

Study Abroad Fair highlights travel opportunities for students.

This year's annual Study Abroad Fair took place on Tuesday at the Terrell Mall. The Study Abroad Fair is a resource fair that gives students a chance to learn more about the study abroad opportunities and the social clubs at Washington State University.

In February 2020, all global travel was banned due to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. However, it wasn't until November 2021 that this strict travel ban was lifted. During that time, study abroad programs at Washington State University were put to a standstill.

"Covid-19 halted all travel for over a year, but we did cautiously send 15 students abroad in Fall 2021 and 65 students in Spring 2022," said Global Learning coordinator and advisor Nathan Ghiorso.

By summer 2022, students were eager to participate in WSU's travel abroad programs.

"We broke our pre-pandemic record by sending 400 plus students abroad in Summer 2022, including 13 faculty-led programs. We think numbers will continue growing as students decide they want to leave the country and travel more," said Ghiorso.

This year's Study Abroad Fair showed growing interest as dozens of students packed the mall to explore the rows of informational booths. From Paris to Peru, there were booths for every kind of traveling interest and for every kind of major. At each booth, a student and faculty leader was ready to answer students burning questions about studying abroad.

However, not every booth was just about travel abroad programs. A variety of clubs were also at the fair to showcase their organization, including the WSU International Center.

"The WSU International Center is a club that connects international students and raises awareness of our campus diversity," said Tu Le, WSU junior and president of the International Center, "we hold weekly events, like our coffee Fridays. You don't have to be an international student to participate; anyone is welcome to the International Center."

Another club at the Study Aboard Fair was the Global Leadership Certificate Program.

"I am a part of the Global Leadership Program, so I can kind of go anywhere. Any course I take abroad will count towards my credits. There is major-specific study abroad programs, like, for example, I'm majoring in English, there are English-specific study abroad programs I could apply for if I wanted to travel somewhere specific to my major," said Natalia Nin, WSU junior and Global Leadership Certificate Program member.

According to the Global Leadership Certificate Program website, the program focuses on “enhancing your marketability in an increasingly international job market.” Students in this program can expect to gain leadership skills through traveling abroad.

“Studying abroad is so important; it helps us see another cultural viewpoint. Each country has its own culture, and how they teach there is going to be different. I think going to a different country helps you expand your knowledge and make connections,” said Nin.

According to the Washington State University website, the Global Learning Office plans to send over 500 students abroad this year alone; that’s the most students WSU has sent in over three years.