

# SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA

## PENNY HAZELTINE

**Program:** UW Spanish Language in Costa Rica, Winter

**Penny's Major:** Sociology

**Academic Life:** The academic classroom experience was highly professional and a great immersion experience. The instructor taught myself and 2 other UW students in 4th semester Spanish. Class included oral presentations, essay papers, exams and quizzes. We also learned about the country of Costa Rica and their history.

**Most Memorable Moments:** The countryside of Costa Rica is rich with culture and beautiful scenery, but what made the experience wonderful was getting to know those who live there. My host family was not only wonderful to be with but they taught me a lot about home life and education in the country.

**Benefits of Study Abroad:** The experience of traveling alone, finding your way around a new environment, and continuing your learning experience in another country offers so many more opportunities than any classroom in the U.S. can offer. Language can be challenging enough, but when you begin to learn with the help of native speakers in an environment where you can concentrate without distractions of other course responsibilities interfering with your time is beyond valuable!

**New Perspectives:** This experience has renewed my faith in my self-confidence, the ability to adapt, and succeed even when I feel overwhelmed and challenged. Being an adult student and learning a foreign language has been very difficult. My time is balanced between school schedules, work, home, family and other commitments. While attending class in Costa Rica, I finally had the chance to look at what I have already done, what I was accomplishing and where I was growing. I now fully understand that we all continue to grow not only in age but also with the wisdom to challenge our abilities, strengthen our stamina and focus on new goals.



Penny (right) with her Spanish 204 classmates and professor.

**“The depth of knowledge you gain from an experience abroad is more than academic.”**

