

STETSON UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Prospective Trip Participants

FROM: Dr. Mitchell G. Reddish

SUBJECT: Travel Course to London and Paris (RELS 168A-95)

I appreciate your interest in the spring 2018 course, RELS 168A-95 "The Bible in Art and Artifact," that will include travel to London and Paris during spring break, March 2-11, 2018. The brochure and this memo should give you all the details about the travel portion of the course that you need to help you decide to join us for this educational adventure.

This course is a full-semester course with classes on campus from January 16 to May 2 and travel to museums in London and Paris during spring break. During the travel we will be visiting the British Museum, the British Library, the Tate Modern Museum, the National Gallery, the Louvre, and the Musée d'Orsay. The course has two primary objectives: (1) to study archaeological artifacts from the ancient Near Eastern world and the Mediterranean world that have a direct bearing on the history, events, or places associated with the Bible (examples include the Cyrus Cylinder, the Mesha Stele, and the Taylor Prism) or that provide important background information about the biblical world (examples include the Law Code of Hammurabi, the Amarna letters, and the Sumerian creation stories), and (2) to study art works in museums in London and Paris that portray scenes from the Bible. During the trip, you will also have ample free time to explore some of the sights of Paris and London on your own.

The price of \$3398.00 is the additional cost for the travel portion of the course and includes all air and ground transportation, hotel accommodations, daily breakfast, dinner three evenings in London and three evenings in Paris, and all taxes, tips, and museum entrance fees. I have tried to include all expenses except for lunches, a couple of dinners, and personal spending money. (Plan on about \$300.00 for lunches and dinners, depending upon the size of your appetite!)

I have taken students on travel courses several times in the last few years to places such as Greece, Turkey, Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and Italy, in addition to London and Paris. These trips have always been extremely enjoyable and educational. Here are comments from some of the participants on previous London/Paris trips:

"I loved this trip! I would definitely recommend it to all my friends. Going to the museums taught me a lot, especially because I was seeing everything in a completely new context and perspective. Learning about London and Paris by experiencing them first-hand through their culture and people was a priceless experience."

"It was one of the most amazing educational experiences of my life. This trip was well organized and I would recommend it to anyone in a heartbeat."

"To read about art and artifacts is fascinating. To *see* them adds so much to one's understanding of their significance."

"The trip was more amazing than I expected. I loved every minute of it! It is well planned and organized. Great experience overall."

"There was not a minute I didn't enjoy. I *loved* the British Museum."

“The trip was a wonderful experience for me. I was able to learn and do so much in such a short time. I learned so much about how artifacts help our understanding of events in the Bible. My favorite part was Paris and going to the Louvre. The Louvre was so amazing and overwhelming.”

“It was a wonderful trip. I got to see living history. Stories I had heard all my life were made concrete and placed in front of me with the artifacts. Different understandings of the Bible throughout history were vividly demonstrated in the paintings. I learned a lot and had a blast.”

Space on the trip is limited, so register early. **If spaces are available, students who do not wish to take the full-semester course may participate during spring break only in the travel portion of the course for no academic credit.** Priority will be given to students who are taking the full-semester course. Students who are not taking the full semester course have the option of earning ½ unit of credit for participating in the spring break travel and completing specified assignments. Friends or family members of students, as well as other interested persons, are also eligible to participate in the trip.

To register for the trip, complete the registration forms found online at world.stetson.edu (look for “Faculty-Led London and Paris”) and pay the \$300.00 deposit by check or money order, payable to “Stetson University” and delivered to WORLD: The David and Leighan Rinker Center for International Learning (635 N. Bert Fish Drive). Electronic copies of the trip brochure and this memorandum may also be found at that website. Also, be sure to complete the registration form from the brochure (or print out and complete the online copy at the world.stetson.edu website) and submit that registration form to me. Although the deadline for registration and payment of the \$300.00 deposit is **October 30**, you should register as early as possible.

In the event I receive more applications than I have spaces available, acceptance will be based on several factors, including date of application, student’s major or minor, and level of student’s commitment to the academic nature of the trip. Students will be notified of their acceptance for the trip no later than November 6. The remainder of the trip costs is due by **November 27, 2017**. Payment by check or money order (payable to Stetson University) should be made at WORLD: The David and Leighan Rinker Center for International Learning.

Financial aid to help students participate in the trip may be available. Students should check with WORLD: The David and Leighan Rinker Center for International Learning for travel scholarships available from that office. In addition, the Department of Religious Studies has a limited number of Rinker Travel Scholarships for Religious Studies (approximately \$1000.00 each) available for students who will be participating in travel courses. You may check with me for additional information and an application for the Rinker Scholarships for Religious Studies. **(Deadline for application for Rinker Scholarships for Religious Studies is October 16.)** Also, financial aid in the form of student loans is sometimes available to help pay expenses for travel courses. The availability of these loans varies with each student’s individual situation. If you are interested in exploring the possibility of a student loan, please check with Stetson’s Office of Student Financial Planning.

If you are considering participating in the trip and do not have a passport valid at least through September 11, 2018, you should apply for one immediately. A copy of your passport will be needed when you register for the trip.

Travelers sometimes are interested in travel insurance that provides reimbursement for trip payment in certain situations when the person has to cancel the trip. I can provide further information about this optional type of insurance if you are interested. (The “Optional Travel Protection Program” mentioned on the back of the brochure is an example of this type insurance that is offered by the travel agency we use.)

If you have any questions about the trip, please do not hesitate to contact me.


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