

Meet Noiya, First Oranim Student to Study Abroad

Study abroad is a life-changing experience. Noiya Gal Sarai is the first Oranim student to study for a semester abroad. She encourages every Oranim student to participate in an international program, whether study abroad or a short-term program.



Noiya Gal Sarai, a student in Oranim's English department, is studying for the semester at Tilburg University in the Netherlands through the Erasmus+ student exchange program. In this interview, she describes how her experience abroad has contributed to her development as a person and a future teacher in Israel.

Why Study Abroad?

Noiya decided to study abroad because she wanted to experience "a different world" – to encounter diverse cultures from all over the world and to see how teachers teach and students learn in a different country. Noiya plans to become an English teacher back in Israel, and she sees her studies abroad through those eyes. She is always looking for how her experience abroad can help her become a better teacher.

Erasmus + Student Exchange

Noiya is the first Oranim student to participate in the Erasmus + student exchange program, which enables students to study abroad throughout Europe while receiving credit at their home universities. Erasmus + covers tuition fees for participating students. In order to participate in the program, a student's home university and the university abroad where they want to study must have signed an Erasmus + mobility agreement. Oranim has currently signed mobility agreements that include student exchange with three universities, and we plan to sign several more agreements for next year. We are happy to offer Oranim students the opportunity to study abroad through this exciting program.

Coursework

In preparation for studying abroad, Noiya chose courses together with Oranim faculty from the English department and the International School. She chose courses in psychology, because they give her knowledge and skills that will be helpful to her as she builds her career as a teacher. For example, a psychopathology course has given her tools to identify children with psychological issues. Her courses are international courses, taught in English to students from all over the world.

Noiya is also taking a foreign language course in Dutch. By observing what works and doesn't work in this course, Noiya has gained insights about how to best teach foreign languages. For instance, she found that as a student she needed the instructor to speak some English as well as Dutch, since she is only just beginning to learn Dutch. As a foreign language teacher in Israel, she would intersperse Hebrew for students just beginning to learn English.

Impact

Noiya has enjoyed getting to know students from different cultures from all over the world. This encounter with diverse cultures has made her more openminded and has taught her not to make assumptions about people, whether cultural or otherwise. She also has enjoyed being exposed to different teaching styles from which she can learn.

Noiya's experience as a student abroad strengthened her commitment to building personal relationships with students. Tilberg is a large university with large classes, and Noiya missed the intimacy of her classes at Oranim and her personal relationships with lecturers here. When she becomes a teacher, Noiya hopes to build personal relationships with each and every one of her young students. Noiya quotes educator Rita Pierson: "Every child deserves a champion."¹ She explains: "Each child needs to feel that he is the most important to me in the world, that I will do everything for them."

Are You Considering Studying Abroad?

In many countries, a semester abroad is seen as an essential part of each student's studies. Noiya recommends that Oranim students similarly integrate study abroad or some other type of international experience into their studies. She explains that it is important "to broaden your horizons and enrich yourself, even when it is difficult" and that study abroad "gives added value to your degree." Study abroad will "give you a different perspective on your studies and in general."

Noiya gives students interested in studying abroad a few tips. First, she would recommend going together with at least one other Israeli student, so that you can support one another. She also would advise students to find an apartment or dormitory close to campus, to best facilitate an active social life.

¹ https://www.ted.com/talks/rita_pierson_every_kid_needs_a_champion?language=he#t-89917