

Bob Blanton Study Tours @ Gaston College

Since 1978



Ben Haddou, Morocco

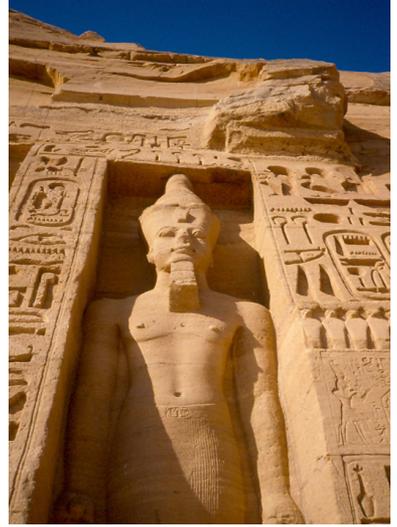


Gaston College
Opportunities For Life

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THE BOB BLANTON STUDY TOURS @ GASTON COLLEGE PROGRAM

is a unique concept in international travel for our service area. For almost four decades, Gaston College has planned and escorted some 91 educational tours, visiting more than 80 countries/principalities on six continents. These study tours have involved hundreds of students, college staff members, and local community participants. Students have the opportunity to earn college credit while traveling abroad, while community participants not interested in college credit may simply audit any overseas travel course. Our professionally escorted tours are carefully planned and customized, and are offered at a wholesale price.



**Temple of Ramesses II
Abu Simbel, Egypt**



**"El Castillo" pyramid,
Chichen Itza, Yucatan, Mexico**

HISTORY

Gaston College was the first community college in the western Carolinas to institute a program of international educational travel, and the college has the longest continuous record of successful study tours abroad in the community college system. The Bob Blanton Study Tours @ Gaston College program was planned and organized by its first and current director, Bob Blanton, and was approved by the college and the Department of Community Colleges in 1977. The first overseas tour was conducted to England and Belgium in June of 1978.

PURPOSE

The Bob Blanton Study Tours @ Gaston College Program enables the college to fulfill its mission as a “community college” in the broadest sense in that it expands our “community” from a local one to a global community. All participants are prepared for international travel by a series of informative pre-departure meetings on the college campus

beginning several weeks prior to departure. One of the most important objectives of the overseas study tours program is to develop an attitude of “cultural relativism”. This teaches our participants to be respectful, tolerant, and appreciative of other peoples’ ways and customs that might differ from our own American lifestyle. It also helps participants to understand that cultural differences need not imply cultural “superiority” or “inferiority,” but simply difference.



Grand Canal, Venice, Italy



Spring in the Swiss Alps

Our program is motivated by the belief that there is a great demand today in our society for people who possess “international competence” and understanding. It has been proven many times that the most effective path to world peace comes not from politicians, but from personal contact between tolerant and understanding citizens.



The Forbidden City, Beijing, China

The Study Tours Director is assisted by an Advisory Committee, composed of local community members who have traveled with the college and support and understand our program:

Dr. Carrietta Adkins, Charlotte
The Honorable Tim Patti, Gastonia
Elizabeth Grose, Gastonia
Myra Caldwell, Gastonia
Judith Maloney, Gastonia
Betty Upchurch, Member Emerita, Charlotte
Bob Blanton, Study Tours Director, Gastonia
Susan Flynn, Assistant Director, Lincolnton

All photographs from Bob Blanton's personal collection.



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