

Boston University School of Law

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# Boston University School of Law

## Study Abroad Final Reports



Universidad Pontificia Comillas (ICADE)

Madrid, Spain

Single Semester Program

# FINAL STUDY ABROAD REPORT

## INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1) Please provide a written assessment of your experience abroad this past term in light of your academic and educational objectives. In particular, please touch on the following: your overall experience at the foreign institution, the quality of the faculty and the quality and availability of courses offered. Please also comment on other topics you feel might be helpful to future students, such as quality of life, financial, housing, social or other considerations that had an impact on your experience. Your report need not be longer than two pages.
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NO
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NO ☐

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**Please write your Final Study Abroad Report below.**

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**Name:**

**Semester/Institution: ICADE, Fall Semester 2022**

**REPORT:**



Overall, the experience at ICADE in Madrid is fantastic. The general atmosphere of the city is pleasant, and it is a different cultural experience than Boston. The quality of life is great as the university is in a very safe neighborhood that is well connected via public transit. I strongly recommend living within walking distance of the university as that is what most students in the program did and will make getting around the city much easier. The faculty at ICADE vary from doctorate students to seasoned professionals in their field. Overall, most of the professors are highly knowledgeable in their fields and there is a lot to learn from each of them. Occasionally, professors are not willing to or unable to answer questions students have that expand beyond the particular scope of the current class, but that problem rarely occurred regularly. The amount of daily "homework" that needed to be turned in at ICADE was significantly greater than anything I had seen throughout law school. However, as most of that homework was graded on completion it felt more like busy work that would be given to high school students rather than law students. Occasionally, some professors would also assign amounts of reading that simply could not get done in the given time frame (once, a professor spontaneously assigned 200 pages of reading to be done by the next class session, which was less than 24 hours away). Professors also regularly change, alter, or deviate from the syllabi provided and it is important for students to be vigilant in keeping track of assignment due dates as they are generally provided verbally in class and not repeated again or posted in the syllabi. The courses offered were a set list that every student was required to take, so although there was no choice in which courses a student could take, they were all highly interesting and relevant to the stated program which is an L.L.M. in international and European law. Learning the similarities and differences to how various legal bodies and frameworks function in the E.U. compared to the U.S. was extremely beneficial particularly for students that plan to pursue a career with a more global or European focus.

The cost of living in Madrid is lower than Boston, but if students plan to travel or partake in other activities throughout the semester, they should expect a similar out of pocket expenditure. Madrid is safer than most cities in America and there is very little crime to be concerned about other than pick pocketing. Especially when at night clubs or leaving them, be very vigilant of your belongings as that is the most likely time that a phone or wallet mysteriously "goes missing". Housing is not too difficult to find through various websites and ICADE also recommends a housing agency to go through if students are willing to live in shared accommodations (4-6 people, each have individual rooms).

Also, attendance is highly valued at ICADE. If a student misses a class, whether for a legitimate reason or not, they will likely be contacted by the head of the program and have points deducted from their class grade. This led to some issues during the cold and flu season where students would turn up to class ill to avoid losing points but would thereby leave the rest of the class susceptible to illness. **The largest thing to keep in mind regarding this program is the expense of the Brussels trip and the consequences of not attending the trip.** If a student did not attend the Brussels trip, it was unclear what the alternative assignment would be. Although it was clear that it would be a paper of sorts, the page length continually changed with it being stated it was 20 pages and then it being listed at another length and the topic of the paper was never clearly stated until after students already confirmed whether or not they would attend the

trip. This ambiguity led many semester students to attend the Brussels trip for the academic enrichment but also to avoid having to struggle through an unclear assignment. Unfortunately, ICADE charged semester students to attend this trip, so at the end of the semester, prepare to pay a large sum of money (500-700 Euros) to attend a trip and receive credit that every other student that attends ICADE for the full year received for free (included in their tuition). The Brussels trip/course not being included in the already hefty tuition payment going to ICADE was extremely disappointing and unfair as it merely added to the already significant financial burden of studying abroad for a course that is mandatory for BU students to take. The Brussels trip should be covered just like ICADE covered the cost for the full-year students.

In conclusion, the pros outweigh the cons and I highly recommend students to partake in the program. As long as students keep in mind the potential difficulties that they might encounter in this program and are conscious and respectful that they are in a foreign country with different customs and norms, particularly in the sense of urgency to get certain things done (apply for your visa early!), then students will have a wonderful time in Madrid. I also strongly recommend for students to participate in this program for the full year, as the program classes take part every day (4-9PM), seeing the same people every day and growing a close bond with them while learning about truly fascinating areas of law, is an experience worth prolonging as much as possible!



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**Name:**

**Semester/Institution:** Fall 2021 ICADE/ Comillas

**REPORT:**

My name is Mara Rosario-Salinas and I'm a 3L at Boston University School of Law. I studied abroad during the Fall 2021 semester through the Comillas ICADE Program in Madrid, Spain. I learned so much throughout my time in Spain, academically and practically. Overall, my experience studying abroad in general was a positive one. However, the experience did also have a bit of difficulties throughout.

