

November 2019: 50 Years of Women Edition



As Sewanee celebrates 50 Years of Women, Sewanee Around the Globe highlights the contributions of Sewanee women with an international reach. Read about Professor Mila Dragojevic leading a new study abroad program, Christina Kwauk '05 addressing global challenges, Professor Ruth Sanchez-Imizcoz '86 reflecting on Sewanee as both an international student and a current professor, Mandy Tu '21 and her getting-to-Sewanee story, Maren Czura '21 writing from Prague, and more!

European Studies: Contemporary Wine in Old Bottles

Sewanee and Rhodes have jointly operated a European Studies Program for more than three decades, focusing on classical or medieval/renaissance periods. This year, the program offered a new track to study contemporary European society. Below, some of the participants describe the exciting new study abroad offering:

From Professor Mila Dragojevic:

Eleven students from Sewanee and Rhodes, their professors Mila Dragojevic and Sophia Seydack, and program coordinator Chris Dowling completed their six weeks in Berlin in the contemporary track of the European Studies program. In Berlin, students were learning about the contemporary German and European history, conflict, peace, and the politics of memory, European visual culture, and German language at the DiD (Deutsch in Deutschland) Institute. Students visited a number of Holocaust memorials, numerous galleries and museums, the former Stasi prison museum, the Berlin Wall memory sites,



Prof. Dragojevic with students from Sewanee and Rhodes at Bundestag

and the Bundestag, among many other sites related to their coursework. Before arriving in Berlin, students took a course on European Integration at Sewanee, which was taught by Prof. Rae Manacsca from Sewanee, and a contemporary European history course at Oxford taught by Prof. Lynn Zastoupil from Rhodes. After Berlin, Prof. Dragojevic and students traveled to Strasbourg

where they will complete the semester abroad with the final course: European Citizenship, Rights, and Identity.

From students Logan Bulls and Charlotte Moffett:

Contemporary European Studies has taught us the functions of the European Union, how European identity has been shaped by peace and conflict, and how political and cultural aspects have influenced Europe's history. As International Global Studies majors and Politics minors, both of us have found this program to be so beneficial for both of our fields of studies. Living in Oxford, England, Berlin, Germany, and soon to be Strasbourg, France has given us merely a small taste of what it means to live like a "European." We have the opportunities to go on amazing field trips like the Holocaust Memorial and the Reichstag building, and we have travelled to several other countries like the Czech Republic, Ireland, and the Netherlands, both with European Studies and on our own time. Both of us believe that this program allows a unique cultural experience that cannot be emulated anywhere else.



In Bundestag: Logan Bulls (Sewanee), Charlotte Moffett (Sewanee), Pierce Rose (Rhodes), Jamie Jang (Rhodes)

The Privilege to Work for the Good of Others



Global Citizen Spotlight Christina Kwauk '05

For many people around the world, things we take as basic rights — clean water, clean air, an education — are seen as privileges. Christina Kwauk, C'05, is working to change that. In her work at The Brookings Institution as a fellow in the Center for Universal Education, she hosts the annual Girls' Education Research and Policy Symposium, manages the Echidna Global Scholars Program and the Center for Universal Education's girls' education research portfolio, and "help[s] support girls' education leaders from around the world develop locally-driven, evidence-based policy recommendations that will help them amplify the work they do to a larger national, regional, and-or global audience." That work is mountainous enough, but she has also broadened her scope to "merge issues around gender justice and climate justice." While she works to shift these issues from privileges to rights, she acknowledges that the ability to do this work itself "is such a privilege." This theme ripples through her understanding of global citizenship and the work she does: the ability "to 'think global' is a privilege as it means that one's most basic needs of food, shelter, safety, belongingness, a reliable income, etc., have all been fulfilled (i.e. one's 'local' must all be in order before thinking global)."

