but not in depth enough to be very useful.

Overall, I think a BU student would find that the international business program at Bucerius covers subject matter than is taught at BU, only more in depth. If students are looking for a program that is challenging strictly in terms of academics, they may want to consider another program.

Cultural Experience

Because the program caters to students from all over the world, participants are exposed to a wide variety of cultures. The vast majority of students are outgoing, friendly and come from very varied backgrounds. You will often find yourself sitting down for lunch with students from six different countries and three different continents, if not more. Comparing and contrasting the cultures and experiences of different countries is quite eye opening. Often, I found myself questioning the wisdom of certain "American" views, and other times had them reaffirmed.

Participants will find that they have a lot more spare time during the program than they do while they are studying at BU. Students will have ample time to explore and experience Hamburg. Hamburg is a fantastic city to live in. The second largest city in Germany, it offers something for everyone. The city is easy to navigate, clean and beautiful. There always seems to be some sort of festival going on and other students are eager to enjoy them as well.

On the weekends or during breaks, I would recommend traveling. Traveling in Europe is much cheaper and easier than in the U.S. and students will find that pretty much all of Europe is at their disposal. There will almost always be students willing to travel. I would also recommend renting a car and driving to some of the destinations in Germany. Germany has some of the most beautiful drives in the world, especially southern Germany. Renting a car is much cheaper than

in the states and when split amongst a group, is very affordable. Students over twenty-four years old with a valid U.S. driver's license and a passport can rent a car. Oktoberfest takes place during the program, and I would recommend students start making lodging reservations as soon as possible. Students will have no problem finding other participants willing to go with them and split the costs. I would also recommend a trip to Dresden, a beautiful eastern German city with a lot of interesting history.

The school offers an organized Berlin trip during the week long break between terms. Berlin is a great city to visit with a ton to see. However, the trip may not be for everyone. It is very organized and very planned. Those who go on the trip will see the best museums in Berlin. The days are filled with museum visits and educational activities. If you don't enjoy spending your days in museums and on tour busses, this trip may not be for you. Even if you do enjoy museums, you might find that you never want to hear about World War II or the Cold War ever again. Many students used the week long break to travel to other destinations in Europe. This option should be considered.

Conclusion

I would definitely recommend this program to anyone who is interested in learning more about other cultures, especially European ones. I think between the traveling, meeting and befriending the other participants, and living in Hamburg, students become much more culturally well-rounded and may even make some life-long friends. The program gives participants enough spare time to experience much of Europe and travel.

On the other hand, for students who are looking for a rewarding and challenging academic experience may want to consider other programs. For the most part, the subjects taught at Bucerius are also taught at BU at a higher level. It's not that nothing will be gained academically at Bucerius, students will learn quite a bit. However, they would probably learn more at another institution.

February 5th, 2010

February 5th, 2010

Essay Two: Study Abroad Follow-up

I. Academic Goals

My primary academic goals for the program were to gain a better understanding of European law in general, and to obtain a European perspective on topics with which I was already familiar. My courses at Bucerius Law School afforded me opportunities to achieve both of these goals. My European Union law class solidified the understanding I had of EU Law from my internships in Luxembourg. I also appreciated learning about the history of the EU and its separation of powers system, knowledge that I had not already obtained from my job experience. My German Law Survey course also gave me insight into the German legal system, and allowed me to do ad hoc comparisons to our common law system, which I enjoyed. The class was organized into lectures on specific topics, such as torts, tax, contracts, agency and company law. I found the company law lectures particularly interesting, and potentially the most useful for my future career. I also took the corporate governance course offered at Bucerius for the same reasons, and now have a good understanding of two-tier governance structure in place in many European companies. Regarding topics with which I was already familiar, I took Cross Border Activities and Transactions in order to gain a European perspective on mergers and acquisitions, building on what I had learned from my M&A class at Boston University. Not surprisingly, merger strategies are similar in Europe, as are alternatives to mergers strategies. The lectures were given by practicing attorneys from German and other European law firms, and it was great to gain their M&A insight. I also appreciated their perspectives on using M&A to penetrate foreign markets, something we had not covered in my previous M&A course. Overall I was

pleased with all of my courses, finding the subject matter both substantively enriching and practical.

II. Personal Goals

My personal goals for my time in Hamburg were to further improve my German language skills, and to simply enjoy and appreciate every moment of living in a foreign country. I would like to say that my German has improved. Unfortunately, I did not get to know many of the German students at Bucerius, and was unable to practice my speaking skills through those means. Moreover, the students in my program were either (1) native English speakers, or (2) only knew English as a common language. I found myself speaking English more than I really wanted to. In order to compensate, I tried to do activities on my own, in which I forced myself to speak German. These activities could be simple, such as shopping at a market, getting a haircut, making a bank transfer, or conversing with a taxi driver. I also took a short trip to Bavaria by myself, and I was pleased that I was able to speak German often for the entire trip. Furthermore, I made sure to read advertisements, brochures, menus, and use German websites whenever possible in order to improve my vocabulary. Reflecting on my semester, I can confidently say that I took every opportunity to “flex my language muscles,” so to speak, and I am sure that this has brought me to a higher degree of fluency.

