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COLLEGE



Summer Institute on Tolerance, Diversity and the Holocaust: lessons for today

Impressions 2019

Hanze Honours College



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Reflection Andrew Nerland

Holocaust Remembrance Program

My experience with the summer school has been extremely profound and impactful. Preparing for the program, I was unaware of the effect that my experience in the Netherlands would have on me. The influence of the program was not limited to education; rather, in addition to the material I had the opportunity to learn, I was positively affected by the cultural exposure, the emotional influence, and the incredible friendships that I gained.

Growing up in the United States, World War II and the Holocaust were always events that I had exposure to, but my exposure was typically restricted to statistics, indifferent facts, and historical occurrences. In other words, my knowledge was limited to a surface level understanding. Through our activities and trips, I was truly able to gain a deep, personal understanding of the horrors of the Holocaust. I will always lack the capacity to fully comprehend the evils of genocide, but my time spent at the Holocaust memorial, the Anne Frank house, Bergen Belsen, and Camp Westerbork permanently cemented many personal stories of the victims. My experiences in all four of these locations were entirely surreal, and I believe the memories that I made at these locations will last a lifetime. As I continue to reflect on my experiences at these historic sites, new insights become increasingly apparent.

Reflection Rachel Hughes

My short time in The Netherlands has provided me with unforgettable experiences, life long friends, and a broadened perspective on my role in this world.

One unexpected lesson that I learned on this trip was that life doesn't stop for anyone.

The Nazi regime didn't stop for the little girl with big dreams to become an author, baby Michael wasn't shown mercy when he was sent to a gas chamber after being nursed back to health when he was born prematurely, and Max's grandmother was not given a break for being a fun loving girl playing on the beach; she was still pushed into the sand and called vicious names because of her race and religious affiliation.

This realization made me sick. People being persecuted, tortured, and torn from their families just for being born is still something that I struggle to grasp. but it is just as difficult to expect them to move on and heal immediately when things are "made right". When wars are over, funerals pass, and infections go away, we are expected

Outside of the program's Holocaust education and experiences, the cultural exposure that I had the opportunity to experience was very enlightening. I particularly enjoyed the visits to the International Criminal Court and the Reichstag. I felt that these visits changed my perception of the European union and the modern German government very positively. Not only was the Reichstag beautiful, it also explained many unanswered questions that I had accumulated throughout the day about the significance of the architectural wonders I witnessed. Overall, Berlin was unforgettable.

Perhaps the most impactful aspect of the program were my interactions with the fellow students. Interacting with the group and mutually experiencing an entirely new culture was uniquely profound. I believe that I created lifelong bonds and a connection to a culture across the world.

I thoroughly enjoyed collaborating with every member in my group. Each member brought a unique perspective to the table, and I believe we were able to benefit from each other's opinions. Although our opinions often differed, we were able use this to our advantage.

to jump back into our daily life as if nothing has happened. But the truth is we carry weight with us long after wounds look clean, and we need the support and understanding of our peers to get us back on our feet to help us prevent and fight our next hardship together. I came to understand this concept that life doesn't stop for anyone when I saw the hardships that our small group faced in just a few weeks. From sick grandmas, to relationship issues, to family emergencies, to one severely infected eye, we experienced a lot of obstacles together. However, I saw us deal with these issues with compassion and understanding. The professors allowed time off, and group members picked up extra work to allow their peers to heal. This program proved to me the importance of standing up for my peers and putting the humanity of each individual first. I know that it is my role in this world to fight for equality and speak up when I see injustices occurring around me.

I had a great experience working on our group project. We came together to establish goals as a group to create a lesson plan that we are all proud of. Our skillsets came together to make something that none of us could have done alone. Our talents came together to create a wonderful representation of our trip and all of the lessons that we learned.

Introduction

A unique partnership

Hanze Honours College of the University of Applied Sciences has developed a unique collaboration with Memorial Centre Camp Westerbork that connect the past with the present.

The Westerbork camp was a World War II Nazi refugee, detention and transit camp in Hooghalen, north of Westerbork, in the northeastern part of the Netherlands. 107.000 people were deported from the Westerbork transit camp to camps like Auschwitz, Sobibor, Bergen-Belsen and others. Only 5.000 returned.

Summer school with impact

Every year in June Hanze Honours College organizes a summer school in cooperation with Memorial Centre Camp Westerbork and Windesheim University of Applied Sciences Honours College. We are honored to have Dr. Naomi Yavneh Klos of Loyola University in New Orleans join as faculty in this very special summer school.

In this two and a half week long summer school honours students from different American universities and Dutch honours students from Hanze UAS and Windesheim UAS research the history of the Holocaust in the Netherlands, connect their findings to what they think is important in today's society and create a message for peer students. Freedom, discrimination, diversity, bystandership and tolerance are important topics in the summer school.

