**Program:** UW Tropical Horticulture in Costa Rica, Winter

**Emily’s Major:** Spanish; Certificate in Global Health

**Academic Life:** My study abroad academic experience was unique, because none of it was spent sitting in a classroom or reading books. Every day for ten days we would go to different plantations, organizations, or family farms to learn about horticulture in Costa Rica. At night, we would have student-led group discussions about what we learned about during the day.

**Memorable Moment:** Visiting an organic pineapple plantation. Being that pineapple is Costa Rica’s primary crop, it was pertinent for me to see how it grows and notice the labor put into it. I was able to think about the social, environmental, and other impacts that pertain to it. In time, I began to critically think and allow myself to ask questions whether aloud or to one of my peers. In addition, I got to eat a lot of fresh pineapple and different products made from it.

**Advice for Someone Considering This Program:** You will be visiting many plantations and having “class” from 7 in the morning until evening. If like me, you find horticulture fascinating, and would like to see directly how certain plantations function in the tropics, then definitely pursue it. You will learn more in two weeks than you could learn in a year, and that I found very amazing.

**New Perspectives:** I learned that I really enjoy learning about horticulture and agriculture. I love the connection between humans and earth; it is amazing that we can plant a seed, and then consume what grows.

**Tips for Future Students:** Ask yourself, “Why do I want to do this and what are my expectations?” Then review the program’s goals to see if they match your own.

**Emily is hoping to consume this cacao in the form of chocolate one day.**

“I will use the knowledge I gained to educate and create discourse regarding global health.”