

# Study Abroad Lithuania

## newsletter//small country, big world



[www.lcc.lt/studyabroad](http://www.lcc.lt/studyabroad)

LCC International University

### Academic Opportunities in Lithuania

Ella Myer, Wheaton College

I came to Lithuania expecting to only take the classes I signed up for but after talking with the Study Abroad Director about my interests she suggested I set up an independent study. I was blown away by the opportunities LCC made available for me.

My independent study is on the Contemporary Church in Lithuania. In particular, I'm looking at Catholic and Protestant perspectives on mission here. It's an awesome project. There is nowhere else in the world I could do this particular study! I decided to do it because I'm a Christian who loves to learn about the church and what God is doing around the world among the body of believers. Lithuanian churches intrigue me because their situation is very different from the churches I grew up around. This has been an incredible opportunity to learn about churches in a post-Soviet country which is transitioning into a

new phase as a member of the EU and a country living in between Western and Eastern cultures. I've also learned practical things like communication with non-native English speakers who have different sets of cultural assumptions and theological language.

My course of study has taught me about a small country with a big soul and what God is doing here. I've learned different ways of doing things and have been blessed with new ideas which I can bring home with me. Not only this, but I've noticed ways in which believers here can be blessed from a person like me or another American. The body of Christ is truly globally connected and the mission of God is a fascinating thing to see played out internationally. Things are not perfect – here or at home – but God is still present in the church. I've been challenged by the Lithuanian witness and perspective and I know I'm better for it.

### Promoting diversity through Education

Jonathan Puckett, Westmont College

CMAP is a program where LCC students initiate discussion on a broad set of topics ranging from the Oppression of the Jewish people in WWII, to the Children's Army in Africa, and on the modern skin head movement. I joined CMAP because the purpose of the program is to educate youth, specifically high school students, about the issues occurring throughout the world that violate every notion of human rights. I really believe in this program and I am learning a great deal along with the students we presume to teach. I have definitely done a ton of learning throughout the program and one of the first things

that come to mind is just how differently we (the University students) interact with each other; Lithuanians, Americans, Ukrainians, Moldavians, and Romanians, it's just a fun dynamic.

I love working with youth. I first became a Christian because I started working with youth when I was in high school. I continue to work with youth because I don't know it all (or even all that much) and there are things that I can and do learn from the students just as there are things that I hope they can learn from me. I have met so many great people in and through CMAP and I have been blessed with greater and deeper friendships.

Also, again I can't stress enough, I am learning more and more each day, not only about the issues we discuss, but also about the students; how they interact and the differences and similarities between us. The topics we discuss are important issues that need to be heard, and I am proud to be a part of a group, however small, that promotes the spread of knowledge and the end of ignorance.

### Summer opportunities for faculty and students

Every summer there are opportunities for summer study abroad groups as well as individual students. Students and faculty could come for either May or June or both sessions. Studying abroad in the summer is a way to experience another culture and get academic credits for students who are not able to study abroad during the regular semester. We are still accepting applications, so feel free to pass this information on to your students - <http://www.lcc.lt/study-abroad-summer-program>

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### The Immersion Challenge-Practicum Learning

Joshua Boden, Messiah College

I am a third-year Psychology major and I chose to do my LCC practicum at Klaipėdos 2-oji Specialioji Mokykla (Klaipėda 2nd Special School). It's a pretty intense program, wherein I have to log 90 hours of on-location practicum time at the school within the semester.



Because of the language barrier I don't have too many responsibilities. I normally go in 4 mornings a week. One of them is normally an observation day in a small classroom of severely disabled children aged 13-17. I play games with them and just spend time getting to know them and their needs. On another day, I tutor a young boy in English. He has rather mild mental and physical disabilities, but his positive attitude and permanent smile is infectious. I've learned a lot working with this boy about motivation, as every week he anticipates our lessons and retains nearly everything I teach him. On other days, I spend time with the School Psychologist. She has me help her with various small tasks, but most of the time we spend our sessions talking -- about the school's children and structure, therapeutic techniques, and even Lithuanian society as a whole. It's great to be able to supplement my hands-on learning throughout the week with increased factual understanding of the problems these children face and the opportunities made for them.

Through the practicum, I've come to a greater understanding of the field of school psychology; its intricacies and applications. I've seen firsthand what sort of real problems children face, and the aversive home conditions that professionals can counteract by a positive school environment. As I look ahead to graduate school, I am looking at programs in clinical or school psychology that will enable me to work with kids in such circumstances.

I've faced many challenges during this practicum, but in spite of them all I don't regret doing it in the least. The language difficulties are the first challenge, but through that I've learned a lot about effective nonverbal communication. Because of that and other complications, it has been difficult at times for me to feel useful at the school, but I've learned to try to measure my impact in other ways. I am learning just by seeing and experiencing and I'm grateful for that.