

Anne Kuster

Graduation Year: Senior

College: Arts & Letters

Major(s): Anthropology, International Economics

Minors(s): Gender Studies

Scholar Group Membership: Hesburgh-Yusko

Did you received other funding for this project?: No

Could you have completed this project without CUSE funding? No

More details on CUSE funding assistance?

Project Title: Spanish Youth Perception of the Andalusian Economic Crisis

Project Location: Complutense University in Madrid (Madrid, Spain) and University of Seville (Seville, Spain)

ND Faculty Mentor: Gabriel Torres

Project Type: Research

Why did you undertake this project/experience? Deepen your knowledge of a topic or issue, Research/experience necessary for senior thesis or capstone project, Career discernment and/or preparation

Did your funded experience help you:

[Deepen your understanding of your coursework or field of study]: Yes

[Discern your interests and post-bac goals]: Yes

[Become confident in your ability to set and achieve your goals]: Very Much

[Gain a more nuanced view of local, national, or global communities]: Very Much

[Improve your written and verbal communications skills]:Very Much

Tell us about your experience.

While abroad, I was able to work with several groups of people in different areas in Spain. I spoke with professors at Complutense University in Madrid and University of Seville about the problems in the Andalusian economy, and where youth fit into the solution. Experts seemed to think that youth took too passive a role in their own futures and were therefore more likely to leave the country to find jobs rather than create their own. This was largely echoed by the youth interviewed, who tended to blame economic problems on the government rather than their own lack of initiative, business cycles, failures in particular sectors, etc. This was very interesting to me and is what I intend to delve into further with my thesis: to what extent is the government to blame for the failure of and solutions to the economic crisis? Furthermore, one expert regarded incentives for young entrepreneurs as a key for economic improvement in Spain. I would love to further consider some policy implications of this, different policies, and whether youth would actually take advantage of such "incentive programs" or other social programs. In other words, what role does government policy actually play and what role could it play in the economic crisis of Spain?

Describe the impact this project had, both on you as a student-scholar and on the people you worked with.

For me, part of this project was personal. I wanted to learn more about youth working in Spain because I, as a young person, was considering working in Spain. Speaking with the youth broadened my horizons but also presented me with a distinct moral crisis: who was I, as an American student with a job offer in the USA, to take away a job from a struggling Spanish student? This is a fundamental Anthropological question that has arisen in other research I have done as well; to what extent are we explicitly studying human beings vs. engaging in reciprocal understandings of each other? I had some very interesting conversations with students not only about their future plans but about mine as well. In the end, many of my conversations with youth was done as peers instead of the more traditional researcher-participant relationship. I think this aided to my project because students trusted me easier and were therefore more likely to share with me perhaps controversial perspectives on the region of Andalusia and stereotypes about its people.

Describe how this experience is connected to your plans as a student or future professional.

I will be including this research in my senior thesis, publishing in the NDIAS magazine, and I hope to also present at a conference before the end of the year!

What advice would you give other students who are planning to pursue similar projects?

Don't be shy! People are generally excited to engage in research and are very willing to help - some students even corrected the grammar on my written survey for me! That being said, don't be discouraged if you get some "no"s as well. Some people were uncomfortable speaking to me formally and signing a consent form, but informal research can do a lot to guide your thought processes as well.

I acknowledge that this form has been filled out truthfully and to the best of my ability. I understand that this information will be shared with many different CUSE constituencies. As such, I have provided as much useful information as I was able. I understand that CUSE will not complete my award disbursement until this form is successfully completed. If I have any questions or concerns, I will contact CUSE before submitting this form. To illustrate that you understand all of these points, please enter your Notre Dame email in the box below.

undefined