Program: University of Bristol Exchange, Fall

Amanda’s Major: Genetics

Academic Life: I took some general social science classes while I was in England as a way to learn more about English society and ways of teaching since I’ve already taken social science classes here in Madison. For a full-time student, I only had eight hours of class a week. But, there was an expectation that you were doing a lot of the work independently through the assigned readings, further research, and general studying. Overall, the classroom environment was the same as what we experience here at UW-Madison, and also similar to UW-Madison, there is a large emphasis on independent work and personal initiative.

Amanda’s Most Memorable Experience: My most memorable experience was doing Thanksgiving with my friends, which includes my English flatmates, some other English friends who lived in the same complex, and several international students from the US, Singapore, Brazil, and Chile. We managed to cook enough food to feed 15 people, with a proper Thanksgiving spread and still have leftovers. For most of them, it was their first Thanksgiving, and for others, it was a much-needed snippet of home to stave off the homesickness. It was really rewarding to be able to share a small bit of my culture with them.

Advice for Someone Considering Bristol: Bristol is a great place to study. Everyone is incredibly welcoming and friendly. The program is well-designed, and the advisors in Bristol are incredibly helpful, prompt with answering questions, and are always there for you. The academics are worthwhile and offer perspectives on world issues and events that might not be as available for examination when studying in the US.

Advice for Someone Studying Abroad: Plan ahead. This means knowing your spending habits so that you can know if you need more or less money for food, supplies, and other items than is on the projected cost sheet. You can also be frugal by taking things that you already have from home like bedding, cutlery, and other items. Planning ahead also means being proactive with your instructors and advisers about whether or not you will need alternate assessments for exams or have general questions and concerns regarding coursework.

“Studying abroad is worthwhile, and looking back on it now, I would regret not doing it.”