



Ceiling Unlimited!

Fall 2026 Newsletter of FSC's Study Abroad Office

Greetings from the Study Abroad Office

Greetings and salutations! I am thrilled to distribute the Fall 2026 newsletter of the Study Abroad Office.

Why a 20-page newsletter, you may be asking? Well, in this world where video shorts reign and our attention span averages 47 seconds, I still believe that people enjoy opportunities to browse news items and even read an article or two. **Ceiling Unlimited** is a venue for our students and faculty to share their experiences and impressions of the areas of the world which they called home for a while. We hope you'll be inspired to plan an overseas adventure of your own!

AY 2025-26 was a fantastic year for Study Abroad and AY 2026-27 promises to be even brighter! In the last year, I met more than 300 students, eager to study overseas. More than fifty joined programs in Australia, Brazil, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, Egypt, England, Finland, Greece, Italy, Japan, Nepal, Portugal, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, and Taiwan. Six students are overseas now, in Fall 2026, studying at American University in Cairo, CEA CAPA Barcelona, Edinburgh Napier University, and Florence University of the Arts. And at least thirteen students will study abroad in January 2027 – Japan, Honduras, Italy, and Tanzania!

We are planning a number of exciting Faculty Led programs in January 2027 and Summer 2027 on four continents. There are three Faculty Led programs scheduled for January 2027: Prof. Eric Anderson's STS 395 course in **Malta**, Prof. Orla LoPiccolo's ARC 100 in **Ireland**, and Prof. Wei Shi's PCM 335 in **Japan**. We are developing the full schedule of Faculty Led Summer 2027 course, but, to date, students can choose from: Service Learning in **Dominican Republic** (Prof. Marya Carter and Prof. Brianna Maven), Global Management in **Greece** (Prof. Antigoni Papadimitriou), Nursing Beyond Borders in **Nepal** (Prof. Tesi Thomas), Animal Forensics in **South Africa** (Prof. Monique Sosnowski), Manufacturing Industries in **Milan & Bologna** (Prof. Khosro Shirvani – of interest to Business and Engineering students), **Life in Ancient Rome & Pompeii** (Prof. Eric De Sena), and **London through the Ages** (Prof. Tim Nicholson).

Lastly, I want to thank Global Ambassadors **Ashley Granger, Aoun Khandaker, Amy Koo, and Higia Saravia** for their Herculean efforts last year. They spread their infectious enthusiasm for travel among FSC's student body through participation in campus events and in the Greenley Library. You'll see Amy, Higia, and Aoun again this semester!

2027 Study Abroad Opportunities

Looking ahead to January and Summer 2027, we are offering Faculty Led Programs on four continents! In January 2027, two programs focus on architecture and culture: Prof. Orla LoPiccolo (**ARC 100 in Ireland**) and Prof. Eric Anderson (**STS 395 in Malta**). Also, in January 2027, Prof. Wei Shi will teach Strategic Communication in northern **Japan**. Over the summer, Prof. Shi was successful with a Social Sciences Research Council / Japan Foundation grant application that will provide scholarships for each of the ten participants of the course! We are grateful to the SSRC / Japan Foundation for this opportunity.

In Summer 2027, **Business students** can study **Global Management in Greece** with prof. Antigoni Papadimitriou (BUS 390), where you will visit companies, meet business leaders and observe operations. **Engineering and Business students** can join prof. Khosro Shirvani (MET 270) who will lead you to manufacturing companies and cultural sites in **Milan and Bologna**. For the second time, Prof. Tesi Thomas will lead **Nursing beyond Borders** (NUR 240), a clinical practicum in **Nepal**. Prof. Marya Carter and Prof. Brianna Maven will lead a Service Learning Program in the **Dominican Republic**. Prof. Monique Sosnowski will lead students to **South Africa** for a seminar on Animal Forensics. On the **Liberal Arts** end of the spectrum, Prof. Timothy Nicholson will lead **London through the Ages**. And, Prof. Eric De Sena will lead students on an archaeological and cultural journey in **Life in Ancient Rome & Pompeii** (HIS 319), where in addition to discovering the ancient Romans, you'll sample the best gelato in the world! We are still working out the dates and fees of some Faculty Led programs, so keep checking the Study Abroad webpages (farmingdale.edu/study-abroad).

Our students can also study with our academic partners: **Edinburgh Napier University**, **Florence University of the Arts**, **IQS Barcelona** (Business), **University of Nicosia** (with campuses in Cyprus and Athens), and **University of Rennes** (Business). And there are hundreds of opportunities through the other SUNY campuses.

