England, Bristol – Fall/AY 2010-2011
IAP PROGRAM HANDBOOK

The England, Bristol Program is offered by International Academic Programs (IAP) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in conjunction with Bristol University. This IAP Program Handbook supplements handbook(s) or materials you receive from Bristol University as well as the IAP Study Abroad Handbook and provides you with the most up-to-date information and advice available at the time of printing. Changes may occur before your departure or while you are abroad.

Questions about your program abroad (housing options, facilities abroad, etc.) as well as questions relating to your relationship with your host university or academics (e.g. course credit and equivalents, registration deadlines, etc.) should be directed to International Academic Programs at UW-Madison.

This program handbook contains the following information:

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University of Wisconsin-Madison
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Madison, WI 53706
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Web: www.studyabroad.wisc.edu

Kate Hamoonga
IAP Study Abroad Advisor
(608) 265 6296
hamoonga@bascom.wisc.edu

Emergency Contact Information
In case of an emergency, call the main IAP number (608) 265-6329 between 7:45 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday; after-hours or on weekends call the IAP staff on call at (608) 516-9440.

Embassy Registration
All program participants who are U.S. citizens must register at the U.S. Embassy before departure as this will help in case of a lost passport or other mishap. You can register online at https://travelregistration.state.gov. If you are not a U.S. citizen, register at your home country’s embassy or consulate.

Mailing Address
United States Embassy
24 Grosvenor Square
London, W1A 1AE
United Kingdom
+44 (0)20 7499 9000
http://www.usembassy.org.uk

Physical Address
24 Grosvenor Square
London, W1A 2LQ
United Kingdom

Program Dates
Fall 2010
Arrive in Bristol Saturday 2 or Sunday 3 October
Orientation and Registration 4 - 8 October
Classes Begin 11 October

Spring 2010
Classes Begin 31 January
Easter Break 2 April – 1 May
Preparation Before Leaving

Refer to the Pre-Departure Checklist on pages four and five of the IAP Study Abroad Handbook for essential information.

Immigration Documents

Passport: A passport is needed to travel to England and because of strict visa regulations is a required supplementary material during the application process. Passport information and application forms can be found on the U.S. State Department website (http://travel.state.gov/passport). Make sure your passport is valid for at least 6 months beyond the length of your stay abroad.

Visa

For students with US passports, there are two types of visas to study in the UK: the “Tier 4 General Student Visa” and the “Student Visitor Visa.”

Students studying in the UK for six months or longer must apply for the Tier 4 General Student Visa. This visa allows you to work (part-time), intern, and/or volunteer in the UK. It also allows you to extend your stay if you would like to remain in the UK after your program ends. In order to apply for this visa, you will receive a “Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies” once you have firmly accepted your offer from the university. Apply for this visa as early as possible as it can sometimes take 2-3 months for processing.

Students studying in the UK for fewer than six months are not required to obtain the Tier 4 General Student Visa. Students staying in the UK for fewer than six months may apply for the Student Visitor Visa at the airport upon entry.

IAP has developed a presentation that gives a general overview of the application process for UK student visas:
http://studyabroad.wisc.edu/programs/UK_Visa.html

More information about the student visa process can also be found at:
http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/

If you are a non-US passport holder, please contact your Study Abroad Advisor.

Handling Money Abroad

The British currency is the pound, with 1 pound equaling 100 pennies. As of 02/2010, the exchange rate was $1 USD to 0.66 GBP. You should bring some money with you in cash for incidental purchases as well as for bus and train fares. It is possible to convert almost any currency into English Pounds at the airport when you arrive.

Banks: The four main banks in the United Kingdom are National Westminster, HSBC, Barclays, and Lloyds. Their services are very similar and they have branches all over the
United Kingdom. However, most major banks will not allow you to open a bank account unless you have lived in the United Kingdom for one year. Some of the local building societies (similar to a Savings and Loan) will open an account for you. They will give you a cash card, which you can use to withdraw cash from a cash (ATM) machine.

