

SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA

STEVEN MIKEL

Program: UW Spanish Language in Costa Rica, Winter

Steven's Majors: Finance, Biochemistry

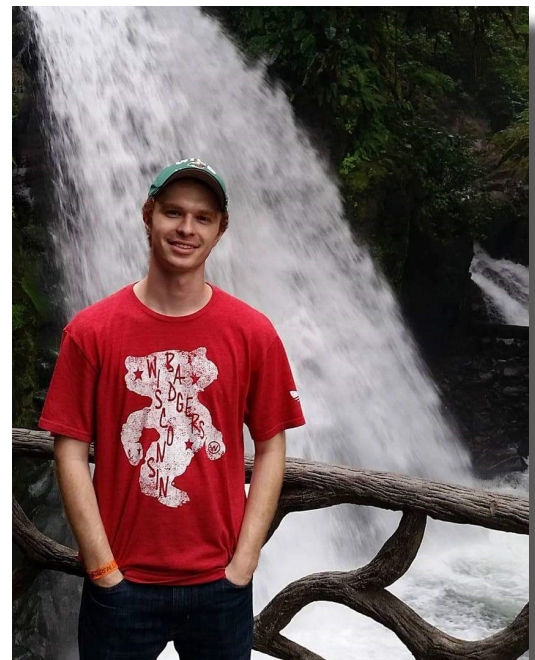
Academic Life: I studied Spanish at Maximo Nivel, a learning and service institute that offers programs for volunteering, internships, and studying abroad. I took Spanish 325 with five other UW-Madison students. In a small classroom environment, we engaged in conversations on Latin American culture, contemporary issues, and our own experiences. Our instructor, a local professor, was always cheerful and pushed us to try our best while guiding the discussions.

Most Memorable Experience: Talking with my host family at dinner about everyday life, learning new words in Spanish, exchanging facts about the U.S. and Costa Rica, and sharing laughs together - these are moments that I will always remember.

How Study Abroad Has Changed Steven: Studying abroad has really augmented my perspective on what life is like outside of the U.S. While my exposure was only to Costa Rica, I recognized differences in economic conditions, lifestyles, and cultural values. This new insight has led me to both appreciate and question various aspects of my daily life and my home country's culture.

Advice for Someone Considering Costa Rica: For those individuals who are considering studying abroad in Costa Rica or in other programs, I recommend that they approach it with an open mind. Some experiences may be stressful, or unlike what you might have expected, but by working through these difficulties, you will learn a lot about new cultures and about yourself.

“Study abroad has improved my Spanish language skills and this will help me connect with individuals across language barriers.”



Steven in front of La Paz Waterfall Gardens.

