

# MADRID, SPAIN

## MARIEL WHITE

**Program:** WIP Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Year

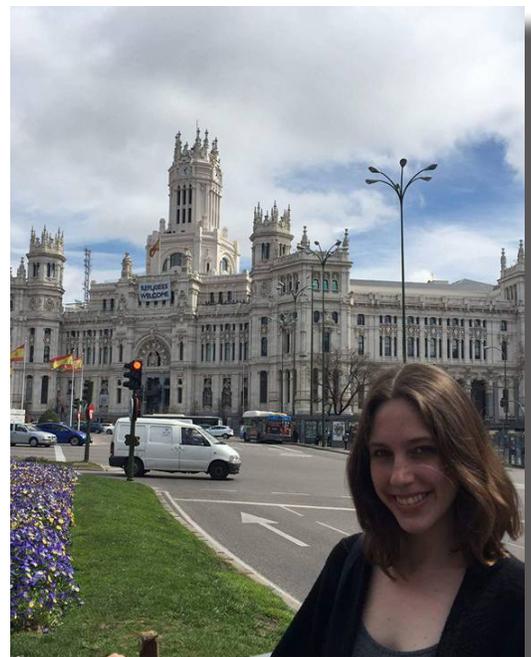
**Mariel's Major:** Sociology

**Academic Life:** During each semester, I took three Reunidas classes and two Complutense classes. The first semester, I took first-year Complutense classes because I was worried about the level of difficulty. The second semester, I took one second-year class and one fourth year class. I did well in all them. The hardest thing to do was to adapt to a new school system, but once I figured out how they teach and test, it was easier to follow along. The second semester I paid the extra fee and took two Complutense classes in the school of sociology (not part of WIP facultades). This proved to be a wonderful experience and I regret not doing it first semester as well.

**Memorable Moments:** One of the most memorable experiences of my program was apartment searching. After a long orientation (which was very helpful), I felt empowered to explore Madrid on my own in search of an apartment that I would feel at home in. The whole process was stressful and a bit frightening but once I found my apartment and signed the contract, it felt rewarding. Looking back on my experience, this is one of the most meaningful moments of the year.

**Home Away from Home:** By the end of the first semester, I felt like I was just starting to feel comfortable and to have a grasp on things. I realized this when the thought of going home provoked more sadness than relief. I realized this when I no longer had to look at my metro map to get around because I had it all memorized. I got to know Madrid like the back of my hand and that's exactly what I wanted.

**Tips for Future Students:** My tip for those considering Madrid is to fully commit to the idea of language immersion. Consider what your priorities are-- do you want to become better in a foreign language? Don't expect to stay in your comfort zone and speak English all the time.



Mariel with Palacio de Cibeles in the background.

**“Having a roommate who is a native Spaniard was a special experience.”**

