

BADGERS BEYOND ABROAD

alumni interview series

Tiffany Vazquez

Spain

Life After Study Abroad

After completing my semester abroad in Madrid, I returned to UW-Madison for my senior year and graduated in 2014 with a double major in International Studies and Spanish. During the year after graduating, I completed an AmeriCorps service year with Public Allies Chicago all the while looking for opportunities to work abroad. After my service year, I moved to Madrid once again and have been working as a Language and Culture assistant with the program BEDA (Bilingual English Development & Assessment). Through my program, in addition to working in a Spanish school, I am a student at the University of Comillas where I take classes related to the Spanish Education System, teaching English as a second language, and Spanish language.

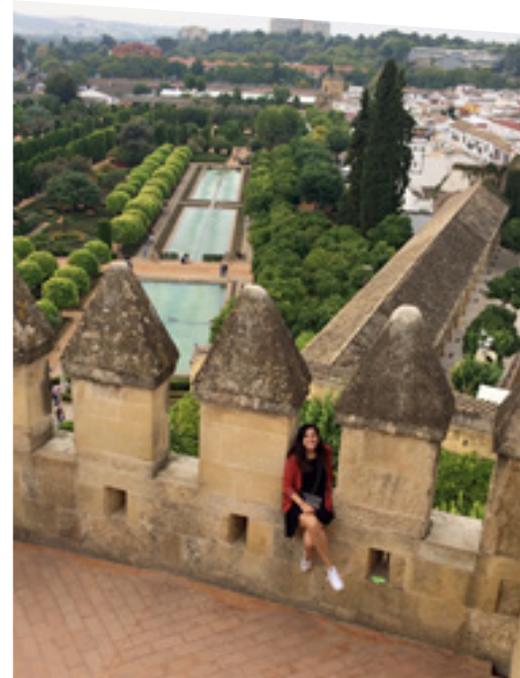
Impact on Life, Goals & Career

Studying abroad as a student at UW-Madison gave me the confidence to return to Madrid as a student with a full-time job. While abroad I learned that I wasn't just improving my language skills; I was improving my ability to learn from different cultures and convey parts of my culture appropriately. As a language and culture assistant, this is one of the most important skills I use on a daily basis. Studying abroad sparked my curiosity in learning more about international education and is the reason I am back in Spain. Through my semester abroad and time now as a language assistant, I have become interested in pursuing a master's degree in Higher Education. I know that I will integrate international education and providing students with opportunities to study abroad into my future studies and career.

Advice for Returning Students

I would advise students who are returning from studying abroad to try and take away something that interested you while you were in a different country and incorporate this topic or activity into a new experience at home. Get an internship or take an elective course at UW-Madison upon returning; join a club where you interact with international students; take a Spanish literature class (yes, even if it doesn't count for your major); or try and learn about different cultures within Madison's communities. You do not have to be abroad to be able to interact with and learn about new cultures during your undergraduate studies, or even in your careers after graduating.

Interview from February 2016



Tiffany visiting the Alcázar of Córdoba during an October 2015 puente (break).

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