Experientiel learning

The program switches back and forth between Holocaust history and present day wicked problems of tolerance and diversity. Experientiel learning is at the heart of the summer school. Students not only visit Camp Westerbork, but they also talk to a Holocaust survivor and they research original historic materials. To delve deeper in Holocaust history a guided visit to the Anne Frank House is part of the program. In the second week a three day trip leads to Bergen Belsen former concentration camp and the Holocaust Memorial and the Jewish Museum in Berlin. We connect to other periods in history like the Wall and the former DDR in Berlin, we visit the International Criminal Court and Humanity House, a refugee museum, in the Hague. An interactive Model UN style Security Council Meeting is also part of the program. Students work on a Security Council Resolution, negotiating as countries, on a fictional case. This is evaluated afterwards with a long term employee of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, giving an insight in the real working of the Security Council.

At every location visited the group interacts with a guide, a survivor or a former refugee to ensure a rich learning environment that stimulates empathy and requires active participation. Debriefings after visits and workshops on Anne Frank, the theme of bystanders and on anti-semitism support learning from different perspectives and disciplines.

The program also contains lighter parts like the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and the Neues Museum and the Reichstag in Berlin. Also group dinners and informal gatherings are an important part of the program.

The power of diversity

The diversity of the international group both in faculty as in students in combination with the experiential learning make this summer school an experience with impact. Students from very different backgrounds participate in the program. They come from different countries, different universities and different majors. They spend two weeks fulltime, experiencing and discussing topics like tolerance, freedom and discrimination in a historic context. In the informal parts of the summer school they learn from their different experiences and perspectives on education, politics and many more topics.

Pay it forward

To actively translate their findings and experiences in the summer school into educational value for other students, summer school students work in multidisciplinary groups on a project. Each group creates an educational communication item about the topics they feel their peers should know about.

Results so far were a video on refugees, an Instagram account "Educate from the Past" to have people learning from past situations, a website "Bring your own Bias" to make people realize their own biases, and lesson plans on bystander behavior and on the workings of the International Criminal Court. All of these products will be used in education by Hanze Honours College, Windesheim Honours College and Memorial Center Camp Westerbork. In this way the summer school has a lasting impact on many more students.

I hope that this program will be able to continue and evolve overtime. If future students have the capability to have an experience anything like mine, the world will be better off as a result.

The summer school students have written individual reflections on their learning experiences. We have included a few in this booklet along with photographs from the 2019 Summer School on Tolerance, Diversity and the Holocaust. Enjoy!

Want to know more?

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1. Introduction to Memorial Center Camp Westerbork, tour and talk by survivor Herman Polak

Visiting Memorial Center Camp Westerbork offers the students a closer look on the history of the camp and it's implications for people's lives. A guided tour around the Camp Site and the Museum and a talk by survivor Herman Polak make history come alive.

Reflection Keely Shaw

I've been journaling throughout my time here, and it's been interesting to look back over all of my thoughts throughout these past two weeks. When I first arrived here in Zwolle, it was amazing. I've never seen such a clean city, so many people on bikes, or been welcomed so warmly. That first day, I wrote about the Dutchies in our group. I walked into the Hive and saw these students being

like every student in college--loud and full of laughter. But it was somehow different. I walked in and thought that these women, now these women are loud and brilliant and kind and absolutely unapologetic about it. And that felt like liberation. I still feel that way on some level. It's wonderful to see women be blunt and unashamedly own their space and selves. I think I will miss that quite a bit when I get home.

Camp Westerbork showed me something new. It made me think. It made me try to conceptualize memory in a different way. I found the tour necessary to understand the enormity and importance of the camp. The personal stories made it far more real than a lecture. But, without that, I don't know that I would understand or connect with the information. Looking around, the camp feels like a park. People bike through it easily. It's a field that is filled with flowers at the moment with an attached museum. It felt more like a park than

anything else. It's left me with far more questions than answers. Is a memorial space like that effective? If it's not, if it's treated more like a park than place of remembrance, then what is the point? Doesn't that simply allow people to further forget? But at the same time, I understand the hesitance to rebuild.

Similar questions cropped up during our time in both Amsterdam and Berlin. How should one remember things? How can monuments and memorials be effective? I have particularly strong thoughts about the Homomonument and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin. The Homomonument actually made me more frustrated than anything. People don't even realize it's a monument most of the time. The sit on it or walk over it without ever recognizing it or what it symbolizes or the importance. The only people who see it are the ones who are looking, and even then they often miss it (one of our guides from the Anne Frank house mentioned that people looking for it often ask where it is when they've literally just stood on it). It just seemed exactly like anything else dealing with the queer community or queer history; invisible and walked over. A monument that was meant to inspire thought and reflection, that was meant to ask for remembrance, forgotten even when people are right on top of it.

