

Grad is Belgium bound

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Patrick Matthews, a 2014 Tulane grad, will be a Fulbright Teaching Assistant in the Dutch-speaking city of Ghent, Belgium, for the coming academic year. (Photo by Ryan Rivet)

Patrick Matthews speaks English, French and Dutch fluently. The 2014 Tulane University graduate from Shaker Heights, Ohio, will be in Ghent, Belgium, for the coming academic year as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant.

Matthews followed the advice of his adviser in shooting for a [Fulbright](#): Pick the Fulbright and location that's right for you, considering the competition.

“Fulbright is a statistics game,” says Matthews, who majored in French and political science (international relations). “France, with its much larger population, has many more teaching assistantships than does Belgium, which has only two ? one in Brussels (for a French speaker) and one in Ghent, where they speak Dutch. The Netherlands has none.”

His international focus started during high school when his family hosted an exchange student. Then, Matthews wound up in the Netherlands as an exchange student during his gap year.

“Being an exchange student in the Netherlands was a defining experience for me, but one of the hardest things I’ve ever done. Dutch is very challenging.”

Matthews also had challenges with his first host family and nearly left for home. But he switched to a second host family, with whom he still maintains contact.

At Tulane, he wrote his honors thesis on the European Union, and Brussels, Belgium, is the headquarters of the EU. During his junior year, he studied abroad in Paris.

These experiences, along with his grades and strong on-campus interview, led to the Fulbright.

Other Tulane undergraduates who placed in the English Teaching Assistant Program are: Ophir Haberer (Vietnam), Lauren Kwiatkowski (Taiwan), Daniel Mellow (Greece) and Reese Osta (Germany). Two Tulane graduate students have Fulbright fellowships: Daniel Castilow (anthropology) in Trinidad and Tobago and Erlend Johnson (archeology) in Honduras.

The campus deadline for the Fulbright Program is Sept. 16, 2014. For information, contact [Charlotte Maheu Vail](#), associate director of the Honors Program, who is the Fulbright Program adviser.

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