First, the visa process was very stressful. The Spanish embassy in Boston is very small as is, but due to COVID-19 there was only ever one or two individuals working with people who came in for assistance. I emailed and called multiple times from April to July to set up a visa processing appointment, but received no answer. I also went in person several times and they continued to refuse to either give me an appointment or take my documents. It was not until my third time going in person when I told the individuals at the front desk that I wouldn't leave without an appointment that I received one for a date that was 3.5 weeks before my arrival date in Madrid. Thankfully my visa was ready in 3 weeks instead of the estimated 4-6 weeks, but I did have to go in person once again to push them to print it out because that was taking a long time as well.

After I got my visa, I flew to Madrid and began to look for housing. A previous study abroad student had told us to wait to find a place in person because the website where many students look to rent in Spain, Idealista.com, can have outdated pictures. Looking for housing was a huge hassle as many landlords did not respond to my viewing requests until a week or more after my request. This probably occurred because I would mention that I could only rent for four months rather than the full year and this was not ideal for many landlords. Classes began the following week after I arrived, so I was desperate for a place fast. After my roommates and I found a place, the living situation was a bit uncomfortable as we found out there were many issues with the apartment that were not previously disclosed such as prior mold, not enough hot water, constant power outages etc (we were once without power for 5 days). Our attempts to get these issues fixed with the landlord, like a worrisome water leak, were not met in a timely manner either. On the other hand, despite these issues, housing in Spain is relatively cheap and my rent was about \$600 for a room in a 3-bedroom basement apartment. After my experience, I would strongly suggest future study abroad students to perhaps book an airbnb for the first month or first few weeks upon arrival and then try to find something more permanent. Make sure to ask all necessary questions at the beginning, even things you might not think you need to ask such as "How much hot water does the water heater hold?".

Unfortunately, my experience with people from Madrid was not always positive. Some individuals can be a bit crude in their tone of voice and, disappointingly but unsurprisingly, I had a few racist experiences. When my darker-skinned Latinx family members came to visit me, we had an unpleasant encounter with some locals. I witnessed Spanish police randomly ask a Latinx couple for their passports, which was very strange and disheartening. Additionally, when my partner came to visit me, we were profiled in a museum and kicked out of a cab. There are many people in Madrid and, of course, not everyone is like this, but if there are people of color—particularly Black and Mestizo/Indigenous Latinxs—who wish to study abroad in Madrid, they should be aware that it is not the most welcoming place. With this said, other cities in Spain like Barcelona and Granada are very welcoming!



Lastly, I wanted to report on the MIEBL program and its faculty itself. The Director of the program, Adam Dubin, was always very accessible and professional. The program coordinator was a bit harder to get in touch with and never gave us our grades on time. Our classes began at 4pm local time and ended at 9pm. At first, due to the time change from Boston to Madrid, this was great. However, after getting used to the time change, it can be difficult to deal with night classes. Additionally, our semester schedule went through several changes which were never announced until perhaps the week before or from one class to the next. The organization of the program was challenging because we took in total 12 courses which all started and ended on random dates. At a time, we only ever had 3-4 classes and not every class was the same duration as others, but I found myself having 3 memos due in one week for one class while having a paper due for another course and a final in the third course.

Despite the disorganized structure of the program, my experience with the academic content itself was overall positive. It allowed me to achieve my main educational goal prior to starting the program which was to be able to gain enough knowledge and familiarity of the EU Legal system to effectively complement and expand on the transactional work I will be doing post-grad.

Although we were not allowed to choose our courses, the program is very business law focused which was perfect for me because I am hoping to go the transactional route post-grad. The very first course is an introductory course for European law and European business topics, which is what a majority of the classes focus on. My favorite courses were Corporate Law and Corporate Engineering, Competition Law, Negotiation, and Accounting because they were some of the most interesting, taught by some of the better professors in the program, and I had some familiarity with them as they were based on topics not too different in American law. The other professors, particularly those of: Geostrategy of the EU, International Contracts, and Alternative Dispute Resolution courses, taught their course assuming students had an advanced understanding of European Union law. Having had no prior knowledge on European law (hence my reasons for studying abroad), I struggled a lot more in these courses. Nonetheless, the classes were insightful and the content of the courses was rigorous. I learned an immense amount of unique information which I knew I would not have received from my American legal education alone. My classes through the MIEBL program allowed me to obtain a reasonable amount of knowledge of how the European Union legal institutions work to create the Directives and Regulations which alter business law throughout the whole EU. This knowledge allows me to be a greater asset to my firm compared to before the study abroad program and, as a first-generation attorney, my ultimate goal was to be able to complement my skill set in a way that would allow me to be a better attorney in my first real legal career.

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**Name:**

**Semester/Institution:** ICADE – Fall 2021

## REPORT:

Academic Objectives and the Institution:

My educational objectives were to learn about the European Union's approach to business and legal affairs in an immersive environment. I also wanted to learn the various laws that govern business in the European Union and how these laws impact dealings with other countries like the United States. I also hoped to gain a better understanding of international law and business



concepts, specifically international corporate law, trade law, and arbitration. These objectives were achieved during my time at ICADE as many of the classes offered focused on topics such as EU law, trade law, arbitration law, and competition law. For the most part, the faculty was very knowledgeable about the subjects they were teaching and eager to help. All of the professors were attorneys in the field they were teaching about. Therefore, the professors were able to provide real world examples, and the classes were relevant and interesting. The courses for the ICADE program are pre-selected, so there is no option to add or drop courses. Some of the class topics seemed to overlap, but overall, the classes covered a wide range of topics in different practice areas. My experience at ICADE was positive, and I definitely enjoyed my time there. I also feel like I learned a great deal about the EU and the laws that govern EU member states.