**ATM/Debit Cards:** The most convenient way to withdraw money from a U.S. bank is by using an ATM card. There are a large number of cashpoint (ATM) machines in England which connect with CIRRUS and PLUS networks. Usually, the exchange rate at ATM machine is as good if not better than at a bank. Before departure, you should check with your U.S. bank/credit union to see if your ATM card will function properly in the United Kingdom, if you need to use a different PIN abroad, and if there will be any fees and service charges while you are abroad. Also, check the maximum amount you can withdraw in one day or one week as this can vary from bank to bank. You may want to consider taking an extra ATM card with you in case yours gets demagnetized, lost, or eaten in an ATM machine. Always leave the extra ATM card in your dorm or flat in England.

**Credit Cards:** Most major U.S. credit cards can be used worldwide and are extremely valuable in a financial emergency. It is highly advisable to obtain a major credit card in your name (not a parent) before studying abroad. Be sure to record your credit card number and emergency card numbers in a separate place in case your card is stolen or lost.

**Important Tips:**

- Not all merchants accept credit cards, regardless of the brand name. Visa and Master Card are the most commonly accepted cards. Past participants have found it difficult using a Discover Card or American Express, as they are not as widely accepted.
- Be aware that credit card companies charge fees for “cash advances” if you choose to take money out of an ATM using a credit card. Be sure you know what these charges are before you leave the U.S. as well as the maximum daily withdrawal.
- Before you leave for England, make sure to get confidential four-digit international identification numbers to use with your credit card while you are overseas.
- Typically, the amount charged to your credit card bill is based on the exchange rate on the day that your bank or credit card company processed the transaction.

**Travelers Checks:** If you are using travelers' checks, it is essential to keep a record of the check numbers (in a separate safe place away from the checks) in case they are lost or stolen. The checks will not be replaced unless you have a record of the numbers. Be careful where you cash your checks; most banks and bureaux de change will charge a commission. American Express will cash American Express travelers checks free of charge and usually have a good exchange rate. You will need your passport with you when cashing travelers' checks.

**Packing**

Past participants recommend casual but neat clothes that you would wear in Madison. A good raincoat or waterproof windbreaker large enough to wear over a sweater is recommended. Several lightweight layers of clothing are warmer than one heavy one, but you may want to take a down jacket if you plan to vacation in colder climates.
**Electric Appliances**: England runs on 220V (volts), 50Hz (cycles) AC and uses the British Standard 1363 three-pin plug. If you plan on bringing any appliances from the United States, keep in mind that they will require adapters/converters which you should purchase before departure. It may be more convenient and less expensive to purchase appliances in England rather than purchasing the necessary converter/adapters in the United States.

**Health Insurance**
As a participant of a UW-Madison program, you have health insurance through CISI. Please see the IAP Study Abroad Handbook for additional information on coverage through CISI.

**Travel and Arrival Information**
You are responsible for arranging your own transportation to Bristol.

**Heathrow Airport to Bristol by Bus**: There is a daily National Express coach service from Heathrow to Bristol. Coaches leave the Central Bus Station at Heathrow Airport and go to Bristol, where you can get a taxi to the University. Coaches leave Heathrow daily at regular intervals. The journey to Bristol takes approximately 2 hours, with direct departures about every 1.5 hours. Tickets need to be purchased in advance. More information, including times, routes and prices, can be found on the National Express website at www.nationalexpress.com.

**Heathrow Airport to Bristol by Train**: If you wish to travel to Bristol via train, you will take the coach from Heathrow to the Reading railway station, where you will board the train to Bristol. The journey takes about 2.5 hours (including travel time to Reading railway station), with departures approximately every hour. Train tickets should be booked to Bristol Temple Meads station and not to Bristol Parkway. For information about prices and times of trains, visit: www.nationalrail.co.uk.

**Gatwick Airport to Bristol by Bus**: You can take the National Express coach directly from Gatwick to Bristol. This journey takes about 3 hours, 20 minutes, and the service runs roughly every 2 hours. Bus tickets need to be purchased in advance. More information, including times, routes and prices, can be found on the National Express website at www.nationalexpress.com.

