ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

NICHOLAS ENGREN

Program: UW Biodiversity, Health, and Food Systems, Winter

Nicholas’ Major: Agricultural and Applied Economics

Academic Life: As a field course, the academic component of this course was not limited to the classroom. There were several classroom sessions in the United States prior to departure in order to give a brief overview of the country, culture, and language. In Ethiopia, the academic component became learning from professionals: attending lectures, shadowing, and participating in workshops, to name a few. The combination of these two components provided students with a “top to bottom” perspective: moving from large, nationwide trends to on-the-ground realities.

Nicholas’ Most Memorable Experience: Discussing American and Ethiopian politics with a group of local men on the shores of Lake Hawassa.

Addis Ababa as a Second Home: It certainly became a second home to me. I realized this when I began consistently telling people I would meet that “I would be back in Addis soon enough” without realizing it.

Study Abroad and Future Career Aspirations: My study abroad experience has given me a perspective most students do not have when they enter the job market. I feel I have a better understanding of the world as a result of my experience. In our dynamic, globalized world this understanding is invaluable not only for individuals but for companies as well.

Advice for Students Considering Ethiopia: You should seriously reflect on your reasons for studying abroad. Understand that every country is not for every person, so you should really try to find a good fit for your goals and needs.

Nicholas enjoying a traditional coffee ceremony.

“A lot can be said in theory and in books, but to experience it and to work with it on a daily basis exposes you to the subtleties which are often lost.”