Lauren’s Majors: Secondary Math Education, Spanish

Program: Pontificia Universidad Catolica del Peru Exchange, Fall

Academic Life: Registration is a two day process; on the first day, you walk around campus and visit the different ‘facultades’ or schools on campus. The second day of registration students form a line to sign-up for courses, and when classes are full, they are full. Nearly all courses consist of a substantial amount of reading, which is tested in ‘controles de lectura’. In terms of my specific experiences, I took four classes: Cine (Film), Modern World History, Modern Peruvian History, and Amazon Ethnography. Cine is a fun class; I highly recommend the course and my professor, Chicho Durant. I also particularly recommend Modern Peruvian History with Professor Orrego who has a lot of knowledge about the topic and a great sense of humor.

On Cultural Differences: Living in Perú, and especially Lima, I encountered a number of changes - from the slow, relaxed pace of life to the greeting of everyone, even complete strangers, with a kiss on the cheek. After a few weeks, though, I got used to the new greetings, began to appreciate the new food, and really grew to respect the more relaxed, connected culture that our American multi-tasking attitude rarely knows. There were a lot of things to adjust to at first, but before I knew it, I was taking pride in my newly adopted ‘Peruvian’ ways.

Study Abroad and Lauren’s Future Aspirations: I am a secondary math education major, and one of my dreams is to teach math in a bilingual setting; therefore, I think the opportunity I had in Perú to improve my language skills in an authentic setting will definitely set me on that path. Additionally, I think just having sufficient conversational skills will be invaluable to me when working with my students’ parents, many of whom are solely Spanish speakers.

“My host dad picked me up from the airport, and I just remember being so excited to see my name on his piece of paper.”