**Gatwick Airport to Bristol by Train**: There is no direct train service from Gatwick to Bristol; travelers will need to change trains at the Reading railway station. The journey takes approximately 3 hours, with hourly departures from Gatwick. Train tickets should be booked to Bristol Temple Meads station and not to Bristol Parkway. For information about prices and times of trains, visit: www.nationalrail.co.uk.

**Orientation**
For each intake of new Study Abroad students a special Orientation is organized. The Orientation is run by the Study Abroad team and is designed to help you not only settle into Bristol but also meet the people who will be working with you during your stay. Orientation Day will be filled with meetings on social as well as academic aspects of your
time in Bristol, and will include lunch with academic staff and a brief campus tour. Orientation is mandatory! For more information on orientation, visit:

http://www.bris.ac.uk/international/studyabroad/orientation.html

The Academic Program

The University of Bristol
Bristol is firmly established as one of the premier universities in the United Kingdom, and has a world-wide reputation for its academic achievement and research. All league tables consistently place Bristol in the top ten out of nearly a hundred universities in Britain, and for British students it is one of the most difficult universities to get into. Anyone familiar with British universities will be able to confirm Bristol's excellence and reputation.

University of Bristol - http://www.bristol.ac.uk
Bristol International Office - http://www.bris.ac.uk/internationalcentre

English Academic System
There are some important differences between the educational systems in England and the U.S. which you will need to understand as you approach your year of study at the University of Bristol. Many terms are used differently from the way we are used to using them. The term “unit” is the British term for class. The British use "staff" where we use “faculty” and their “faculty” includes students as well as teachers. They use the term "marks" rather than "grades."

Good academic study does not differ much from country to country, but there are differences of emphasis. A key difference between the learning methods of the American and British degree systems is the extent to which British students are expected to plan and carry out their own work. Particularly in the Arts, the amount of classroom contact is less then in some other systems, with a correspondingly greater reliance on independent study, in the form of directed reading and essay writing. Most units (courses) consist of formal lectures as well as tutorials and seminars (which vary in size from perhaps three to a dozen students and require active participation), but there are great variations between departments. Each department is responsible for both its own curriculum and for the form in which it is delivered, which can range from small seminar groups to computer-assisted learning. Acquiring this level of responsibility and adjusting to a different academic system presents a challenge, but it makes for a rewarding experience. It is also an excellent preparation for graduate study, since it provides an introduction to the self-discipline skills required of a good graduate student.

Units are normally taught as a mixture of lectures, tutorial or seminar classes and practical laboratory work (where appropriate). Attendance at classes is compulsory for credit earning purposes. Assessment is normally by written work, project or laboratory work (where relevant) and examinations, which usually come at the end of the year in May and June.

Course Information
Courses
While most Study Abroad students at Bristol study for a full year, the option strongly recommend, Bristol also offers Autumn and Spring-only semester options. Please be aware, however, that not all subjects are available to students studying at Bristol for less than a year. Some departments normally do not accept students for less than a year, and other departments such as Economics and the Sciences only offer a limited selection of courses to semester-only students.

You may choose from any combination of the units offered and are not restricted to a single department. This freedom is, of course, subject to the constraints of timetabling and pre-requisites. Please refer to the Unit Catalogue for a list of courses and be sure to read the restrictions for study abroad students, view the prerequisites and take note of the year courses vs. semester courses:
http://www.bris.ac.uk/international/studyabroad/unit-catalogue.html

Levels at Bristol
There are different levels of courses at the University of Bristol. Be sure you carefully look at this when you are selecting classes from the Unit Catalogue. Below is how the levels transfer back to the US:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UK Level</th>
<th>US Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level C (UK 1st YR)</td>
<td>Sophomore, sometimes Junior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level I (UK 2nd YR)</td>
<td>Junior, sometimes Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level H (UK 3rd YR)</td>
<td>A very advanced Senior (this level compares to 1st level US Masters study) - If approved, only half of the student's course load can be Level H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level M</td>
<td>Not relevant to Study Abroad students, Masters level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level D</td>
<td>Not relevant to Study Abroad students, Doctoral level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In summary, students typically take a combination of first and second year units (Level C and I). Some are able to take third year units (Level H), but no more than half their credit load and it must be approved by the Bristol International Office.

