Program: University of Cape Town Exchange, Spring

Caroline’s Majors: Gender and Women’s Studies, Global Health Certificate

Academic Life: I had the opportunity to directly enroll at the University of Cape Town, which has a breathtaking view. I took classes surrounded by both South African and other international students. I enjoyed going to class and listening to not only what my professors had to say, but my South African peers as well. I learned about South African issues in regards to gender, race, and politics while getting to hear peoples’ first-hand experiences with these issues as other students shared their opinions on them. Not only did I find these conversations interesting in the classroom, but I found that they directly applied to my experiences outside the classroom as I lived my day-to-day life in Cape Town.

Housing: I lived in a big house, which was about a 10 minute walk from campus, with 9 other international students. The students came from the USA, Australia, Finland, Mexico, and Austria. It was a really interesting experience having to live in a house with people from such different cultural backgrounds and having to find ways to compromise to make sure everyone felt comfortable while enjoying our time abroad.

Caroline’s Most Memorable Experience: One of my most memorable experiences from abroad was one of my first weeks in Cape Town doing a full moon hike up a mountain, Lion’s Head. We hiked up just before sunset and then got to watch the sunset from the top. I was truly amazed to watch the city transition from day to night. We then hiked back down guided by the light of the moon.

Advice For Students Considering Studying Abroad: For someone who is considering studying abroad, I would say definitely “do it.” Being in a new country while learning about a new culture helps give a person a new way of looking at many things. Learning at an institution with international and foreign students opens your ideas to new perspectives and opinions on topics you may not have had here in Madison.

“Rather than sitting in a classroom in Madison learning about issues in South Africa, I was able to witness and experience them myself.”