She herself has had the privilege of education. Kwauk came to Sewanee with the goal of becoming a sports psychologist, majoring in psychology with a minor in Asian studies. Her time at Sewanee “definitely set [her] up with a solid foundation and intellectual curiosity for the journey to come...This Mountain-centric experience mixed with the opportunities [she] had to travel to different parts of the world (e.g. Ecuador for an outreach trip with Eric Hartman, China for a research trip with Scott Wilson, Scotland for study abroad) spiked an interest in [her] to better understand the experiences, aspirations, and perspectives of others around the world as they related to [her] own as a second generation Chinese American in the American South.” She changed course after graduation, going on to earn an M.A. in Social Sciences from the University of Chicago and a Ph.D. in Comparative and International Development Education from the University of Minnesota. The role of sports, though, comes through her work, even though she did not become a sports psychologist. She’s been able to have a wider reach.

Kwauk has kept the international focus she gained during her time at Sewanee. She’s “designed a 12-month multi-sited ethnographic field study on gender, sport, and education policy and programs in Samoa”; she was a “member of an election observation mission [to Papua New Guinea] during the 2012 parliamentary elections”; she “designed and managed a short-term field study to Cambodia, China, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam to the Asia Pacific Leadership Program”; and she’s co-authored a book: *What Works In Girls’ Education: Evidence for the World’s Best Investment*, among many other things. She’s been able “to take inspiration from the land and [her] personal interest in environmental stewardship — developed during [her] years on the Mountain — and bridge this with [her] research on girls’ education vis-à-vis the greatest existential crisis to face humanity: climate change.” For her, “the thought of being able to look back in 10 or 20 years and say that [she] did what [she] could with the skills that [she has] to help move the needle toward a more sustainable, equitable world is what keeps [her] going [every day].”

With Kwauk’s varied experiences dealing with challenges on a global scale, she’s had the opportunity to reflect on what it means to be a global citizen. It “is being aware that you (your existence, your privileges, your rights, your opportunities, your aspirations, your being) are intricately intertwined and interconnected with those of distant others. And in realizing these privileges, rights, opportunities, etc., you have an obligation and duty to ensure that your realization does not infringe upon the realization of others. If others are oppressed, exploited, or disenfranchised in any way, you have a moral and ethical duty to help bring about justice, because your being is so connected with their being.” She

credits Martin Luther King, who “sums this up....more eloquently [in his “Letter from Birmingham Jail”]: ‘Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly.’” While his focus was on race in the United States, his words ring true for the global community, for the wider garment that covers all the world.

Kwauk finds continued inspiration from those with whom she works. “These are individuals, many of whom themselves struggled to get an education, who have decided to make their life’s mission all about creating opportunities for marginalized girls in the Global South to gain access to and complete a quality and empowering education. Working with these individuals is incredibly inspiring and an enormous privilege.” Of her own work, she says, “I can’t ask for a better job than one that allows me to identify a problem in the world, ask critical questions about it, find ways to understand it, and then attempt to impact how policy and decision makers act on it.” That’s the kind of privilege to which we can all aspire.

To Sewanee and Back Again: Ruth Sanchez-Imizcoz, C’ 86



When Ruth Sanchez-Imizcoz came to teach at Sewanee, “[i]t was not really a conscious decision.” While she was still working on her Ph.D., Drs. Naylor and Spacarelli asked her to be a sabbatical replacement - “two years into the future”! After finishing her coursework for her Ph.D. at the University of Kentucky, she came to Sewanee and taught for three years, from



Francesca (USA), Ruth (Spain), Barbara (Germany), & Karin (originally Surinam)

1990 - 1993. When her three years were up, she left to teach elsewhere but was again asked back, this time by Dr. Bonds. She had her condition: she'd come back, but only for a tenure-track job. Dr. Sanchez-Imizcoz said she was on her way to Spain, told the department chair how to contact her, and set a deadline. In 1995, on her own terms, she was back - not for the second time, but the third.

