

Experiential Learning and Mentoring Plan – Annecy, France summer program



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Welcome to UH Mānoa's study abroad program in Annecy, France for summer 2025 !

This summer program focuses on French language and culture, with the academic program conducted by the host institution Institut Français des Alpes (IFALPES). I will serve as your UHM Resident Director abroad, with my primary role to ensure your overall program of study proceeds smoothly by facilitating your transition into the program in Annecy and providing academic and other support during your time there. Studying abroad can be a transformative experience; I aim to help ensure that your experience abroad will be as rich and rewarding as possible.

As part of our educational journey, we will all engage in an experiential learning assignment (ELA) to enhance our cultural learning while abroad. This assignment is designed to address the following Study Abroad student learning outcomes (SLOs):

1. Demonstrate awareness of your own cultural values and biases and how these impact your ability to work with others.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of diversity with a focus on the population or topic of interest in your Study Abroad program.
3. Communicate appropriately and effectively with diverse individuals and groups.
4. Demonstrate an increased capacity to analyze issues with appreciation or disparate viewpoints.

General Description: There are 2 components to this assignment. In the first, you will keep a journal with weekly entries that record and reflect on various aspects of French culture, language and the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region of southeastern France. In the second, you will prepare a 12 min presentation to share with all students in our cohort that focuses on 1 aspect of particular interest or relevance to you (music, athletics, food/wine, family, connection to place, politics, geography).

Details:

Journal. Keep a journal with 2X entries per week. Here you are encouraged to record your observations about life in France and Annecy. You may write about daily life, for example things like the rhythms of what, where, when and with whom people eat (mealtimes). You may record the geography of the place, and how it structures how people move, travel and the ambit of their daily lives. You may want to observe or write about a particular place you visit on an excursion, recording your initial impressions and deeper reflections on the cultural site. You may write about any aspect of your life in Annecy. I consider these journals the ‘raw data’ that captures your real-time responses to a new culture, language, and environment. You are also asked to incorporate self-reflection and cross-cultural comparisons in at least a subset of journal entries. You are encouraged to include images/photographs in your journals where appropriate, with the expectation that each entry includes between ½ and 1 page of text. You may prepare them in Word, Powerpoint, or a hard copy journal (other formats – please ask).

Presentation. For this assignment, I would like you to focus on 1 element of French life, for example practices, values, traditions, family life, music, athletics, food/wine, geography or history and politics – any aspect of the culture or place that is of particular interest to you. Learn deeply about this 1 aspect and prepare a 12 min multimedia presentation to share with the cohort that will enhance our understanding of this topic. As part of your presentation, please reflect on how French practices/values are similar to and/or different from your own cultural background. Record your observations using any appropriate means, to include images (photographs), sketches, written descriptions, and/or any combination thereof to include in your presentation.

Final products and Grades. (1) Electronic or hard copy journal to be turned in for brief review, (2) Oral presentation must be turned in at the day and time of final presentation (e.g., pptx file). Your final grade will incorporate your performance in both the coursework at the host institution (IFALPES) as well as the experiential learning assignment described above.

Logistics: There will be several mandatory meetings for us to engage as a group and share what we are learning about the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region of southeastern France. In addition, I will hold office hours 3X per week for drop-in meetings; you are welcome to reach out to me at other times as well. I am available to assist in any emergency arising.

I look forward to exploring Annecy with all of you !

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Learning Objectives	Below Expectation	Satisfactory	Exceptional
Demonstrate awareness of your own cultural values and biases and how these impact your ability to work with others.	Fails to submit regular journal entries. Final presentation fails to include comparative cultural elements.	Submits regular journal entries that include self-reflection on cultural learning or cross-cultural reflections	Journal entries include insights into thought processes or communication styles that affect meaningful cultural learning. Final presentation includes thoughtful cross-cultural comparisons for chosen topic
Demonstrate knowledge of diversity with a focus on the population or topic of interest in your Study Abroad program.	Fails to submit regular journal entries, fails to participate in <i>Institut</i> programs, including excursions	Submits journal entries that document and reflect on host culture, history and geography, etc.	Insightful journal entries that go beyond documentation to include synthesis and reflection. Final presentation demonstrates genuine knowledge on student's chosen topic
Communicate appropriately and effectively with diverse individuals and groups.	Poor attendance and participation in <i>Institut</i> programs.	Regular attendance and active participation in <i>Institut</i> programs.	Applies classroom and excursion learning to everyday living experiences. Takes advantage of all opportunities to enhance language learning
Demonstrate an increased capacity to analyze issues with appreciation for disparate viewpoints.	Fails to attend meetings, limited engagement in all aspects of the program	Regular attendance and active participation in all aspects of the program	Insightful journal entries that demonstrate an understanding of the complexity of issues discussed (journal entries / final presentation)