

AIX EN PROVENCE, FRANCE

SHANNON READER

Program: Academic Program in Aix-en-Provence, Aix Marseille University track, Academic Year

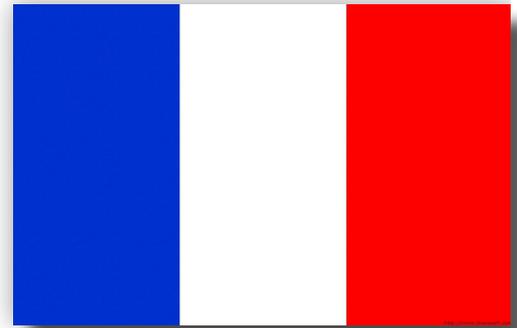
Shannon's Majors: French; English

Academic Life: Going to a French university was a great experience. I took classes in French history, language, and literature alongside French and international students. Being able to attend a French university made the experience feel authentic. Classes are longer in France, ranging from two to four hours, which took a couple of weeks to get used to, but after those first few weeks, everything felt normal. I also liked being able to take classes through the program because it felt more personal. I really improved my French in phonetics.

Advice for Someone Considering this Program: Absolutely go for the year. It seems like a lot of time to be away, but it's so worth it. I was able to experience so much more: more French speaking, more time to make friends, more time with my dinner family, more time to travel, more time to absorb it all. When first semester was ending, I felt like I was right on the cusp of really improving my French, feeling at home, and feeling like a part of Aix culture. Time goes by so quickly and there's so much to experience that you almost forget about missing home.

Housing: From my fourth floor apartment in the centre ville of Aix, I could see and hear everything: the market every morning, the flower market every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, the cafés below, and all the people walking by. I lived right in the old town hall square and was surrounded by 17th century aristocratic buildings. Even though my apartment was tiny, I loved it. I felt like I was a part of Aix's slow-moving, yet bustling, everyday life.

How Study Abroad Changed Shannon: I think I'm calmer and am more relaxed; I go with the flow better. Perhaps it's because of the provencal sun, the slow-paced Mediterranean lifestyle, or all of the traveling. Each city taught me to appreciate something new.



Shannon buying sunflowers at the daily market.

“The best way to learn about a culture and improve in a language is to talk with locals.”

