

# MADRID, SPAIN

RACHEL GUENTHER

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

**Rachel's Majors:** Spanish; Criminal Justice

**Academic Life:** I took two classes related to the topics of law and the European Union, as well as three classes that counted toward my Spanish major, including history, literature and linguistics. The academic and classroom experience was more difficult than I expected. During the semester there is not a lot of outside classroom work, however if you do not work ahead, midterms and finals will be 10x harder, especially if you haven't already started reviewing beforehand.

**Initial Thoughts:** "What did I get myself into?" This was my reaction because the WIP program is very independent and you have to make many important decisions early on. However, without having to make those decisions, I would not be the person I am today. I feel that because of those decisions I have grown more independent and gained critical thinking skills.

**Housing:** For the first month, you live in a homestay, which involves you staying with a señora or a family, and the homestay includes breakfast and dinner. During that month, you have a choice to either continue your stay at the homestay or live in an apartment. I chose to live in an apartment. My apartment consisted of three other people apart from myself who were all Spanish and either students or young adults working.

**Most Memorable Moment:** I attended an Atletico Madrid soccer game on my birthday. I am a huge fan of soccer and it was a dream come true to be able to attend a live match with some close friends!

**Home Away from Home:** By the end of the program, it will feel like home because you have a daily routine, friends that help make it feel like a home away from home, as well as favorite restaurants and hang out spots.



Rachel (R) and friends at an Atletico Madrid Game.

**"You are forced from the beginning to adapt to the culture."**

