

VARANASI, INDIA

ARWEN BLEKSLEY

Program: UW in India, Academic Year

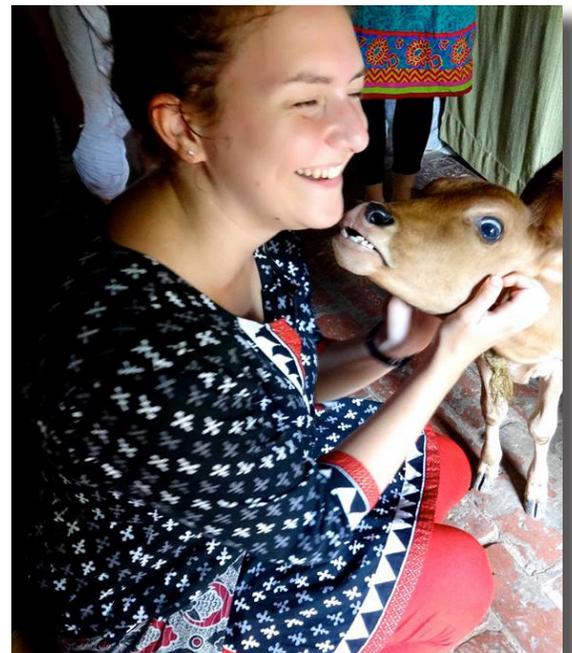
Arwen's Major: Languages & Cultures of Asia

Academic Life: We took some basic classes with other students on the program in the Program House, and then some private tutorial classes. Everybody did an independent research project. I decided to do my project on food. I took cooking classes and interviewed local residents, including housewives and restaurant owners, about their cooking and eating practices. I had a field assistant with me most of the time who translated from Hindi. It was always fun getting out in the city and learning about something I liked a lot first hand.

Living in Varanasi: I lived in two places. First semester, I lived in a guest house. I had a room on the roof and my own bathroom, but was often invited to have dinner with the couple who owned the house. Then second semester I moved in with a host family. Here, all my meals that I didn't have at the Program House were provided.

Advice for Someone Considering India: India is very different from America, but that's what studying abroad is all about: experiencing something completely new. You should be certain that you are up for this challenge before you come here, but if you're willing to roll with it, and laugh at all the ridiculous things that happen on a daily basis, India will embrace you as one of her own.

As a Transfer Student: There is a way for you to study abroad, if you really want to. I had a major that it just made sense to study abroad, but I truly believe that anyone can make it work if they make the effort. There will probably never again be a time in your life when you have the opportunity to do something like this. Do it. Just make it work.



Arwen playing with a new friend.

“If you want a program that is really, really going to change the way you look at the world, then this one is for you.”

