

The following information will be published on the Courses page of the [Summer Sessions Website](#):

Course Title:	Travel Stories and Transatlantic Storytelling		
Course Number:	GSS 2264	Credit Hours:	3
First Instructor:	Christin Essin	First Instructor Email:	christin.essin@vanderbilt.edu
Second Instructor:	Elizabeth Cizmar	Second Instructor Email:	ibby.cizmar@vanderbilt.edu
Program start date:	5/3/2026	Program end date:	5/31/2026
Program destination(s): (Each city, country - start/end date)	New York City, 5/4 to 5/8 Queen Mary II crossing, 5/8 to 5/15 London, UK, 5/15 to 5/30		
Does this course fulfill any AXLE credit? If so, what?	Perspectives		
What are the academic pre-requisites (if any) for enrolling in this course?	None		
What are some are some conditions or challenges that students will face? (Ex. Hiking long distances, extreme temperatures, rocky terrain, etc.)	Seasickness on transatlantic crossing; gaps in wifi for connecting with family.		
What is covered in the student budget:	Detailed answers below.		
Lodging (Total nights + included)	New York City, 4 nights with roommate, TBD hotel Queen Mary II crossing, 7 nights, oceanview room with roommate, includes all meals, afternoon tea, gym access, and shipboard entertainment. London, UK, 15 nights, London House Hotel in Kensington, includes continental breakfast and high-speed wi-fi		
Meals:	Total breakfasts: 22		

	Total lunches: 10 Total dinners: 11
Transportation (Airfare, public transit, etc.):	Coach from Southampton to London included. All NYC and UK public transit costs included.
Supplies (Textbooks, gear, etc.):	n/a
Excursions (Tour fees, admission fees, etc.):	All tours and admission fees included
What is <u>not</u> covered in the student budget:	Detailed answers below.
Lodging (Total nights):	Click here to enter text.
Meals:	Total breakfasts: 4 (NYC) Total lunches: 16 Total dinners: 15
Transportation (international airfare, public transit, etc.):	Airfare/transport to NYC and one-way return flight from London.
Supplies (Textbooks, gear, personal items, etc.):	Mobile phone, including service in UK (purchased international plan or SIM card)
Excursions (Optional activities, tour fees, admission fees, etc.):	Extra shipboard purchases on QMII; possible London activities outside those included for the group.
Visa needed for US passport holders?	No
Is the cost of the visa included	N/A
Does the course have a service-learning component:	No
Please provide the course description below:	
In 1853, transportation tycoon Cornelius Vanderbilt and his family embarked from New York Harbor to Southampton, UK on the first leg of his European Grand Tour. The Vanderbilts left amidst great fanfare aboard the new luxury steam yacht, the North Star.	

American journalists reported on the ship's advanced engineering and luxurious accommodations they, while the British marveled at Vanderbilt's wealth, contrasting this "self-made" man with the European aristocrats he would encounter.

Students on this Maymester excursion will follow the same path as passengers on the Cunard Line's Queen Mary II, the last of the ocean liners built with a strengthened hull to withstand the Atlantic's rough waves. Following four days in New York spent investigating Vanderbilt's cultural imprint on the city and its history as a global port, students will traverse slowly across the Atlantic in a luxurious setting befitting the Vanderbilt name.

Onboard classes (3 hrs each day) will engage students in 1) stories of past transatlantic crossings and travelers, 2) theoretical questions of crossing, identity, and mobility, 3) the forms, techniques, and rhetoric travel narratives, and 4) practices of oral, written, and digital storytelling to document our crossing.

In London, students will explore this port city for their own "grand tour," experiencing cultural sites and events that offer "refinement" for "self-made" visitors. As a community of travelers, students will create and tell stories to document both the journey and their process of self-discovery outside the familiarity of their daily lives. Stories might align with or diverge from the Vanderbilt legacy, but each will help students embrace the new perspectives gained from a slow crossing in the liminal expanse of the Atlantic.

Time in New York will include:

- A tour of Ellis Island, the Tenement Museum, and dinner in Little Italy.
- A tour of Gilded Age mansions and artifacts from Vanderbilt history at the Museum of the City of New York.
- Cross-cultural storytelling on Broadway and Off-Broadway stages

Time in London will include

- Group exploration at the British Museum, National Gallery, and National Maritime Museum to encounter artifacts and art works from various oceanic crossings and "grand tours."
- Group touring, such as a day trip to Blenheim Palace, encountering the legacy of Vanderbilt wealth at home of American heiress Consuelo Vanderbilt.
- Group dining in "storied" family restaurants established after various immigrant crossings.
- Self-exploration to a variety of historic and contemporary sites (Tower of London; Westminster Abbey; Windsor Castle; Hampton Court; Shakespeare's Globe and more).
- Cross-cultural storytelling on West End, Fringe, and National Theatre stages.
- Cinematic storytelling at The Making of Harry Potter, Warner Brother Studios