

Study Abroad Student Profile



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21 Years Old

Major: Economics

Minor: International Business

I have studied abroad twice at my time here at UCF. Both at MCI in Innsbruck, Austria. My first-time studying was a short-term program during the summer of 2019 and then I studied the following spring semester (2020).

I originally picked Innsbruck because I googled all of the locations that UCF had to offer, and Innsbruck was the most beautiful and intriguing location in my opinion. Located in a mountain range, you have some of the most scenic views over all of Europe as well as many outdoor activities such as skiing and hiking.

The first time that I went to Innsbruck I fell in love with the city. I made friends that I am still in contact with over a year later. The experience allowed me to travel to many surrounding countries around Austria and provided me with a once in a lifetime experience. I loved it so much I came back for a second time. My second time in Innsbruck was a bit different than the first. I arrived just before the COVID-19 pandemic broke out and it was a challenging experience, but it made

me realize how much I have grown being able to handle those conditions far out of my comfort zone. Although many students returned home, I continued my time in Austria and I enjoyed it to the fullest despite many attractions being closed. I spent most of my time hiking with close friends and am currently making plans to return once the pandemic is over.

During my abroad experience, I was challenged in ways that I never thought I would be. It was difficult knowing that the whole world turned to chaos and I was thousands of miles from any safety net I had but the experience allowed me to truly see the beauty in where I was. I know it is cliché, but I have truly grown as an individual and have made worldwide connections. Throughout the pandemic especially, the locals showed me true hospitality and took me in like I was one of them. I have a family in Innsbruck that I truly love like my own.

I would definitely study abroad again! I've already done it twice so I would love to go as many times as I can. I definitely would love to return to Innsbruck as I have truly fallen in love with the city. Along with Innsbruck, I've also recently taken a deep interest into South Africa and would love to visit there someday as well.

For future students, I would recommend really immersing yourself in the experience. One of my favorite quotes by Anthony Bourdain is "Travel isn't always pretty. It isn't always comfortable. Sometimes it hurts, it even breaks your heart. But that's okay. The journey changes you; it should change you. It leaves marks on your memory, on your consciousness, on your heart, and on your body. You take something with you. Hopefully, you leave something good behind". This quote is exactly how I feel about my experience. It wasn't always this picture-perfect European vacation, but it was crazy, exhilarating, uncomfortable, hectic, spontaneous, and so much more. Although the experience is a scary one, it is worth every moment.

