Eric’s Major: Strategic Communications  
Program: UW Spanish Language Program, Summer

Academic Life: I went to a small, Spanish-language institute called COSI. The teachers were Costa Rican, and the students were primarily from the United States. I took two classes, an advanced conversation class and a redaction class. Each class had either three or four other students.

Housing: I lived with a host-family in San Jose, the capital city and largest city of Costa Rica. My host-family’s house was only a 15-minute walk away from the COSI study center. Downtown and the San Pedro Mall were also within walking distance.

What would you say to someone considering this program?  
It is an excellent program to help hone your Spanish skills. You should take advantage of all opportunities to travel around the city and interact with the locals and partake in their culture.

Internship: I did an internship with the Center for Peace Studies Foundation for four weeks in San Pedro, a city right outside of San Jose. My job was to hold a strategic planning meeting and to help find and obtain sponsors for upcoming events held by the Foundation. My major is strategic communications, and my internship gave me valuable hands-on experience outside of the classroom. I had never been in a work environment where I had to speak Spanish, so adapting to that was a bit of a challenge. Expressing myself in Spanish was not as easy as expressing myself in English, yet it gradually became easier as my internship progressed.

Advice for Someone Considering Studying Abroad: It is beneficial to plan as far ahead as possible. Planning ahead will allow you more time to research your program and fund your study abroad experience. Going to the IAP office and speaking with a Peer Advisor or Study Abroad Advisor is also helpful.

Eric participated in the UW Spanish Language Program in Costa Rica.

“Students should consider interning abroad because it will open their eyes to work opportunities worldwide.”