Program: SFS Wildlife Management & Wildlife Research, Summer

Kallie’s Major: Biology

Academic Life: Our curriculum was broken up among three professors: one who taught about wildlife policy, one who taught about wildlife management, and one who taught about large mammals themselves. Optional Swahili classes were offered by a fourth professor as well. I attended class with the same 30 students every day - all were undergraduates from various American universities with the exception of two students who were from villages in Tanzania. Our academic schedule and settings varied significantly from day-to-day and we spent just as much time learning outside the traditional classroom as we did in the classroom. It was not uncommon for us to load up the land cruisers with camp chairs and set up on a hill, or a ranch, or on the side of the road to receive lecture within view of our topic. I was especially fond of the group exercises we completed while on safari in Tarangire, Lake Manyara, or Serengeti National Parks.

Housing: Nestled in the quaint village of Rhotia was a gated camp where I lived with 30 other SFS students, faculty, and staff. Students were split up among 10 rooms. Each room had two sets of bunk beds, shelves, two desks, and a personal bathroom with sink, shower, and toilet. Faculty and staff lived in similar housing on the other side of camp. Also in camp, were faculty offices, a classroom, library, dining hall, gazebo, and various picnic tables painted by SFS students from previous years.

What Sets Kallie Apart: It is easy to say that you have conquered language and cultural barriers in the United States, and that you are prepared to overcome those challenges in a foreign context. I used to believe that about myself. However, it is completely different to physically live in a country where you are the minority, where you do not speak the language. What sets me apart from students who have not studied abroad is the wisdom I gained simply from being the foreigner. I was forced to adopt another culture out of respect - whether I agreed with it or not. I was forced to communicate via body language simply because I had no words to express myself in Swahili.

“There is no substitute for the lessons you learn abroad.”

Kallie at a field site with elephants.