BRISTOL, ENGLAND
KELLY HALLOWELL

Program: University of Bristol Exchange, Spring

Kelly’s Major: Molecular Biology

Academic Life: I took classes with a mix of UK residents and international students, with a handful of exchange students as well. The attitude of the students there is to study heavily for finals, as the final grades are mostly based on them. It did get crowded at the libraries when the mentality of campus changed to focus on exams. The UK degrees are more focused, so their classes are much more detailed than in the US. Overall, my professors were very helpful in explaining the grading scheme and working with me in office hours.

Housing: I lived in university housing, in a building called Colston Street, with 10 other students. We were right next to the Bristol City Center, the university campus, and the social life. We were close to many bus stops, and about a 20 minute walk from the train station. We all shared a large kitchen and a nice common room with a view that overlooked the city center.

Most Memorable Moments: I joined the University of Bristol Expedition Society (UBES), which is a mountaineering and hiking club, and signed up to go on a hike called the Yorkshire Three Peak challenge. It was a 5 hour drive from Bristol, 24.5 miles long with over 1,000 meters of ascent! We managed to hike it in less than 10 hours. The hike physically pushed me to my limits, but it was a great experience to share with people and helped me feel more connected with others in the club.

Advice for Someone Considering Bristol: Try to avoid expectations. Every part of your experience will be different than you thought, and planning can take away from the spontaneity. You’ll miss out on things you never knew existed if you try to see everything at once. Leave yourself the opportunity to spend time with people who will show you how they live their everyday lives.

“Studying abroad put me out of my comfort zone, and it has made me more confident in all of my decisions.”