FSC Faculty Led Programs – 2027

JANUARY 2027		
LOCATION	PROGRAM	DATES
Dublin, Ireland	Prof. Orla LoPiccolo - ARC 100 Architecture & Culture	January 13-22
Hokkaido, Japan	Prof. Wei Shi - PCM 335W Strategic Communication - ONE place remaining	January 5-18
Malta	Prof. Eric Anderson - STS 395 Global Connections – Architecture	January 4-16

SUMMER 2027		
LOCATION	PROGRAM	DATES
Dominican Republic	Profs. Marya Carter & Brianna Maven - Service Learning	May 22-28 or May 28-June 4
Greece	Prof. Antigoni Papadimitriou - BUS 390 Global Management	May 31 - June 12
Italy - Rome	Prof. Eric De Sena - HIS 319 Life in Ancient Rome & Pompeii (with visits to Naples & Ostia Antica)	June 9-21
Italy - Milan	Prof. Khosro Shirvani - MET 270 Manufacturing Industries (for Engineering & Business students)	June 6-19
London	Prof. Timothy Nicholson - HIS 315 London through the Ages	July 9-21
Nepal	Prof. Tesi Thomas - NUR 240 Nursing beyond Borders	early June
South Africa	Prof. Monique Sosnowski - CRJ Wildlife Forensics	late June / early July

For more information, contact:

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Reflections of FSC Students and Faculty on their Overseas Adventures

Annabella Dixon (Nursing Major; Florence University of the Arts – Summer 2026)

This summer, I studied abroad in Florence, Italy for six weeks, and it was one of the best experiences of my life.



I took two courses that helped to shape my appreciation of Tuscany. *Food, Culture, and Society* provided a wealth of information and included tastings and visits to local shops each class session, giving me a real feel for Italian cuisine and culture. *Art and Architecture of Florence* used the city as a classroom and introduced me to the Renaissance masterpieces and stunning palazzi of Firenze.

The food deserves its own mention. Our meal plan included a pastry, coffee, and

water for breakfast each day of class, and the restaurants across the city never disappointed. The language barrier was much less of an issue than expected. Most people spoke English, and the Italians I met were warm and genuinely happy to talk. Some of my favorite memories came from the people: students from all over and locals I got to know. Some new friendships will last well beyond the summer.

I also made the most of being based in Europe, traveling to Cinque Terre, Venice, and Sardinia, plus trips to Paris and Switzerland. Each trip added something different, but Florence always felt like home. Studying abroad in Florence was everything I hoped for and more, the classes, the food, the people, and the travel all came together into an unforgettable six weeks.

Prof. Antigoni Papadimitriou (School of Business; Faculty Leader of BUS 390 in Greece – Summer 2026)

What happens when the classroom becomes an entire country? Farmingdale State College's **2026 Global Management Immersion Program in Greece** was an opportunity for our students to experience international business firsthand. Traveling through Athens and Thessaloniki, students visited more than 15 organizations, met with business leaders and professionals, and explored how organizations navigate global management, finance, sustainability, innovation, and cross-cultural challenges. Students brought these experiences back into their academic work, selecting

organizations for deeper analysis, and presenting their capstone projects at the University of Athens.



The experience did not end when the program concluded. In collaboration with Professor Dimitrios Thomakos, students' projects were published in a scholarly monograph, transforming their study-abroad learning into a lasting academic contribution. Their curiosity, thoughtful engagement and professionalism made a strong impression on the host organizations, several of which celebrated the Farmingdale students and their visits on LinkedIn.

More than a trip abroad, the Greece program connected classroom learning, global business, academic scholarship, and cultural discovery, giving students an unforgettable opportunity to learn, connect, and see themselves as future global professionals.

Prof. Tesi Thomas (Nursing, Faculty Leader of Nursing in Nepal, Summer 2026)

Seven students and I returned to Long Island enriched after our recent NUR 240 Nursing Beyond Borders study-abroad experience in Nepal. I have always dedicated a portion of my time to volunteering my expertise in nursing to help underprivileged communities. A special place for me, where

I have volunteered for nearly a decade is Nepal. In Summer 2026, I led a group of Farmingdale Nursing students to Nepal for the first time.



During our time in Kathmandu, our team partnered with local clinics, schools, churches, and community leaders to provide community-based health services. Key activities included:

- Community health screenings: blood pressure, pulse, blood glucose, height/weight, BMI, and growth chart assessments.
- Health education: oral hygiene, hand hygiene, nutrition, and general wellness teaching.
- School health outreach: assessment of 112 primary school students, identification of dental concerns, earwax impaction, stunting, and other health needs.

- Clinical observations: time spent at Shalom Clinic and Anandaban Hospital, including exposure to primary care services, leprosy treatment programs, wound care, physiotherapy, and reconstructive services.
- Home visits: three households visited to assess living conditions, social determinants of health, access barriers, and family health needs.

