

Abroad Program: Universita Bocconi, Milan, Italy

I studied at Bocconi University in Milan, Italy from September 2015 to December 2015. It was a wonderful, invaluable experience that I was so fortunate to enjoy.

Law Program:

Bocconi is a business school. Therefore, the focus is primarily business. Within the law department, fortunately, there were several different classes to choose from. My classes were Competition Law, Law of International Organizations, Private International Law, and International Trade Law.

I found that that Competition Law was the class that was most similar to an American law school class. It was a comparative law class, so I was able to learn about American antitrust law as well as European Union Competition law. It was taught by a professor that had previously taught at an American law school, and it focused heavily on case law. However, because Bocconi is a business school, and several students are business students, the class had a heavy economics aspect. The class was also a requirement for economics students. Thus, it was a bigger class than any of my other classes, and it focused a lot on the business and economics side of competition. Although this was hard to follow, I recommend this class to any person that decides to attend Bocconi.

With my other three classes, it was very apparent that the law program at Bocconi is newer and a little underdeveloped. Not only were there less students enrolled full-time at Bocconi in those classes, but they also seemed a little unorganized. For example, my International Organizations professor had to restructure the entire course because it was presented as an introductory course, while she thought it was a continuation from a course taught the semester prior. International Trade law was one of my favorite classes because

the topic is interesting, but also, one of the professors teaching the course – the course had two professors – was previously a World Trade Organization judge. It was amazing learning from someone with real-life experience. Private International law was an interesting class because it was interesting to learn conflict of laws from a civil law perspective.

A different perspective was the general theme of my academic life in Milan. It was a different way of learning: for Competition Law and International Trade Law, rather than getting cold called, groups were assigned cases to present in front of the class, and in International Organizations and Private International Law, the professor mostly lectured based on written rules rather than precedent or case law. It was not too difficult to adjust, but it was just a different way of learning.

#### Administration:

Everything in Italy just seems a bit more relaxed and a bit slower, that includes the administration at Bocconi. The online interface to get important dates or to get your schedule was not always working well. Additionally, professors were able to change the dates of their class times at a whim. This was a hard adjustment; I was so accustomed to having the same schedule for an entire semester. However, in the big scheme of things, it was not detrimental to my learning. Additionally, getting grades straight after the final is not realistic at Bocconi, but I think that is true at any school.

#### Housing:

Since I was the only one from UC Hastings attending Bocconi in Fall 2015, I decided to live in the dorm. I was able to meet a lot of different people, but keep in mind that the Bocconi program is for undergraduates and graduates as well as law students from other

countries. Therefore, there are a lot of people that are younger than the average American law student.

The dorm that I stayed in was called Residenza Arcobaleno. It is a little rundown, but definitely livable. The only issue was that it is 25-35 minutes away from campus and 45 minutes away from the center of the city. Additionally, it is pretty bare around the dorm; luckily, there is a grocery store nearby. However, the public transportation system in Milan is absolutely amazing. You can basically get anywhere you want to go. I bought a four-month public transportation pass and it allowed me to use the buses, trams, and underground my entire stay.

#### Travel & Fun:

I traveled almost every weekend. If you are planning to travel around Italy, I would recommend buying your train tickets as early as possible because the cheaper seats tend to become sold out. Also, there are several cheap airlines to take you all over Europe. I would also recommend exploring Milan as well, and not simply going to other places every weekend. My only regret is that I do not think I spent enough time just exploring Milan; it turned into a place where I went to school.

Bocconi was a wonderful experience, and I am glad that I chose to spend a semester there. It is great for people interested in international law as well as people who just want a semester to experience something different.

## TRAVEL REPORT

TO: Global Programs Office  
RE: Fall 2015 Exchange Program – Bocconi, Milan, Italy  
DATE: December 28, 2015

### Introduction

My third semester of law school was spent in Milan, Italy at the University Bocconi, a world-renowned business school with approximately 15,000 undergraduate and graduate students. Although the main attraction is its b-school, there are studies in law, which are a great compliment to anyone interested in practicing or learning about the international legal arena. As an exchange student from Hastings, you are allowed to take any of the graduate level courses offered. However, it's vital to ensure that the course will transfer over to Hastings. I took two courses in the law department and the finance department, which I will go into detail below.

### Milan

Milan is a fantastic city in northern Italy. With three airports, and two train stations, the city is ideal for traveling in and around Europe. There are various little neighborhoods circled around the Duomo, the main cathedral in the city center. Traveling is extremely cheap once you are situated in Milan. I was able to take around ten weekend trips to places including Malta, Rome, Istanbul, and Berlin, while never paying more than \$100 for airfare. Trains to cities like Genoa, Parma, Bologna, and Monaco are also inexpensive and can be booked very last minute without any price hikes. Getting to Europe from San Francisco, I booked a flight on Norwegian Air for \$199 each way to/from Stockholm and traveled on both ends of my semester. The airline consistently has these fares if you book far enough in advance. For anyone who wasn't able to study abroad in undergrad, wants to see a lot of Europe, and learn international law/finance while actually abroad, Milan is a great choice.

