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Redhawks Soar Abroad

Bridget Lawrence, Staff Reporter

Seattle University students have the opportunity to study abroad through many different programs. These range from Seattle U sponsored programs to faculty-led trips. Regardless of the program, all students at Seattle U have the opportunity to discover programs that fit their interests.

Owen Trampe, a fifth-year environmental science major, had the opportunity to go abroad during the summer and get 15 credits without missing an educational quarter in Seattle. He chose a program called Wildland Studies and went to Iceland for 6 weeks.

Trampe's specific program was a guided backpacking tour where the students would learn and discover Iceland's nature. At times during the trip, they were doing homework in tents with headlamps or on glaciers.

Trampe spoke of his memorable moments while in Iceland, such as scuba diving between two tectonic plates and witnessing dramatic geological activity.

"The coolest thing I've done in my life is see an erupting volcano, and that was thanks to my study abroad program," Trampe said.

His other hands-on opportunities involved helping collect data on seabirds with researchers from Iceland.

"We got to help them out. It was really cool. There were other people who did work with Arctic foxes and whales. Tons of incredible researchers," Trampe said.

There are other programs that offer the opportunity to study at a university, rather than experiencing the outdoors. Madilyn Oster, a fourth-year forensic psychology major, is studying at the American College of Greece in Athens. She will be graduating in June and is hoping to stay abroad and find a job.



Jordie Simpson

A world map decorating the entrance to the Seattle U Study Abroad office

The hardest part about being abroad for her is standing out.

“I very much want to be able to adapt and blend in as much as I can to experience things, to the maximum. Some days I feel like I do, and a lot of people will initially acknowledge me in Greek. Some days, I feel very obvious despite my efforts,” Oster said.

Her favorite thing that she’s done while abroad was visiting the island of Hydra and all the other traveling she’s been able to do around Europe in general which includes the U.K., Turkey, Hungary, Czech, Austria, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Iceland. She also has adapted to the Greek way of teaching and her professors.

“Initially they all feel very intimidating, but the professors are very kind and encouraging. There is one true thing about Greeks, it’s that they’re loud, and can sometimes sound angry when really they’re just passionate! I had to get over that hump a bit, but I’ve found that my professors are extremely inspiring and supportive in every way you can think of,” Oster said.

Oster chose Greece because she has family that lives on one of the islands and knew that Greece was an affordable place to live and travel compared to other countries.

Shannon Allen, a fourth-year environmental science major with minors in film and biology, decided to study abroad in Madrid, Spain. She chose a program called CIEE which allows students to actually move to different cities during the semester or quarter if they so choose.

Allen chose to just stay in Madrid but she doesn’t feel like she missed out by not choosing to leave and move to a different city. During the period of time when other students were moving to their next city, Allen was traveling.

“I chose this program because it had a medium level of support. There are some programs that they’ll plan out every minute while you’re abroad and you don’t have free time and you’re always supervised. This one they have planned activities that are optional,” Allen said.

One of the things Allen found difficult was being able to practice speaking Spanish.

“In a big city hub like Madrid, people speak English. Obviously the first language is Spanish but if they hear the American accent when you try to speak Spanish they immediately switch to English,” Allen said.

Overall, all different programs and levels of travel experience before going abroad helped make these Redhawks enjoy and experience different cultures differently. They were able to immerse themselves in some way whether it was enjoying tapas in Spain, gyros after a long day of swimming around a new island, or being in a tent trying not to be blown away. They all were able to say that their lives had been changed by going abroad.