

Major: Fashion design

Semester abroad: Paris American Academy

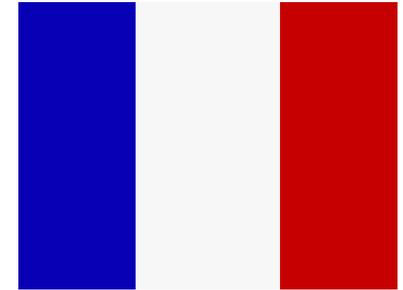
Why did you choose Paris?

Paris is the fashion capital of the world. Only Paris is allowed to do *Haute Couture*. There is so much energy to be creative there. It was the perfect place for me and for my major, and for what I wanted to get out of my study abroad experience.

Advice: Just do it! Even with the hurdles of arranging for credits that would count for my major and working with the consulate, it's worth it.

Housing: I shared a small apartment with a fellow student. It was included in the program price for the semester. We were located in the 5th Arrondissement, which is the Latin Quarter. It is an older part of Paris, but the people living there are young.

“I thought Paris would be all glam and glitzy, but there were social issues in Paris that I was not even aware of until I went — no article or picture could have compared with the experience.”



Janelle in the window of her apartment in Paris.

Benefits of Study Abroad: The euphoria of travel. Interning for Eli Saab and working backstage at the runway shows awakened my true passion. I realized I want to do fashion but differently, in order to further social justice issues. I love the idea of consumers buying a fashion piece, but having the profits go to help women's education in other countries. It wasn't about me in the end — it was about what I can do for others.

Cultural differences: Sunday the shops close and people have a day off. On Sundays or Mondays people picnic. They relax more — picnics on the front lawn at Versailles are normal.

How were you transformed? I had time to think and make decisions about myself. I want to travel to see what is going on in the world firsthand rather than from a Yahoo news feed. There is so much hurt in the world and so many issues, but I want to go so that I know what cause speaks to me and what it is that I want to give back. Give yourself an opportunity to grow in knowledge about the world. Everything has value— you are more joyful when you see things from a different perspective.