

# 11th Student's Symposium: Research Topics and Intercultural Learning in the International Context (May 21-29 2023)

## May 22, 2023 (Monday): Opening Session of 11th Student's Symposium

On Monday, May 22, 2023 the 11th student symposium: Research and intercultural learning in an international context was opened. Before the beginning of the symposium, it was necessary to register. As professors and students from different universities arrived, excitement and joy could be seen on their faces. Universities participating in the symposium are University of Cincinnati, OH, Pennsylvania State University, PA, University of Central Florida, FL and Indiana State University, IN.

Introductory speeches and short presentations were held, in which our guests introduced themselves and their universities. Presentations were also held by volunteers from the Faculty of Organization and Informatics. It's amazing how the students from the USA listened to each presentation with interest, and asked many questions.

Very interesting and interactive games were presented by Damir Vučić, Ph.D. and later he taught us how to dance the „kolo“ to traditional folklore songs. After a busy day, our volunteers took the guests on a tour of the city of Varaždin and later we all went to dinner together. Professors and students get along very well, there was a great positive atmosphere and this was the perfect start to the 11th student symposium.



## May 23, 2023 (Tuesday): Visit to capital city of Croatia – Zagreb

The agreed time of meeting was between 9:15. Although it is still early morning for most of our students, the American students were the total opposite; cheerful, smiling, eager to travel and explore. After the morning introduction, we got on the bus and headed for Zagreb.

In Zagreb, everyone was delighted; from the Museum of the City of Zagreb to real Zagreb coffee. After lunch we got some free time. Students from the USA wanted to visit stores, so our volunteers took them shopping. After shopping, we sat down for coffee and ice cream and talked about different topics. Time flies fast when you are in good company, so the moment has come to return to Varaždin. The students exchanged contacts and social networks because we definitely want to stay in touch in the future.



**May 24, 2023 (Wednesday): Visit to Kindergarten in Varaždin and presentations**

At 9:30 in the morning we all gathered on the *Korzo* of Varaždin. Students and professors from the USA greeted us with "dobro jutro" (good morning), to which we were delighted. We visited Varaždin Kindergarten, the first step in education and the friendly staff took us through all generations of children. We were all amazed when the children started speaking in English and talking to our guests.

The afternoon was reserved for another series of presentations. Our guests had very interesting presentations and stimulated discussions and great interest. We had a delicious lunch at the restaurant, and the best part of everything is that you get to bond and make new friends at lunch.

From 16:00 onwards we had free time and used it to go for ice cream and coffee. Everyone is very friendly.



**May 25, 2023 (Thursday): Čakovec and Social enterprise Humana Nova**

At 10:00 AM we gathered in front of the student dormitory in Varaždin, where we were picked up by a bus that took us to beautiful Čakovec. The first stop was the social enterprise Humana Nova, where a human resources employee welcomed us and gave a presentation about the company. They offered us juices from the local farm - apple juice was the main attraction for foreign students and professors. Later, the same lady took us through the Humana Nova production facility, and the other employees were very kind to us. The best part of the visit was definitely the store within Humana Nova where we stayed for over half an hour and everyone bought something. The bags made by Humana Nova were bought immediately.

After lunch, we visited the Nikola Zrinski castle and the city park. We took wonderful photos and it was time to return to Varaždin.



## May 26, 2023 (Friday): Closing section

In the morning at 10 o'clock, presentations was given by Assistant. Prof. dr. Mladen Konecki on digital technology in modern music production. The guests played and sang a song for us, and at the end, all the students and professors sang our song "Jednom kad noć" by the band Opća opasnost.

After that, some more interesting presentations were held by our volunteers and my colleague Petra Ljubić and I prepared everybody for tomorrow's trip to the Plitvice Lakes - Smiljan - Zadar. In the end, we lacked a little more fun, and that was completed by Assist. Prof. Kristina Detelj, who taught us to dance bachata. At the very end, certificates and thank you notes were distributed to all participants and volunteers, and after lunch nobody wanted to say goodbye, so we spent the whole afternoon drinking coffee and eating ice cream and after that, we went to shopping all together.