The students demonstrated strong clinical skills, cultural humility, adaptability, and teamwork throughout the experience. This immersion reinforced the importance of preventive care, community engagement, and culturally sensitive nursing practice. In addition to clinical and community work, we incorporated cultural learning and sightseeing to deepen students' understanding of Nepali history, traditions, and daily life.

Sophie Nitzberg (STS Major; Libera
Università Mediterranea – Summer 2026

In July 2026, I had the amazing chance to study for four weeks in Lecce, Italy with Libera Università Mediterranea. I had always wanted to go to Italy, so this was incredibly exciting for me, even if it meant leaving friends and family behind.

Before heading to the study abroad program in Lecce, I decided to travel... to Rome, Florence, Sicily, Sorrento, Capri, and Pompeii! I had never heard of Lecce before, but all the Italians I spoke to on my pre-Study Abroad adventure told me how beautiful the area was, especially its beaches. When I arrived to Lecce, I was greeted by the kindest, most accommodating people, Emma and Rylee, the program leaders. Rylee did this same program eight years ago and met Emma, who is from Lecce. Now they are

married and living there together. Such a sweet love story!

During the study abroad program, I spent four hours a day, five days a week, learning Italian, which was the main reason I went. Every Saturday, we went on excursions to different parts of Salento, in the Puglia region of Italy. Every place was beautiful. The beaches were mesmerizing. The food was delicious. And the locals were so kind and loved that we were trying to learn their language.



Outside the classroom, we had cooking classes where we made homemade pasta, dance classes where we learned the traditional Salentino dance called Pizzica, walking tours, papier-mâché classes taught by a local maestro, and even Italian theater classes! Our schedules were packed and amazing.

Getting to live in a country I had always dreamed of visiting and experiencing its culture, architecture, people, and food was, well, a dream come true. Experiencing a different way of life was fascinating, especially how everyone takes a break in the afternoon from 1-3! (which, sometimes was very needed!) I would recommend this experience one thousand times over. Thanks to this experience I have another home in Lecce!

Reflections on Taiwan & Tokyo

Lill Cuevas Perdomo (Liberal Arts Major;
Taiwan & Tokyo – Summer 2026)

This summer, I had the remarkable opportunity to study abroad in Taiwan and Japan with Professor Ai and fellow students. What began as a study abroad trip very quickly became an experience that expanded my understanding of the world and allowed me the opportunity to meet some amazing people and make memories that will last a lifetime.



In Taiwan, I was able to immerse myself in the culture, food, history, and the everyday life of the communities I visited. I then continued my journey to Japan where I explored temples and shrines and lastly, I had the chance to experience the dynamic energy of Tokyo.

More than anything, this trip completely transformed how I view the world around me. In essence, it broke the illusion that my current life is the only life I can live and experience. There is an entire world out there, beyond anything I've seen before, that I've yet to appreciate and experience. It's filled with different languages, cultures, and cuisines. At the risk

of sounding like a broken record, reiterating that I made beautiful connections and memories that will last a lifetime, I'll just say that I returned home with a burning desire to venture out and explore the world for everything that it has to offer. The freedom and happiness I felt during this trip reminded me that there is so much more to life than I have ever known. And I literally cannot wait to discover what else is out there.

Tatiana Urbina (Business Management
Major; Taiwan & Tokyo – Summer 2026)



My study abroad experience in Taiwan was one of the most rewarding opportunities I have ever had. From the moment we arrived in Taiwan, I was excited to experience a new culture, meet people from different backgrounds, and learn outside of a traditional classroom setting.

During the program, I attended classes at Minghsin University of Science & Technology, connected with students from Taiwan and the Philippines, and participated in activities that encouraged cultural exchange. Although speaking in front of a classroom was outside of my comfort zone, it helped me gain confidence and improve my communication skills. Outside of class, I explored local attractions, tried new foods, and spent time with my classmates. One of

the best parts of the trip were the friendships and connections I made along the way.

Sharing new experiences with people from different cultures made the program even more meaningful. After Taiwan, I traveled to Tokyo, where I had the opportunity to experience another unique culture. Exploring the city, visiting popular attractions, and enjoying the local food made the trip even more unforgettable.

Overall, this study abroad program allowed me to grow personally, become more independent, and gain a greater appreciation for different cultures. I am grateful for the memories, friendships, and lessons I gained throughout my time abroad, and I can't wait to continue having these amazing experiences.

Taylor Connell (STS Major; Taiwan & Tokyo – Summer 2026)



My experience studying abroad in Taiwan this summer was truly something to remember. I met new people while doing the in-person part of the course, and I enjoyed the hands-on learning of Taiwan's history and culture. Along with trying new foods and visiting night markets while over there. I bonded with the other Farmingdale students who are now some of my best

friends. This experience is something that I would recommend to any student who wants to travel in a group setting. Studying abroad is life-changing.