The Holocaust Memorial in Berlin inspired different emotions. Because we exited the museum, we came up in the middle of the memorial. It was akin to being in the middle of a maze and swallowed by the walls steadily growing above you. One felt overwhelmed, disoriented, out of place.

Even without knowledge of the meaning, I thought that it would inspire similar feelings due to the nature of it. However, rather than awe or creeping horror, people screamed and played and stood on it. Is that a lack of understanding on their part? A lack of empathy? Or a bad job done to mark it off as a memorial? Has the historical memory faded so much that people are happy to play hide and seek in a memorial to over six million murdered people?

The personal stories made it for more real than a lecture.

Clearly this course has left me with a lot of questions, but I don't think they're ones that can be answered by anyone other than myself. I have learned a lot about myself, made new connections and friendships, and grown intellectually and emotionally because of this course. I am glad to have been a part of it and hope that others found (and find!) it as enlightening as I have.



2. International Criminal Court and Humanity House in The Hague

To connect history to today the group visited the International Criminal Court in the Hague where they witnessed a trial on child soldiers in Uganda. This close encounter with the fact that armed conflicts are still going on in different parts in the world and their impact in people's lives made a big impression. The visit to Humanity House after this provided an insight in the life of refugees, while the talk with a former refugee gave the opportunity to ask questions and have a discussion. The visit ended with a SimSummit in which students played a Security Council meeting representing different countries. Negotiating a resolution appeared to be more complex than anticipated..

Reflection Alexa Kummrow

I came into this institute wishing to learn more about the Holocaust and develop a deeper understanding of how to prevent these acts from happening in the future. But the course actually taught me that part of preventing is better understanding current issues in the world.

While creating a deeper understanding of the Holocaust we were immersed with different aspects of the horrible acts that occurred. Walking through Bergen-Belsen and its mass graves made me shudder and watching people take Instagram photos and play on the Holocaust Monument in Berlin made me feel sick. Seeing these monuments where people were able to display such ignorance during the Holocaust and even today showed a parallel.

However, the most impactful experience of the trip I feel was our visit to the ICC. Listening to the way the ICC serves to hold people accountable for terrible crimes such as those committed in the Holocaust made me think that as a society we should also be more engaged in current events. Hearing a witness account during the



trial at the ICC made the child soldier issue in Uganda I had heard about years ago real and made me want to understand other issues on a deeper level happening today.

What also struck me was our guest speaker's speech on being a bystander. Many of us unconsciously become bystanders. I really appreciated the talk that our classmate Max gave to us which made bystandership more real in terms of anti-Semitism. Now more than before I understand the importance of being active in global issues and being a part of change. While prior to this institute I did not make it a point to know a lot about current crises or acts of discrimination, now have an inspiration to educate myself on the world today and in the future.

Being able to talk and compare experiences with others in the institute also helped me grasp a better understanding of issues they are passionate about and inspired me to become more aware. It is apparent to me that people, including myself, often become stuck in their own bubble and don't think of others around the world. I realize how imperative it is for me to not be a bystander and to learn from these past events to speak up when people are mistreated and speak up about global issues. From this institute, I've found that one must combat being a bystander in order to live in a world where equality is possible.

Listening to the way the ICC serves to hold people accountable for terrible crimes such as those committed in the Holocaust made me think that as a society we should also be more engaged in current events.

Reflection Marieke Hess

I came into this program ready to dive into history and absorb as much information as I could. My expectations were far surpassed as the intensity of the subjects and the human connection that came from learning was something I hadn't even thought of. The way history informs today was a concept that I hadn't given much thought to. Through my time here, I've drawn stronger connections and have formed a much larger basis of understanding humanity.

The interactive experiences here, such as Humanity House and the viewing of the trial in the International Criminal Court (ICC), have made me look at things much more holistically. I had originally written that one of my main goals coming into the program was broadening my perspective and learning more about human rights through history and the continued infringement of them that continues today. The ICC inspired me the most with its dedication to justice and the special care it gives to victims of the crimes.

Listening to the presentation on what the ICC is and hearing a first hand account from someone who had to flee from a war stricken country stuck with me. For the first time I heard of a career that would make use of a history major that really excited me.

Meeting so many historians here and having them share their passions made me fall in love with history again and again. The leader at the Anne Frank house who spoke with such intensity you could tell that she loved where she is and wants to dedicate herself to the foundation. The tour guides for the memorial walk were also genuinely excited to be sharing their knowledge with us and that made it exciting for us to learn.