Registration
Students will indicate on the Bristol application the classes that they wish to take. The study abroad officer at Bristol will then work with the student to approve and enroll them in appropriate classes. Students will have the chance to finalize their courses once they are in Bristol, however it is important that most of the student's course selections are finalized before their departure from the US. It will not be possible to know your actual class schedule before you arrive in Bristol (ie: the days/hours of each class). During Orientation week students visit the departments in which they intend to study and put together their own personal timetables.

Equivalents and Course Equivalent Request Form (CERF): Each course you take abroad must be assigned a UW-Madison “equivalent” course in order for your grades and credits to be recorded on your UW-Madison transcript. In order to establish UW-Madison course equivalents for your study abroad courses, you will submit a Course Equivalent Requests through your My Study Abroad account. Detailed information on the UW course
equivalent process that you will use through your My Study Abroad account is available in the IAP Study Abroad Handbook.

**Credits and Credit Conversions**

The following is how your credits will be transferred back to UW-Madison:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bristol Credit Points</th>
<th>UW Madison Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Limits and Load**

A full year's work is 120 Bristol credit points, and you are expected to take the full load. If you are studying in a range of departments, you may not be able to take precisely 120 units, so margins of 115 to 125 are acceptable and are still considered to be a standard year's work for transfer purposes. A semester's work is 60 Bristol credit points, and rules are as for the full year. Margins of 55 to 65 are considered acceptable. As a participant on an IAP UW Madison Study Abroad Program, you are required to take no less than 12 UW Madison credits and no more than 18 UW Madison credits.

**Pass/Fail/Drop/Audit**

Please refer to the IAP Study Abroad Handbook for academic policies.

**Grades and Grade Conversions**

The following is how your grades will convert back to UW-Madison:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bristol Grade</th>
<th>UW- Madison Equivalent Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>63-100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57-62</td>
<td>AB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48-56</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42-47</td>
<td>BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-41</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-29</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Living Abroad**

**BRISTOL**

Bristol is a multicultural city of balloons and kites, clubs and DJs, festivals and carnivals, architecture and park land, business and new technology, theatres and museums, artists and animators, music and film. It has been officially designated a 'Centre of Culture' and a ‘Science City’ by the Government.
Bristol has been a port for a thousand years but came to prominence after the Norman invasion of 1066. St Augustine’s Abbey was founded in 1140, and after several additions became the cathedral of the new Diocese of Bristol at the behest of King Henry VIII in 1542.

By the 14th century, the city was trading with Spain, Portugal, the Mediterranean and Iceland. After the discovery of America, Bristol was the main point of departure for voyages to the New World. In 1373, King Edward III granted Bristol county status – an honour it has held almost without interruption until the present day.

In the mid-18th century, Bristol was England's second city. The country was flooded with goods imported via Bristol from the New World, including cane sugar, tobacco, rum and cocoa – products of the slave trade. Around this time, merchants began to build their homes away from the docks in genteel areas such as Clifton. The beautiful Georgian houses of this area are a legacy of these times.

By the 19th century, Bristol's fortunes as a port were on the wane. The Avon's extreme tides left many ships dangerously marooned, and its bends caused great problems for the navigators of the new, bigger merchant ships. But a new age was in prospect with the arrival in 1831 of a new chief engineer at Bristol docks: Isambard Kingdom Brunel. In 1833, Brunel was appointed chief engineer of the Great Western Railway, and his work on the line that linked London to Bristol helped to establish him as one of the world's leading engineers. Brunel did more than anyone to shape the face of modern Bristol. His legacy includes the Clifton Suspension Bridge, the SS Great Britain, and Temple Meads Old Station.

The aerospace industry has had a base in Bristol since its early days when George White founded the Bristol Aeroplane Company at Filton in 1910. In the mid-1960s, Concorde was built and tested at Filton.

Modern Bristol is one of the most popular British cities for business relocation and a major focus for media and new technology. The HTML web language was partly developed at the Hewlett Packard research centre in Bristol, Aardman Animations created its Oscar-winning Wallace and Gromit films here, and the Internet Movie Database is largely run from here by its co-founder and managing director, Col Needham.