April Guzman (Health Promotion & Wellness; Taiwan & Tokyo – Summer 2026)

I had the opportunity to study abroad in Taiwan and Japan with Farmingdale State College. This was my second study abroad experience.



My first experience was a semester abroad at Richmond American University in London, which made me want to continue traveling and learning about different cultures. Studying in London was a monumental experience. I enjoyed exploring my new country, seeing new places, and learning outside of the classroom. After that experience, I knew I wanted to study abroad again.

The Summer 2026 study abroad program to Taiwan and Japan provided a completely different experience. In Taiwan,

my favorite class sessions were day trips to places like Taipei, Sun Moon Lake, and Taichung. In the countryside, I enjoyed the beautiful views, being near the water, and riding bikes. I also had the chance to meet Taiwanese students, including Dora, Chen, and Cluck, and learn about their lives and culture.

Japan was another highlight of the trip. I got to wear a kimono, make and try matcha, visit DisneySea, and go to a capybara café, experiences I would not have had if I had stayed home on Long Island. Having the opportunity to study abroad twice with Farmingdale has allowed me to see how much I enjoy traveling and experiencing new cultures. My first trip to London encouraged me to go abroad again, and my second trip to Taiwan and Japan gave me even more memories and experiences that I will always remember. I am very thankful to Farmingdale for giving me these opportunities, and I hope to study abroad again in the future.

Prof. Qing Ai (Dept. Modern Languages;
Faculty Leader of Summer 2026 in Taiwan &
Tokyo)

This summer, MLG 321, “Chinese Culture and Civilization,” left the textbook behind. A group of FSC students traded the classroom for Xinfeng, near Taiwan’s own Silicon Valley, spending ten immersive days with our partner institution, Minghsin University of Science and Technology (MUST), with an extension trip to Tokyo afterwards.

On campus, students toured MUST’s semiconductor lab, sat in on invention pitches from Filipino international students, tried traditional archery, and learned Chinese calligraphy, brushing their own spring couplets. Students were also invited to a farewell lunch with COIL faculty and had

a meetup with Utah high school students who were taking Mandarin classes at MUST. Full-day excursions by high-speed rail took them to Taipei, visiting the National Palace Museum, Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall, Lungshan Temple, and Taipei 101. Sun Moon Lake, explored by land, cable car, boat, and bike, was a favorite day, and the hike up Fengqi Sunset Trail became one of the trip’s most talked-about memories. In Tainan, students explored the Confucius Temple, Hayashi Department Store, and Fort Zeelandia.



Food was its own education: night-market stinky tofu, bubble tea, Din Tai Fung dumplings, giant sweet mangoes, hot pot, Peking Roasted Duck, and, of course, McDonald's and pizza as comfort food on tired nights. In Tokyo, students rode DisneySea, wore kimono, and learned to prepare matcha.

Many called it their first hike, their first time speaking to a room of strangers, or the farthest they’d ever been from home. Beyond the sights, MLG 321 students came home with something more lasting: lifetime friendships and bonds with each other stretching from Long Island to Asia and back.

Prof. Betty Feng (School of Business; Leader of Summer 2026 in Finland)

What does sustainability look like when students can experience it beyond textbooks and classrooms?

This summer, our students Marcin Wasiuta from Civil Engineering and Dhana Duval from Business Management traveled to Finland for BUS395 Creativity and Innovation, led by Prof. Betty Feng from School of Business, an immersive program centered on the theme of innovation for a sustainable future. Through experiences in Helsinki and Vaasa, students connected concepts of sustainability, circular economy, innovation, entrepreneurship, and international business with real-world practices.

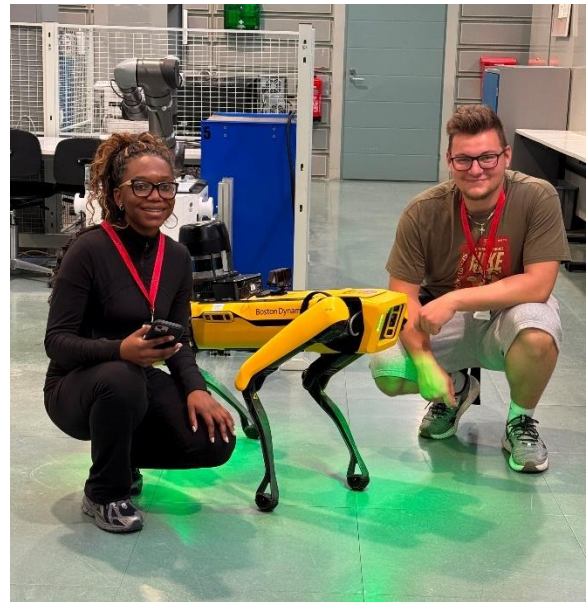
Seeing an Innovation Ecosystem in Action

Finland became a living laboratory for understanding how sustainability and innovation can shape regional economic development.