To start at Westerbork and have that introduction to a very different side of the Holocaust than is typically seen set the rest of the program up as everything tied together. The connections between the past and present, which includes refugees, bystanders, inclusiveness, and recognition of humanity form a much deeper understanding for me personally as I start really thinking about what is going on today. The walk through the Humanity House with the simulation of what it's like to be a refugee made me think about my privilege and the fact that letting this lack of human empathy in the refugee systems continue on is remaining complacent. Remaining complacent and choosing to ignore major issues is the clear sign of privilege and example of being a bystander.

Complacency is the enemy of progress. This program has shown me that I have remained complacent in my education and have allowed my privilege to affect the way I seek out knowledge. Exposure to hands on and personal connection has made this learning experience for more powerful than the regular classroom experience. As my first study abroad in college this has enforced my dream to study abroad for an entire year. I look forward to applying what I've learned here to the continuation of my education.

Reflection Tinnie Louie

The Summer Institute has provided an intense but thought provoking curriculum. I feel that we definitely addressed the intolerance during the Holocaust in many ways such as the various memorials, museums, and discussions. Prior to this program, I had only learned about the Holocaust through my high school history textbooks. Much of my knowledge was surface level, and I did not have the full understanding of relating the past to the present.

Camp Westerbork provided an intimate experience. After hearing Polluck speak about his experience as a refugee, I kept thinking about how most of the successful escapes for him, and many other refugees, was purely dependent on luck and timing. He talked about the moment when the German officers busted into one of his homes and had the family line up against the wall. He said that his hiding sister told him to try and sneak back into his bed. Had he not done that, he would have been taken like the rest of his family. This related to the moment in Schindler's List when Oskar said "What if I had been 5 minutes late?" when reprimanding Stern. It amazes me how timing can play in many situations.

I thoroughly enjoyed our trip to The Hague and Amsterdam. One of the most interesting and memorable experience was the ICC. This was something I had never heard of, and would most likely never have witnessed in my life given my chosen career path. It was crazy to me to listen to the witness speak of his upbringing. I could never imagine being told as a child that hurting people and killing them is a normal occurrence.

Humanity House was also one my most memorable encounters. The interactive simulation allowed me to get a glimpse of what it could have been like to be a refugee. I also realized that the refugee situation is occurring right now, and after running through the simulation, I have gained a greater appreciation for my current life situation.

During the Anne Frank tour, I was able to finally able to experience her living situation first-hand. After reading her diary several times, this experience helped put many of her details to perspective. I do wish the attic was accessible because I know that Anne spent much of her time there, and I believe that I would have felt the same emotions of why the attic was her favorite spot. Though small, I greatly appreciated when the tour guide mentioned that 6 million people try to get tickets every year and only 1 million people succeed. I feel special to be a part of the 12.5% that get to experience this museum every year.

Bergen Belsen gave a different feel than Camp Westerbork. For one, it was much bigger than Camp Westerbork. Walking outside and experiencing the nature was so peaceful that it almost felt eerie. It was ironic that I kept hearing the military base that was 2 km away. Bergen Belsen felt more real when I saw the massive land mounds that marked how many people were buried in that specific location. I tried to imagine 5000 bodies of the victims of the Holocaust in that tiny area.

The Berlin trip was much more different than I expected. My first impression of the city was that it was more spread out than other cities I have been accustomed. Many of the monuments, buildings, and other attractions were quite spread out with nothing in the middle. The Holocaust memorial hit me the hardest this trip. Most of the time, I wander through museums and look at each exhibit briefly, but do not develop deep feelings from it afterwards. However, this one left me with many emotions. I recall one letter that was written by a daughter and addressed to her father. She stated that she loved him and she was going to die soon. For me, this was the most personal story I have felt because I embody the role of a daughter, and I cannot imagine having to tell my own dad that his only daughter is going to perish in the hands of evil.

3. Anne Frank House and Rijksmuseum

Anne Frank was deported from Memorial Center Camp Westerbork to Auschwitz and later to Bergen Belsen where she eventually died. The diary of Anne Frank is one of the most well known and most read books of all time. The Anne Frank House in Amsterdam shows the place where Anne Frank and her family and friends hid, the small size of it and the dangers of making a noise during the day time and what that would mean for a teenage girl. After the Anne Frank House students participated in a Memory Walk to monuments in Amsterdam, like the Homo Monument and the "Dokwerker" a Monument commemorating the February strike in 1941 in the Netherlands. The groups discussed the value of remembrance and monuments. A visit to the Rijksmuseum with its famous Golden Age paintings and much more was part of the visit to Amsterdam.

For this program, the biggest experience that stuck out to me was the Anne Frank house. Although it seems cliché, this experience was extremely humbling for me.



Reflection Samantha de Graaf

Between my time in Zwolle, Amsterdam, and Berlin, this trip has given me the opportunity to explore the diversity within my peer group for this program and the culture in this foreign land. Before leaving the US, I had an idea of what this program was going to be like, but to my surprise I have learned and seen more than I can imagine. The first night I was extremely nervous at the first dinner, but I soon learned that this program had so much more to offer. While spending time in Zwolle I have enjoyed learning about the honors program at Windhiem University. In addition to the honors program, this was my first time in a European "city center."

