During summer 2013, right after my freshman year, I had the amazing opportunity to travel with Dr. Waldron to Great Britain for a month. While I was gone, I completed six English credits, which was amazing because it never actually felt like work. We had reading assignments that we read on our own each day - usually the night before - and we kept logs of our thoughts so we could discuss them later. The really cool thing about having class abroad was that it was never in a classroom during a set time. We went to places that had actual significance to the things we read and we discussed them there. The best memory I have of that was reading Wordsworth’s “Tintern Abbey”, which is an incredible poem about a decaying abbey in Wales. Then we got to spend hours exploring it and taking group photos on the ruins. There were no other tourists there so we felt really special and as if we went back in time to when Wordsworth actually wrote the poem. Then we had lunch in a café on the premises and analyzed the poem on a bench literally yards away from Tintern Abbey. It was so overwhelmingly beautiful that several of us, including me, had tears in our eyes.

Besides the school aspect of the trip, it was a massive learning experience. Over the course of the month we went to many places in England, Scotland, and Wales. Dr. Waldron gave us a lot of freedom and if we had time, we could go wherever we wanted. I remember making a bucket list of all the things I wanted to see and do in Great Britain such as visit Platform 9 ¾ from the Harry Potter series. My friend and I just picked a day and we got on the tube and went without any supervision. It wasn’t as scary as I thought it would be to navigate around London. Since I am directionally challenged, figuring out the tube system gave me a lot of confidence to be independent and not worry about getting lost. In fact, we had a free weekend in the middle of the month, so my friend and I packed an overnight bag, left our flat in London at about five in the morning, and took the Eurostar to Paris. We got to see most of the major sites in Paris, plus go to Disneyland, which was absolutely wonderful. But it made us glad to get back to London when the weekend was over. I felt entirely at home while I was in Europe, but especially in London.

There are a million stories I could tell you about my study abroad experience, but it won’t mean much until you actually go for yourself. It isn’t even worth worrying about money or feeling homesick. I never felt unsafe or nervous while I was away with my Campbell family. I greatly encourage anyone who entertains the idea of study abroad to just go as soon as possible. You will not regret it for a moment!