In Vaasa, students experienced one of Finland's leading energy and technology ecosystems and saw how universities, businesses, municipalities, entrepreneurs, and communities work together to support innovation. Visits to EnergyLab and Technobothnia introduced students to research and applications involving alternative fuels, electricity systems, robotics, and other technologies.

Company visits further connected classroom concepts with practice. At The Switch, students explored how a Finnish technology company operates within global markets. At VILPE, discussions connected innovation and international business with values such as responsibility, resilience, trust, and long-term thinking.

A visit to Finvacon added an important social dimension to our understanding of sustainability. Students learned how international competitiveness can coexist with an inclusive approach to employment, encouraging them to consider sustainability not only in environmental terms, but also in relation to people, communities, and organizational values.



From Waste to Opportunity

The circular economy was another important theme throughout the program. Visits to Westenergy and Stormossen allowed students to see how materials commonly considered waste can become resources for energy, transportation, recycled materials, and new economic activity. Students observed how waste streams can be transformed into energy and learned about biogas production, composting, recycling, and reuse.

These experiences encouraged students to rethink a fundamental business question: What if a sustainability challenge can also become an opportunity for innovation?

Instead of seeing sustainability only as a regulation, constraint, or cost, students saw examples of organizations using environmental challenges as starting points for new technologies, processes, partnerships, and business models.

Finnish Culture as Another Classroom

Learning continued well beyond company and university visits. Through walking tours, conversations with Finnish professors, cultural activities, and time in nature, students gained a deeper understanding of Finnish culture and everyday life. The group explored the UNESCO-listed Kvarken Archipelago, hiked and sailed, picked wild berries, visited Edvin's Path with its sculptures created from recycled materials, and experienced local cultural traditions.

The forests, parks, coastline, and archipelago became our "nature classrooms." These experiences helped students recognize that sustainability is not limited to corporate strategy or government policy. It can also be reflected in cultural values, community practices, everyday choices, and the relationship between people and nature.

Learning with Students from Around the World

A highlight of the program was our students' participation in the University of Vaasa International Summer School on Entrepreneurship and Venturing. During the intensive on-campus week, our students studied alongside participants from around the world, creating a truly international learning environment.

The 2026 International Entrepreneurship week brought together 60 participants representing 25 countries. Students worked in multicultural teams to explore international business

opportunities, develop business plans, prepare and deliver pitches, and test their decision-making through a hands-on marketplace simulation.

For our students, this was an opportunity to move beyond learning about international business to actually experiencing it. Working with students from different countries and backgrounds required them to communicate across cultures, consider different perspectives, negotiate ideas, and collaborate toward common goals. Innovation became not simply a concept to study, but a process they practiced together with international peers.

From Finland Back to Farmingdale

Study abroad creates opportunities for students to encounter ideas in ways that cannot always be replicated in a traditional classroom. During our time in Finland, concepts such as sustainability, circular economy, internationalization, innovation ecosystems, entrepreneurship, and social responsibility became things students could see, experience, question, and practice.

Perhaps most importantly, our students experienced what it means to learn globally: studying alongside peers from 25 countries, engaging with Finnish businesses and communities, and seeing how another society approaches some of the same sustainability challenges we face at home.

Our journey may have taken us thousands of miles from Farmingdale, but the learning does not remain in Finland. We return with a new question: How can we apply these lessons to our classrooms, businesses, communities, and sustainability initiatives at Farmingdale, across Long Island, and beyond?

Reflections on Sicily

Daniel Arena (STS Major; ST-Sicily Internship – Summer 2026)

This past summer, I had the opportunity to spend two months in Balestrate, Sicily, completing an international business development and marketing internship with ST-Sicily. It was an incredible experience, both personally and professionally, and I feel extremely fortunate to have had the opportunity to live and work abroad while gaining valuable experience in my field.



During my internship, I worked directly with on-site directors of the program on projects involving market research, university outreach, marketing, and program development. One of my main responsibilities was researching universities in the United States and identifying opportunities for ST-Sicily to develop new partnerships. I also helped create presentations and outreach strategies and had the opportunity to communicate directly with university representatives. Being able to contribute to real projects gave me valuable experience in international business and professional communication.

I do not have enough words to describe the wonder of living in Sicily.