For this program, the biggest experience that stuck out to me was the Anne Frank house. Although it seems cliché, this experience was extremely humbling for me. While reading the book I was instantly connected to Anne as a character. She did, said, and felt things that reminded me of my sisters and I. She had crushes on boys, fought with her mom, and added a sense of drama to everything she did. But when I traveled through her house, the reality set in that she wasn't a character. She was a person. The idea that people glorified her as a celebrity is odd to me. While seeing the annex I was hit with the reality that she was just a girl. Just a Jewish girl, with a family, with the hope of escaping the horrifying reality of death that the war brought to her community. The video following the annex really struck me when writer, John Green, read a passage from his book, *The Fault in Our Stars*.

The passage read, "the book was turned to the page with Anne Frank's name, but what got me about it was the fact that right beneath her name there were four Aron Franks. FOUR. Four Aron Franks without museums, without historical markers, without anyone to mourn them." Anne definitely had a way with words, but she wasn't a celebrity. She was a girl with a beautifully articulated diary, that made people connect to the victims of the Holocaust on a person level. Once I came to this realization, I was almost saddened that it took some girl kissing a boy in the attic and fighting with her mom for me to remember that people, real people, died in the Holocaust.

Anne Frank was an eye-opening experience that humbled me to my core, but the Jewish Memorial in Berlin was experience that is hard to summarize. The day before experiencing the memorial Lois and I walked through the outside exhibit. She briefly explained the design to me. I was amazed by the boldness in the design, but we quickly continued on our path through the city. The next day we went back to the memorial. This time we actually went through the whole exhibit, including the underground museum. After experiencing the museum, my experience shifted onto a whole new level. The darkness and silence of the underground force you to focus and respect the information in every room. After completing the museum, you rejoined the rest of society out in the large open aired memorial. This is where I became frustrated and saddened. People were playing hide in-go-seek, taking fancy pictures, and standing on the memorial. It was a reminder that if you don't take the time to learn about the past, you can become so ignorant to what surrounds you.

I am so grateful that I decided to join this program. Being able to work alongside other students who value learning and growing from the past has given me immense hope for the future. We must take what we learned in this program and apply it to all aspects of our futures, with the determination of never letting such a heinous and gruesome acts happen again.



4. Workshops on Anne Frank, Bystanders and Anti-Semitism

To give participants a deeper understanding of the places visited and connecting them to the world of today, workshops are offered throughout the program. Dr. Naomi Yavneh Klos lead the workshop on Anne Frank in preparation of the visit to the Anne Frank House. In the second week a workshop on the theme of bystanders was lead by Dr. Gerrit Breeuwsma (University of Groningen). Students learned about the bystander effect and several examples where shown and discussed. Max Blust, one of the participants of the summer school offered to prepare a workshop on anti-semitism. He showed examples of propaganda materials and the way Jews are shown in these materials. These formed input for a discussion on anti-semitism both in the past as today and the impact of this on society.

Reflection Aurelie van der Vegt

About the whole summer school: every day of the summer school was a new experience for me. I got to know people I would never have known otherwise. By talking to these so different people, I have gained much more insight. They have such a different view of life that this has enriched me enormously as a person. I thought the activities that we did were very appropriate and relevant but the days were sometimes very long and exhausting.

I entered the summer school with the idea that it would only be about World War II and bystanders during this time, but now I know that this is much wider. This became clear to me during the presentation by Gerrit Breeuwsma. Because he explained what a bystander is and that you see this in so many different situations. This made me realize that I have also been a bystander myself. Think of situations at school that someone is being harassed and where I did nothing. now I realize that I was also a bystander then. When we were in Berlin I took a picture of what I remembered the most. I found the museum at the Holocaust Memorial the most



impressive of all museums. Because of the lessons I had in high school, I know very well which events have taken place in the past. The difference with the summer school is that a lot of emphasis is placed on the stories behind the event. This is also the reason why I found this museum very impressive.

One of the moments that I remember most was in the museum at the holocaust memorial. In high school I was taught about the things that happened during this time, but the emphasis within the summer school is on the stories behind the events. This is why this museum has made such an impression on me. There was a room that was completely black, only there was a line on the wall. All countries and the number of deaths from that country were on this line. There were enlarged letters in this room on the floor. Most of these letters were goodbye letters. The letter you see on the photo is from a ten-year-old girl who said goodbye to her father. She emphasized the fact that she wanted to live so badly. (the photo is large because otherwise it is not readable)

what also touched me was the moment of reflection in the park after the visit to the holocaust memorial. Students and teachers have shown such a vulnerable side of themselves. I think it is very special and clever that they have dared this within our group. An example of this in Max. As he said earlier during a workshop, everything is very close to him because he is Jewish and people from his family did not survive the Second World War. The way he expressed himself touched my heart. How the group responded was so beautiful. This characterizes the respect and acceptance of each other in this diverse group.