#### Life in Madrid:

Life in Madrid was a bit different from life in Boston. The cost of living in Madrid is lower than the cost of living in Boston in terms of rent and food, but apartments are typically smaller and older in Madrid. Getting around in Madrid is quite simple due to the metro and bus system. Also, getting around other parts of Spain and other parts of Europe was also quick and simple. Traveling to other parts of Europe during weekends and other breaks was one of the highlights of my semester abroad. Sometimes there was a bit of uncertainty due to COVID, but overall traveling was relatively quick and simple. COVID tests in Madrid are a little bit harder to come by than they are in the U.S. Typically, getting tested requires you to book an appointment and pay around €60 for a PCR test.

Socially, Madrid is quite different from the U.S. Many stores and restaurants close for a few hours in the afternoon and then re-open later in the evening. Also, many restaurants and bars are open much later than in the U.S. In Madrid, some people speak English, but the majority of people do not speak English or do not feel comfortable speaking in English, so some level of Spanish is definitely helpful. However, it is important to note that the Spanish in Spain is a bit different from Spanish in Latin America or Spanish used sometimes in the U.S., so there might still be some challenges. I always felt pretty safe in Madrid. I had only really been told to worry about pickpockets, but I did not have any encounters or negative experiences with pickpockets. Although life in Madrid is a bit different from life in the United States, the culture in Madrid is interesting and I enjoyed immersing myself in Spanish culture for a semester.

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**Name:**

**REPORT:**      ICADE Fall 2019



## **Final Study Abroad Report**

I spent the fall semester in the MIEBL program at Universidad Pontificia Comillas ICADE in Madrid, Spain. My overall experience was wonderful. ICADE is a well renowned legal institution in Spain and Madrid is an amazing city that I will miss very much. ICADE provided a full schedule of business law classes with a focus on EU law. I feel as though I have come away with an understanding of the EU that I would not otherwise have if I did not participate in the MIEBL program.

The curriculum was very full with twelve different classes taught by over fifteen professors. The faculty was made up of a combination of ICADE professors and lawyers from some of the top Spanish law firms such as Cuatrecasas and Gomez, Acebo & Pombo. Each professor was an expert in their topic and they were able to reflect on a wide range of relevant experiences such as working for the European Commission, participating in international arbitration, and advising on large mergers. This made it very easy for me to achieve my goal of learning about the business laws and environment in the EU. The only thing I would note that was not positive is that sometimes the lawyers, as opposed to full time professors, are not the best at explaining complex topics in different ways to students that are having a hard time understanding them in the way they are first explained. I believe I really benefitted from already having a strong base in corporate and financial law from classes I took here at BU during my 2L year. Other students that did not arrive with a prior knowledge in these areas had a tougher time with some of the subjects such as EU company law and financial topics. The lawyers also sometimes struggled to get through complete lesson plans without getting very side tracked, which resulted in less material being covered. That being said, many of the lawyers were great

teachers and each of them was able to present the point of view of an expert in their respective fields.

Other things that are worth mentioning are the schedule, the make-up of the MIEBL program, and the willingness of the faculty to present opportunities in the EU. The schedule was two classes per day from 4:00 pm – 9:00 pm with a half an hour break from 6:15 pm – 6:45 pm in between. Many of the weeks had one day without classes and/or one day where there was only one class. Many of the students, including me, thought this schedule was less than ideal but it was necessary so that the professors that were practicing lawyers could attend class. Also, the class was made up of about eighteen students with sixteen from the U.S. and two from China. The class was full of intelligent and interesting people and we all became friends, however I thought this was worth noting because I was expecting to be in a class with students from all over the world, which was not the case. Lastly, students interested in working abroad in the EU should definitely be interested in this program. The program offers several opportunities to break into the EU with a mentorship program and almost every professor offered to meet with students and help them find opportunities if they were interested in their specific fields.

Outside of school, Madrid offers so much to do for every type of person. I truly loved it and it made it easy for me to get out and meet Spanish people. Personally, I found a soccer league that I could play in three or four times a week. I was able to make friends through this league who were more than happy to speak Spanish with me and help me learn.



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**Name:**

**Semester/Institution:** Fall 2018/ICADE

### REPORT:

#### *Educational Goals:*

My educational objectives at ICADE were to improve my substantive knowledge of business law and broaden my outlook by experiencing a different culture. I wanted to gain an array of

viewpoints to both diversify my legal knowledge and to give me a different perspective when approaching legal issues.

Because I am going to be a corporate attorney, I was glad that many of the majority of my classes were corporate-focused. It was really interesting to see how the European Union, a supranational entity, works vs. the United States' Federal and State Governments. I felt as though learning how the European Union operates both strengthened and diversified my knowledge of corporate law.

As I was in the Masters Program, my courses were selected for me. I was satisfied with the topics covered including, EU Geostrategy, EU Institutions, International Contracts, Accounting, Arbitration, EU Corporate Law, Competition Law, etc.