Bocconi does offer dormitory rooms, but I rented a private apartment in Porta Vittoria, roughly a twenty-minute walk to school. If you are interested in the dorms, it is good to note that there is no wifi available; all internet is through an LAN cable. Friends of mine that stayed in the dorms reported internet was spotty and definitely slows down later in the evening when everyone is in the building. Also, most of the dorms (which are full of undergraduate exchange students) require a 20-30 minute tram ride to and from school. Overall, I would not recommend you go the dorm route. I found my apartment months ahead of my arrival on Airbnb. It was a nice studio in a really great neighborhood, which rented for around \$1100 per month. There are definitely cheaper options depending on your desired neighborhood, whether you want to take public transportation to school, and whether or not you want a roommate. I enjoyed living surrounded by Italian neighbors and going to small local cafes to better my understanding of the language and culture.

Compared to San Francisco, Milan seemed rather cheap. Breakfast of a coffee and brioche runs one euro each. You can get a filling and delicious dinner for under twenty euro, and there are plenty of cheap panini and pasta options around campus for under five euro. There are hundreds, if not thousands of cafes around the city to plop down your laptop and books. You'll feel no pressure to leave after you order no more than a coffee and stay for hours. It's a rather student friendly city.

### **Law Courses**

The Italian system for law school is rather different from ours in the States. Students attend for five years after high school, so most are very young compared to students at Hastings. Courses were definitely not as difficult as Hastings in terms of coverage, discussions, and exams. I took International Law (4 unit hours) and Human Rights and Civil Liberties (3 unit hours).

Unfortunately, the structure of the classes was much more lecture than discussion. There was also no Socratic method, which I found to take away from what could have been very interesting class discussions. Most students were very quiet and it was difficult for professors to engage them. You

have a choice to take a midterm exam in most classes, which can count for half of your grade if you are happy with it. If not, or you don't want to do the midterm, there is one final exam that is given in December. My exams consisted of multiple choice questions and short essays. The exams are closed book, on paper, and usually no more than an hour and a half. Although very different overall from my past law classes, I certainly feel like I learned a lot in both of these classes.

### **Business Courses**

It is very easy to see why Bocconi is ranked in the top ten for business schools around the world. The workload and concepts are on par with, if not exceeding classes at Hastings. I took Mergers & Acquisitions (3 unit hours) and International Corporate Finance (3 unit hours). Both were very heavily math based, and if you do not have any business or accounting experience would be extremely difficult. For students interested in more of a business law education, these are just two of the classes I wanted to take and strongly believe they will help once I'm out of law school. Professors are very experienced in their area of study and invite many incredible guest speakers to present classes. We had CEOs, CFOs, hedge fund managers, and others come in to discuss transactions they actually worked on. There was a lot more participation from students in these classes and overall felt more thorough than some of the law classes.

### **Conclusion**

Study Abroad! Whether or not Bocconi is the right school for you, the opportunity to study law in an international environment is incredible. It's so important to have a global perspective in our practice. Whether you are going into litigation or transactional work, international law or small town USA private practice, your clients could be from anywhere. An international aspect to your legal education has an endless list of benefits. I expanded my network of attorneys, learned about international law from a European perspective, and solidified my hopes to go into international business law. We're very lucky to have the Global Studies Program, so take advantage of it!

## Travel Report: Bocconi University Milan, Italy

In the Fall of my 2L year, I chose to study abroad in Milano, Italia at a prestigious economics University called Bocconi. Bocconi has a beautiful campus in a very nice neighborhood in Milan. Since the University is well known for its economics program, there are few options for legal classes. I chose to take Intro to the Italian Legal System, IT & Communication Law, IP & Comparative Law and Law and Management of 3rd Sector Organizations.

First thing. Classes. The classes are much like the classes at UC Hastings, minus the Socratic method. I did not have any mid-terms, though in 1 course it was cancelled only due to a delay in the course's book distribution. All professors used PowerPoints and slide presentations, which they made available after lectures. The only thing that is unfortunate about the classes is the fact that the professors have very heavy accents, which makes a new subject somewhat difficult to grasp when you can't understand every word. Sometimes I felt it was easier, to just read and look at the slides.

Secondly. Housing. I opted to not stay in the on campus housing facilities that is provided for students because I wanted to really have the chance to be immersed in the culture and get to know the city outside of the campus area. When you live on campus, sometimes one tends to be comfortable there and exploration is limited. Also, since the campus is has a strong undergraduate presence there are strict rules in regards to the dorm's hours and visitors. I knew that my other friends studying abroad, in addition to family and friends from the US would be coming to visit so I wanted the freedom of having whomever I wanted to stay with me for extended

periods of time. From what I heard from other students, there's a no overnight policy in the dorms and there's no Wifi in the dorms. Some students that tried to disobey these rules were written up and their home schools were notified. So it's pretty serious. I found my place on Airbnb.com, but I also had a friend that found her place once she arrived in Italy from a bulletin board on campus. So there are other options if you know that people will come visit you or you just like to have the freedoms afforded to graduate students our age.