Balestrate is a small beach town near Palermo, and living there for two months gave me the chance to experience Sicilian culture almost as a local rather than simply as a tourist. Sicily has something to offer for nearly every interest. Love the beach? No matter where you are in Balestrate, you are less than ten minutes from warm, clear water and beautiful beaches. Love history? You are constantly surrounded by sites and communities shaped by Greek, Roman, Arab, and Norman history. Even the nightlife offered something special. Every evening in Balestrate, the main street was closed to cars as restaurants filled and seemingly the entire town came out for dinner. It created an atmosphere unlike anything I had experienced before. I was also fortunate enough to travel throughout Sicily and other parts of Europe during the summer, making an already incredible experience even more memorable.

Most importantly, I shared the experience with a diverse group of students from all over the world which in itself was its own culture shock. We quickly became a very close group and sharing this new experience together was a gift that I truly cherish. My internship in Sicily was an unforgettable combination of professional development, travel, history, and cultural immersion, and I cannot recommend ST-Sicily enough.

Gabriella Tanner (Business Management Major; ST-Sicily Internship – Summer 2026)

My name is Gabriella Tanner, and I'm a Business Management major with a minor in Economics and a certificate in Marketing. I've always been passionate about learning through real experiences, especially those that push me outside my comfort zone and

help me grow both personally and professionally. This past summer, I had the opportunity to live and work abroad in Sicily, an experience that shaped me in ways I never expected.



What began as a seemingly simple abroad internship program with ST-Sicily quickly grew into a life-changing experience: a blend of meaningful work, new friendships, rich culture, and personal growth that gave me a deeper understanding of myself and the world. Working in Sicily challenged me

in ways that felt exciting rather than overwhelming. The rhythm of life was different, calmer, more human yet the work itself pushed me to stay sharp and adaptable. I learned how to communicate across cultural differences, how to adjust to new expectations, and how to contribute to a team that treated me with genuine warmth. Every assignment taught me something new, and every obstacle helped me build confidence and independence. But the most meaningful part of my experience was the people I met.

I formed friendships that felt immediate and real, the kind that happen when you're all discovering a new place together. From wandering through Palermo's lively streets to sharing long dinners by the water in Balestrate, those moments became the memories I hold closest. Sicily has a way of making you feel connected through its community, its traditions, and its incredible sense of hospitality and I felt that connection every single day. Living in Sicily changed me. It opened my eyes to how big the world truly is and reminded me that I'm capable of finding my place anywhere. It taught me that growth happens when you embrace the unfamiliar instead of avoiding it. And it gave me a second home, one filled with sunsets, laughter, and lessons I'll carry with me for the rest of my life.

Meet Our Faculty Leaders

Eleven FSC faculty members will share their interests and expertise in 2027 by offering Faculty Led Study Abroad opportunities on four continents!

Eric Anderson, A.I.A., is an architect and educator with more than thirty years in educational and non-profit facilities planning and management. He has overseen the planning and/or construction of over \$ 1 billion of capital improvement for non-profit and educational institutions. Institutional project responsibilities include engineering research facilities at West Virginia University, student residential and service renovations at WVU and Stony Brook University, academic and library facilities at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, and campus master plans for the CUNY system. He is a registered architect in New York and West Virginia.



He is an Associate Professor and the Department Chair for Architecture and Construction Management at Farmingdale State College. Professional memberships include the American Institute of Architects and the American Society of Engineering Education. He is an adviser to the student team that participates in the Associated Schools of Construction Region 1 Project Management Competition. Honors include 2002 Award of Merit from the Association of University Architects for Recovery of BMCC/CUNY from 9/11 Attack, 2015 Educator of the Year Award from the American Institute of Architects-Long Island Chapter, 2015 Ecclesia et Pontifice Medal from the Holy See for distinguished service to facilities planning for the Catholic Church, 2024 FSC Faculty Center Student Mentorship Award, and 2024 FSC Student Activities Club Advisor of the Year.

Eric will lead STS 395 Architecture & Global Connections in Malta, January 4-16, 2027.

Orla Smyth LoPiccolo is a registered architect, professor, and former Chair of the Department of Architecture and Construction Management at FSC, where she has taught 17 courses since 2008. She earned her undergraduate and professional architecture degrees with honours from the Dublin Institute of Technology and Trinity College, University of Dublin, Ireland, and a post-professional degree in Architecture Urban Regional Design from the New York Institute of Technology. She also holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Building Construction Management from New York University and is a Certified Passive House

Designer through the Passivhaus Institut in Germany.



Professor LoPiccolo has professional experience in both the private and public sectors, including architecture and construction project management positions in Dublin and New York, as well as over ten years of experience as an architect and Community Development Project Supervisor with the Town of Islip. She also served as an adjunct assistant professor in the School of Architecture and Design at NYIT for five years, teaching multiple architectural studio courses.

