Spain

Packing and Traveling  

1. Specifically, what kind of linens did you need to bring?
   - I didn’t bring any, and I was just fine.

2. What are you glad you packed from home?
   - Spanish/English dictionary, books for leisure reading, computer, swimsuit, comfy shoes, ibuprofen, Band-Aids, a few snacks from home.

3. What do you wish you had left at home?
   - I brought way too many clothes. I didn’t need half of them, plus I bought a bunch while I was there (during the summer they have a bunch of sales going on). It also was possible to buy things like lotion, shampoo and those types of things; I didn’t necessarily need to weigh down my luggage with those items.

4. Do you have any travel tips to pass on (planning advice, safety considerations, guidebooks, train vs. bus, etc.)?
   - I wish I had bought a travel book, but we got a lot of info from the teachers and from websites as to things we should see. Book things ahead, we found out with our plane tickets that the best time to purchase was in the middle of the week and a couple of weeks in advance. Don’t waste any days, travel as much as possible.

   I wish I had made travel plans for before or after to go see more cities, the weekends weren’t enough time to go see places like Barcelona. I was thinking about traveling beforehand with my family, I wish that it had worked out so I could have seen more. You will easily need more money than you plan for; there are so many things to spend it on. Valladolid was pretty safe, but while traveling keep your bag secure when going into places like the train, bus, or metro. I would suggest always having travel buddies. The bus is alright, but the high speed train gets you there the fastest and it is cheaper for students under 25 or some age around that.

5. What places would you advise future students to see and why?
   - Barcelona and Madrid were amazing. The school also takes you to Salamanca and Segovia, which were beautiful too. I wish I had more time in Barcelona, and I wish I gotten to see Granada, Sevilla, San Sebastian, and maybe the Canaries.
1. How did you meet other students?
   - I really didn’t meet any students from Spain, although you met a few while out at night. All classes are with English speaking students.

2. How did you like to spend your free time and why? Is there anything you regret not doing more of in your free time?
   - We went to bar and cafes, museums, and the beach a lot. We only lived five minutes from the beach so we played basketball and went on walks/runs there a lot. I tried to see as much of the city as I could. I wish I had spent more time out at night; we didn’t experience as much of that as I liked.

3. What opportunities for social, recreational, and cultural events that the host university or program offered did you like best? Why?
   - They had Spanish movies for us every Wednesday night, which were kind of interesting. The University didn’t really plan many events for us besides the two weekend trips, which were amazing and the teachers did a great job of explaining the cities and landmarks to us. Most of the time we had to plan our own fun.

4. What piece of advice would you give future students regarding their non-academic life while abroad?
   - Try everything; you don’t want to have regrets. I was especially afraid with the food, but it was all great.
1. How did your academic experience abroad differ from your U.S. experiences concerning:
   Relations with professors/classroom instruction?
   - This was similar. We actually had problems with students eating in class, which is not acceptable in their culture at all.

Grading?
- They were fair with their grading. Similar to professors in the United States.

Study habits?
- I studied about the same as I do at home, but it was tough trying to balance that and trying to see and explore new things!

Library?
- They have a public library that we had to use a few times to write a paper, but otherwise people all do homework and research in the computer lab they have.

Computer access?
- The internet always seemed to be not working and the computers were old. I brought my own laptop, but I still had internet troubles with it. We didn’t have internet in our homes like all the other students. It was difficult to get things done sometimes when we couldn’t always have internet access.
Money and Communications

1. How much money in U.S. currency would you recommend students have at their disposal for their whole time abroad?
   - I brought about 700 in U.S. dollars, but it was tough to exchange once you actually get into Valladolid. I suggest credit or debit cards. However a little bit of money in dollars would be handy. Call your bank to let them know you will be abroad.

2. How much money did you have in foreign currency when you left for your program? Was it enough?
   - I brought 200 euros over, which was fine at first. Then I had to exchange U.S. currency, which was tough. I would suggest just using a credit or debit card to withdraw euros the whole time.

3. How did you manage your money (credit cards, traveler’s checks, bank accounts etc.)? How and where did you access your money?
   - Credit and debit card. There are tons of ATMs outside of banks.

4. How much money did you spend on:

Books?
- $0

School Supplies?
- $5

Food?
- $300

Local transportation?
- $20-$30

Travel?
- $1,000-$1,500

Personal items (toiletries)?
- $10-$30

Entertainment?
- $200

Postage?
- $0

Airfare?
- $1,300

Laundry?
- $0
5. How did you communicate with the U.S.? What would you recommend to future students (e.g. calling card, set up e-mail account and where, etc.)?

- I used Skype and Facebook to keep in touch with family and friends. I would send them messages letting them know when we could Skype, although it’s tough with the time change. I never had a cell, but a lot of students did and it would have been nice to have to communicate with other students while there.

Comments
- Studying abroad was a great experience and I definitely met a lot of great people. I learned so much about myself, their culture, and about their language.