Lastly. Travelling. There will be ample opportunities to travel around Italy and Europe if you choose this program. There is an international students network called ESN that puts on weekly events, happy hours and trips at a low cost for the study abroad students. This is a great way to meet students from all around the world. You will make friends this way and you will most likely keep these friends. Although the Italian students speak English, it is not very good because they don't use it regularly so it'll be harder to connect with the Italian students if you don't speak Italian. I went on many small trips with the ESN group around Italy, some over night but well worth it and cheap. In addition, there are a couple very cheap airlines that can get you anywhere in Europe for under \$200 round trip for easy weekend getaways. For these getaways I also recommend Airbnb.com for quick and easy housing. Normally will be with a family who is very warm and excited to see you travel and get to know their country or town.

Overall, I had a blast studying abroad. I think studying abroad anywhere will broaden your horizons and allow you to be free in a once in a lifetime kind of way. Milano is very much a big city lifestyle as far as living. Its similar to San Francisco in

that there are many restaurants, lots air pollution, great public transit system and a great downtown area for expensive shopping. The only thing it lacks is a beach! Milan is not very scenic or relaxed, its big buildings, shopping, and tourism. If you are looking for something different from San Francisco “city life” and for an experience that is more cultural and authentic, I would recommend a different option.

## Milan, Italy Study Abroad Fall 2013

Studying abroad during law school was the best decision I have ever made in my life. I believe that I share the same sentiments with most if not all students who have studied abroad in law school. No one says that they regret studying abroad. If there are regrets, it's that they did not get a chance to study abroad during their time at law school. I knew coming into law school that I wanted to study abroad because I did not have the opportunity to do so in undergrad. Though I studied abroad later in life, I will forever cherish the experiences and memories I created abroad.

Prior to leaving for Milan, I spoke with previous students who studied abroad at Bocconi University in Milan, Italy to learn about their experience and also to garner any advice they wanted to share. I highly recommend doing so because I was able to get an insider's point of view as well as some good recommendations about what classes to take, which restaurants to visit, and other bureaucratic matters in Milan. One warning I received was the bureaucratic red tape of the Italian government. It takes months to get a permit of stay or a monthly transportation pass (called the ATM). The paperwork is long, confusing and in Italian! Thankfully, the International Student Desk (ISD) was very helpful in assisting students who were not able to make the sessions dedicated to filling out the paperwork.

In regards to dorms, I stayed at Arcobaleno Residence, which was technically outside the city of Milan. Arcobaleno used to be a hotel that the school bought out to use as dormitories. I had my own single room and lived with a Serbian roommate who also had her own room. We shared the bathroom and a small kitchen together. The dorms were clean and had all the bare amenities. I chose Arcobaleno because it was about thirty euros cheaper than the dorms located

right on campus or close to campus but you end up making up the difference by buying a monthly tram pass. I took the 15 tram to school every day, which took about twenty-five minutes to get to school. If you're under twenty-six years of age, you pay twenty-five euros for the monthly pas but if you're over twenty-six years of age, you pay thirty-five euros. I would recommend staying at the Bocconi or Spadolini residence. Bocconi Residence is located right on campus so it's a five minute walk to and from classes. Spadolini is a fifteen minute walk from campus so there is no need to take public transportation to and from school.

Bocconi University is world-renown as a business university. When I was looking for classes to take, there was a plethora of business courses in finance, accounting, marketing, and management. Since it is internationally acclaimed as a business university, there weren't that many law classes that were available. I took four classes: International Trade Law, Comparative Industrial Relations Law, Organizations and Social Movements. I never took any law classes about international trade law but I did not have a problem learning the material. One of our professors was a former Chairman of the WTO Appellate Body so it was an honor and privilege taking a class with someone who actually decided some of the cases we read. The Comparative Industrial Relations Law class covered the role of labor unions in France, German, Italy, England and the United States. The professor did a comparative analysis of the labor laws as well as the history behind the formation of the countries' respective laws. Since I have an interest in labor law, it was interesting to learn the labor standards of different western European countries. I also had the chance to take a MBA graduate course in Organizations, which was one of my favorite classes. I learned a lot of practical information about the structure and power within organizations, which can greatly influence the company's culture and work ethic. Social

Movements was also another favorite class of mine. We read case studies about American companies and how they influenced a social movement or were influenced by a social movement.

The best thing about Milan was its location. It's centrally located in Europe so it was very easy and cheap to fly or train everywhere. Flights all throughout Europe were around 1-1.5 hours and were usually less than or around \$100 roundtrip. Due to convenient budget airlines like EasyJet and RyanAir, we were able to travel at a good price all throughout Europe. I would recommend getting a credit card that waives international transaction fees and a bank debit card that doesn't charge foreign transaction fees as well.

