

The Jean Monnet European Union Center of Excellence awarded two undergraduate students and a community college instructor an opportunity to participate in a Brussels Study tour in June 2018. Below is a summarized report that Lisa Hollman, an instructor at Madison College, gave regarding her time in Brussels.

The trip to Brussels was an amazing opportunity to learn about the European Union, and the timing of the trip was distinct. Between the Brexit vote and follow through, the tariff discussions and implementations, and the media surrounding the Harley Davidson/presidential response, the trip allowed me to have a view of the processes, responses, and reactions of our government and the EU while immersed in their culture. While attending a presentation highlighting the Educational Diversity within the EU, I was struck by the passion of the students and the presenters to advance opportunities to everyone.

Highlights of the trip included understanding why the European Union was established and how it continues to work, and what a country leaving the EU means. The European Council is the driving force behind the European Union and its political priorities. The Council works with the European Parliament, the European Commission and the member states. Each body of the European Union sets their own agenda in regards to future policy making.

I am very grateful to have had such an opportunity to go to Belgium and experience the European Union first hand. The knowledge I gained will provide amazing learning opportunities to share with my students in the classroom, students who are tied to the labor market and economic development. In the dynamic of the global classroom and labor market, seeing the work of the EU firsthand, increases my ability to actively engage my students and work as a part of a larger whole.