Program: University of Sydney Exchange, Spring

Megan's Majors: Zoology and Environmental Studies

Academic Life: During my time in Sydney I took quite a range of classes. My favorite by far was taught by the coolest professor I have ever had, who also happened to be a retired professional soccer player. The class was titled, Sports and Learning in Australia, and essentially we would learn about a sport in class, anything from lawn bowling to Australian Football, and then we would go to a sporting event later that week. The class was primarily for study abroad students, which made it a great way to meet people from all over the world! The other three classes I took, Environmental Law and Ethics, Geology: The Physical Environment, and Literature in Film, were with primarily Australian students, TA's, and professors. In one of my discussions, I was the only foreign student and while it was a bit disconcerting, I found it to be a great experience and I would definitely do it again. The setting (lectures and discussion sections) is very similar to here at Madison, and I found it relatively easy to get into the swing of classes. That classes I took were rather rigorous. Yes, classes here at Madison are also difficult, but the grading system is different in Australia and not as forgiving. With that said, I still would have taken the classes I did, and without a doubt still studied abroad in Sydney!

Most Memorable Experience: One of my most memorable experiences from my time abroad was having the opportunity to go to a rugby match on ANZAC Day. ANZAC Day is a holiday in Australia in April, that celebrates the veterans from both Australia and New Zealand, and it is a really big deal! Over the years, Australians have started to use rugby as a way to commemorate the occasion and as a result, the rugby match on ANZAC Day is one of the most publicized one of the year and tickets are sold out right away. The atmosphere was infectious and despite it raining, the crowd stayed the whole game. I felt like I was part of something larger than myself and I absolutely loved it!

How Studying Abroad Changed Megan: Studying abroad has definitely changed not just who I am, but what I want in life. Australians are much more laid back than Americans and the idea of having a career right out of college is not as established there as it is here. They are perfectly okay with deciding to go travel the world or working a fun job like teaching scuba diving during your younger years and then settling down with a career later on. I found this mind set so reassuring because I honestly don’t know what I want to do, but I’m so much more okay with it after studying abroad. As a result, I’m so open to any opportunity and even people. I speak up more in class and introduce myself to strangers at random places.

“I’ve had a taste of what it’s like to be unspeakably happy in a place I love, with people I love, and it has changed who I am and what I want in life forever.”

Megan on the field after an Australian Football match.