## Study Abroad Summary

Semester Abroad: Fall 2013

Location: Università Bocconi – Milan, Italy

### Introduction

My semester abroad was amazing. I learned a lot, travelled a lot, made new friends from around the world, and had an unforgettable time. I studied abroad during the Fall semester of my 3L year, and I think that was a smart choice. Nothing much happens during this semester, so I did not feel like I missed much. I was back in the Spring, just in time to file my moral character application and figure out logistics for the bar. I was at Bocconi along with three other 3Ls from Hastings, and we were inseparable. We were essentially one family. We took some classes together, we travelled together, and we went out together. Having them there made the experience even better.

### Academics

At Bocconi, I did not learn nearly as much as I would have at UC Hastings. Some classes were good and others were pretty bad. In all classes, however, knowing English alone had placed American/British/Australian.. etc. students ahead of the curve. Attendance was not mandatory. Students had the option of taking classes as Attending or non-Attending students.

Attending Students ended up doing a little less work than the non-Attending students. For example, in one class, non-Attending students had to write an extra paper.

I was enrolled in four classes: International Trade Law ("ITL"), Private International Law ("PIL"), Advanced Intellectual Property ("Advance IP"), and Social Movements and the Competitive Strategy of Firms ("Social Movements").

ITL was taught by two professors. One professor was great; he was fluent in English, and had served as the European Union's representative on the WTO Appellate Body. He shared a lot of insights with us, and they were always interesting since he had presided over some of the cases we learned in class. The other professor who taught the class did not speak English well, and he was very difficult to understand. The final for this exam was a written final, but it was very easy compared to finals at UC Hastings.

PIL was also taught by two professors, one of whom spoke English fluently and the other did not. After the second week of classes, I only attended lectures taught by the fluent professor. The final was an oral one in the form of a one-on-one conversation with the professor. Essentially, the professor asked questions about the course while other students were present. It was an interesting experience.

Advanced IP was not what I had thought it would be. It was sort of a survey of IP issues, not necessarily law, around the world. Although it was very interesting, I found it more informational than anything. We learned about Creative Commons, and other interesting subjects, but I would have liked to learn more about the law.

Social Movements was my favorite class. Although it was not a law class, and I had to get it approved by Hastings, it was the most enriching. This class allowed me to practice and improve my strategic thinking and problem solving skills. In this class, we had to give presentation to persuade a jury of students as to why a certain solution to a problem was the best solution. Since I am interested in litigation, the persuasive public speaking component of the class was both enriching and fun.

### Housing

I lived in the Bocconi dorms, which are the only dorms on campus (other dorms are off campus). The dorms were very convenient and safe. I had my own room and shared a bathroom with an Italian girl. Every floor had two shared kitchens, and the building also had a cafeteria and a place to do laundry. The only bad part about living in the dorms was my inability to have over night guests. This meant that I could not host friends who wanted to visit, and they had to stay at hostels during their stay.

## Milan

As a city, Milan is not great. It is very grey and industrial. The people of Milan are not the nicest, but luckily Milan has a lot of people from southern Italy and they are generally kind and friendly. Milan does have a lot of history though, which is fun to explore. Perhaps the best part about Milan is its location. It is in northern Italy, and it is close to many cool cities such as Verona, Turin, and Venice. Milan is also ideal for travelling across Europe. We took a day trip to Oktoberfest by bus (it was planned by a club at school), a day trip to the Swiss Alps by train, and a 2-day trip to Nice and Monaco by train too. Flights from Milan were affordable, and we got to travel to London, Paris, and Amsterdam.

### Advice for Future Study Abroad Bocconi Students

- There is a Chinese store in Porta Romana (close to Bocconi) that has pots and pans and other kitchen supplies at affordable prices.
- Aperitivos are awesome! You pay for a drink (6-8 Euros), and you get to enjoy an open buffet. Aperitivos take place all around the city and are usually between 6-9 PM. Some good aperitivo places are: Bhangrabar, Deseo, and Manhattan.
- Best pizza in Milan: Pizzeria Piccola Ischia – they have Napolese thin crust pizza that is both affordable and delicious.

## Study Abroad Fall 2013 – Bocconi

Last semester, I studied abroad in Milan, Italy. I had never been to Europe prior to studying abroad. This experience was eye opening and was a great opportunity for personal growth. Two experiences struck me the most. The first thing was the language. Aside from high school Spanish, I did not speak one word of Italian. Learning to perform daily tasks in a country where I did not speak the language was not easy. Secondly and unexpectedly, this experience gave me a newfound appreciation of the United States.

