Akwaaba! Welcome! It is hard to go far in Ghana without hearing this cheerful greeting. During the first six-week summer session in late May and June, students from across NYU participated in the Journalism in Ghana program at NYU Accra and were welcomed with characteristic Ghanaian warmth. The university’s well established West African outpost celebrated its tenth anniversary in 2014 and was home to students this summer as they explored Ghana’s history, culture and incredible stories. Led by Professor Frankie Edozien, journalist and NYU faculty, students in a variety of disciplines converged in Accra to expand their interests and sharpen their reporting skills. While visiting the group in early June, Noelle Marchetta, Associate Director of CAS Summer and Study Abroad Programs, had the pleasure of tagging along and getting a sneak peek at their work.

As with other CAS Summer Abroad programs, academics form the core of the experience. Students take two courses, Reporting Africa and Journalism and Society, which together complement field work and inform a capstone project. The latter course is taught by a local instructor who prompts students to critically examine how African events are represented in the press, both locally and by western media; students are encouraged to look beyond the conventional African narrative to an authentically local perspective. By contrast, Reporting Africa is hands on, putting journalistic principles into practice and allowing students to explore interests in varied topics. Participants worked on collaborative pieces investigating the tourism industry, the energy crisis, or dumsor, and the sports boxing culture in the Bukom neighborhood. To learn more about students’ research and reporting in Ghana, check out the program’s dedicated publication, Africa Dispatch: http://journalism.nyu.edu/publishing/africadispatch/.

Participants worked hard but had ample opportunity to enjoy Ghanaian culture through the incredible people, music, food, and city atmosphere. With visits to the Black Star Square, Kwame Nkrumah Memorial, the international heritage site at Elmina Castle and Cape Coast, as well as a breathtaking canopy walk in Kakum National Park, students learned about Ghana’s colonial history and its rise as one of the first independent African nations. Another sponsored excursion to the Ashanti region in Kumasi and the northern regions near Tamale further informs students with a sense of the country’s varied history and diverse cultures. This program offers an incredible international perspective for any student—not only for budding journalists—interested in economics, public health, politics, history and education. For your amazing summer, check out Journalism in Ghana or one of the ten other CAS Summer Abroad programs: http://www.nyu.edu/admissions/summer-sessions/summer-abroad/programs.html. Ghana is waiting for you.

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