Tera Holtz
LEGON, GHANA

**Tera’s Majors:** Political Science, International Studies and African Studies Certificate

**Term Abroad:** Fall Semester

**Academics:** I took three of my classes through CIEE’s Development Studies Track, including an internship for credit and a Twi language class. I also directly enrolled for three Political Science courses at the University of Ghana-Legon: U.S. Policy Towards Africa, Foreign Policy Analysis, and Post-Conflict, Peacebuilding and Transitional Justice. The latter was interesting because the professor was a Liberian refugee who personally dealt with a post-conflict situation.

**Internship experience:** I had an internship with a Ghanaian NGO called Self-help Initiative Support Services (SISS), providing skills training for residents of Agbogbloshie, the largest slum in Ghana, to help them get jobs and ultimately leave the slum. We taught students about nutrition, the environment, how to use the internet, domestic violence, and how to prepare for job interviews. We were able to participate in a peace march through lower income neighborhoods just before the presidential elections to promote peaceful elections and encourage people to vote. We also led a weekly women’s support group called Sisters in Support, educating women about their rights and how to deal with women-specific issues in Ghana. It was extremely rewarding; I get a call from one of my SISS students almost every week just to say hello.

**Most memorable moment:** In the end, my homestay was the best learning experience I could have asked for. Singing and dancing with my host sisters while cooking in the kitchen, having the Vice President of Ghana visit my host parents’ house, having my host mom refer to me as her daughter: my host family is really what made Ghana my home.

**Advice:** Ghana is a one-of-a-kind place that will steal your heart. Understand that things will not always go as planned but that is part of the adventure. If you are open-minded and willing to learn, then compassionate and generous people will teach you. CIEE also has a fantastic staff that supports you in every way possible to ensure that you have a great experience.

“I believe studying abroad has provided me with more drive to be a better person and a better global citizen. I learned to become a better communicator as language and cultural barriers arose often.”