I remember that one of my first experiences when I arrived in Milan was trying to take the tram from the dorm to the school. Unfortunately, the dorms were about 5 miles from school in a quiet suburban area. I was completely unprepared for the fact that even though Milan was an “international” city, not everyone spoke English, including the tram drivers. With the little Italian that I learned from my app in my iPhone, I was able to communicate what I needed, although my Italian was horrible. It was surprisingly complicated. To get a tram ticket, I needed to find a coffee shop to buy the tram ticket. However, at the time, it also happened to be “siesta” time, where all the coffee shops were closed. This was so frustrating for me because I am from a city where nothing ever really closes. This experience made me realize the importance of language in performing menial daily tasks. The inability to express what I want and need was incredibly frustrating and it made me feel like I had no voice. It was a very disempowering experience. Immediately after this, I dedicated myself to learning basic Italian during the first two weeks of school. After I learned some basic Italian, I felt much more secure in the country. Also, because of this language barrier, I felt that I was not able to fully participate in the Italian culture and social life outside of the study abroad students. This experience made me understand

what it was like for new immigrants who come to America and who are not able to speak the language. Now, I understand how the language barriers that they face impact their everyday life and I can empathize with their difficulties in communication in way that I could never understand before.

My study abroad experience also gave me a deeper appreciation of the United States. I was born and raised in the United States and although I have always been aware that I don't look "American" because I am also Asian, I never felt that my ethnicity prevented me from being viewed as a person first. In Italy, race is the first thing that people noticed about me. This was strange for me because often times their conception of what my ethnicity is, was completely incorrect and because I felt like I had to work harder to make some Italians see me as a person who is beyond their stereotypes of what they think I am and who they think I should be. That is not to say that all Italians were horrible to me. It just made me realize that Italy still has a long way to go in terms of "race relations." While I was in Italy, I read heard stories from fellow students that Italian fans were throwing bananas at their own team's black players. This kind of behavior is unsettling and shocking to me. I was surprised that one's ethnicity matter so much in Europe because Europe has been around a lot longer and has been interacting with different ethnicities for a longer historical period than the United States. However, I think that because the United States was forced to deal with issues of slavery and mass immigration early in its history, the United States has more experience and a more profound understanding of how people of different cultures and ethnicities should be treated, like individuals. I know that United States is not perfect, but this experience made me appreciate how lucky I am to live in a place where I can be treated as an individual and makes me even more proud of my American heritage.

Studying abroad in Italy was one of the best decisions that I have made. I learned so much about myself, about people and about the world. Aside from some frustrations, I immensely enjoyed my time in Italy. The history, culture and beauty of Italy are unmatched to anything that I have seen. There is just something about being able to go to the place where history happened. This experience has made me appreciate history more. For example, seeing the Creation painting in person was amazing and left me in awe. Overall, I loved Italy and I would definitely go back to visit.

## Study Abroad Experience Summary

Studying law at Bocconi University was a unique experience, and I am glad I was given the opportunity to experience global diversity in the field of law. I enjoyed taking law classes with students from all over the world, because it helped me learn the differences between the laws of the U.S. and other countries. Taking International Trade Law with Professor Giorgio Sacerdoti, someone who was once a member of the WTO Appellate Body, was an incredible experience because I had an opportunity to learn about the process of international trade law, and also hear about his experience at the WTO. He was able to help improve my understanding of trade law, and the details that go along with the process. However, the other professor for international trade law was not my favorite. He had a different perspective of how students should act in class, and was very insecure about the way he taught.

In addition to international trade law, I enjoyed learning about both the U.S. and European Antitrust/Competition law. I learned more than what I thought I would learn. My favorite class was probably innovation in the public sector because the professor actually cared about what she taught, and was a great person to know, and learn from. She was the only one who gave us practical advice, and had guest lecturers come in so we can learn what really happens in the real world. The class that I thought would be the best ended up being the class I regretted taking the most, which is the fashion management course because the professor had an ego that made it impossible for me to learn from her. Also, the final was unrealistic, and uninspiring. However, it was nice to have the attending/non-attending option for all the classes.

Aside from the educational aspect of the study abroad, I thought Hastings should have prepared us better for the study abroad session, and Bocconi was not as technologically advanced as I thought a top university in the country should be. I did not understand how there was no wi-

fi at the dorms; I could not study in the living room because there was no Ethernet connection or wi-fi in the living room. Even on campus, the internet was very slow. The entire situation with printing was unbelievably frustrating! We could not print from our laptops, and even if we wanted to print from the school computers, we had to go to the computer room, get a computer number, and print from there. There also was no cell phone reception in the computer room so if you had to double-check what you needed to print, you have to leave the printing room. In addition, the printing room was only open for a certain number of hours and there was no other way to print on campus. We had to go to printing shops to print over the weekend. For one of my exams, I could not print until the day of the exam because they were closed the weekend before finals. Lastly, you cannot print more than 20 pages at a time or the printer did not recognize your job. Honestly, I cannot believe there was so much fuss about the printer, but the entire administrative process was beyond frustrating. People were slow, and had no issue lying about any information.