At FSC, Professor LoPiccolo has been an active contributor to campus governance and service, including the Applied Learning Review Board (Chair 2022–2023, member since 2016), the Executive Committee (Chair 2018–2022, member 2016–2022), the Public Art Task Force (former Chair), the Calendar Committee (former Chair), the Sustainability Committee, and the American Society for Engineering Education, Middle Atlantic Section (former Chair, Secretary, and

Treasurer). As Department Chair (2017–2021), she oversaw three successful ABET re-accreditation visits, streamlined departmental processes to enhance student success, and strengthened professional partnerships that have connected hundreds of students and alums with employment opportunities. She has authored and presented more than 20 scholarly papers on innovative pedagogy, with a focus on spatial reasoning, sustainable construction, and service learning.

Orla will lead a group of students in Ireland for a class in Architecture & Culture – ARC 100, January 13-22, 2027.

Dr. Wei Shi is an Associate Professor of Professional Communications. She holds a Ph.D. in Organizational Communication from Rutgers University and an M.S.Ed. in Intercultural Communication from the University of Pennsylvania.



Her interdisciplinary research bridges communication, business management, and psychology, and her work has been published in leading journals including the Journal of Small Business

Management, the Journal of Knowledge Management, the Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, and the Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology. Prof. Shi's teaching portfolio reflects the breadth of her expertise, spanning communication theory, organizational behavior, psychological processes in workplace communication, and strategic decision-making in business contexts. She is committed to connecting theory with practice, preparing students to become effective communicators and leaders in diverse professional settings. Fluent in English, Mandarin, Cantonese, and Japanese, she brings a global and culturally informed perspective to her courses and is well positioned to guide students through immersive, internationally focused learning experiences.

Wei is leading a group of ten students to Sapporo and Tokyo, Japan in January 2027.

Dr. Timothy Nicholson received his MA from King's College London and his PhD from Stony Brook University and is currently an Assistant Professor of History at Farmingdale State College on Long Island, New York. He is the author of *Interracial Intimacies: Sex, Power, and Global Encounters* (Routledge, 2026). His research involves expanding the field of African and transnational youth studies and he is currently in the process of completing a manuscript that looks at how during the 1950s and 1960s East African youths interacted with local and global paradigms of authority in imperial and Cold War contexts. He has spent a considerable amount of time in East Africa conducting oral histories and working in archives throughout the region and has published several book chapters and articles on the subject.

Tim will lead a group of students to England for a course "London through the Ages", July 9-21, 2027.



Dr. Antigoni Papadimitriou is an Assistant Professor of Strategy in the School of Business and a strong advocate for experiential, global learning. Originally from Greece, she studied business and economics and worked at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, later serving as a researcher at the University of Macedonia. Outside the classroom, she is a former basketball player and coach and has also competed as a racing crew member at the Nautical Club of Thessaloniki. She has extensive experience designing and leading international programs, including study-abroad initiatives at Lehigh University and the Duke University TIP program. Dr. Papadimitriou earned her Masters from Baruch/CUNY, PhD in the Netherlands, and completed postdoctoral research in Norway, bringing a global perspective to her teaching and research.

Her research explores how organizations and communities adapt to change, especially as emerging technologies like artificial intelligence reshape the way we work, lead, and make decisions. Her interests include behavioural strategy, AI adoption in organizations, organizational

change, entrepreneurship in the creative industries, community development, responsible management education, and student engagement with AI. Grounded in organizational theory, her work often draws on stakeholder and social learning perspectives and uses mixed-methods research designs. She has received research funding from Lehigh University, Johns Hopkins University, the Research Council of Norway, and the Greek Ministry of Education, and her work has appeared in a range of academic journals.



In June 2027, Antigoni will lead Business students in Greece where you'll visit companies and cultural heritage sites.

Dr. Khosro Shirvani is an assistant professor in the Mechanical Engineering Technology at Farmingdale State College (FSC). His research areas include Tribology, Additive Manufacturing of Metals, Renewable Energy, and Engineering Education. Since 2011, He has worked on projects sponsored by The Boeing Company, the National

Institute of Standards & Technology, and National Science Foundation.



Over the past eight years, he has developed and taught novel hands-on skill-building courses with a focus on design, manufacturing and clean energy technologies. He was also involved in creating a certificate program in Wind Turbine Technology at FSC and authored a paper on developing wind turbine educational programs on the east coast. ("Developing a Premier Wind Turbine Technology Programs in the East Coast: A Novus Industry and Academia Collaborative Approach" at the 2022 ASEE Annual Conference & Exposition). Prior to 2011, He served as an innovation consultant to turbine engineering and manufacturing companies where he provided and oversaw maintenance strategies for a variety of electro-mechanical and manufacturing equipment. Khosro is a member-at-large of the Volunteer Orientation & Leadership Training Academy of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) and was a 2018-19 ASME ECLIPSE Member of the Board of Governors.