My favorite course was our EU Institutions course. We went to Brussels for a week and got to visit many of the EU Institutions. We took courses taught by governmental officials and got to ask them questions regarding their roles and issues occurring within the Institutions. We also had the opportunity to visit international law firms to hear from attorneys practicing both state and EU law. While this course is free for year-long masters students, semesters students had to pay for transportation and for accommodations. It ended up costing an additional 415 euros in addition to paying for food. The alternative to this experience is to write a research paper, which I did not find as an equal substitute for such and incredible academic experience. BU also does not cover this cost, but I believe that it should moving forward, because it is, in essence, extra tuition.

I believe that I have increased my knowledge of business law internationally, which will better my practice in the future. I think I have learned different viewpoints that will allow me to be a more creative attorney.

*Experience with the foreign institution:*

It is important to note that in Europe and many other places, law is generally studied in undergrad. Thus, ICADE allows you to either take part of the undergrad program or the Masters program. In the undergraduate program, the classes may be easier and your classmates will be from all over the world, but the majority of them will be between the ages of 19-22. I am in my late 20s, so this is not something that was of interest to me. The Masters program is mostly American students. We had three students from China, two students from France/Luxembourg, and one student from Spain, but everyone else was American. I took one class in the undergraduate program before switching the Masters Program and was very thankful that I did. The courses may have been "harder," but they were still not nearly as difficult as the courses that I have experienced at BU. I think I likely learned more and felt more comfortable with people closer to my age.

It was interesting to adapt to the system of courses. We were on a module-system, which meant we had each class intensively anywhere from two days to 4 weeks depending on the credit allocation. At first, it was a bit confusing to keep track of everything, but I understand that they needed to organize the classes this way so that we would have the foundational knowledge of the



European Union to be able to apply to rest of our courses. It was nice to not have a finals week at the end of the semester and complete finals throughout the semester. It was also different in that we spent less time preparing outside of class compared to BU, but more time in actual class. Because of this, class attendance was compulsory – you had to attend 80% of the class or else you failed. This caused a lit bit of a problem, because some courses that only meet 4 times and so you cannot miss any of those classes. In effect, you are essentially required to attend 95% of classes. They do make exceptions if you are ill, but you must have a doctor's note.

I found the administration of the school to be disorganized, which I expected from reading reports of previous students, but I also found the administration to be rather inflexible. The schedule changed quite frequently, which caused conflicts sometimes. For example, we were originally supposed to finish our courses on December 12 and then a professor had to reschedule. We had almost a full week in November without classes and then ended up going until December 17. When a student had already booked a flight back to the U.S. for before that date, the administration would not let the student take the final early and expected her to change her flight which would have cost a lot of money. So, students should not plan to schedule travel during days listed on the schedule listed "Save for Class," because those days were frequently used.

For the most part, the faculty was really great. We had a lot of professors who were partners at large international law firms like Clifford Chance, Baker and McKenzie, and Gomez Acebo. They were very prepared for class and also really dedicated to helping us learn the course material. I often found the practicing attorneys to be better professors than the actual ICADE staff. We did have one professor who was a practicing attorney who did not teach well and often got off topic – leaving us not knowing much about the intended course material, but we addressed it with the administration.

#### *Finances:*

The cost of living is much lower in Spain than it is in Boston. I had a completely renovated studio apartment in Malasaña (a popular neighborhood) for about what I pay in Boston. In Boston I share a two-bedroom apartment. My apartment was small, but good for the five months I was in Spain. It was also very close to school. I booked my apartment through [spotahome.com](http://spotahome.com). If you are good at speaking Spanish and are willing to do the legwork, you can find a shared apartment for about 400 euros a month. I chose not to go this route, because a week in an Airbnb while I was searching would have likely cost me close to \$1,000.

Groceries and dining out are significantly cheaper. I usually spent about 30 euros in groceries a week and in Boston I spend \$100-150 a week. I eat rather healthy. An average meal out is 10-15 Euros. There are some tapas places where you will spend less.

One big thing to note – it took me about a month to realize this, but when paying with a U.S. credit card, you always want the store, restaurant, etc. to charge you in Euros. Your bank's (or credit card's) exchange rate will be better than the credit card reader's exchange rate. This also goes with the ATM. An ATM will ask something like "Do you accept this exchange rate?" and



you always want to put “no.” Your bank will have a better exchange rate than the ATM company.

It is very easy, and much cheaper, to travel around Europe once you are in Europe. I traveled almost every weekend, which was possible if I worked really hard during the week to complete all of my school work. However, I don’t think I could have traveled every weekend while solely depending on my student loan allocation. I had a job at a law firm my 2L summer and used a lot of what I made on travel.

Also, as I mentioned before, the EU Institutions Course cost about 415 Euros, so this should be accounted for.

### *Social Life:*

I think it’s important to note that during the summer, I panicked. I second guessed why I had signed up for study abroad. I was worried about missing out on some of the classes at Boston University and being away from my friends. I had already paid for my flights and my deposit for my apartment, so I felt obligated to go.

I got to Europe and traveled a little bit before school started. The days between orientation and school starting, I felt lonely and also had major second thoughts. I look back on this moment and think I was being silly – I can’t imagine not having this experience abroad. I talked with some people later and they all felt this way before school started. So, it’s important to know that this is normal and it will be okay.