Hailing from Valencia, Spain, Dr. Sanchez-Imizcoz first came to Sewanee with a degree in history and geography from the University of Valencia. In fact, she had first heard of Sewanee when a Sewanee student spent a semester abroad at her university in Spain and thought Dr. Sanchez-Imizcoz (then, just Ruth) would be good as the director of the Spanish House. The following year, another Sewanee student came and they roomed together. A letter of invitation from Dr. Naylor resulted in her applying to be and then becoming the Spanish House Director in the fall of 1983.

Even fourteen years after women were first admitted to the University, “Sewanee was male dominated in just about every sense.” She remembers having just one woman as a professor: Professor Anita Goodstein. “And hers was a class [Dr. Sanchez-Imizcoz] still remember[s] with fondness, and it was a small class, so it was easier to speak.” While fraternities had houses, sororities did not. There were still more men than women in her classes.

Dr. Sanchez-Imizcoz, though, felt more differences from her international status than her gender. At the time, there were more international students (often women!) who were directors of language houses than there are now. While it was easy to make friends with them - she and Barbara, the director of the German House, were friends and are still



Ruth & Sachiko (Japan)

in touch now - it took longer to make other friends. She was “older than [her] class, had a degree, [was] used to work and really, more than [her] gender, [she] would say that [her] accent is the one [thing] that [had] people thinking [she’s] different, and [she is].” She had to adapt to “accents and colloquialisms.” One big shock was the food: “We didn’t have McClurg, not even close, and we didn’t have that many eating options either. Shenanigans was there, the Blue Chair was the City Cafe, and we had the Pub, privately owned, and it was open from 8:00 a.m. until midnight.” Even with the food and linguistic challenges, she spent three years as the Director of the Spanish House, then graduated, going on to the University of Kentucky for her M.A. and

Ph.D. before returning to Sewanee.

Since 1995, Dr. Sanchez-Imizcoz has been a constant part of the fabric of Sewanee, another woman - and an international one at that - to guide and inspire female and male students alike. As times have changed, so, too, have her field of Spanish language and literature and her areas of interest. “When I was a student, the canon was full of male authors and very few women (if you were lucky, you had someone who would teach them. I did!). Nowadays, we try to balance what we [offer], because there [are] a lot of good things that have not been/are not taught because they are not part of the canon.” As for her own research, she largely focuses on the Spanish Golden Age of the 17th century but is



Enrique (Venezuela) & Ruth

currently reading and researching detective/police novels of the 20th and 21st centuries. “Whatever period [she works] on, [she] tend[s] to look at culture and life, and how it is represented in the works [she reads/teaches].” While her focus has shifted and widened, her interest in teaching the works of women and linking culture and literature has not.

Sewanee has changed with the times as well. The dining options are better, there are sorority houses, and many more professors here are women. “All [in] all, I do like the current Sewanee better. There is more diversity in the course selection, in the student body and in the faculty. The place was not perfect, it is not perfect, and it shouldn’t be, because perfection is different for each one of us.”

While coming back to Sewanee as a professor may not have been a “conscious decision,” staying here has been - and Sewanee is all the better for her pairing of Spanish culture and language. “I like [living] in a small place (don’t get me wrong, I love going back to the big cities in Spain!), where I know most of my neighbors. I like my students, I like to see them grow, they change a lot in 4 years. And I like that I can keep in touch with them, and that they try to find me when they come to visit. You need to be in a place like Sewanee to have that sort of relationship.”



Catherine (France) gives a bigger picture of international women at Sewanee.



International Student Spotlight

Mandy Tu C'21

by Diego Ortega



Home Country:	Myanmar
Year:	Junior, C'2021
Major:	English
Minors:	Psychology and Women's and Gender Studies plus a Certificate in Creative Writing
Honors & Awards:	Order of the Gown, Omicron Delta Kappa, Isabel Marks Memorial Scholarship, Davis Family Scholarship
Fun Fact:	I love Corgis! I love dogs in general, but mainly Corgis. I want to have five and name them all after cheese!

Why Sewanee?

