

AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE

AUSTIN GLUTH

Program: Academic Program in Aix-en-Provence, Spring

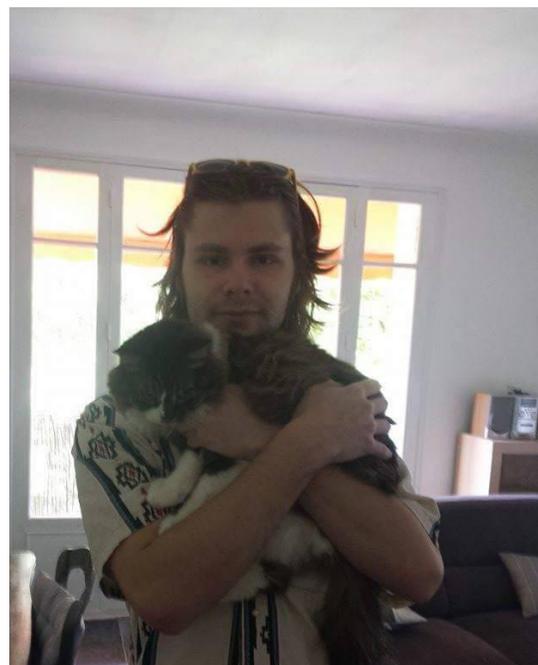
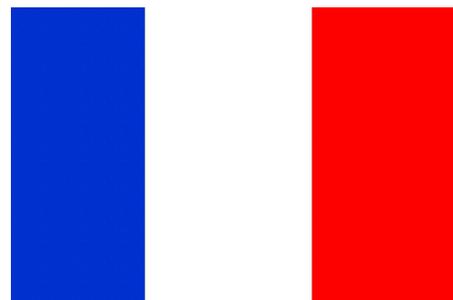
Austin's Majors: Biochemistry & French

Academic Life: Due to free and readily available higher education, as well as other factors, it is difficult to fund new infrastructure and technologies for classrooms especially for a letters university. The professors usually lectured and didn't use visual aids quite as often. This is especially difficult when the lectures are 2+ hours long--though not as frequent throughout the week. For many of us attending UW-Madison, I think most of us are used to attending a lecture with a powerpoint presentation to accompany and clicker questions to account for attendance; however, this is not the case for the Aix-Marseille II University.

Daily Commute: I lived with a host family in an apartment complex just on the outskirts of the Centre-Ville (center). Everyday I walked one of two routes to reach the academic program office, which was conveniently located near bus routes that connect to the university. Passing la rotande (a large fountain) and traversing the narrow, winding cobblestone streets was always a pleasant walk--a walk where one may not see many cars for the entirety of the 15 minute walk!

Advice for Someone Considering Aix: Challenge yourself by always attending lecture and taking notes in French, and meet French people. It is difficult to become fluent. In fact that's a fairly loose term in my opinion; however, I can now reflect on how much I've become cultivated--how much I've improved. Without this opportunity, you are missing a chance to truly develop your language and cultural skills.

Social Differences: People of all ages are socially active. Here, we call it "going out," where in France, "going out" meant socialization in public--showing yourself and engaging in deep conversation. Being an introvert, it was difficult to associate, yet it's quite the spectacle.



Austin with his host mom's cat, Zoey.

“This is an experience you should embrace.”