I think Hastings should prepare the students better by publishing a handout for prospective study-abroad students from experiences of other students who previously attended those schools. Filing for visa was very confusing, and I cannot imagine dealing with that if I were not a citizen. Also, we were not aware that once we enter the country we had to apply for the Italian resident card. I needed more information on whether it would be okay if I went to the UK for a weekend or Switzerland, and the new entry date would start my 90-day count from the beginning, but no one was helpful. The student visa was free, but the resident card cost was over 200 pounds, and it is something that was not of any use while we were there.

I wish someone had told me which dorms to list as a preference and/or which classes to take. I also wish there were a list of restaurants, grocery stores, phone information, etc. available

to us before we left blindly for a new city where most people did not speak English. Although it was fun to discover new things, it was a constant struggle to find everything I needed. Also, it would have been important to know what to take there from the U.S. and what is easily available there. I paid \$25 for a converter when it was available in Milan for less than 5 pounds. There were other smaller things such as filter bottles or vitamin pills that I wish I had taken from the U.S. because it was very difficult for my body to adapt to the pasta diet, which often caused sickness. Overall, the experience was great, but if I had been better prepared for what was to come my way, I think I would have had a more enjoyable time because I would have been prepared.

## STUDY ABROAD SUMMARY, MILAN, FALL 2011

My study abroad experience as an exchange student at Bocconi University provided several interesting opportunities to broaden my educational framework and my cultural awareness. At Bocconi University, where the primary focus is business and economics, the classes I took were informed by a style of education geared to those specialties. I enjoyed this business focus because it gave me a chance to think about information from an angle I had previously not explored in my education. Analyzing law with an eye to the practicalities of business and management allowed for a pragmatic framing of new concepts, and broadened my interests for the rest of my legal education.

My International Law class provided the opportunity to enjoy the opinions and perspectives of students from many different countries, brought to bear in a way that allowed for a truly “international” understanding of the subject. In addition, it was interesting to engage with topics in international law in the European Union, one of the most internationally minded communities in today’s world. At times it was daunting to be one of only a few American students in class discussions, because the United States’ role in international law provokes a fair amount of heated discussion among citizens of other countries. I sometimes wanted to explain that being a U.S. citizen does not imply that I agree completely with U.S. policy and choices. However, being one of a few representatives of the U.S. in such discussions definitely provided an opportunity to engage critically with the material, and to consider the implications of international law on current international events.

There were several fascinating elements of my Introduction to the Italian Legal System class. First, it was interesting to compare the teaching methods from my IL year to the teaching methods applied by an Italian professor addressing approximately the same topic matter. Whereas the American law school approach puts a heavy emphasis on case law and on drawing out the rules from the cases, the Italian approach was much more straightforward, and relied little if at all on cases. The textbook we worked from presented the substantive rules of each area of law in a straightforward, organized fashion. Second, it was interesting to learn the fundamentals of a foreign legal system from a comparative basis. Having already taken the IL classes at Hastings, I have a comfortable knowledge of the basics of the American legal system, and as

such, the Italian legal system came to me on a compare and contrast basis. I found it unusual and exciting that so many basic elements are shared between the two systems. It made me curious to compare other legal systems, and to consider how some legal principles may be virtually universal. Finally, taking my first oral exam was a unique experience. I have never encountered the oral exam style before, and I found it quite enjoyable. Having the chance to converse with your professor one-on-one and discuss the subject matter of the class seemed a delightful way to demonstrate comprehension of the material.

Non-Profit Law was an excellent class. Having taken nothing like it in the U.S., I have no basis for comparison as to how it might otherwise be taught, but I suspect that Bocconi's business emphasis contributed to the very practical, hands-on approach to the topic. I found this quite enjoyable, and learned a lot of very applicable skills in a field I hope to practice in. The group presentation emphasis was a bit of a challenge, particularly because of the wide array of countries from which the students hailed. The group presentation was based on a hypothetical situation, and required each group to devise a suitable non-profit organization to fit the needs of the hypothetical client. We then mapped out all the practical elements of the intended organization, drafted bylaws and articles of incorporation, and created a presentation to showcase our work. At times, I found coordinating our ideas as a group to be difficult. However, I was very pleased with our end product.

The fourth class I took was Public Management for Competitiveness. This class was primarily a business and economics class, and focused on analysis of the factors relevant to business competitiveness in a given locale. We examined various countries and regions, and the industries that thrive in those locations. I have no background in business, and this particular business analysis was particularly salient for me, as it provided a theoretical overview of many essential elements to a successful business environment. It also allowed me to bring to bear my undergraduate emphasis in Anthropology, because much of the analysis turned around specific cultural conditions and how they make a given population particularly adapted to succeed in various elements of a business environment. This class also focused on a group presentation, in which each group was assigned an industry "cluster" in a particular locale, and presented a multi-faceted analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of that cluster.

There were some elements of Milan itself that frustrated me. I had hoped to build on my Romance language background in Portuguese and develop Italian language skills. However,

perhaps in part because of the business and economics emphasis of Bocconi, English was spoken quite regularly, being the “language of business”. As a result, I had difficulty finding sufficient practice in Italian, and was dismayed that the Italian speakers I encountered often insisted on speaking English. I feel comfortable that I now have a fundamental working knowledge of Italian, but I would have liked to push beyond that to a more conversational fluency.