I made friends rather quickly in my program. I was glad I did – we traveled, studied, and frequently spent almost all our time inside and out of class together. I plan to keep in touch with them despite not being geographically close to each other. Many of our classmates frequently got drinks or dinner together after class and we generally had good rapport.

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### Madrid Recommendations

#### **Neighborhoods:**

Malasana - hip, grungy, but fun neighborhood - the Brooklyn of Madrid

Chueca - LGBT-friendly neighborhood

Calle Fuencarral - great street for shopping

Salamanca - fancy neighborhood

Moncloa - restaurants and shopping

Chamartin - the financial district & Santiago Bernabeu stadium is located here (where Real Madrid plays)

La Latina - fun neighborhood, colorful, lots of bars and cafes

#### **Places to Eat:**

##### **Gastro Markets:**

Mercado de San Anton

Mercado de San Ildefonso

Mercado de San Miguel (super touristy and expensive - have a few tapas there and move on!)

Coffee Shops:

Federal (super good - lots of work space)

La Bicicleta Cafe (good food, but not a good place to work)

Masters Speciality Coffee - small but great coffee - they have filtered coffee, but it's over priced

Mur Cafe - my favorite place to study - they have great English (or Veggie) Breakfast - also great place to hang out

Roll - also has a lot of food

Tapas:

El Tigre (all you can eat tapas with drinks purchase - really heavy food, but super cheap)

Bodega Rivas - cheap and delicious - probably my favorite place for Spanish food

Carmencita Bars - the best huevos rotos in Madrid (same owners as Bodega Rivas)

Pez Tortilla - the best tortilla you will have, but super crowded

Monkey Monk Bar - vegan tapas

Alhambra (Calle de la Victoria, 9) - also has paella - big portions, not my favorite place, but by plaza mayor

Habanera - expensive fancy tapas

100 Montaditos - cheap sandwiches & beer

Calle Pez has a ton of restaurants and tapas bars

Asian Food:

Sushita - overpriced, but some of the better sushi in Madrid

Sabor Sichuan - hot pot, friends from China said it's just as good as back home!

Ramen Kagura - the best Ramen I had in Madrid . . . and I ate ramen a lot!

Dessert:

Mistura - considered the best ice cream in Madrid

San Gines - churros con chocolate - very cheap, but very touristy

Bars:

Bodega Rivas

Monkey Monk

Tupperware

Madklyn

Freeway

El Cafe Sin Nombre

Zombie Bar

Clubs: *These are big clubs, but I didn't go to them, because I'm not into that . . .*

Kapital

Joy

Other:

Ojala - pretty good, but not my top choice of places to go.

La Jardin Secreto - adorable place with great prices and food

Gracias Padre - Mexican Food

La Vengaza de Malinche - Mexican food

Abolea - healthy bowls

Grosso - Pizza (so delicious!)

Things you have to eat:

Huevos Rotos (Potatoes with ham and fried, runny egg)

Croquettes

Pulpo (octopus)

Patatas Bravas (potatoes with sauce)

Tortilla (fluffy potato omelette - tastes good if they have truffle)

Jamon Iberico - cured ham

Angulas - small baby eels - they are very sweet and good on sandwiches

Churros con Chocolate

Tinto de Verano - a sort of lazy Sangria - red wine, lemon fanta, fruit, and sometimes hard alcohol - I like it better than Sangria if you have it from a fancier place. I prefer when they make it from scratch - sometimes they have it on tap.

Drink all the Spanish Red Wine!

FYI: Paella is more of a Valencian/coastal thing.

Stores:

Grocery Stores:

El Cortes Ingles - this is a department store, but think about it as Macys, Target, and a grocery store combined in one - generally, you can find more American products here (like peanut butter)

Carrefour - biggest grocery store chain, good prices

Carrefour Bio (Calle de Alberto Aguilera, 56, 28015 Madrid) - same chain, but nicer food

Carrefour Express - smaller store, produce is sometimes not as good and food selection is smaller.

Dia - good for quick things, but I don't particularly like this grocery store

Clothing:

Lefties - cheap

Pull & Bear - cheap

Zara - way cheaper here than in the U.S. - good for business professional clothes if you need in a pinch

Mango - another Spanish clothing store - used to be in the U.S. - affordable

Stradivarius - cheap

El Cortes Ingles

Parafois - good for accessories

Birkenstock - buy your birks here! It's much cheaper than in the U.S.

Decathlon - great, cheap sports shop

Souvenirs:



El Crespo Old House - get your Espadrilles here! This shop has been in the same family for 4 generations and they hand make their espadrilles - they are very cheap and great souvenirs.  
Spicy Yuli: great place to buy Spanish spices to bring home - can be pricey, but they are packaged nicely  
Cortes Ingles (Calle Callao, 2): you can find Spanish olive oil and Spanish saffron here  
Traditional Souvenirs: Espadrilles, Olive Oil, Spanish Wine (esp. Rioja wine), and Spanish Saffron and other Spanish spices

#### Homegoods and other essentials:

Muy Mucho - super cute and affordable - it gives off the anthropology vibe without the prices.  
Hema - good for essential home items  
Flying Tiger - good for school supplies