Its name comes from the Old English Brycgstow, meaning “the place at the bridge.” That's still a good description, and not just because of Brunel's renowned Clifton Suspension Bridge. Bristol is a bridge to culture, experiences, landscapes, careers – and the future. The next few years will see a tremendous program of redevelopment and investment to secure Bristol’s place as one of the most striking and beautiful waterfront cities in Europe.

Lovers of landscape here are spoilt for choice. The Avon Gorge and surrounding hills provide a magnificent setting for Bristol, and at every point of the compass, stunning countryside is only a short journey away. To the north are the Cotswolds and the Gloucester Plain. To the west are the Forest of Dean, the Wye Valley and the Black Mountains of Wales. To the south is Somerset, with the beautiful Mendip Hills, Cheddar Gorge, Wookey Hole Caves and Exmoor. Further to the south and west are Devon,
Dorset and Cornwall, with countless natural wonders of their own – Dartmoor, Somerset and some of the most breathtaking coastline in the UK. To the east is Wiltshire, where ancient monuments such as Stonehenge, Silbury Hill and Avebury sit side by side with picturesque towns and villages – Lacock, Bradford-on-Avon, Dyrham, and many more.

**Housing**

October entrants to Bristol are guaranteed University housing for their time in Bristol, and January entrants, although not formally guaranteed University housing, almost always get in. The accommodation ranges from self-catered student houses in Clifton (near the University) to large catered halls of residence in Stoke Bishop (35 minutes walk across open parkland). Between these two lie a whole range of housing situations, each of which has its own merits. You will be asked to choose between two main categories of accommodation - catered or self-catered. Past experience suggests that the catering plans on offer are rather more restrictive in both portion and menu than you may be used to, and not suitable for people who have any sort of dietary restrictions. Self-catering is very easy, and a popular choice for international students. Nonetheless, catered halls represent reasonable value for money and a good alternative for those who do not enjoy cooking. They also tend to be very sociable places as most Bristol first year students gather there, and if you fancy a break from cooking the University refectory offers meals at reasonable prices.

**Students who have already been accepted onto the Study Abroad Program should refer to the email you received from Bristol when you accepted your offer for the link to the Accommodation Application Form.**

**Student Life**

The city of Bristol is small enough to get to know well, but large and cosmopolitan enough to have an enormous variety of social and cultural events happening at any one time. At the beginning of each new academic year, the Students' Union provides a guide for new students on things to do in the city, and there are other listings, magazines, and websites, such as Venue (www.venue.co.uk), readily available throughout the year, some free of charge, giving comments and recommendations to keep you up to date on concerts, meal deals in restaurants, salsa dance classes . . . the list of possibilities is endless! (However, please note that the inclusion of any particular establishment or publication here is not a recommendation in itself, but merely intended to give an indication of what’s on offer in the city.)

Sporting opportunities can be found either through the Students' Union or the city itself. The Students' Union has a vast collection of different sporting societies from football to canoeing, Tae Kwon Do to skydiving. The University has its own sports ground in Stoke Bishop Sports Complex, plus a new sports centre in Tyndall Avenue, which has a gym and hall for exercise classes, among other things. The swimming pool is in the Union building and many of the Halls of Residence have squash or tennis courts, table tennis facilities and even croquet lawns in some cases.

Day trips to nearby towns and cities are also easily achievable. Bath, Wells and Glastonbury, for example, are just a short train or bus journey away. London is just over two hours away on the coach and day return tickets are generally inexpensive. If you like to travel in a group, a number of the Students' Union societies organise day trips and
sometimes weekends away in pursuit of their particular interest. These can provide an ideal opportunity to see a little of the countryside outside Bristol, in sociable surroundings.

If shopping is what interests you, then Bristol has plenty to offer. The main shopping centre is Broadmead, where you will find most of the UK’s large department and chain stores. There are also small individual boutiques and large discount warehouse shops. Park Street is the place for music, books, clothes and shoes. Alternatively, you can hop on the bus and travel out to Cribbs Causeway (where there is also a large cinema and several different restaurants) and shop in a large, light and airy undercover mall.

