

Having participated in the Politics and International Relations (IR) course of the Reach Cambridge summer school this year, I am glad to recommend the program to every aspiring student keen on deepening his or her knowledge in a particular subject, but also zealous to get to know an interesting bunch of people, and to experience the intellectual environment of the city of Cambridge. To give the reader a glimpse of what is awaiting them at Reach Cambridge, I will first write about the scholastic aspect of the program, as it is probably the part in which he or she is most interested in. The specific activities that I am going to mention below do not represent an exhaustive list, but are what I've regarded as pinnacles of the course that I have taken. On these examples, I will try to depict the praiseworthy atmosphere of a class in Reach Cambridge.

In the first week, my subject course took a holistic approach towards what we call Politics by explaining the philosophical and ideological basis of political thought. This later enabled us, the students, to further recognize the links between the conceptual part of political theory and everyday events.

In the second and third week of the course, we examined (among other things) the way supranational bodies function, e.g. the European Union and the United Nations. The theoretical part of the subject course that established our thorough understanding of these institutions was being enriched throughout by practical activities like a mock EU negotiation and a Model United Nations session.

During all of the three weeks, the academic course was highly interactive, full of dialogues with splendid teachers and guests. It was also intertwined with simulation exercises and political debates that made us use our knowledge in practice. Another notable aspect of the learning environment was that many of the classes were taught - and many of the debates were held - outside, e.g. on the benches alongside the River Cam.

The discussion in the community was stimulated and encouraged every day at the evening lectures, which were held by experts in various fields. The thought-provoking ideas from a colourful range of topics provided us with a unique opportunity to gain cross-field knowledge, inspiration, but most of all, topics to talk about in the evenings and during breakfast the next day.

A great source of variance from the classes were the after-class activities, ranging from sports to drama, which served us as an outlet from our studies, but also as a time to socialize and to enjoy

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ourselves. The university workshops served a similar function had the workshops, and personally helped me a lot with my university application.

Lastly, the excursions - an indivisible part of the program. These took us to places like the Victoria & Albert Museum, and the Globe Theatre, where we had the chance to appreciate art in its many forms.

Underpinning all the parts of the program, and the main reason why the summer school was so praiseworthy, was the community. Reach Cambridge is replete with students keen on broadening their horizons, and full of zeal in the discussions both in classes, and in the dormitories as friends. Because of this, and because of their remarkable characters, the personas of the Reach Cambridge community - that so characteristically summon themselves from all around the world into Cambridge colleges - will enrich your life experience, just like they have mine.

Written by Timotej, Reach Cambridge student 2016

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