A Promotional Video for Study Abroad: Westminster College

Honors 499

by

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Muncie, Indiana

May, 1993

Expected date of graduation: May 8, 1993
Purpose of Project

This video is intended for students at Ball State for the purpose of fostering interest in the Westminster College foreign study program. The video may be used in conjunction with visits to the classroom by program directors, faculty recruiters, or other interested parties. It has a running time of ten minutes which is divided into five equal sections. Each section describes a different aspect of the Westminster experience. Background information, travel opportunities, student life, activities, academics, and friendships are all discussed. In order to add student perspectives, former Westminster students have narrated this video.
INTRODUCTION

Jason:
Are you getting burned out at Ball State? Are you tired of the same daily routine, the same classes, the same professors, and, yes, the Muncie weather? If so, then you should consider overseas study as an alternative. I'm Jason Pitts and I want to tell you about the semester I spent at Westminster College in Oxford, England, where I had the time of my life. I want to tell you a little about the program and the kinds of experiences that you might have there. Let's begin with some background information while you look at some scenes of the college itself.

VIEWS OF THE COLLEGE

Westminster College is located about two miles west of Oxford in county Oxfordshire. It is about an hour from London by train or an hour and a half by bus. Westminster has an enrollment of about 800 students and as of last year became an official degree-granting institution of Oxford University. Westminster is about half an hour’s walk from Oxford along the beautiful Willow Walk. Students spend the Fall term from early September through mid-December studying there.

The cost is around twice what a normal Ball State semester would be including tuition, living expenses, traveling costs, and spending money. Fees are payable in installments during the summer before the trip. Most financial aid is applicable since payments are made directly to Ball State.

Application materials can be picked up in the Honors College office: Burkhardt Building, room 108. Any question that you might have about the program will also be answered there. Remember, the program is not just for honors students, so check it out. Now let's take a look at where you would live and some of the activities you might get involved in.
STUDENT LIFE

Ball State students live in houses with about twelve British students. These are something like small dorm houses. Each person has his or her own room and shares a common bathroom and kitchen. Rooms come equipped with the usual bed, wardrobe, and desk, with the added feature of a personal sink. Living as the only American in a houseful of Englishmen was a great way for me to get to know people. The guys in my house, named "O" house, became good friends of mine and were happy to teach me all about English life.

Dining service provides meals through the week. One meal each week, called formal tea, is served in a more traditional English style, with many of the faculty members seated at the high table.

There are plenty of activities for you to get involved in at Westminster. English sports like rugby and soccer, or football as they call it, as well as golf, can all be played on the expansive, green college grounds. More familiar sports like basketball, volleyball, aerobics, and swimming are also available. Westminster College proudly boasts having the only indoor swimming pool in Oxford.

The students are always planning dances, or discos as they say, performing plays, showing movies, and, of course, spending time at local pubs. Pubs are the real center of English social life. More than just places to drink, pubs are where students go to meet, relax, talk, and have fun. If you go to Westminster don't miss my favorite friendly pubs: The Fair Ros, The Fishes, and The Oxford Student Union.

Kevin Smith, who was a Junior at the time he went to Westminster, is going to tell you about the travel opportunities that you'll have while studying there.
TRAVEL

Kevin:

While studying at Westminster, there are many opportunities for travel. The first of these is a two week train tour of the island. As a group, Ball State students and instructor tour England, Scotland and Wales. When I was on the Westminster trip, our tour took us to the major cities of York, Edinburgh, Durham, Chester, and Stratford-upon-Avon. The tour is the first big adventure of the Westminster trip. There is something interesting to see at every stop. At least in my case it was a trip full of experiences that I will never forget.

Westminster College is within driving distance of many exciting travel spots. Beautiful Blenheim Palace, the home of the Duke of Marlboro, is only a few miles away. The college took us to see it and many other places on day trips spread throughout the semester. We saw Stonehenge and Bath, Warwick, Kennilworth, and Windsor Castles, as well as Hampden Court Palace. These trips came complete with knowledgeable tour guides from the college.

At the middle of the semester there is a break. With this also comes an opportunity for a longer trip of approximately ten days. My friend, Jason, and I went to France. Others in our group went to Germany, Austria, Denmark, Holland, Switzerland, and Ireland.

There are, of course, countless things to see and do in London. There are many plays, museums, and the symphony - all less than one hundred miles from Oxford. Many students also go for trips on weekends. My girlfriend came to see me around Thanksgiving and we took a weekend trip to Stratford-upon-Avon.

In short, you can travel as much or as little as you like and your funds allow. No matter how much you travel, you will receive life-long memories from your travel experiences.
ACADEMICS

Jason:

Of course there's more to spending a semester at Westminster College than fun and games. Ball State students have the unique opportunity to attend lectures taught by Westminster faculty. Some even attend lectures in Oxford. Now let's hear from Mrs. Patricia Thompson, a visiting Westminster faculty member, about the academic aspect.

(interview with Mrs. Thompson inserted at this point in the video)

Stephanie Riter, who was a Senior while studying at Westminster, would like to tell you about some of the friendships that she made, and the kinds of connections that you can make with England.

FRIENDS

Stephanie:

I think that the most beneficial aspect of my stay at Westminster College was the opportunity that I had to make some of the best friends that anyone could have. England does not seem so far away; it is almost like a second home. When I hear about international issues on the news, I do not think of them from an American point of view. Rather, I take into consideration how that event might affect the life of Vanessa or Nicki or Kristein or Grainne.

Vanessa and I write to each other very often. I send her Kraft Macaroni and Cheese, grape Kool-Aid, and Levi's. She sends me Cadbury's Chocolates and P.G. Tips Tea. I love her to death. On my way to Turkey this summer, I will be able to spend a week lay-over in England and I cannot wait! Neither can Vanessa. I think that I just want to make sure that my trip to England over a year ago was real, and not just a dream lingering in my mind. I have a connection with England that runs deeper than an affection for things English. I know that Vanessa better understands many of the things that we discussed while I was over there, now that she has visited my turf.
CONCLUSION

Jason:

As you can see, Westminster College gives you more than just a semester of adventure. You will leave with memories that last long after your plane touches down on the fields of home. Not a day goes by that I don’t think of my experiences there. I often wish I could go back for another semester. So do like I did: take a chance and look into the Westminster Program. You could spend the best semester of your college career in... merry old England!
CREDITS

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The Liberty Bell
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Help From my Friends &
Drive My Car
by
Lennon/McCartney

Crazy Little Thing Called Love
by
Freddie Mercury

Stonehenge
by
Spinal Tap

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This Video Represents
The Creative Honors Project
of Jason Pitts.