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Study Abroad Report

Spring 2017

Aix-en-Provence

My semester abroad in France was the best experience of my life so far. I feel honored and grateful that my semester was partially funded by the Department of Languages and Cultures at West Chester University. Without the Study Abroad Scholarship, my semester in France would not have been possible.

The entirety of my scholarship was spent on tuition, and it was money well spent on classes that genuinely interested and challenged me. I took five classes: French Business, where we explored the differences between French and American businesses and visited some micro-enterprises right in Aix. The second class was French Linguistics, which helped me to better understand the complexities of spoke French so I could better communicate every day with the shopkeepers, bus drivers, and friends I met in Aix. Thirdly was the French Honors Seminar, which challenged me to open my mind not only to the new culture in which I was immersed, but to any culture I might come in contact with in the future. I will take the lessons I learned in that seminar with me forever. My favorite class was French Translation, where we explored the nuances of written French and the many different ways the same phrases can be interpreted. From my work in this class, I won the Anne Jourlait Prize for Translation at the end of the semester. My last class was Contemporary French Identity Politics, which gave me a better perspective on the French perspective of the world.

These classes were all invaluable to me, and my growth as a student and as a person was rapid and extremely noticeable. These classes, the people I met, and just living in France changed my goals for myself and my future.

Besides the classes, I was fortunate enough to visit several other French cities such as Marseille, Nice, Montpellier, Toulouse, Lyon, Dijon and Paris. I spent my spring break in Corsica, one of the most beautiful places I've ever been. I kept my travels relatively close to Aix as my main goal was to experience French culture and to practice speaking French. From these travels I had varied experiences and conversations that, paired with my classes, gave me a broader understanding of a beautiful country.

None of these experiences would have been possible without the help of the Study Abroad Scholarships, and I will be forever grateful.