Khosro is offering a course in Milan and Bologna, June 6-19, 2027, that will be of interest to **Engineering and Business** students. MET 270 focuses on the management and logistics of manufacturing companies.

Dr. Marya Howell-Carter is a Full Professor and Associate Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences at Farmingdale State College.



She is a NYS licensed clinical psychologist with a specialization in adolescent, young adult, and family psychotherapy. Her teaching responsibilities include Individual and Group Counseling, Abnormal Psychology, Psychology of Women, and Cross-Cultural Psychology. Her current research interests and publications are in the areas of pedagogy; career development; mindfulness, sleep and stress in college students; and perceptions of people from multiracial backgrounds. Marya is the Director of Continuing Education for the Westchester Center for Psychological Education.

Dr. Brianna Maven is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology. She earned her PhD in Integrative Neuroscience from Stony Brook University, and her research interests include learning, memory, growth mindset, and neuroscience

education. She is passionate about creating meaningful learning experiences that extend beyond the classroom and allow students to learn through new experiences, cultures, and communities.



Dr. Maven enjoys traveling and spending time in nature and loves having the opportunity to share those experiences with students. She has helped lead Farmingdale's service-learning program in the Dominican Republic, where students work alongside local communities while experiencing a new culture and seeing firsthand how learning, service, and cultural exchange can come together. One of her favorite parts of these programs is watching students step outside of their comfort zones, build connections, and return home with a broader perspective on the world.

Marya and Brianna lead the Service Learning Program in the Dominican Republic each summer.

Dr. Eric De Sena is an internationally renowned archaeologist who brings to Farmingdale 20+ years of experience overseas as an educator and an administrator. He holds a BA from SUNY Albany in Mediterranean Archaeology, a MA in Art History from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and a PhD in Archaeological Sciences from University of Bradford (UK). De Sena has participated or led projects in Italy on the Palatine Hill in Rome, Ostia Antica, Pompeii, Cetamura del Chianti, and many other sites and in Romania at Porolissum and Bozna.

While living in Rome, he was the Archaeological Laboratory Associate of the American Academy in Rome and a professor of ancient art and archaeology at John Cabot University, Saint Mary's College, and Duquesne University. He served JCU as Chair of the Dept. of Art History and Studio Arts for four years, a position he used to develop short-term Faculty-Led programs in Italy, Romania, and Turkiye. He directed the American Research Center in Sofia, which supported American and Southeast European scholars, published monographs, hosted lectures and conferences, and

offered grants for cultural heritage projects in Bulgaria.



A passionate traveller, Eric has published two guide books: *Get Lost in Travel: Transylvania* and *Get Lost in Travel: 90 Minutes from Rome*. He is currently combining his interests in classical archaeology and music by recording an album based on Virgil's Aeneid, *Echoes of Troy: A Rock Odyssey* (some songs available on YouTube and other platforms).

Eric will lead a group of students to Rome and the Bay of Naples (June 9-21, 2027), his favourite places in the world!

FSC's Study Abroad Office and the Office of Institutional Advancement are partnering to create scholarships for our students.

A major concern of Studying Abroad is the cost. The program fee of a semester abroad is often comparable to the tuition & housing of a SUNY student. But when you add an international flight, meals, destination travel, and personal expenses, the total bill tops \$20,000. Winter and Summer programs are less expensive, but with tuition, hotels, and flights, the cost of a 2-3 week program easily exceeds \$5,000.

In order to alleviate the burden of program fees and travel costs, we have been seeking ways to assist our students. In 2025, Kwame Insaadoo Jr. (EOP) and I applied for a Dept. of Education Title VI grant in the amount of \$140,000 to finance a month-long study abroad program in Ghana. This funding program was, unfortunately cut. More recently, Prof. Wei Shi successfully applied for a \$32,000 grant from the Social Science Research Council and the Japan Foundation. The SSRC/Japan Foundation funds will allow us to give scholarships to the 10 students participating on Prof. Shi's January 2027 course in northern Japan!

I am working with FSC's Office of Institutional Advancement to create annual scholarships, such as that established by the [Fava family](#), and to develop an endowment that will allow us to offer scholarships for our students. We welcome the generosity of individuals and organizations who wish to establish Named Scholarships of \$5,000 or more, or who wish to contribute toward a \$2,500,000 endowment that will enable us to provide scholarships for 50 students each year in perpetuity.

For information on how you can contribute, please write to studyabroad@farmingdale.edu

