By: Jennifer L. Berghom

Marivel Mata, now a graduate student at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, said studying in Germany in the summer of 2014 opened a whole new world to her. Mata, who earned her bachelor's degree in business administration from UT Pan American in 2014 and expects to complete her Master of Public Administration at UTRGV in June, said in addition to learning more about her field of study, she also experienced living in a culture completely different than her own. She also visited tourist attractions throughout Germany and in Barcelona, Spain.

“It changes you,” said Mata, who is an administrative coordinator for UTRGV’s Office of Global Engagement’s International Programs and Partnerships. “You come back a different person. It changes you in that you not only appreciate your own culture, but others and respect the fact that it’s different.”

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley is planning to offer about 39 study abroad programs throughout the world this summer. Countries where students can study include Mexico, Peru, Britain, Germany, Italy, Spain, Costa Rica, China and South Korea, to name a few.

WHY STUDY ABROAD?
The benefits of studying in another country are numerous, UTRGV Honors College Dean Dr. Mark C. Andersen said. Andersen is serving as the interim director of the Office of Global Engagement, which oversees the study abroad program.

Not only do students have the opportunity to see another part of the world, they also are building their résumés so that they are more desirable to future employers, he said.

“Employers look for global competence and experience in a foreign culture,” he said.

Studying abroad can be costly — the average price for study abroad programs is between $5,000 and $6,000 — so it is important to start saving money early, Andersen said.

SCHOLARSHIPS
There are scholarships available to students looking to study overseas, he said. One of the most popular scholarships is through the International Women’s Board of the UTRGV Foundation, which raises money to sponsor study abroad programs, for students’ travel to present papers at international conferences and other endeavors.

“The Office of Global Engagement has study abroad fairs throughout the year to educate students about what opportunities are available to them,” he said.

For more information about study abroad programs, call (956) 665-3572 (Edinburg) or (956) 882-8955 (Brownsville) or email oge@UTRGV.edu.

ABOUT UTRGV

The number of UTRGV students that studied abroad under faculty-led programs last year.

11:
The number of countries UTRGV students journeyed to for an unforgettable experience in 2015.

WHAT CAN YOU STUDY?
UTRGV study abroad courses are a global learning experience. Learn from knowledgeable faculty in some of these areas of study:

- Art
- History
- Communication
- Philosophy
- Literature
- Language
- Culture
- Music
- Theatre

HOW ARE YOU GOING TO PAY FOR IT?
Start saving now for your study abroad destination. UTRGV also offers scholarships and financial aid opportunities for study abroad. Contact UTRGV’s Office of Financial Aid at (956) 665-2501 or visit utrgv.edu/financialaid to learn more.