Hello. My name is John Ferri, I am a University of Pittsburgh undergraduate student double-majoring in Italian and French, and I am an active participant in the CAPA Florence Fall 2017 Global Internship Program. Today I am going to be talking about my experience in this Global Internship Program, including both a class component on global professionalism and an internship placement at Flod, a creative communication firm. The goals of this presentation are to describe my experience, demonstrate the global professional skills I have learned, articulate how I have gained and used C.Q., show how this program features cultural diplomacy, and confirm what my next steps will be for constructing an international career after this program.

Let’s start with an overview of the contents of the presentation. There are two equally important aspects of this program: my internship placement at Flod and the CAPA Global Internship Program course with Dr. Kraczyna. I will start by describing my internship placement at Flod and then I will explain the Global Internship Program course. I will elaborate by first detailing the specific experiences that I had at Flod and at CAPA and then by confirming the global professional skills that I have learned. Moving on, I will define C.Q., a central theme for this program, and elaborate on how I acquired and demonstrated this capacity. I will then define cultural diplomacy and show how it is an implicit but very important and relevant aspect of this program. The presentation will conclude with a discussion of the potential next steps to build my global career in the future.

We will begin by talking about my internship placement at Flod.

First off, I will answer these two questions: what is Flod? What does this company do? Flod is an organization located at Via dei Banchi 4 in the center of Florence, Italy, and it is a creative communication and marketing firm. In other words, they produce content published on social media platforms, on paper, and in multimedia projects in both English and Italian that promotes client companies. Their clients include Il Borro, a Tuscan Relais and Chateaux resort owned by the Ferragamo family, Dievole, a producer of wine and olive oil, and Visit Tuscany, the tourism entity in the Tuscan government. As a Communication Intern, my duties consisted of translating Visit Tuscany articles from Italian to English for tourists, including non-native English speakers. I translated social media posts describing featured exhibits at the Museo del Tessuto, a museum in Prato highlighting the rich textile history in Prato, in Tuscany, and in Italy. I also promoted client companies on Instagram using comments on other Instagram user’s posts. These comments raised the companies’ visibility and were created in both Italian and English. The client companies included Il Borro, a Tuscan Relais and Chateaux resort owned by the Ferragamo family, Dievole, a producer of olive oil and wine, and Podere Brizio, a Montalcino company that owns a Montalcino wine resort and produces various wines in that region.

Now I will move on to the classroom learning aspect of my professional experience at CAPA - the Global Internship Program Course.

This course was a series of seminars and lessons with Dr. Kraczyna at the CAPA Florence Center. It has provided me with many resources and pieces of advice to make the most out of my internship at Flod and to construct my global career for the future. The regular reading assignments for this seminar are among the most important sources of knowledge and guidance for my employment at Flod and my career development. The readings that I found to be the most relevant and crucial for me were the excerpts from Middleton’s CQ book, which defines the cultural intelligence quotient and describes the usefulness of having the ability to successfully navigate across cultures, the masterclass and PDF document on workplace wellness and work/life balance challenges, the Belbin test, which explores team member roles in a company and which role fits me best. I am considered a monitor, someone who helps to observe, analyze, and lead a team project situation. There were the excerpts from John Hooper’s The Italians book, which provided a useful cultural framework of Italy and contributed to the development of my cultural intelligence quotient, C.Q. There was also a Forbes professionalism article that reinforced lessons that taught me what qualities are desired in a global professional, including a diplomatic and calm demeanor, clear and concise communication skills, respect for others and myself, and an ability to deliver high-quality results in an appropriate time frame. The course took place at the CAPA Florence Center at Via dei Pandolfini 20.

This next part of this presentation delves deeper into my experiences through the internship placement at Flod and the course at CAPA, clarifying what my duties were and what I worked to achieve in this program.

The first key internship experience is translation. The translations that I performed from Italian to English for Visit Tuscany, a government entity promoting regional tourism, and for Museo del Tessuto, the textile museum of Prato, required critical thinking, understanding of and navigation between cultures using C.Q., strong professional and public communication abilities, and robust foreign language capabilities.

For Visit Tuscany, I needed to confirm with every article that I had translated all of the content from the original Italian document closely and accurately, but I also needed to think critically and apply C.Q., communication, and language skills to ensure that I was translating in a way that would be clear even for non-native English speakers. I was obliged to preserve the colloquial and engaging style of the original articles in order to appeal to the target market of English-speaking tourists. For the Museo del Tessuto, I needed to translate from Italian to English for posts for social media platforms that described various highlights of the museum’s exhibits.

These posts contained colorful, engaging, and colloquial language to appeal to potential museum visitors, and they used several idiomatic expressions and phrases that were difficult to render in English. ‘Chapeau,’ for example, is a French word for hat, but is used in Italian as an idiomatic expression roughly equivalent to ‘hats off’ or ‘I tip my hat to you,’ so in these posts, it needed to be translated as one of the following English idiom equivalents, not as a direct translation of the word itself. Another example of a phrase that required critical thinking, C.Q., language skills, and communication skills is ‘gioco di prestigio,’ which, if one were to literally translate into English, would become ‘game of prestige.’ However, the real meaning of ‘gioco di prestigio’ in Italian is much closer to the English expression ‘magic trick’ in the context of these posts.