#### Museums:

Thyssen (Art Museum)  
Reina Sofia (must see Guernica) - free after 7pm  
Prado (mostly Renaissance art, but you can see the "original" Mona Lisa - super famous, but not really my thing) - free if you are a student under 25 or free after 7pm  
Museo Lazaro Galdiano (was okay - 3 euros if you are a student)  
Museo Ceramelo - beautiful house - free on Thursday evenings  
Ermita de San Antonio de la Florida - church that has Goya original works and Goya's burial place - free  
Museo de la historia de Madrid (Madrid History Museum) - free  
Palacio Real - the Royal palace - free after 7pm  
Palacio de Cibeles - more of a co-working space now, but there is some modern art

#### Parks:

Retiro Park - Madrid's Central Park - beautiful glass palace and pond where you can rent boats  
Parque del Oeste - another beautiful park.  
Templo De Debod (in Parque del Oeste) - Egyptian structure (was a gift from Egypt) - the Mirador is close by and has a beautiful view of Madrid and Palacio Real  
Plaza de Espana  
Madrid Rio (also known as Madrid' beach)

#### Things to do/See:

Plaza Mayor (main plaza where they used to have bull fights - don't try to eat around here, it's expensive)  
Puerta del Sol (originally an entrance into Madrid - there is no longer a door there . . . but there are street performers.  
Plaza - converted mall, now has fancy restaurants and live entertainment (there are aerial silk artists on Fridays)  
El Rastro - biggest flea market in Madrid - it's in La Latina - very crowded and overwhelming  
La Riviera - fun concert venue - I saw Hozier here and it was intimate and fun!  
Circulo de Bellas Artes Rooftop - great, affordable bar, with beautiful views of the city!  
Teleferico - cable car over Madrid

**Movie Theatres in English:**

Cines Renoir - Princesa - new releases in VOSE (version original, subtitles español)

Cine Paz - often shows older movies

**Phone Plans:**

Orange - this is the one I used - you can use this anywhere in the EU - I paid 20 Euro per month for 10 GB of data and 80 minutes of calling, which is more than enough, because most people use WhatsApp for text and even calls.

Vodafone

**Gyms:**

Revolution is coming - pretty cheap, classes at all hours of the day

TopCycle - spin studio that is more bougie

**Good day trips from Madrid:**

Cordoba

Cuenca

Salamanca

Segovia

Castille y Leon (wine tour)

## FINAL STUDY ABROAD REPORT

### INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1) Please provide a written assessment of your experience abroad this past term in light of your academic and educational objectives. In particular, please touch on the following: your overall experience at the foreign institution, the quality of the faculty and the quality and availability of courses offered. Please also comment on other topics you feel might be helpful to future students, such as quality of life, financial, housing, social or other considerations that had an impact on your experience. Your report need not be longer than two pages.
- 2) Please indicate whether we can share your information with current BU Law students interested in participating in our 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 ☐

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**Please write your Final Study Abroad Report below.**

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**Name:**

**Semester/Institution:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fall – Comillas, Madrid** \_\_\_\_\_

### REPORT:

Studying at Comillas had both highs and lows. The experience of being abroad was enlightening. I learned about the different legal and educational systems in many different countries, got to meet people from different cultures and practice my Spanish.



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The experience at Comillas however, was disappointing. The classes that were offered were not business focused as the program was advertised to be. There is a set list of classes which are basic law classes with no business focus at all. Administratively the program is quite frustrating. Monica does not always answer emails nor does she keep appointments. Possibly the most frustrating issue is that the administration does not schedule the finals but instead the students have to figure out among themselves when the final will be. With an exchange program of roughly 35 people, that is a daunting task that ended with me having three finals in 24 hours and two exams at the same time.

As for Madrid itself, it was marvelous. Trying to find housing was difficult but a long term AirBnB ended up working out very well. It is very cheap to eat and drink in Madrid which is lovely. If your goal is to practice Spanish, you do have to be proactive. People like to practice English and will often switch into English when they recognize that you may not speak perfect Spanish.

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Fall 2016, ICADE Madrid

### Study Abroad Final Report

I studied abroad at the ICADE at the Universidad Pontificia Comillas in Madrid, Spain for the Fall 2016 semester. Overall, I found the experience somewhat disappointing and of significantly poorer quality my experiences at BU. My biggest issue was the availability of courses offered. The only reason I chose to study abroad in Madrid was to take all classes in Spanish and improve my legal Spanish. However, because of the way the law program in Spanish is structured there, it was virtually impossible to take all of my classes in Spanish. International students are meant to take the courses in English as part of their international student program, and those who want to take classes in Spanish as part of the general law program are given to guidance, and many of those courses build upon earlier courses so they cannot be taken without having taken requisite prior courses, so my options were incredibly limited and I ended up having to take half of my classes in English, which I had no intention of doing going into the program. My initial educational objectives were centered around perfecting my legal Spanish, and this was only partially achieved because I was only able to take half of my courses in Spanish. The professors were very knowledgeable and explained material well, but most, if not all, were practitioners, so classes were often cancelled with little notice. If students are coming to this program to learn legal Spanish, I would generally advise against it. The quality of life in Madrid is excellent, which is another reason why I wanted to study there, as I had lived there twice before and loved the city. It is much more affordable than Boston, even with the Euro being stronger than the dollar. Students will have to find housing on their own, as neither BU nor Comillas provides any guidance in that regard. I was fortunate that I had lived

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there before and had friends to assist me and knew the general process of finding housing, but without this knowledge it would be extremely difficult to find good housing. In addition, the students at the ICADE are undergraduates, so as a law student from the U.S. it is not very easy to integrate socially in the institution, so it's advisable to find roommates that are compatible with the BU student. Overall, Madrid is an excellent city to be a student and has a very vibrant social and cultural scene, so finding a satisfying social life should not be too difficult, it will just likely be outside of the university.



