AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

KATIE DUDENAS

Program: Massey University Exchange, Spring

Katie’s Major: Computer Science

Academic Life: I knew I wanted to take two classes related to my major and two that would help me learn more about the country I was visiting. I was able to take two classes with a focus on Computer Science. Both were taught by university professors. I also took a class called Pacific Peoples in New Zealand, taught by a senior lecturer. This class was very small, and it ended up being almost entirely exchange or international students, with about a third of the class being Americans. My last class, which covered New Zealand history up to 1914, was taught by a visiting lecturer and it was even smaller. We only had eight students in the whole class -- way fewer than I was used to at UW-Madison.

Housing: I lived in newly-built on-campus dorms in Albany, a suburb of Auckland’s North Shore. The Massey Albany campus is made up of only a few buildings, but it is a short walk to Albany Village. There’s a lovely park nearby, and lots of walking trails. It’s easy to hop on a bus to the nearby Long Bay, where there’s a beautiful beach, or to the middle of Auckland city.

Advice for Someone Considering this Program: New Zealand is an incredible place to study abroad. The culture is both similar and totally different to that of America. There is so much to see, and because it is a relatively small country, you can see a lot of it even in the span of a semester. New Zealand’s population is very diverse and they are very welcoming to people from other countries.

What Katie Learned About Herself: My study abroad experience helped me learn that I am capable of much more than I might’ve thought. I now know that I can navigate an international airport by myself, and pass a three-hour history exam. Studying in New Zealand made me realize that I’m at a point in my life with endless possibilities.

“I can’t recommend this program enough; it is a wonderful experience.”

Katie visiting the Hobbiton movie set in Matamata.