Mandy first began writing in 2007, when her father introduced her to J.R.R. Tolkien's Lord of the Rings series. She moved from writing stories and plays to poetry, which became her passion. After high school, she spent time both in Perth, Australia, studying mass communications and performing her poetry, and in Yangon, Myanmar, working as the co-founder and editor-in-chief of Yangon Literary Magazine (go [here](#) to listen to the BBC interview her and others!). At the time, Mandy's younger brother had been accepted at Sewanee; hence, Mandy began considering Sewanee as a possible option for her future, too. She was instantly struck by the Domain's beauty and saw that Sewanee's environment would be a great source of inspiration for her writing. After discovering that Sewanee has an exceptional English department, Mandy was convinced that Sewanee was the next step on her academic journey.

Hobbies and Interests

With her strong literary interests and leadership skills, Mandy has quickly become an indispensable part of campus life. She is co-president of the Organization for Cross-Cultural Understanding (OCCU), last year focusing on representations: the ways we are “called upon to represent not only ourselves, but our countries, our people, our histories.” A poet, Mandy also co-directs the Writing House, writes for the Sewanee Purple, tutors in the writing center, and is on the Interfaith Advisory Council, among other things. This summer, she interned at the Nashville International Center for Empowerment (NICE). Coupled with school work and a work-study, Mandy keeps herself busy!

Favorite Places on Campus

Mandy’s favorites are Guerry-Garth (the green area between Convocation Hall and Walsh-Ellett) and, for really quiet times, the University Cemetery. Mandy uses these spots as places where she can go think, write poetry, and just find some healthy peace and quiet.

Best Class at Sewanee

Coincidentally, during her freshman year, Sewanee offered a Special Topics in Literature about Tolkien and his writing. The class was a 300-level course and required a prerequisite of English 101, but in the end, the prerequisites were waived and Mandy got to take the class and receive credit for it. Memorable!

Advice for Current & Future Sewanee International Students

“Freshman year is difficult, not just for international students, but for everybody... Remember that you’re not alone, and don’t be afraid to reach out and seek companionship.”



Student Blog: Semester Abroad in Prague

by Maren Czura

As I approach the halfway mark of my semester abroad in Prague, Czech Republic, I have excitedly ticked off the boxes on my bucket list, including my semester goal of solo-traveling. I recently traveled to Stockholm, Sweden and explored the vast, Nordic city by myself. After trekking from the Arlanda Airport to my hostel, nestled in the Old Town district of Stockholm, I aimlessly wandered around the city in sheer awe. My anxieties and worries of traveling alone as a young woman were immediately dispelled as I ventured around the archipelago city. Although I always enjoy creating shared experiences while traveling with others, I knew that I needed to push myself and create a newfound sense of independence. Moreover, there was an inexplicable sense of happiness and self-reliance I felt the entire weekend alone.

The following day I went on a nine-hour hike in Tyresta National Park, led by a local guide. The hike was the perfect Sewanee “fix” that I needed, as I immersed myself in natural beauty, contrasting from the city-life I had grown accustomed to in Prague. I learned about native Swedish plants, animals, and foods, as we identified different species in the vast forest. Eventually, we found a batch of chanterelle mushrooms and cooked them for lunch, as shown in the attached picture. All in all, the hike solidified my decision to venture to Sweden alone, and I am forever grateful to my family and Sewanee for allowing me to study abroad and create invaluable experiences like this one. Ultimately, my solo excursion in Sweden has been my favorite and most memorable trip thus far, and I am already looking forward to my upcoming solo travel to Poland next month!