For more information on student life, visit the following website: http://www.bris.ac.uk/international/studyabroad/student-life.html

Communication
When making calls, keep in mind time zone differences (www.timeanddate.com/worldclock). To make an international call to the United States, dial the access code for the country from which you are calling plus the United States country code (always “1”) followed by the appropriate U.S. area code and local number. To call internationally from the United States, dial “011”, the country code, city access code (if necessary) and the phone number. Country and city codes can be found online (www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/dialing.html). Some of above steps can vary if you are using a calling card.

Skype
Skype is a free, downloadable software application that allows users to make live video and voice calls over the internet. Skype users can also add money to their account and can then use the service to call land lines and cell phones internationally at very low rates. Additionally, Skype also provides an instant messaging function as well as file sharing.

To create a Skype account, users must download the application from www.skype.com and create a user name and password. Once the application is installed onto their computer, they can search for friends either by first and last name or using their friends’ Skype usernames. Once a friend is added to a users contact list, they will be able to see whether that person is available to chat. If two users both have web-enabled video cameras for their computers, they will be able to chat face to face. For users without a web cam, a microphone is all that’s required for calls to another computer.

Other Helpful Links

Bristol Study Abroad Guide: http://www.bris.ac.uk/international/studyabroad/

Bristol Pre-Arrival Guide: http://www.bris.ac.uk/international/studyabroad/prearrival-information.html

International Academic Programs (IAP) at UW-Madison: www.studyabroad.wisc.edu
General Orientation Information:
www.worldwide.edu/travel_planner/index.html
(includes topics such as culture shock, international travel, etc.)

U.S. State Department:
travel.state.gov

U.S. State Department Students Abroad site:
http://www.studentsabroad.state.gov/

Center for Disease Control:
www.cdc.gov/travel/

Current Exchange Rates:
www.x-rates.com

The BBC:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/

The Daily Telegraph:
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/

The Guardian:
http://www.guardian.co.uk/

Bristol Tourism:
http://visitbristol.co.uk/

Student Testimonials

TRAVEL AND ARRIVAL
Wendy and Tory at the international office are great. They're very friendly and helpful and the tea party they threw for us at the beginning of the semester was a great way to meet other study abroad students.

The cheapest flights around Europe are offered by Ryan Air and easyJet. They both fly to a lot of places out of Bristol, and you can usually get a round trip flight for under $100.

MONEY
I don't have a bank account here, but I believe it is possible to open an account with at least one of the major banks. I have an American friend who opened an account at Barclays. The study abroad office here helps with that.

ACADEMICS
Lectures are really interesting and I'm really enjoying the labs especially since the professors actually instruct them. Classes seem to compare in difficulty with Madison but they do require us to write a lot of essays here, even in the sciences.
Your mark (grade) for a class is almost entirely determined by one exam or paper due at the end of the term. There are no midterms, and in the case of chemistry, no finals at the end of the first semester either.

The different departments run separately and there is no centralized time table. For each class I wanted I had to go and sign up in person hoping the next class I registered for would not conflict.

The biggest struggle I have come across is the difference in academic structure. I have been taking multiple choice exams my whole life and now have to rip the bandage off and write a 2000 word essay. I have however found it easy to get professors to talk to me about what they are expecting from me with regards to the essay.

HOUSING
I don't think I'd recommend living at Northwell house to other students if they were given a choice. It's a moderate walk to campus in comparison to the other dorms/houses but it is quite isolated because there are no other dorms nearby.

My room is huge in comparison to doubles back in Madison and it is randomly painted blue.

STUDENT LIFE
To be honest, I was a little worried about coming to Bristol with only one other person from Wisconsin but after orientation, it was not an issue anymore. All the study abroad students I've met so far have been incredibly friendly and I've made many plans to travel with them during our month long Easter break!

Last autumn, they opened a huge shopping center called Cabot Circus which has every type of store/restaurant/entertainment venue imaginable. It's maybe a mile from campus. http://www.cabotcircus.com/website/default.aspx

OTHER
I know we already have health insurance but if you come here for the year, they register you for NHS, which is the British universal healthcare system.

It's really easy to buy a cheap cell phone, and every provider has pay as you go plans so you don't need a contract.