Essay Max Blust

July 1st, 2019

Life Goes On: Visiting the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe Berlin, 2019

The stairs rise up and dead ahead are the columns. The dark gray of a storm cloud, the large rectangular pillars stand upright towards the sky and spread out before me. In the heart of the German capital the memorial is composed of 2,000 pillars that are laid out in a grid over an entire city block. The paths through are sloped in every which way to disorient and daze. The public nature means that people stumble upon it and jump between the columns, take selfies, and mess around within the memorial. But I know all this, and as I walk boldly into the abyss of downward narrow walkways. I turn left, then right, making my way by losing my direction. The blocks grow tall around me and the sky is out of reach above them. Far away through the end of a passageway I can see the tops of trees.

This is the memorial to the murdered Jews of Europe, and I can feel the solitude it works to invoke. I change direction constantly until I come across a family. They're laughing and taking pictures. My heart drops and I move away quickly, only to walk a row down and see kids running. The solitude is gone and isolation sets in. Where do these people think they are? A group of three plays hide-and-go-seek, as if the representation of a terrible fate was a maze to be gleefully maneuvered. My temperature is rising, and there are no familiar faces in sight, no matter where I turn. People taking photos, smiling faces, running, cackling, a hundred family outings. 'Why don't

you see?' I want to beg, but my tears blur the faces together, just as they've done to the individuals within the 6 million Jews murdered. I hate them for this, for not bowing their heads in remorse at this place of remembrance. I want them out, I want them punished. Suddenly I stop and there is no one around. I feel the anger boiling inside me and I want to scream out because it burns and I can't fathom the reality. But the truth is, this anger has been passed on to me by those who hated Jews and it has festered in me and made me writhe with resentment towards all those who took terrible actions and all those who did nothing in return. Hatred breeds hatred, yet I'm amid a vast number of people who are joyfully enjoying their weekend while I weep, shamefully seething, and look for the exit.

This program has provided an infinite space as my learning environment. I have thoroughly enjoyed learning with every step of my travels and not be confined in one space. I have gained more knowledge about intolerance and diversity and will implement it into my own studies and chosen career.

I walk outwards broken and the pillars shorten until I can see over to the park across the street. Outside the memorial my professor waits for me in what I presume is frustration at my delay, until she sees my red eyes and her gaze softens. We walk together to meet the group, and I am shaking and it feels as though I can't go on. She tells me of the shock of her husband's sudden death, but that life still goes on no matter what has happened. I look out across the park which is full of the painful evidence that indeed it does. I see people strolling and jogging, playing and picnicking in the sunshine or the cool shade of the trees. Chatter mixes with whistles of birds and the background roar of traffic that is constantly moving on. We meet up with the group and I sit down with my class. A Dutch friend hands me a cigarette. People look woefully at me and I stare at the grass close enough to count the blades and see where one plant ends and another begins. We move into a circle. My crying has subsided but my face seems permanently hardened as if it were made of granite and I could not express emotion upon it, just a permanent grim gaze to a sullen world. People began to talk about their reactions. A German friend recounts telling a girl to get down off a pillar. An American friend recounts the imposition of the memorial. Someone else mentions photographers, another the museum visited prior. Others talk and I'm ready to explore my thoughts so I raise my palm to speak. A garble of words flow out of me. I tell them I'm angry and devastated. I cry and then sob while trying to explain how the memorial has been tarnished, how the public has shown

disrespect. I'm confused and ashamed for the way I feel and when I close my mouth I can barely remember what I have said. The American Jewish professor responds to me and tells me to be easier on myself, and that we must turn the anger into education. I nod as tears drip down my face and fall through empty space to water some of those grass blades. I feel dozens of eyes on me, and I am further embarrassed. People move in around me. Someone rubs my back and someone pats my knee. I glance up into the eyes of my friends who look at me with nothing but love. Someone else speaks, and the gathering concludes. I stand carefully, with weakness as if my knees might pop off. Arms are around me swiftly, faces are coming towards me, comforting me. I am lost in a sea of limbs and a series of embraces. My emptiness is put under pressure by how full the world is around me. Slowly I relax into the looks and the comfort and my loneliness melts off gently.

My dear friend reflects with me and he speaks kindly as we walk onward to the next place we will visit in the city. I am exhausted from draining my emotions onto the ground, but yet I feel a calm pass through me. We wait at a bus stop, the entire class amassed as a crowd. Life goes on, despite the tragedies of the past, and maybe that's the hardest part; life will always continue even when it feels that you can't and even when you finally cannot.

