Eric Friestrom

KATHMANDU, NEPAL

**Eric’s Major:** Biochemistry, Global Health Certificate

**Program:** UW Global Health Community Health and Health Disparity, Summer

**Academic Life:** The classroom setting was very different than the traditional university setting. Towards the end of every day we would gather as a group and have discussion and reflection upon everything we experienced that day. Our group discussions consisted of the 15 students from UW Madison and our group coordinators. The group reflection was one of my favorite parts of the day due to everyone having such incredible insight and new ideas I never had thought about. We are currently working on the post trip work in order to complete our academic experience including reflection on the trip as a whole.

**First Impressions:** My very first impression when I stepped off the airplane was “I can’t believe I am in Nepal right now.” Landing in the largest city of Kathmandu, everything was buzzing and there were hundreds of people around us talking in a foreign language. So initially there was quite a bit of shock in response to everything around me. As we settled into the culture and city the shock turned into an overall sense of curiosity. I was curious about the people around me, what the different buildings represented, why the city looked the way it did, etc. This curiosity led me and the rest of our group to learn about the great culture that Nepal has to offer.

**Advice for Students Considering This Program:** Just do it. Nepal has an incredible culture that is in such contrast to our own. To have the opportunity to experience such a culture and visit around Nepal is one of a kind. Along with that, the program leaders and guides have such important connections throughout Nepal that we were able to visit very unique areas of the country. Given the choice to go back in time and re-chose where to study abroad, I would without question chose Nepal. It was one of the most memorable experiences of my life.

“Study abroad has really broadened my view on the world we live in.”

Eric drinking local tea after an early morning hike to see the sunrise through the mountains.

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