As regards enjoying and appreciating my experience in Germany, I can say with full assurance that I accomplished this goal as well. From my first trip to the grocery store on my first day in Hamburg to my final stroll through the Christmas markets, I immersed myself in German culture whenever possible. I loved sampling German cuisine; one of my favorite dishes was *Bratkartoffeln*, a plate of sliced, fried potatoes with onions and bacon, often served with eggs or sausage. Renting bicycles and cycling around the Alster, Hamburg’s artificial but

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extremely scenic lake, was also quite fun, as was experiencing the fish auction, which takes place every Sunday morning in Hamburg's harbor on the Elbe River. Germany during Christmas was a sight to behold, as the square in front of the town hall was transformed into a small village of merchants selling tree decorations, all types food, drinks, toys and other gifts. I often took the opportunity to stroll through there on my way home from class, as I really enjoyed the atmosphere and seeing people of all ages experience and appreciate the Christmas market as I did.

III. Conclusions

Overall, I would rate my study abroad experience at Bucerius Law School in Hamburg as top notch. It allowed me to diversify my legal education as well as gain the invaluable experience of living in a foreign country for four months. I would highly recommend the program to anyone with similar goals and interests.

FINAL SEMESTER REPORT ON BUCERIUS (HAMBURG) PROGRAM

My semester in Hamburg was wonderful and I would strongly recommend it to anyone considering studying abroad. It was a much needed change from the daily sameness that was my first two years of law school, as well as a fantastic opportunity to learn about different legal systems first hand. The mixture of students at Bucerius provided for stimulating classroom conversations regarding the differences between each student's legal systems. These conversations happened in every class, covering a wide range of topics. Outside of the classroom, the diversity of the Bucerius program allowed me to make friends with future lawyers all over the world. We were also able to compare the pros and cons of our educational and professional systems outside of the classroom, which often provided insights not readily shared during class.

The staff of the Bucerius International Office was very well intentioned but not very organized. Frequently classes and extracurricular events would change dates or times with very little or no warning. This issues seemed to stem from more of an organizational defect than a cultural difference (the German's do love their schedules).

There were several activities that I would highly recommend to any future student participating on the Bucerius program:

First was the visit to the Neuengamme concentration camp. About 45 minutes outside of Hamburg, Neuengamme was a political work camp during WWII. During our visit was spent about an hour speaking with a guide, and another hour walking around the grounds. The guide was a little unorthodox, but fabulous. She was very passionate about educating students about

the atrocities that occurred at Neuengamme, leading to a very interesting discussion of how the German educational system has dealt with teaching primary and secondary school children about the war.

Second was the bus tour of Hamburg. I think this tour occurred during the first two weeks the program. It was very nice to get a feel for the city on something other than the metro. The tour helped orientate all of us and the guide was also quite good. The only drawback from this tour was that the bus did not accommodate all of the students. The staff of the International Office had to turn people away outside of the bus. It was very awkward and seemed unnecessary given that they knew how many students wanted to participate ahead of time.

Third was the visit to the International Tribunal of the Law of the Sea. I thought this was a wonderful opportunity to visit a UN organization. Located just outside of Hamburg proper, the Tribunal is housing in a beautiful building that alone was worth seeing. We were given a tour of the building and an informational session on what types of cases the tribunal handles and how it functions. I am very interested in this type of law so I found this especially interesting. Some other people looked a little bored (but it was also pretty early in the morning and freezing cold outside).

During the second quarter I took EU Law, Law and Economics, Cross Border Activities and Transactions, and German Law Survey. I enjoyed both EU Law and Law and Economics. Both of these classes were quite different than any of the classes I had taken at BU. EU Law was also especially interesting as the EU treaty structure changed during our class. It was great to have an individual lecture on what exactly these changes entailed and mean for the future of the EU.

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Fall 2008
Bucerius Law School
Hamburg, Germany

It is difficult to sum up the entire program in two short pages. On one hand, two pages are not enough to describe 4 months of experiences and on the other hand, its way too much space to state the obvious.

The obvious is that Bucerius was an incredible experience on both a personal and academic level. On a personal level, Bucerius exposed me to students from around the world. While I've come across international students throughout my life, these students were all in the program for the same reason which gave us a common ground. I had been warned that some of the students might be younger but for the most part the students tended to be around my age (perhaps offset by the large number of American students who were in their mid to late 20s). Regardless, age didn't matter since we were all at a similar place in our lives.

