

Meret Hofer

Study Abroad Counselor

#### Career/Education Background:

I started working in the Office of Global Programs right after I finished my undergraduate studies at NYU. I majored in East Asian Studies and Psychology and spent my senior year in China studying the Chinese language and culture at Beijing University. My experience in China was amazing (if challenging at times!), and when the opportunity presented itself to work on opening the NYU in Shanghai site I was thrilled! Since then, I've helped prepare students going abroad to NYU's many study abroad sites, though I primarily work with students planning on studying at the NYU in Shanghai site.

After I started working in Global Programs, I also began work on my MA in cross-cultural psychology and international human rights. I'm currently working on my thesis, which examines the possibility of a truly universal standard of human rights given the world's many value systems and cultures. It's been an exiting project!

#### Why do you think students should study abroad?

Studying abroad challenges you in ways you can't expect. It pushes you out of your comfort zone, makes you become aware of your limits, and challenges your basic assumptions and beliefs. You'll learn more about yourself during your months abroad than ever before!

#### What advice do you have for students who are about to study abroad?

Keep an open mind and embrace the fact that you're experiencing a culture completely different than your own. Don't get stuck wishing that things were like at home! Even when you're homesick and things seem difficult, make sure you always make an effort to keep busy and stay involved. While it may feel like you have tons of time at your study abroad site - it will fly! Before you know it you'll be on your return flight, and you don't want to regret not having taken advantage of this opportunity to the fullest extent possible!