Faatima’s Majors: Spanish, Biology

Program: UIUC Spanish Studies in Granada, Summer

Academic Life: Over this summer I took a total of 9 credits consisting of three courses taught in Spanish. I had the good fortune of being taught by native Spanish teachers who I now consider to be among my favorite teachers. Individually they each managed to engage us students while encouraging us to practice the language in their own unique way. Furthermore, the opportunity to learn in a smaller classroom environment, ranging between 10 and 20 fellow American students, allowed for more interaction between the teacher and student. I believe that I learned far more in this classroom environment than I ever could have in a larger lecture hall in a university.

Housing: One of the main reasons that I chose this program is because it allowed students to live with a host family. I was paired with the most wonderful host family that lived only a seven minute walk from school. Overall, living with a host family was one of the best decisions that I have ever made. It allowed me to be more immersed in the culture and further improve my communication skills by practicing with native speakers. My host family was so welcoming that they not only opened up their home, but also their lives to me. I had the opportunity to meet their friends and family and participate in their festivals. In fact, I spent so much time with them and we grew so close that I now consider them a part of my own family.

Advice for Someone Considering this Program: In regards to professional goals, I have found that my study abroad experience has provided me with international skills that are valuable and will serve as an asset for future employers. As a student intending on entering a medical or healthcare career, I see the need for fluency in another language and I believe that studying abroad has helped with this. In addition, I believe that my cross-cultural communication skills have improved and I now think that I am better able to adapt to new circumstances.

“Granada might seem small yet it has the kindest people, unforgettable views and delicious food.”