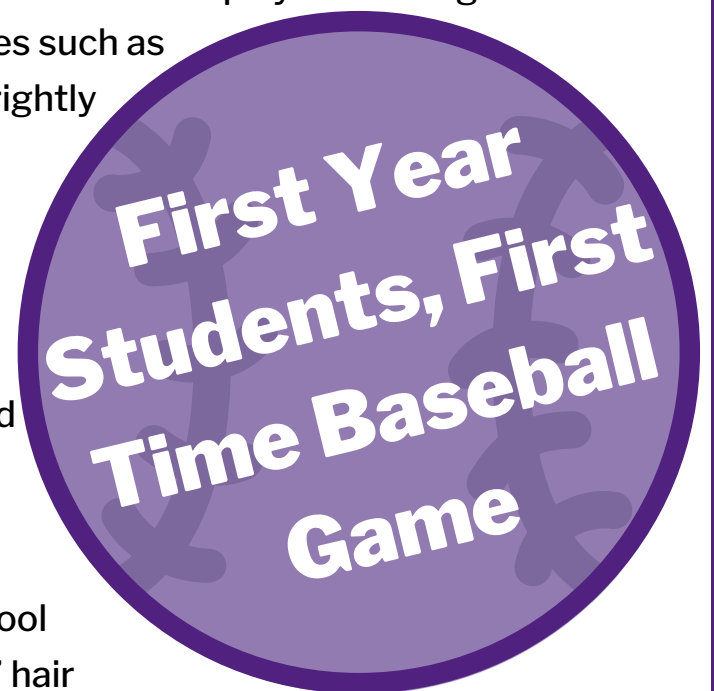
In the deepening darkness, fifty international students plus a few friends stood to stretch. Specifically, they were taking advantage of the seventh-inning stretch: “Take me out to the ball game,/Take me out with the crowd.” On that last night of August, current and new Sewanee international students were taken out to the ball game at First

Tennessee Park in Nashville to watch the Nashville Sounds play minor league baseball. The guitar-shaped scoreboard, revealing names such as Patrick Wisdom and Christian Lopes, shone brightly in contrast with the night beyond.

The students, on the whole, felt they needed some extra wisdom to understand the game. With runs, balls, and alternating patterns of play, baseball’s rules are more complicated and bountiful than soccer, which is generally the best-loved sport of international students.

With a long game and a long bus ride (on a school bus, no less, with windows down and students’ hair blowing in the wind), however, it was the perfect opportunity for students to build new friendships or strengthen old ones.

The Sounds’ mascot, Booster the Rooster, did his best to crow the team to victory, but with “one, two, three strikes you’re out/At the old ball game,” Nashville lost by one run. The students were too busy talking to notice much about the score, but that just means they were the big winners of the night. Home run!



New International Students



Top row: Xiangrun (Alex) Li, Lingjie (Eric) Hu, Seifaldin (Seif) Aldalil, and Yuncheng (Chris) Ni

Third row: SiQi (Madison) Liu, Feihan Yu, Ziyu (Susan) Wang, and Tingyu (Kerria) Luo

Second row: Jorge Barbero Barroso, Anastasiia (Nessie) Kurganova, Anna Püsök, and Sambhav Bansal

Front row: Lucas Carvalho, Chunyi (Paris) Li, Qinzhou (Nick) Song, and Jade Winter
Out in front: Pravesh Agarwal
Not pictured: Dheer Avashia, Elvin Chiciudean, Kristina Romanenkova, and Santeri Valpas

In August 2019, we welcomed 18 first-year students (14 pictured), one transfer student, two language house directors, and three seminarians (not pictured), representing 13 different countries. They bring many new gifts and talents to campus!

Gowning



Back row: Dirk Kayitare, Darja Beinenson, Xinyu (Jack) Li, and Alaa Abdelhamid

Front row: Ashraful Haque, Feza Umutoni, Szonja Szurop, Anqi (Angela) Qui, Adedolapo (Dolly) Prince, Tu (Scarlett) Pham, Hoang Le, and Yousra Hussain

Not pictured: Gillan Junglas, Brigitta (Brigi) Kujbus, and Yaxin (Yulee) Yu

This year, we had a record number of students who were gowning - fifteen students in all! - and awarded this honor.



..... CultureFest 2019



In September, the Organization for Cross-Cultural Understanding (OCCU) held its first-ever CultureFest, a celebration of culture, music, dance, food, and festivities. Various booths offered food, a puppet show, and other cultural activities. Here, Yousra Hussain applies Mehndi/henna to a visitor's hand.

