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College Degree Program: Marketing and Sports Management

Study Abroad Program: England



St. Paul's Cathedral, London.

The future belongs to the curious. The ones who are not afraid to try it, explore it, live it and question it. As a kid, you question everything and want to know why, where and can I go there? Growing up, we see places on TV and the Internet where we never think we will get to visit in a lifetime — or if so, maybe only once. Taking the opportunity to study abroad gives you the chance to make your dreams a reality and open your eyes to so many things you never knew were there.

I recall the first day I arrived in England, and I thought to myself, “What did I just do?” Luckily for me, I was able to study abroad through the same program as my sister, who attends Kansas State University. As we met up at the airport with the other students and the international student support, I felt like I made a mistake. We got on

a bus and traveled to my new home for the next couple of months. When we arrived, I looked around and thought to myself, “Why did I do this? Can I please go back to the United States?” I sat there in my empty room, with my luggage scattered all over the place, and started crying.

That evening, there was a dinner with other international students at a cafeteria on campus. Though I didn't really feel up to it, I knew that I had to go (mostly because I was starving, but I also had to admit I was curious). It was the right decision. If I had not ventured out on that first day, my whole semester would have been significantly different. At this dinner, where I met students from all over the world, I felt suddenly like I made the greatest decision of my life. It was hard to believe I had been in tears earlier in the day.



Stonehenge.



But my venturing out did not stop with international student gatherings — my curiosity pushed me to go further. During the semester, I took additional trips around Europe. I not only visited some of the coolest places I will ever get to see, but I also met people from all over the world along the way. I learned about their cultures, why they spoke differently than me, what their families were like, the reasons they took two months to travel the world and many other amazing stories. I made a lot of friends while exploring through these different cities, many with whom I still stay in touch on social media.

One of my favorite trips during study abroad was when I went with my sister to Austria. As we both are HUGE fans of the Sound of Music, we went straight to Salzburg, where the movie was filmed. We even planned our trip with an extra free day

to let us determine what to do with our time. We decided to make a spur-of-the-moment trip to Halstatt, around three hours on transportation from Salzburg. Hearing about this “most beautiful city in Austria,” we had to see it for ourselves. We took a chance and were rewarded with such a great experience.

Studying abroad gave me a whole new sense of appreciation and curiosity. Throughout the 2017 spring semester, I experienced things I had never done or seen before. I made friends, took pictures and created memories that I will cherish forever. My semester would not have been the same if I had not followed my curiosity. If I have one piece of advice to anyone out there, then, it is to be curious. Question things, explore the world and do not ever lose your sense of wonder.