I did my study abroad exchange at Università Bocconi in Milan, Italy in Fall 2011 and it is an experience I will never forget. This was my first study abroad experience and also my first time visiting Europe. When I learned that UC Hastings offers a study abroad program in a number of different countries, I knew that I wanted to participate but I wasn't particular about where I would study, I just knew that I wanted to take advantage of the opportunity to live and study in a foreign country. After all, when else would I be able to live in another country on a temporary basis without having to uproot my life and without having to make any long-term commitments? When I applied to study abroad, I pretty much included every European school in my ranking of preference, but Milan was my first choice because Bocconi is a reputable business and economics school and I had initially planned on pursuing an MBA before I changed paths and applied to law school, so this was a great opportunity for me to incorporate some business classes into my law degree.

Applying for Visa: Meri will probably warn you, and I will re-emphasize that when you apply for your student visa, be prepared to start the process early and make sure you supply the precise documents that are required when you show up for your interview, or be prepared to be turned away without any opportunity to protest. Dealing with the Italian Consulate is one of the most frustrating experiences I've ever had, so just be prepared to roll with the punches and take it all in stride.

Arriving at Bocconi: The exchange coordinator at Bocconi was immensely helpful in preparing me for my arrival. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to e-mail the international student desk because they were very responsive. They set me up with a "buddy" at

Bocconi, but he wasn't any help at all and I never even met him. Of course, I might have just gotten unlucky with the buddy that was assigned to me. Bocconi's campus takes a bit of getting used to, especially if you're coming from Hastings where our entire campus is made up of only three buildings, which are clearly marked. Most of the classes at Bocconi are in two different buildings, so learn the names and locations of the buildings and pay close attention to the format of the classroom numbers so you know which building to go to. The classrooms and library study area don't have power outlets, so make sure your laptop is fully charged or bring a pad and paper. However, there are a lot of study spaces right outside the classrooms with power outlets, as well as vending machines and coffee machines—just remember to bring your power adapter for the European outlets!

On Milan: A lot of people view Milan as an industrial city, lacking much of the charm of the other popular Italian cities, but if you take the time to explore, you'll realize that Milan has much to offer. I never tired of admiring the Duomo and Galleria, especially after the sun goes down and the façade is illuminated. Other areas I really liked are Navigli, Corso Sempione, and Brera. These areas are great for nightlife. There are also some great nightlife events for international students put on by International Week, and it's a great opportunity to meet other international students and get into the most popular nightclubs at a significantly reduced cover rate, or even free. What I also really like about Milan is that students can get a monthly unlimited transit card for only 17 Euros, valid on all forms of public transport. And if you decide to get an Italian cell phone, it will work on the underground Metro! Milan's transportation network is very extensive and reliable (except for regular strikes, which usually occur at night and aren't very disruptive), so don't be afraid to find housing outside of the immediate vicinity of Bocconi. It will give you an opportunity to get to know other parts of Milan. I lived close to

Central Station, which was very convenient for me, as I seemed to be visiting Central Station to catch trains and airport Shuttles more often than I was going to Bocconi (but don't tell the Dean that).

On Europe: This trip was my first visit to Europe, so I set out to see as much as I could during my short stay. My friends were studying in Torino, so we arrived in Europe early and spent 3 weeks backpacking before school started. I invested in a Eurail Global Pass which allowed me to take unlimited train trips anywhere in 23 European countries. For further distances, I flew on RyanAir or Easyjet, which offers flights to all major European destinations for an average of \$50 or less, one-way. I also joined all the International and Erasmus Student Orgs at Bocconi and other schools in Milan (ESEG, IS@B, ESN), and signed up for organized trips around Italy and beyond. These orgs also organize an annual ski trip and an Oktoberfest trip that are a lot of fun.

All in all, this was an amazing experience that I will remember for the rest of my life. I met so many wonderful people in Milan and during my travels, I got to visit so many cool places, and I got to escape from the Tenderloin and law school for a semester, to regain perspective and have some fun.

## Milan and Bocconi (Fall 2011)

My trip to Milan and my semester at Bocconi was a great experience. I had a lot of fun, but I also got a broader perspective on many aspects of education and life in general. I would recommend this trip to other Hastings students, especially if they have a background in business or economics for the school, have background in highly urban centers like New York or Los Angeles for the city, or if they seriously want to learn the Italian language.

Starting with the school, Bocconi is very highly focused on business and economics, aside from being a law school. It was unclear to me when I first selected my classes that we were only allowed to take courses categorized as law courses, and I was disappointed because I wanted to take some of the sixty odd classes that were offered in English. However, it turned out we really only had an option of seven courses after the additional restriction of purely legal classes was communicated.