# 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 ☐

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**Please write your Final Study Abroad Report below.**

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## PROGRAM NAME & SEMESTER:

**Universidad Pontifica Comillas ICAI ICADE, Fall 2014**

I am very glad that I spent the past summer studying in Madrid. Not only did I enjoy it, but my experiences at ICADE and my Spanish-language skills have already become a centerpiece of my résumé and of the interviews I've had since I returned to the US, and they seem to make quite the impression. Obviously, I'm grateful for any way to make myself stand out in the job search, and so to me that itself is worth the price of admission.

The biggest question mark for me about this past semester is whether any of what I studied will ever be directly relevant to my work in the US. Without knowing exactly what I hope to do post-graduation, that's hard to say, but it doesn't seem likely that my knowledge of some of the specific details of the Spanish constitution will be coming up in a practice setting any time soon. That said, I think there's a lot of value in having spent a semester immersed in a legal system so different from the American one, and with any luck, it will lead to some new insights now that I'm back at BU.

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On a different note, I remain very glad that I studied abroad during the first semester of my 2L year. It did prevent me from doing some things: moot court wasn't an option this year, for example, and I was unable to apply for Law Review because I wasn't going to be on campus this past fall (for the record, no other journal had a problem with my studying abroad, and I'll admit that the odds of my getting on Law Review in the first place were probably less than stellar). I believe that it is most common to study abroad during either the second semester of 2L or the first semester of 3L. I had two things in mind when choosing to study abroad during the fall of my 2L year: first, I wanted to give myself more time to react to my study abroad experience after returning to the US (that is, to give myself more time to adjust my future course selection), and second, I felt that it would be a good way to get a bit more distance from the madness of 1L and the rest of law school. Clearly, those are both very subjective reasons, and it doesn't seem to me that there's a bad time to study abroad if it is something someone is interested in.

I knew coming into law school that I was interested in a program like this, and in fact, BU's study abroad programs were a big part of why I chose to come here for law school in the first place. And now, with my semester at ICADE behind me, I'm happy to say that I'm very satisfied with how it all worked out, and that I look forward to seeing how my experiences in Spain affect my studies and career going forward.

# 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 ☐

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Please write your Mid-Semester Study Abroad Report below.

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## PROGRAM NAME & SEMESTER:

**Universidad Pontifica Comillas, ICADE, Fall 2014**

When I decided to study at ICADE this semester, I didn't realize how unusual my approach would be. While no one in Madrid has been anything but accommodating, it has certainly been apparent that in choosing to attend the regular law classes as opposed to the MIEBL program, I chose the road less traveled; in fact, I'm only aware of one other American law student who is doing anything similar this semester (there are plenty of other international students in the program, they're just all European). What I'm doing really is completely separate: I have had absolutely no interaction with the MIEBL program or anyone in it (I believe there's even another BU student taking those classes this semester, but we've yet to run into each other). I don't regret that choice by any means, but it is a bit odd to me how separate the two options are, given that they both take place in the same building.

I knew before arriving that I would most likely be taking classes with students who weren't as old as I am, but it's still surprising to me how young some of the Spanish students seem. The European and American systems don't line up exactly, but they're basically



undergraduate-aged, so that, combined with the fact that I'm the only non-EU citizen in all but one of my classes, and the only non-Spaniard in one of them, means that I definitely stick out.

In terms of classes, I'm taking European Union Law, Spanish Civil Law, Spanish Constitutional Rights and Responsibilities, Comparative Contract Law and International Contracts, and the highest-level Spanish for Exchange Students class, with all but the contracts class taught completely in Spanish (for the record, ICADE offers a number of EU law classes in English, including some specifically geared towards exchange students). I'm not really sure how to best compare the difficulty of the classes at ICADE to my classes at BU, both because the method of teaching is so different here, and because I'm taking classes in my second language. As to the former, classes at ICADE are almost entirely lecture-based; while students may have to present on a topic at times, it's always planned, and there is nothing close to an on call system. It seems to me that this stems at least in part from Spain being a civil law country; given the lack of case law and the pressure to memorize sections of the civil code, the system here just lends itself better to that approach. As to the latter, I'm glad I decided to take classes in Spanish, but it means I've got to work at things more than if they were taught in English, especially as the Professors aren't cutting me any slack. The University highly encourages all international students to take one of their Spanish language classes, and I'm very glad that I did; it's not a ton of extra work, and it is nice to have a professor to talk to solely about language issues. While it is probably the most difficult class for me conceptually, I've been particularly happy with my Spanish Civil Law class. It's nice to have more than a super high-level understanding of how things work in non-common law countries.

Outside of the University, I love Madrid. It's a fantastic city, and there's always a ton going on. Though with that said, between journal duties, searching for a job, and taking care of class work and reading, I definitely have to make a concerted effort to go out. Housing-wise, I ended up finding a homestay with a Spanish woman through the University, and that's worked out very well.

