

UACES Scholarships 2010

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Outline of project

As part of my PhD, I study voter perceptions of policy choices in European democracies, asking to what degree voters perceive policy differences between political parties, how institutional and party system complexity affects these perceptions, and how such perceptions subsequently influence voting behavior. My stay at the Harvard Kennedy School from January – April 2010, was intended to gain further feedback on my work as well as to interact with professors and graduate students in my field of research at Harvard.

Academic achievements

During my time as a research fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School, I've participated in several courses and attended seminars at the Kennedy School, as well as prepared an article for publication, and written two thesis chapters. The feedback of scholars in my field, both at the Kennedy School and at the Department of Government as well as the contact with graduate students has proven very fruitful for my research.

Use made of resources, facilities abroad

The Harvard library and library staff is wonderful and has been very helpful in tracking down data and literature that I needed during my stay. My receiving professor and the staff at the Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality & Social Policy have been very welcoming as well, both in terms of feedback as well as helping me find my way to interesting seminars and workshops at Harvard.

Positive and negative aspects

The positive aspects of my stay abroad have certainly been the inspiration that a university like Harvard provides. The scientific community and ongoing seminars and brown-bag sessions are a continuous source of inspiration and a chance to see famous professors speak, and the well organized working environment (excellent working spaces and library) greatly increases productivity. The only negative aspect I could identify would be that a research stay of fourth months is too short to participate more fully in courses and seminars, and I would recommend future visiting scholars to take their time, and enjoy this wonderful experience!

Concluding, my research stay at Harvard has been very important for my research, both in terms of feedback and personal contact with important scholars in my field as well as a source of academic inspiration.

I thank UACES and the European Commission for supporting my work.