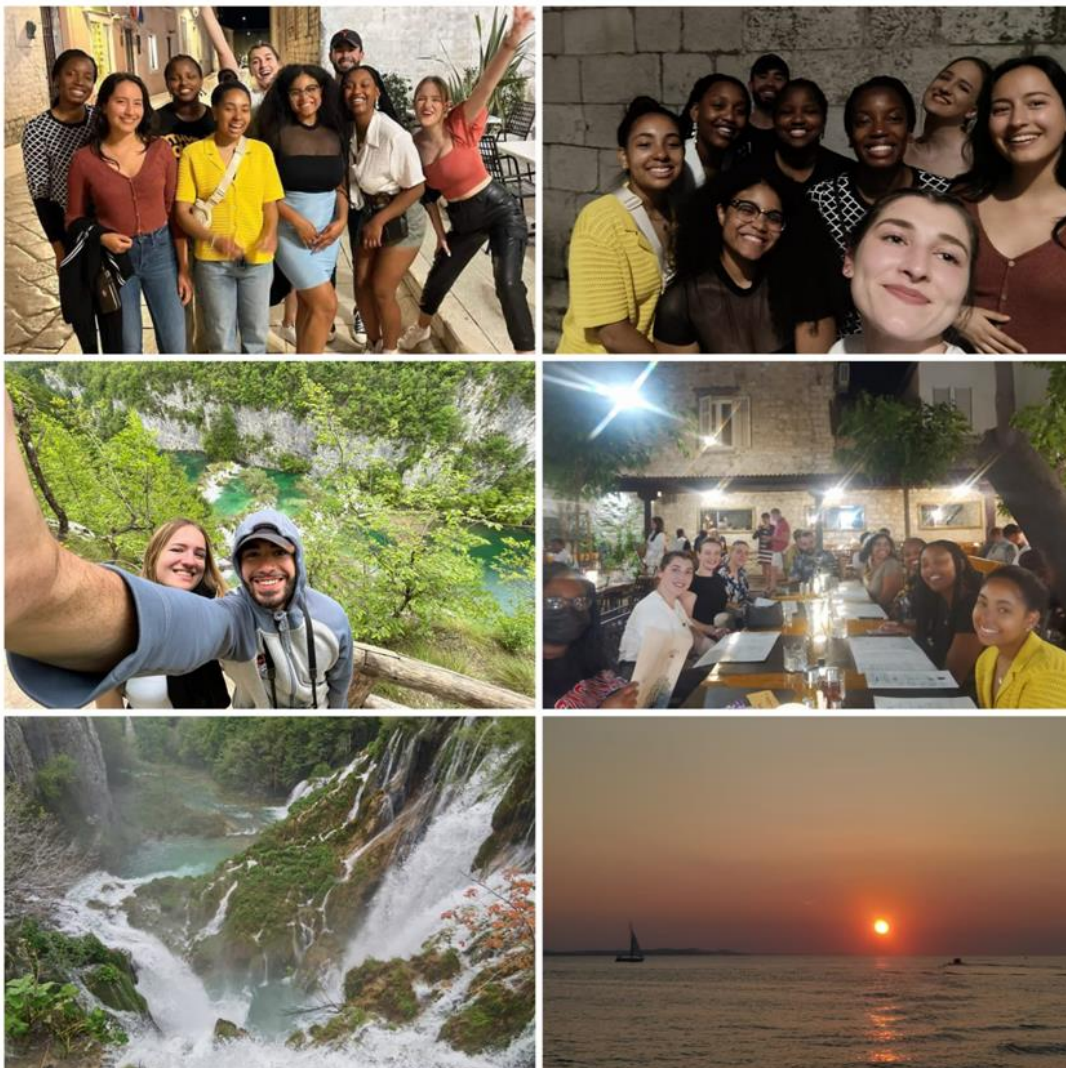


**May 27, 2023 (Saturday): Trip to Plitvice Lakes – Smiljan – Zadar**

At 7:15 a.m., a bus left from Varaždin that took us on field trip ICT integration with UNESCO. Everyone on the bus spent the time dozing off due to fatigue, but upon arrival at the Plitvice Lakes National Park, excitement awoke. The Plitvice Lakes were crowded with visitors, and our guests, as well as ourselves, were amazed by the wonderful scenes. Fortunately, the weather served us well and not a single drop of rain fell, which made it easier to see the wonders of national park. Numerous photos were taken, and most of all we were delighted with the Great Waterfall. We rode the boat to the place where we ate delicious hamburgers, and it was time to get back on the bus and head towards the Nikola Tesla Memorial Center in Smiljan.

In the Memorial center Nikola Tesla, the guide took us through the museum and explained all the inventions and the life story of our great scientist Nikola Tesla. We watched a short documentary film about Nikola Tesla and almost everyone decided to buy souvenirs. We also had a lot of fun at the children's playground where we all had to try out all the equipment.

We arrived in Zadar just in time to see a beautiful sunset. We all agreed that Zadar really has the most beautiful sunset in the world. After that, we settled in hostels where we will spend the night and went to dinners of Mediterranean cuisine. At the end, we all gathered near the Sun Salutation and the Sea Organ and had fun with cakes and homemade brandies. All the students decided to visit the night life of Zadar and we went to sleep satisfied only around 2 in the morning.



**May 28, 2023 (Sunday): Back to reality**

First we all wanted to visit some of the main attractions of Zadar itself – The Church of St. Donatus, Roman forum, Zadar’s defensive system. The guests wanted to visit as many souvenir shops and local shops as possible and really bought wonderful things that will be an eternal memory for them. We all went to the city beach together and dipped our feet in the still quite cold sea. I found it funny and endearing when a wave washed over us, and the guests couldn't believe how salty the sea was. At 15:00 we left for Varaždin. We spent the last moments with our dear guests on the bus and wanted to make the most of them. We played various games and had fun. That's how our wonderful trip came to an end, and you could see on our faces that we were all sorry that the time had flown by so quickly. We said goodbye to all the students and professors who have to catch a plane in the morning and promised to stay in touch.



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