# 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 ☐

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**Please write your Mid-Semester Study Abroad Report below.**

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### PROGRAM NAME & SEMESTER: - ICADE Fall 2014 Semester

During the information session and my interview for the study abroad program in the Spring of 2014, Dean Riccardi informed me that studying law in Madrid would be somewhat different from going to school at BU Law. I have kept this warning in mind, and I believe that it has helped me tremendously during my first two months here.

When I arrived in Madrid, and during my first several days, I was most surprised by the inability of locals to speak English. Fortunately, I studied Spanish all through junior high school and high school so, combined with Google translate, I had built up a basic, but still useful vocabulary that I had put to immediate use. This fact still took some time getting used to. Many of my classmates in the MIEBL program (including my roommate who is also in my program) have never studied Spanish, however, and they continue to struggle to communicate with locals when doing grocery shopping or asking for directions. ICADE has enrolled us in Spanish language classes based on a placement exam we took this summer to help us learn the language. As one of my goals for participating in this program was to increase my Spanish proficiency, I feel that as of now my Spanish has drastically improved and I am very thankful for that.



Finding an apartment in Madrid was no trouble and I secured a room in a five-bedroom apartment that is 5 minutes away from school within 2 days of being here. The fact that the majority of the landlords did not speak English made things somewhat difficult but it was only a slight nuisance. There were many rooms available for rent at this time and everyone was able to find a place to live relatively quickly. The cost of living is cheaper than Boston and I have had plenty of time to explore the city and have done a fair bit of traveling as well.

Thus far the main difference between going to school in Madrid and my time at BU Law has been the organization of the curriculum. The Madrid program is composed of evening and night classes (4-9 pm) and the classes are done in blocks. Therefore, I have already completed five classes and am in the process of completing a sixth class this week. While the afternoon schedule has taken some getting used to, the main reason for this schedule is that the professors are attorneys that work in their respective fields during the day. The professors thus far have been fantastic. They have been very knowledgeable and able to stimulate interest in the subject matter. They are also very easily accessible and open to answering questions. Lastly, the subjects are well structured to first teach us about the structure of the European legal system as a foundation and then delve down into the specifics of individual fields. EU Trade Law, Corporate Engineering, and EU Tax law have been very informative and the professors, many of whom were educated in the US, have highlighted the differences between EU and US legal institutions. This was also one of my goals for coming to ICADE and it has exceeded expectations.

ICADE as an institution seems to be lacking a lot of basic resources that I took for granted and were otherwise an afterthought as a BU Law student, however. Our classes require us to have laptops in class but only have 4 outlets available for charging them and the power strips we purchased were either removed or stolen. The printing services are cumbersome because we cannot print from our own computers and have to bring our own paper. The library is not conducive to studying, as it is just a giant cafeteria with tables. Everything closes very early and the school is not open on Sundays and Saturday afternoons.

The one glaring thing that has been lacking in the MIEBL program is that there seems to be little support, no organization and an absence of communication of critical information. Spain on the whole seems to march to its own tune and ICADE is certainly in line with that. From the time I started receiving emails from ICADE in April of 2014, I noticed that things seemed disorganized. I never received the letters necessary to get my student visa and had to send several emails until I received all of the necessary documentation. Important requirements for obtaining the visa, enrolling in classes and the like were not communicated well and I had to figure them out for myself. When I finally came here, I realized that there were several email lists going around and certain students from the program were omitted from certain lists and thus did not have all of the necessary information. The schedule has been altered several times due to teacher availability but the changes were rarely communicated ahead of time. Exams were given to us in classes where we were previously told an exam would not be given. Class assignments and readings were assigned to us via dropbox and were often uploaded late by the administration or



deleted by students who accessed them because the assignor did not lock the documents. This led to many people not receiving the assignment and thus being unprepared for class. When we complained, it took almost a month to fix.

Nevertheless, I, like the others in my program, have quickly adjusted to the cultural differences and are well acclimated into the school cycle at this point. I have learned a great deal about the EU and the legal system abroad that will serve me well in my legal career. I have greatly enjoyed the program thus far and look forward to learning even more to expand my knowledge about the EU. I would *highly* recommend this program to students in subsequent years.

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# 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 ☐

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**Please write your Final Study Abroad Report below.**

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**PROGRAM NAME & SEMESTER: ICADE, Fall 2014 Semester**

As I had covered a substantial amount of my experiences about the ICADE study abroad program in the previous report, I will use this report to highlight new experiences as well as expand upon any previous experiences that mentioned earlier in greater detail. Please do not take what follows to suggest that I was at all unhappy with my experience. I truly believe that this semester abroad was one of the best things I have done in my academic and professional career and I would repeat the experience every single time, given the opportunity. What I am suggesting is ways that I believe that ICADE can make an already amazing, unbelievable experience even better.

An overall assessment of the professors and curriculum that ICADE prepared for us during this previous semester was stellar. In all, I had taken 31 ECTs, which amounted to 14 courses designed to firstly give students a broad overview of European law as a whole and then delve into greater detail about specifics. The professors were truly top notch and clearly experts in their respective fields. The majority of them were also practicing attorneys, so they were able to give us a real world glimpse into the issues, rather than the opinions set forth by academics.