

*What has been the greatest reward to you in the long years of experiencing our JD program?*

- “The greatest reward for me has been and continues to be the human experience of the programme, both with colleagues and with students. I have had the feeling that both my horizon and those of the students have immensely been broadened by this international experience.”  
/Ladan Niayesh, Paris/
- “Getting to know colleagues abroad whom I never would have otherwise met and learning about/visiting their institutions and countries. Welcoming students from abroad to New York and helping them become integrating into the College and our Master’s program.”  
/Joshua Wilner, New York/
- “The new colleagues I have met, and the satisfaction reported by returning students.”  
/David Newbold, Venice/



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*Did you ever have a surprise in the process?*

- “The first surprise was the energy put into this programme by all involved to overcome the endless administrative and legal problems. But soon I found myself with the second surprise of sharing their obstinacy on this path as the value of the experience became clearer and clearer to me.” */Ladan Niayesh, Paris/*
- “One student who out-stayed her visa and the complications that ensued were an unpleasant surprise. That we were able to finagle this arrangement at all despite not being members of the European Union and participants in the Bologna process was a surprise from the start.” */Joshua Wilner, New York/*



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*Did anything put you off, made you upset or angry?*

- “The weight of the paperwork and the endless bureaucratic obstacles get under my skin on a regular basis, but I’m learning to cope without losing my temper (much)!”

*/Ladan Niayesh, Paris/*

- “The student referred to above was trying to “game the system,” I believe and that was annoying and time consuming. Occasionally there are other students who want to “stretch the framework”. This is done in good faith, but trying to deal with these individual arrangements can be very time-consuming – even “processing” a regular student is time-consuming, and I, like most of the other liaisons, have no support staff and do this work gratis on top of my other responsibilities. The reward is in internationalizing the reach of our program, and in the personal opportunities and relationships that have come my way in the process.”

*/Joshua Wilner/ New York/*



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*What are the key elements of a successful educational cooperation and a successful JD program?*

- “Human dedication on the part of the people in charge and a solid student selection both at the entrance and exit of the programme.”

*/Ladan Niayesh, Paris/*

- “Communication and flexibility are the key elements.”

*/Joshua Wilner, New York/*

- “Sensitivity, flexibility, the ability to learn from others.”

*/David Newbold, Venice/*



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*Can you recall obstacles in the way of sorting out the tasks? What difficulties have you encountered and how were you able to solve them?*

- “A lot of protectionism insidiously inscribed in national educational systems, and occasional opposition on the part of staff and colleagues not understanding the international logic and benefits. The solution for the first has been/is sheer obstinacy, and for the second, a lot of pedagogy and explanations that need to be repeated again and again.”  
/Ladan Niayesh, Paris/
- “Because of our particular status as a non-EU country, navigating the local bureaucracy to create an appropriate authorizing context required a lot of time, creativity, and explanations.”  
/Joshua Wilner, New York/
- “They seem to mostly organizational or bureaucratic (such as what goes on the diploma(s) issued). Luckily I haven’t been called on to solve them.”  
/David Newbold, Venice/



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*Have you ever felt embarrassed and why, in what situation(s)?*

- “Yes, on quite a few occasions when an admin process or a legal stage taken for granted abruptly turned out not to be granted at all, causing embarrassment in front of partners and worry for the students.”

*/Ladan Niayesh, Paris/*

- “Only once, when I had to be rescued at the Bamberg audit, because I couldn’t answer the auditor’s question about courses in my own university. But an esteemed colleague stepped in and saved me from public shame.”

