

Amanda Beinhauer GSC Reflection:

Through a balance of working, studying, exploring, and being just a bit of a tourist, in a few short months--I became a Londoner. Of course the main focus of my trip was studying; the courses I took while being abroad in London were all part of the global engagement program, so they meshed exceedingly well together. I enrolled in Experiencing Globalization, Global Perspectives on Human Rights, and Islam Politics and Britain-- I also had a service learning placement at a housing association in East London. Throughout the semester there was a lot of overlap of the topics discussed in the courses, which made the entire program feel more comprehensive. It was refreshing to focus on a broad topic for an entire semester rather than taking a patchwork of course while trying to simultaneously fulfill expectations for majors and gen-ed requirements. Each of my courses took several field studies, which augmented my experience. My classes visited mosques, toured the street art of Shoreditch, explored a rapidly gentrifying neighborhood, and visited parliament. These trips helped me to improve my navigating and develop a deep love for the London Underground.

Although there was a lot of emphasis on my studies, the fact that I was living in London was never lost on me. Finding community outside of other study abroad kids, made London feel like home. Having people that could point me toward the best latte or pain au chocolat in any given neighborhood was life changing. They also give me an excuse to go back and visit, which isn't a bad deal either. Overall, studying abroad in London was as amazing as all the cliché "studying abroad in London is the highlight of my college career" say it is, and I would highly recommend it and the Global Engagement program.