Program: CIEE Advanced Liberal Arts, Spring

Kaitlyn's Majors: Spanish and International Studies

Academic Life: As part of the Advanced liberal Arts program, you are required to directly enroll in the Universidad de Sevilla with other Spanish students. I took 3 classes at the university and one class at the CIEE program center. My university classes consisted of Contemporary Spanish History, Spanish Linguistics, and a course on Social Anthropology. At the program center I took a class on Arab Politics. At both the CIEE program center and the university, classes were taught by professors solely in Spanish. At the university, the classroom setting consisted of a large lecture hall with the professor lecturing freely or by use of a PowerPoint. In contrast to my past classes at UW-Madison, classes at the University of Seville had less or no organized work, papers or projects throughout the semester and focused mainly on either one final exam at the end of the semester or a combination of a midterm and final.

Most Memorable Moments: My most memorable experience from my time abroad was having the opportunity to attend the great Feria de Abril de Sevilla. Feria, meaning fair in Spanish, was a weeklong fiesta that took place on a large fairground with parades, horse-drawn carriages, festive tents, tapas, Flamenco dresses, and typical Sevillan dance. My host mom loaned me a beautiful Flamenco dress, and I felt like a genuine Sevillan as I danced among them, drank their sweet apple wine, and above all was completely immersed in the Sevillan culture.

Advice for Someone Considering Studying Abroad: You’re going to make mistakes, you’re going to embarrass yourself, and sometimes you’re going to stick out. That’s the beauty and richness of going abroad. It is an opportunity to learn more about different cultures and people around you. It’s a chance to grow as a person, learn more about yourself, and what you are capable of achieving. Being abroad gives you a whole new level of independence that can be both freeing and terrifying. All you need to remember is to be calm and never be afraid to ask for help.

“Being immersed in a new culture made me more open to new things and more understanding of cultural differences.”

Kaitlyn visiting Plaza de España in Seville.