

# Fulbright Austria 2018

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## Dr. Paige Haber-Curran

I arrived in Salzburg, Austria in February 2018 during a snow storm. Through a combination of a taxi and my new colleague and her car, my husband, our 1.5 year old daughter, and I made it to our flat a block away from one of the main pedestrian walkways in picturesque Salzburg. As we spent the first few weeks setting up our apartment and figuring out logistics with daycare, transportation, and paperwork (lots of paperwork in Austria!), we quickly fell in love with the city. We found our favorite bakeries (even one open on Sunday!), went sledding with new friends we met, ate some *Krapfen* (jelly donuts) to celebrate Fasching, and made our first of many trips to IKEA.

A couple weeks later my semester at Salzburg University of Applied Sciences began. I had a joint teaching and research grant within the Department of Business. My educational background, teaching, and research is cross-disciplinary, so although I am housed within the College of Education, I brought my background in leadership and emotional intelligence to my Fulbright role, teaching two sections of Intercultural Management and co-teaching four sections of Social Skills/Emotional Intelligence with an Austrian colleague. My colleagues were quick to welcome me to the department, invite me to join them for coffee or for a beer in the cafeteria, and pick my brain about American politics. I enjoyed getting to know the students and adapting to the culture of the university. I worked collaboratively with faculty to conduct a case study examination of the inclusion of emotional intelligence curriculum in the master's program.

My family and I tried to get out and about to immerse ourselves in Salzburg and the surrounding region. Our daughter enrolled in a *Krabbelstube* (daycare), which was German-speaking, and we met some of her friends' families. My husband and I signed up for a swimming class through the university. We bought an old car so that we could explore the mountains for first skiing, then hiking. We were tour guides to our friends and family who visited (and I somehow managed to not go on a *Sound of Music* tour!). We even bought *Tracht* (traditional Austrian clothing) and attended a wedding.

I enjoyed getting to know other Fulbrighters through participating in welcome events in Vienna, visiting with Fulbrighters coming through Salzburg as tourists (most Fulbrighters were placed in Vienna), and attending the Fulbright conference event at a retreat center on Wolfgangsee, a picturesque lake in the Austrian Alps. At times I was disappointed to be so far away from the majority of the Fulbrighters in Vienna, but I believe being far from the big city enabled us to immerse ourselves in the culture.

I continue to stay touch with many colleagues and friends in Salzburg. My research and teaching with colleagues continues, and it is my hope that we will continue to collaborate. I am incredibly appreciative of the time my family and I had in Austria and the many opportunities that came from the experience.



Teaching *Intercultural Management* at Salzburg University of Applied Sciences



With colleagues hiking at Wolfgangsee during our Department of Business Teambuilding Day



My family attending a wedding for our friends who we met in Salzburg.