Program: CIEE Liberal Arts, Spring

Whitney’s Majors: Spanish and Biology

Academic Life: I took half of my classes at the Universidad de Sevilla and the other half at the CIEE study center. They were with other American students, but they were all taught in Spanish by Spanish professors and were made up of about 10-25 students. They were fantastic classes taught by amazing, upbeat professors who are passionate about their subjects. Almost all my classes involved out-of-class field trips to important, cultural places around Sevilla, including Plaza de España, museums, going out for churros, and even sitting in on a consult between a doctor and patient at the local hospital (Spanish for the Health Professions).

New Perspectives: My study abroad experience gave me an opportunity to see the world from a different perspective, and also helped me gain global connections. Living in a different country for four months challenged me to step out of my comfort zone and see everything from lifestyle, career path, family values, and food from a different perspective. Before I left, I struggled with the idea of being gone for four months; away from my family and friends. However, by the time I finished my program, I knew exploring and immersing myself in other cultures is something I have a true passion for.

Most Significant Cultural Difference: In the U.S., we tend to come home after school or work and spend our time there. We invite guests over, eat dinner at home, watch our favorite TV show, etc. In Spain, rarely do people ever invite guests over. As they told us, they live their lives “en la calle”, which literally translates to “in the street.” Every day when I was walking home from class there were families and friends eating, grabbing a drink, or getting some gelato on every corner. The streets with restaurants were always packed; I love the atmosphere this created.

Tips for Future Students: Have conversations with locals of your host city; participate fully in local festivals and events; try as many local dishes as you can.

Whitney feeling like a true “Sevillana” dressed in a flamenco dress at Feria, one of her most memorable moments.

“You will get the most out of your experience if you are open and willing.”