The SPEA In London summer program is a life-changing opportunity that you should absolutely take advantage of. The excursions and living accommodations are both top-notch, and the staff are always around if you have questions or issues. London itself is gargantuan and has just about anything you could want when it comes to sightseeing, museums, and nightlife. In the month I was there I explored as much of it as I could, and even then I probably only saw 10% of it.

Most impressive to me however was the Nation-Building course I took with Professor Brass. It is very intensive and you cover an insane amount ground in a short period of time: It is equivalent to two semesters worth of work over the space of four weeks, but it is worth every second. If you have interests in the fields of public affairs, sociology, or political science, then this course is right down your alley. I even took a lot out of it as a major in Arts Management that is going to eventually be used in my honors thesis, so it can appeal to just about any discipline in one way or another.

Studying abroad will provide you with life-changing events, both directly and passively, in one way or another. Just one lecture from Dr. Nic Cheeseman of the University of Oxford and my subsequent conversation with him after class was enough to entirely change my outlook on graduate school; it got me pointed in a direction that I would have never thought possible prior to leaving Bloomington, but nevertheless seems perfectly right for me. Add to that the immersion in another culture that will challenge many of your outlooks and preconceptions, and you have an experience that you will not soon forget.

Do this program if it is possible for you to do so, and find a way to do it if you don’t think it is. It will be worth what you put into it many times over when all is said and done.

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