

Studying Abroad by Jonathan Schillios

I never considered studying abroad. Why? I just never considered it an option I was able to take. One by one I addressed the issues I was going over in my head: I knew I couldn't afford the trip, so... I applied for the different study abroad scholarships, most noticeably the funding from the Honors College. I knew that taking a semester off from school would cause me to stay for another year of classes, so... I decided to study abroad for summer 2010. After I figured all of this out, I was ready.

I felt so free leaving all ties to the northwest behind me; I was somewhat sad, but anticipating an awesome adventure. I lived in Barcelona for a month, but the open-ended program allowed me to spend extra time exploring Europe after my University classes ended.

My classes were amazing. I learned so much about the Spanish language, but the real experience is outside on the streets. There is no comparison to studying anywhere inside the US. The cultural emersion continued to surprise me at every turn and I noticed changes in my attitude towards life over the course of the program.

They aren't lying when they say you will make lifelong friends around the world. I talk to my friends on the east coast most weeks and write back and forth with my senora and Spanish friends I made as well. I know I will have friends when I return to Barcelona.

Before I left Barcelona I drank from a special fountain that guarantees you will find your way back sometime later in life, and I am looking forward to it.