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## Part I: European Studies 101

I knew it was a bad idea to let my mom accompany me to the airport. Originally, it was just supposed to be my uncle driving me to SFO, but my madre Lost In The City: A Study Abroad (and a broad or two) Story insisted on going. As I gathered my things and did one final check through before entering the terminal, I braced for the final good bye from my woman that gave birth me to me. My upper lip began to quiver but I focused and kept from spilling Lost In The City: A Study Abroad (and a broad or two) Story the water works. She gave me her blessing and told me to behave myself if I met a nice Spanish girl. Mothers gonna mother I guess. I made my way to the terminal and months of anticipation and planning finally came to fruition. I was on my way to Barcelona to study abroad (and a broad or two) for the next four months. I was ecstatic. I didn't know at the time, but this experience would educate me in more ways than one.

I may have departed for Barcelona on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009 but my journey began way back in 2006. As a junior college student in Modesto, CA, I had little idea of where I wanted to transfer to or what I wanted to do. It was too late to become a Latin pop sensation and my dad told me that playing poker professionally was a bad career move. However, I knew that I had longed to see the world and loved interacting with people. My obsession with soccer had inadvertently introduced me to hundreds of cultures, languages, people and places. The soccer ball was my globe, teaching me about Catalans, The Spanish Civil War, German immigration, and a renewed love for the French language. As I pondered my next academic move I knew this: I had to get to Europe. I researched universities in California, looking for a program that would combine my intrapersonal skills with my worldwide view. I stumbled upon San Diego State's International Business program. Essentially it was a double degree in Business Management and a Lost In The City: A Study Abroad (and a broad or two) Story foreign language of your choice. The highly acclaimed program (it was ranked #11 in the nation when I enrolled in 2007) required its participants to study abroad for at least a semester in a region of their language emphasis. Brilliant I thought! That summer of 2006, I made up my mind to transfer to SDSU Fall of 2007 to study International Business with a Spanish and Marketing emphasis. Let's get globalized!

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It's amazing what you can do when you set your mind to it. Long considered the perennial underachiever Lost In The City: A Study Abroad (and a broad or two) Story (I should have been voted "Most Likely To Underachieve" in high school.) I knew that my old habits and penchant for settling for average would not get me to Spain. I arrived at SDSU in 2007 with a renewed focus and a Jay-Z- like aura of swag. Despite my confidence and "I will not fail" attitude, I was still 6 classes away from being in the program. You see, my junior college did not offer some of the classes I needed to start in the program right away. This was no issue however because instead of looking at this a setback, I viewed it as an opportunity to make new friends and learn new things. If you can learn Lost In The City: A Study Abroad (and a broad or two) Story to see an obstacle as an opportunity, you will get far in life. Fast forward to the end of spring 2008 and I'm finally able to apply to the program. I remember walking into the International Business office for a pre major meeting with other applying students, and simply being blown away by the amazing people that they were. Here was a group of brilliant, open minded individuals who shared my dream of a global community and wanted to explore new lands as well.

I successfully completed the prerequisite classes and was on schedule to study abroad Fall 2009. I had chosen Spain as my area of emphasis. As such, I made a wish list of where in Spain I wanted to go. Lost In The City: A Study Abroad (and a broad or two) Story Without a doubt Barcelona was number 1, followed distantly by Coruna and Madrid. A few weeks after submitting my application to my department and to the respective universities, I heard back. I had been accepted to Barcelona. I was one of two students in the program chosen to go to the Catalan Capital. It had been a dream come true. Years of hard work had finally paid off and it was as if I was beginning to shed my "Most Likely To Underachieve" label.

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