I can't explain why the holocaust happened to the Jewish people, but I can tell why our struggle continues, and this is simply because life goes on and we must never say no to life. Through the darkness of the memorial and the exclusion of ignorant faces and the support from my comrades, I experienced a spectrum of humanity laid out before me. It is two extremes of our awareness and our reaction, and I am forever blessed to be surrounded by people who care and are willing to open up to what they don't know. When I couldn't hold myself together, they held me together, and when I could only cry, they comforted. What more is my God? What less are those who love me? I buckle under the weight of the universes' anguish and yet it's ripe unifying embodiment of compassion between all living things bound by an eternal belonging to God. Life goes on even in the darkest moments, especially if we live while we can and open our hearts to others and when we must, fall down outstretched with nothing but ease in knowing that we will be caught and held again. My anger towards those who acted inappropriately at the monument was my own ignorance at their variant opportunity for exposure to the Holocaust. This is not their fault, but is an ill to be fixed, and because life goes on I must go on carrying the great burden of the Shoah. Yet I am lifted by its calling to me, and as I raced through the streets of Berlin by bus surrounded by friends, I myself decided that to educate and share the story of the Holocaust is to be my life's work. All deserve peace on this earth. As life goes on, the equality of all things by the very nature of their creation will demand that all must have a chance to go on as well. May we learn and change our ways and never forget.



5. Visiting Bergen Belsen

Former concentration camp Bergen Belsen is a Memorial Site and Exhibition. Students walked around the former camp and wondered about the peacefulness of today in contrast to the horrors of the past. The exhibition not only shows the history of the concentration camp but also the prisoner of war camp and the camp for displaced persons after World War II.



Thinking about all the experiences that I've had over such a short period of time is honestly incredible. The flow of the program worked in such a way that each lesson or visit to memorial built on the previous one.



6. Berlin: Jewish Museum, Holocaust Memorial Berlin and Reichstag

The architecture of the Jewish Museum in Berlin reflects the history of the Holocaust. The building zigzags with its titanium-zinc façade and features underground axes, angled walls, and bare concrete "voids" without heat or air-conditioning. American architect Daniel Libeskind did not want simply to design a museum building, but to recount German-Jewish history.

Visiting the Holocaust Memorial and the Museum below the Monument impressed all participants with the personal stories and the special way they are displayed.

Reflection Max Blust

During the program, the most influential sites and educational experiences for me was our tour of Westerbork, our time at Bergen Belsen, visiting the German national memorial to the murdered Jews of Europe. I found myself very emotional at sites that were so influential on my life as a Jewish American. The Holocaust has been one of the most impactful events on my life. My great grandmother's generation reacted to the murder of our Hungarian relatives with fear and suppressed trauma over the genocide of our people. The effects of this trauma caused a distancing from their identity and thus I find myself to be highly assimilated into society. Visiting camps and memorials made me feel the deep emotions of close connectivity and I was able to understand myself in the place of the victims. I understand now more than ever the normal lives of those murdered and how if I had lived in Europe during this time, my life would have been torn apart just the same.





At Westerbork, it was impactful to hear Lisa tell stories of individuals such as Leo while we stood on the very grounds where he lived and went to school and did his drawings. Seeing the cattle car used for transports was like stepping through history, and being able to see the red paint versus the black and white images drove home to modernity aspect of the mass deportation of Jews across Europe. Without the modern box car and freight train such massive destruction would have been more challenging. The scale of the Shoah is thus a product of its technological time.

The amount and diversity of exhibits, sites, and perspectives we were exposed to is paramount in the success and impactfulness of the program.

At Bergen Belsen, we visited the memorial and received a quick talk of where certain barracks and facilities were found in the camp. Seeing the film of the survivors as taken by the British army was very impactful because to see moving images better captures the level of poor health and the terribly dangerous situation that continued into DP camps. Never before did I consider the DP camps to be part of the Shoah, but the nature of concentration camps and their overcrowded barracks and lacking sanitation meant that destruction could continue even as the allies rushed to aid the camp. The mass graves at the site were tragic and showed the scale of death in the camp. The tomb stones varied wildly from the well kept of Anne and Margot Frank to the overgrown and faded stones. The discrepancy between respect payed to different victims of the holocaust and the inability to pay respects to many due to their lack of representation in a memorialized stone