I was able to convince Hastings to let me take one course at Bocconi outside of the law school, which although interesting, might not have been the best choice for me because I have no business or economics background whatsoever. The class was interesting though, and honestly all the legal courses usually have some element of business tied in because Bocconi really is more of a business school. I would encourage future attendees to take one course outside of the law school that seems interesting, and then to rely on your legal background to make your additional courses easier when it comes to exam time.

In terms of exams, Bocconi professors institute a lot of group projects and/or oral examinations in their assessment methods. The oral exam basically involves the

professor asking you a few questions on a few of the topics covered in the semester. They seem like they might be intimidating, but I found it really easy and nothing to worry about. It is quite hard to fall below the passing grade there, so do not worry that you will be studying as much as, say, the first year of law school. There will be plenty of time to enjoy other parts of the experience.

Milan is located rather centrally in Europe, making access to a variety of countries very easy for one who wants to travel during their experience. Since the general rule of thumb at Bocconi is that you are not required to attend class, traveling possibilities are even greater. (Note: some professors will grade on participation and therefore want you to attend class, but they will make that clear in the beginning and, hopefully, on the syllabus. Even with participation as part of the grade, I found the attendance policy much more relaxed as compared with Hastings.)

It is no secret that Italian bureaucracies are infamous for their lack of efficiency and overall creation of frustration for everyone who comes into contact with them. There is no lack of this at Bocconi, especially as final exams are generally scheduled on the same day, and even at the same time. However, your shining glimmer of hope in this situation is the incredibly helpful staff at the International Student Desk. They will make sure all your issues are resolved and that you get to take all your exams. Talk to them, use them, and let them help you.

Onto Milan itself, the city had a vibrant nightlife. The reason I suggest it for someone who has had experience in cities like New York or Los Angeles is that Milan can have a sense of snootiness that one experiences in those similar urban scenes. It's all about who you know, and being of course a fashion capital, who you're wearing.

Milan is a very fashionable city and many times people are dressed to the nines, navigating treacherous cobblestone in four-inch heels, to simply go out to dinner. There is no such thing as overdressed in this town, so bust out your best and wear it with confidence and you'll fit in just fine.

Milanese people are definitely not as friendly as Americans, so do not take it personally. It's a cultural difference, similar to the difference in customer service standards in a lot of Europe that strike many Americans as unkind or un-cordial. It's not; it's just a different culture and you have to be prepared to adapt to their customs.

Figuring out where to go out in Milan can be a bit tricky; some places are amazing on a Tuesday but terrible on a Saturday. For most of the most popular clubs, I found Wednesday to be the best day. They are usually free (at least for girls), whereas on a Saturday they would have 20 Euro cover charges and about as much for each drink.

For food, every single place I ate was good. I am not kidding. The food there is like politics; people will debate over the best approach. It's a beautiful art packed with simple but incredible ingredients, and everything is fresh as can be. There is a market on Saturday mornings by the park near Bocconi, and I highly recommend all the meats, cheeses and produce there; everything is fresh and in season. Note another cultural difference though: unlike many farmer's markets in America, you do not touch the produce. The vendor will pick out the best produce for you, and you do not have to worry about getting a bad apple, as they would not sell it if it wasn't ripe and delicious. It's just wouldn't be done. In terms of a restaurant: there is a place right next to Bocconi

that has amazing salads and plates (of prosciutto, roast beef, or crudo, which is cooked ham). For each you get a selection of items and it's only 6-8 Euro.

Another cheap, and amazing, options for dining in Milan is the great invention that is appetivo. This involves paying for one drink, usually 6-8 Euro, and then getting access to an all-you-can-eat buffet. Some places are known for their food, some for the drinks. It depends what you are looking for, but you can basically always be assured that between the hours of 6pm-9pm, someone will be serving you some sort of free food with your cocktail. If you really want to have dinner via appetivo, I suggest Maya (on one of the Naviglis, with decent food but a lot of it!), or Trattoria Toscana (just north of Ventiquattro Maggio, with quite good food and beautiful ambience).

Keep in mind that not many people speak English in Milan, at least, not when compared to many other European cities I have visited. This can be really helpful if you actually want to learn Italian. I left knowing zero, and even with a month of traveling, I was able yesterday to have a conversation with an Italian on the street here in SF. I also highly suggest avoiding the (costly) crash course offered by Bocconi because you can audit an introductory Italian class for free once the semester starts. It's a much better route, in my opinion.

The one thing I recommend the most during your trip to Milan is to leave it. Go south; go see the rest of Italy. The country has a very interesting and fragmented history that gives each region a distinct flavor. All the romanticized images you have of an Italian getaway usually come from southern regions, so go. The culture, food, wine, language...it all changes as you travel. It's really quite an experience to have, and I

highly recommend it. Just don't be too sad if you can't understand anyone in Rome; I couldn't. It's a whole different dialect.

I hope this helps at least a bit for someone thinking about going to Bocconi, Milan, or Italy in general. My experience was interesting, entertaining, and most importantly, educational in the most unexpected ways. Buon viaggio! Arrivederci!