Program: Pontificia Universidad Catolica del Peru Exchange, Fall

Thomas’ Majors: Biology, Spanish

Academic Life: The classroom experience was difficult because I was often one of just a few exchange students among a large group of Peruvian students. The classes were taught by the regular professors in the university. I was very much like any other normal student at the university. The challenge arose in that the language presented an extra barrier to learning, that my classmates did not have to confront. Even so, I was able to do well with consistent effort and an optimistic attitude.

Housing: I lived in the Jesus Maria district of Lima with a family, as well as seven other exchange students from around the world, as housemates. I made some incredible friendships and truly learned a lot from my housemates and host family in regards to how to live simply and appreciate the uniqueness of each person and their background.

How Study Abroad Changed Thomas: I personally enjoy routine, but in learning to live and study in a completely new place where I spoke a different language, I learned that life becomes so much richer and fuller on a daily basis when you seek out those experiences that are foreign, daunting, or uncomfortable.

Advice for Someone Considering Peru: I would tell them to prepare themselves for an experience of a lifetime. There will no doubt be daily challenges, but the novelty of it all will continually renew a sense of wonder and an appreciation for the remarkable opportunity to study in a place as unique and beautiful as Peru.

“Studying abroad has certainly fueled a desire to seek out new experiences in ways I had not done so before.”