

MADRID, SPAIN

EMILY BRIX

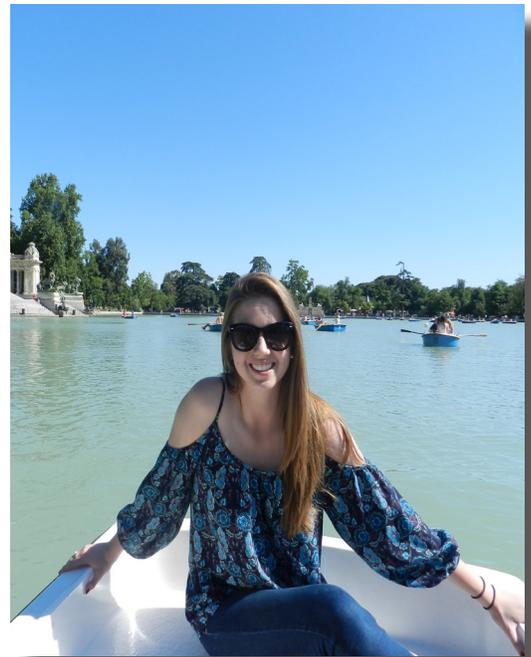
Program: WIP Universidad Complutense de Madrid

Emily's Majors: English Literature, Spanish

Academic Life: Students were required to take five classes. Three of the classes are in a program called Reunidas, with other American students; the class is instructed completely in Spanish by Spanish professors at the university. The remaining two classes are called Complutense courses required to be taken with other Spanish students at the university. The Complutense courses limit the amount of American students in each class, to encourage interaction with other Spanish students, it also encourages more facilitation and growth with speaking and understanding Spanish. In this classroom setting, the instruction is again all in Spanish, but at a faster pace, and students are required to be more independent throughout the semester because it is normal for your grade in that class to be just a final exam, or a final exam and essay.

Most Memorable Experience: One of the most memorable experiences from my time abroad was the opportunity I had to teach English to Spanish students. Every week, I would take the metro to tutor triplet fourteen year-olds, helping them practice their English conversational skills. They had such high energy, were curious to learn, and helped me practice my Spanish skills when I needed to translate phrases or words for them. It was such a neat opportunity that the WIP program set up and was an extra-curricular outside of school that let you dive into the Spanish language and culture even more.

Cultural Differences: The biggest cultural difference I noticed was the long and relaxed meal times. In the United States, it is very common to have a quick thirty-minute lunch or a brief dinner, but in Spain meals can take hours. However, I loved how meals lasted two and sometimes even three hours. You do not feel rushed while eating, and the extra time allows you to build relationships with friends and those you are spending time with at the dinner table.



Emily enjoying a boat ride through Parque de Retiro in Madrid.

“The WIP Program expects students to be more independent and to maintain a high level of Spanish.”

