

Summer Internship Report 2017

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**IGS Research Assistantship:
Arabic/French-to-English
Translation
of Source Documents:
Sewanee, Tennessee**

Provide an overview of the organization/research project and a summary of your responsibilities, tasks, and/or projects.

My work was assisting Professor Shana Minkin in the Department of International and Global Studies to carry out her research. Specifically, my work concentrated on translating Arabic and French primary and secondary sources and finding relevant information to Professor Minkin's research. The research mainly focused on Western nationals involvement in 19th century Egypt, focusing mainly on the death of the foreign nationals and how their bodies were processed and handled. This involved both academic books and historical records.

During your internship, what did you accomplish or how did you make a difference? In what ways did you grow in your professional and technical skills?

Over the course of the summer, I was able to make progress on an ongoing project which I will continue with Professor Minkin throughout my senior year. During this process, however, I drastically improved my translation speed and reading comprehension in Arabic. I did not have too much background in formal translation, so this internship made me learn the technical ins and outs of summary and direct translation from Arabic. Learning how to successfully translate ideas across languages that have different syntax, tones, and academic structural styles is definitely a skill to itself.

Describe a problem that you helped to solve at your internship. What skills or knowledge from your education at Sewanee helped you address the problem?

My research was straightforward enough to not encounter any problem too intense. I was only able to qualify for this internship, however, due to my Arabic and French classes and my study-abroad experience from Sewanee. The largest issues that I encountered involved me requiring more background information to fully understand the text I was translating. The ability to find such

information in an effective way to provide me with a complete understanding of my research is definitely a skill acquired throughout my coursework at Sewanee.

In what way were your teamwork skills strengthened?

My internship was composed mainly of individual work. I did, however, have to work closely with Professor Minkin, which gave me experience with how to work one-on-one with a supervisor. Strengthening my skills of communication and being able to adapt to new projects as they come in and quickly handle the new assignment proved to be important. For instance, Professor Minkin went to work in the archives in Nantes, France, and needed a few documents quickly translated, requiring me to drop the books I was working on to quickly respond with the translations from the archives.

How did your internship affect your career plans?

This internship definitely influenced my future career plans. I never really considered translation as a career, but the ability to learn interesting things about subjects that I find interesting and be able to be paid for that work is definitely a possibility for my future. As I am entering my senior year, I have considered graduate school, but this internship without a doubt has encouraged me to go to graduate school more to further my language and translation abilities.

In what ways did your internship cause you to encounter people of different backgrounds from your own? What steps did you take to communicate effectively with such persons? What did you learn from such persons' perspectives?

Due to my internship dealing with individual research, I was not physically encountering people. That being said, I did work with the understanding of perspectives through my research. A few of the Arabic and French documents I worked with were primary sources which require a certain amount of cultural and religious understanding to fully comprehend. Specifically, the Arabic primary source required me to do some background research to understand the cultural relations of the time that were understood at the time of publication.

Words of thanks to your internship funding donors:

I just would love to thank the donors who made this internship possible. Every time I am given the opportunity to do something like this through Sewanee, my career and academic focus move in a way I never expected before. These funding opportunities give so many students ways to expand their understanding of themselves and what they want to do. The ability to apply for opportunities such as summer internship funding was one of the main factors that attracted me to Sewanee, so being able to take advantage of these programs makes me feel like I made the right choice.