It was interesting to get to know the students, their backgrounds, what led them to law and what they planned to do with their lives. Students from money countries complained that law degrees were not as lucrative in their home country as they are in the United States. Other law students talked about the prestige and wealth their degrees would bring them back home. More interesting that discussing our careers however was discussing our lives. Some dorm mates from India, France and Singapore shared stories of how rarely they get to go out during the school year and how their social lives are limited to social interactions at school. The Americans exchanged stories of Bar Reviews and Law Proms. Our lives as students really gave us a glimpse of how education works in different parts of the world. In America, it seems to be an all around experience while in other countries they strictly adhere to the bunker mentality: go to school, get out – then you can enjoy life.

I was able to learn a lot about myself this semester. Tasks completely unrelated to school (such as planning weekend trips) made me realize what a control freak I can be and how frustrated I get with people. I learned that “going with the flow” is not my way of doing things most of the time. The friendship curve/friend-making curve is much steeper in a study abroad program. Whereas in the States you have months to make friends, in Germany, we all had to form our alliances rather quickly and I was able to learn over the course of a few months, what qualities I valued most in the people I spent time with, traveled with, etc. I learned not to judge people by what you hear about them (the Germans are not as cold as everyone likes to make it seem). I learned to appreciate what I have here.

For the most part, my personal goal was to experience something new. I wanted to meet new people, travel (I had never been to Europe before) and get exposed to something I hadn't been exposed to. I also wanted to get over my fear of studying abroad – it's an unnecessary goal since I'll likely never get the chance to study abroad again – but I had always had a fear of living in another country. As soon as I was accepted into the program, I told my closest friends that they couldn't let me back out. They all kept their word and supported my decision to go abroad (including my boyfriend) even at times when I was so frustrated I really didn't want to go. Ultimately, it was much easier than I expected. I realize Bucerius staff made it much easier for us but I also learned that

I can manage to get by. I learned my way around. I figured out how to do things even when there was a language barrier. I became more reliant on maps and signs. I learned to do lots of research in advance. Now, I am crossing my fingers for another opportunity to spend time abroad.

My academic goals were not too lofty. I wanted to continue learning. I knew this was meant to be an educational experience, not just an opportunity to live and travel abroad. I took advantage of the courses they offered. I felt like the program was really tailored to business and IP law which I am very interested in. The class formats – more lecture, less reading (and less reading in between the lines) made it really easy to learn the information really quickly. I know law school teaches us to think and analyze in a certain way but it was nice to take a break from that and just have information spoon fed to you. I realized very early on that American law students have a much stronger corporate and business law background than most of the other students. This meant that professors (particularly American ones) would have to slow down to let students catch up. But one of the best experiences was helping classmates understand material that I thought I had a handle on (they say you never really know something until you can teach it). During finals, we'd often have study sessions where we'd go off topic for hours discussing various laws in each of our respective countries and how they differed from what we were learning in class. Ultimately, the academic side of the program was satisfying. I feel like I learned a lot without the stress and pressure of law school grading. And I feel like my courses were all very related to work I want to do.

Fall 2008
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It is difficult to sum up the entire program in two short pages. On one hand, two pages are not enough to describe 4 months of experiences and on the other hand, its way too much space to state the obvious.

The obvious is that Bucerius was an incredible experience on both a personal and academic level. On a personal level, Bucerius exposed me to students from around the world. While I've come across international students throughout my life, these students were all in the program for the same reason which gave us a common ground. I had been warned that some of the students might be younger but for the most part the students tended to be around my age (perhaps offset by the large number of American students who were in their mid to late 20s). Regardless, age didn't matter since we were all at a similar place in our lives.

It was interesting to get to know the students, their backgrounds, what led them to law and what they planned to do with their lives. Students from money countries complained that law degrees were not as lucrative in their home country as they are in the United States. Other law students talked about the prestige and wealth their degrees would bring them back home. More interesting than discussing our careers however was discussing our lives. Some dorm mates from India, France and Singapore shared stories of how rarely they get to go out during the school year and how their social lives are limited to social interactions at school. The Americans exchanged stories of Bar Reviews and Law Proms. Our lives as students really gave us a glimpse of how education works in different parts of the world. In America, it seems to be an all around experience while in other countries they strictly adhere to the bunker mentality: go to school, get out – then you can enjoy life.

I was able to learn a lot about myself this semester. Tasks completely unrelated to school (such as planning weekend trips) made me realize what a control freak I can be and how frustrated I get with people. I learned that "going with the flow" is not my way of doing things most of the time. The friendship curve/friend-making curve is much steeper in a study abroad program. Whereas in the States you have months to make friends, in Germany, we all had to form our alliances rather quickly and I was able to learn over the course of a few months, what qualities I valued most in the people I spent time with, traveled with, etc. I learned not to judge people by what you hear about them (the Germans are not as cold as everyone likes to make it seem). I learned to appreciate what I have here.