*/David Newbold, Venice/*



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*How do you feel your share in and between the administration of the program and the academic supervision/guidance you provide to the students?*

- “Generally well balanced, as I am involved with both. The tediousness of the admin part is compensated by the richness of the exchanges with generally brilliant students.” /Ladan Niayesh, Paris/
- “My role is largely administrative. I do give some advice to incoming students about courses and ensure that students for whom City College is the home institution take the courses required to fulfill the particular requirements of the Joint Degree, though this happens as a matter of course for the most part.” /Joshua Wilner, New York/



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*What would you say the most positive aspect(s) of our program has/have been?*

○ “Its longevity and its showing the way for others. Several Joint Master programmes are getting launched at my university, following the success of this one, and I am all the more pleased by this as this is the best answer to the protectionist stance of some colleagues from even my own department.” /Ladan Niayesh, Paris/

○ “Implementing the spirit of the Bologna process.”

/David Newbold, Venice/



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*What are the weak points or insufficiencies (failures?) in this endeavor?*

- “Lack of legal leeway which is particularly problematic in France, lack of success (so far) in getting in more English-speaking countries drawn into the programme.”

*/Ladan Niayesh, Paris/*

- “It has been hard for us to attract enough local students to the program to maintain “parity” between students coming in and students going out, which creates an economic imbalance, since we are carrying the tuition costs of incoming students. Better advertising might make a difference, but the more basic problem is that most of our own Master’s students are adults or young adults who are working for a living and studying at night (our program begins in the late afternoon), making it hard for them to manage a semester abroad. The task of providing second readers for theses is clear beginning to approach the point where it will become unmanageable.”

*/Joshua Wilner, New York/*



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*What factors, conditions or acts would help improve such a complex cooperation?*

- “The presence of partner universities from English-speaking countries, and opening the programme to its logical continuation, i.e. the joint PhDs.”  
/Ladan Niayesh, Paris/
- “If I had support staff back home.”  
/Joshua Wilner, New York/
- “I think the success of the JD is due to the vision and hard work of a small number of colleagues, who are able to communicate this vision to more peripheral figures which can help them in their own teaching of JD programmes and in the support they can offer to incoming and outgoing students.”

/David Newbold, Venice/



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*What would you do differently if you had free hands in designing the JD activities?*

- “Standardize the curriculum more clearly, make arrangements for the M2 students to spend the full M2 year abroad rather than just one semester, work more on bursary schemes to make the programme more attractive for the best students or those who have already used Erasmus grants in the past and need other resources to follow this programme.”  
/Ladan Niayesh, Paris/
- “Offer the option of replacing the thesis with additional coursework.”  
/Joshua Wilner, New York/
- “As a linguist I would make a module of ‘English as a lingua franca’ a core element.”  
/David Newbold, Venice/



*What is your experience concerning host institutions and receiving institutions? What do you think of your own “academic environment” in terms of support and understanding of the international mobility and the processes of joint training?*

- “My experience so far has been most pleasant and positive, and the support offered by the team of international coordinators has been much appreciated.”

*/Ladan Niayesh, Paris/*

- “Mutual hospitability. People locally at City College have been very helpful. Getting cooperation and understanding at the university level (CUNY) has been more difficult.”

*/Joshua Wilner, New York/*

- “Excellent. I personally have been hosted by Graz and Bamberg. Our own university is non-campus, and so somewhat fragmented, but I think our International Office is doing well to improve its services, and I hope this will continue.”

*/David Newbold, Venice/*



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*What do you think about the “academic achievements”? Are there positive arguments for the pursuit of such ideals as a joint training and joint educational results?*

- “As Paris 7 is relatively new on this programme, I am still waiting to see the results in terms of career and future prospects achieved by those whom I have recruited into the programme.”  
/Ladan Niayesh, Paris/
- “Generally speaking the Joint Degree students with whom I’ve worked have been strong and their personal intellectual experience has been enriched by the opportunity to study abroad. Whether the curriculum per se is superior for having been internationalized is probably mainly a function of the enrichment of the experience of individual students.”  
/Joshua Wilner, New York/
- “Academic results are good. A number of our students have moved on to 3<sup>rd</sup> level degrees after the master JD.”

/David Newbold, Venice/



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