The second key internship experience is the English-language writing that I produced for social media posts promoting winemakers. These posts would describe an Italian wine-making company, its history, and its unique mission. They would also feature one or two wines and inform readers of ideal food pairings. These posts were an important aspect of my internship experience because they required me to use C.Q. in order to navigate the world of Italian wine-making and communicate the great pride and heritage of Italian wine-makers to English-speaking audiences. I also needed to use my professional and public communication abilities and my social media knowledge, and I needed to be adaptable and flexible, because this industry was new to me. The messages of every post needed to be tailored to be marketable to a target audience of food and wine industry critics and lovers of Italian wine. Therefore, I needed to use some of the vocabulary of a sommelier by referring to wines as ‘fresh,’ ‘full-bodied,’ or ‘elegant,’ defining their ‘aromas,’ and listing their ‘hints’ of various fruity or nutty natural flavors.

Another major duty that I had at Flod was the promotion on Instagram of client companies using comments in both Italian and English.

Let’s move on to confirming the skills that I have acquired.

Through my work at Flod, I have gained and applied the cultural intelligence quotient, C.Q., which is a skillset enabling successful cross-cultural understanding and navigation, by performing translations and writing about cultural topics. I have learned how to use Instagram, a social media platform, in a professional manner to promote Flod’s client companies. Critical thinking was necessary for the successful translations of cultural features and idiomatic expressions, from ‘chapeau’ and ‘gioco di prestigio’ to tourism promotion articles about Montalcino, Montepulciano and other Tuscan zones.

This next part of the presentation will elaborate upon the cultural intelligence quotient, or C.Q., an idea pioneered by Julia Middleton in her writings.

As stated in Julia Middleton’s interesting book, C.Q., the cultural intelligence quotient is a critical component of a successful global career. It is the ability to navigate between, interact with, work in, and live in different cultures around the world. Middleton clarifies that there are not only national cultures, but also unique cultures for every group of people and organization. Having a high level of C.Q. means combining the interpersonal communication of high emotional intelligence, also called E.Q., with the technical and intellectual capabilities that signify a high intelligence quotient, also called I.Q. C.Q. applies this combination of practical abilities to help one overcome challenges in diverse and international workplaces, such as miscommunication, unintentional insults, and errors resulting from misunderstanding. I learned this skill by participating actively in the Global Internship Program Course at CAPA’s Florence Center and by working for Flod as a Communication Intern. I needed to successfully navigate not only the office politics of a professional organization such as Flod, but also the cultural differences between a Florentine office and an American one. I needed to respect the hierarchy of the office and communicate primarily with my supervisor, Dr. Alexandra Korey. I also needed to be able to produce high-quality results for translations and social media promotions for a variety of cultural subjects, from Italian wines and olive oils to tourism articles about splendid Tuscan cities and countryside spots.

Another important, yet implicit, theme in CAPA’s Global Internship Program and my internship placement at Flod was cultural diplomacy. I will explain what this means and why it is crucial.

Cultural diplomacy means using culture and the arts to promote mutual understanding between groups of people. Cultural diplomacy is a recognized and valuable aspect of diplomacy, under the umbrella of public diplomacy, which uses soft methods, such as culture and sports, to encourage mutual understanding and cooperation. It is appreciated for its flexible, positive, and inclusive nature. Promoting culture promotes peace, and it is a field to which anyone can contribute constructively. Cultural diplomacy operates at many levels in official and unofficial ways. Governments, private organizations, and individuals all contribute to this field. This program features cultural diplomacy at an individual level by promoting the development of my cultural intelligence quotient through a global professionalism workshop and a global internship placement at Flod, a creative company focused on communication that works across cultural boundaries in both Italian and English. This is a relevant and important aspect of the CAPA Global Internship Program because one needs to know about and contribute to cultural diplomacy in every way possible in order to become an engaged global citizen and produce a positive social and professional impact in the international community.

The next steps for building my future career will include an internship over the summer in Paris, France to complement my experience this semester in Florence, Italy, and completing applications to teach English in Italy and France after graduating from the University of Pittsburgh in 2019. Throughout my course of studies at the University of Pittsburgh, my future internship in Paris, and my potential future position as a teaching assistant for the English language in Italy and France, I will apply the professional and personal skills and content and cultural knowledge that I have acquired this semester at Flod and in the CAPA Global Internship Program course. These skills will promote mutual understanding and cooperation, which is a form of cultural diplomacy that is very important for the improvement of world society and the global economy. Cultural intelligence quotient, C.Q., is a skill that I have developed through my internship placement and CAPA course, learning to successfully understand and navigate between Italian and American professional and daily life cultures.