For the most part, my personal goal was to experience something new. I wanted to meet new people, travel (I had never been to Europe before) and get exposed to something I hadn't been exposed to. I also wanted to get over my fear of studying abroad – it's an unnecessary goal since I'll likely never get the chance to study abroad again – but I had always had a fear of living in another country. As soon as I was accepted into the program, I told my closest friends that they couldn't let me back out. They all kept their word and supported my decision to go abroad (including my boyfriend) even at times when I was so frustrated I really didn't want to go. Ultimately, it was much easier than I expected. I realize Bucerius staff made it much easier for us but I also learned that

I can manage to get by. I learned my way around. I figured out how to do things even when there was a language barrier. I became more reliant on maps and signs. I learned to do lots of research in advance. Now, I am crossing my fingers for another opportunity to spend time abroad.

My academic goals were not too lofty. I wanted to continue learning. I knew this was meant to be an educational experience, not just an opportunity to live and travel abroad. I took advantage of the courses they offered. I felt like the program was really tailored to business and IP law which I am very interested in. The class formats – more lecture, less reading (and less reading in between the lines) made it really easy to learn the information really quickly. I know law school teaches us to think and analyze in a certain way but it was nice to take a break from that and just have information spoon fed to you. I realized very early on that American law students have a much stronger corporate and business law background than most of the other students. This meant that professors (particularly American ones) would have to slow down to let students catch up. But one of the best experiences was helping classmates understand material that I thought I had a handle on (they say you never really know something until you can teach it). During finals, we'd often have study sessions where we'd go off topic for hours discussing various laws in each of our respective countries and how they differed from what we were learning in class. Ultimately, the academic side of the program was satisfying. I feel like I learned a lot without the stress and pressure of law school grading. And I feel like my courses were all very related to work I want to do.

Study Abroad Fall 2009
Final Report

When I traveled to Hamburg, Germany this past fall, I was hoping to find an engaging academic experience focusing on international law while meeting a broad range of international students and experiencing first hand a greater cultural diversity than is available within the tower of Boston University School of Law. Without a doubt, I found all these things and more at Bucerius Law School. From the interesting and engaging classes to excellent extra-curricular learning opportunities like a week-long study trip to Berlin to meeting more than 100 students from countries all over the world, my time in Hamburg fully met and surpassed my expectations of what a semester abroad during law school could be.

One of the main reasons I had for wanting to study abroad was the opportunity to study international law in an international program. The Bucerius Law School Foreign Exchange Program does an excellent job of satisfying that goal. Well-qualified professors were eager to teach and engage in discussions with a diverse group of students from home universities located all over the globe. Taking classes with international students allows the material of a course to be discussed in the context of various legal systems and philosophies of law. The classes I took covered information of both an academic nature and a professionally useful and practical nature. It was these latter classes which were the most useful and informative to me, although all the classes were interesting and enjoyable.

One of the most interesting aspects of the classes was learning about the civil law system in comparison with, and contrasted to, the common-law system that is so familiar to U.S. law students. Having known virtually nothing about the practical workings of a civil law system before traveling to Germany, I found it fascinating to learn about the differences and similarities

between the different approaches to the rule of law. Another great thing about the Bucerius program was the fact that, with students from at least 20 different countries, there were countless different opinions and viewpoints being discussed in the classroom. In some cases thoughts about any given topic were similar amongst all students while on others (the issue of punitive damages, for example) opinions varied widely. However, in each discussion the diversity of the student body allowed for engaging discussion and an appreciation for the different ways law is treated in different countries.

This diversity of the student body also greatly contributed to the fulfillment of my personal goals in studying abroad, namely meeting people from other cultures and learning about not only the law in their home countries but also other aspects of their culture like food, fun, language, sports, and traditions. Meeting people from many European, Asian, and South American countries not only gave me a greater appreciation for international cultures and systems of law. It also gave me an international network of friends and colleagues that, hopefully, I will be able to sustain long into the future of my career. I consider many of the people I met in Hamburg good friends, and have cultivated the beginnings of life-long friendships in some cases. It is my hope that in the future I will be able to use this international network both in my career and in my personal life to continue learning about other places, people, and cultures.

Without a doubt, I consider my semester at Bucerius Law School to be my best at BU Law. I would highly recommend the program to anyone considering spending some time learning about the law in a truly international setting. From the distinguished professors that truly enjoy teaching international students to the cultural experiences of living in a foreign country and learning about a different system of law first-hand, to the international network of

colleagues I developed there, everything about studying abroad combined to make the experience some of best four months I've ever had.