The visit to the German national monument to the murdered Jews of Europe was the most moving visit for me. Not because of the memorial, but because of its public nature of it. I found that many people wandering through it acted disrespectfully due to what I hope is ignorance of what the monument represents. The memorial on its own is beautiful but I believe it lacks context which makes it less valuable for teaching lessons of tolerance. In fact, I myself became rather intolerant on the people taking selfies, playing tag, and jumping on the pillars. I was very offended by this even though I knew this is what I would witness before I had arrived based on stories I'd heard of the monument, I was still shaken by what I saw. I became angry as in the moment I recognized my own intolerance towards those disrespecting the memory of people I relate to. In reaction to the Holocaust, I realized that I suffer not just from the inter generational trauma from my own family but also from the trauma upon one's soul of the act of hating. Because of Nazi anger towards Jews, now this anger has been passed onto me. I cried a lot, sobbing really. At the end of all of this I thought I would be able to move towards acceptance of what has happened through an understanding of the events. However now I am just knowledgeable and angry. I must, MUST, turn this anger into productive education and awareness about the Holocaust, and I believe that I can. The greatest weight put on to me in this program was the induced realization that this is my purpose and I will have to spend the rest of my life in pursuit of spreading teachings of the Shoah. I close with thanking you again for this opportunity, as it has been the greatest educational and personal experience I have had in my life with the most personal development and insight in the shortest and most intense period of time.

7. Projects

On the days when they were not traveling, students worked on group assignments culminating in the design of educational material on topics connected to the central themes of the program: tolerance and diversity. The educational materials and campaigns were shown in a final presentation session at Memorial Center Camp Westerbork for an audience of Camp Westerbork and directors from Hanze University of Applied Sciences and Windesheim University of Applied Sciences. The presentations included an Instagram account Educate from the Past, a website Bring your Own Bias and lesson plans on the ICC and on bystandership. These will be used in honours education at both universities and at Memorial Center Camp Westerbork. In creating these projects, student not only learned about the topics on hand both from a historic and contemporary perspective, but they also learned to work in a multidisciplinary and international setting.

Reflection Brittany Jaggars

Going into this summer school, I expected to learn a great deal of new information on the Holocaust and the destruction associated with it; however, I was not quite expecting to learn so much new information pertaining to tolerance and diversity. Even though the course was entitled as a tolerance and diversity course, I guess I just assumed what more was there to know about it than the definition of those two words? Since coming to this seminar here, I have learned more than just a description of these two nouns. I think this was best learned through the group of students that attended this course, so this experience may not be repeatable, making it a one-time experience I am so happy I got the chance to be a part of. Although we had many of the same common beliefs and moral structures, once we started branching off into groups and discussions, I learned all the different ways people could see the world through another set of eyes. For example, I learned more about vegans and their diets as well as the Jewish religion and even different political viewpoints I had no idea existed.

I think pairing this instruction and topic with a remembrance course on the Holocaust was probably the best decision that could have been made. I not only learned tolerance in my society today with those around me, but I also got to learn about the things that occur when one does not have tolerance towards another group





of people, on the extreme scale. The extermination of the Jewish population as well as others during the Holocaust really opened my eyes to the amount of hatred and pure evil that occurred during the second World War. Prior to this course, I, being an American student, knew nothing really about the Holocaust aside from the United States' role in the situation as that's really all we're ever taught growing up. This course really opened up a hole in my heart and gave me a wake up call to the monstrosities that actually happened not even 100 years ago. I think the biggest hit to me was when we visited the Jewish Memorial Site in Berlin and I got to read the stories and see the artifacts collected from just a few of the people that had to deal with such an abomination in World History. It took at least two hours for me to get through the museum and then at the end there was a note saying that they estimate six million were killed during this time period solely due to intolerance, noting that if we had short biographies on every single one it would take at least six years to read. It was crazy for me to comprehend how someone could eliminate so many people and why they would want to do so. It also really saddens me that there are so many people who will be forgotten as there is nothing or no one was left to tell their story. This could also be seen at the campsite of Westerbork as they attempt to read all 107,000 names of those who were deported from this station, taking hours and hours to read just one day's list of names.

The amount and diversity of exhibits, sites, and perspectives we were exposed to is paramount in the success and impactfulness of the program.

I am so thankful that I was given this opportunity to come remember such a desolate period of time in the world we live in. I will take back all my knowledge of diversity and tolerance of those around me and try to not only put it to use in my daily life, but also teach others around me the things I have learned from this course.

List of participating universities

- Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Durant, Oklahoma
- Eastern Washington University, Spokane, Washington
- High Point University, High Point, North Carolina
- University of Wisconsin-Stout, Menomonie, Wisconsin
- University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, Alabama
- University of Tennessee in Chattanooga, Chattanooga, Tennessee
- University of South Dakota, Vermillion, South Dakota
- Missouri Valley College, Marshall, Missouri
- Portland State University, Portland, Oregon
- University of South Dakota, Vermillion, South Dakota
- Loyola University New Orleans, New Orleans, Louisiana
- Angelo State University, San Angelo, Texas
- Missouri State University, Springfield, Missouri
- Windesheim Honours College, Windesheim University of Applied Sciences
- Hanze University of Applied Sciences

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