



Gilman Global Experience: Justine Outside the Classroom **Video Transcript – Justine Knudson**

Life Outside of Class

Hello everyone. My name is Justine and I am studying abroad here in Sevilla, Spain. Today's blog is going to be about some of the things you can do outside of the classroom while you are studying abroad.

One of the really cool things about studying abroad is there are a lot of different opportunities to get involved in the community, outside of the classroom. For example, some students will volunteer at the local hospital, or volunteer at local schools where they can help teach English, or tutor students in general topics, or even coach sports. There are a lot of different ways that people can really integrate themselves into the community, or into the city, or town that they are studying abroad in. Most students who study abroad usually have the goal of learning a new language or learning more about the culture of the place that they are visiting, but living in a new country and speaking in a new language can be surprisingly overwhelming. It is easy to go abroad and only hang out with your American friends because they are eating the same foods as you, they practice the same holidays, and they share the same culture, so it can often be more comfortable to just have your American friends while you are abroad. A lot of students find that those events and those activities that you take part in, that are part of the community and in the city, are the most rewarding experiences you can have abroad. For me, with my time outside of the university, I spend my time working on an internship and through my internship I get to work with American students, and Spanish students, and I bring them together, so that we can share cultural information and practice our language. Everybody involved gets to make friends and it is a lot of fun. My favorite thing about the internship is the amount of people that we have been able to meet and make friends with. At every event, we actually have a whole new group of people because as we make friends they tell their friends and then you have different people coming to every single event. As a result of this, we have actually had students being able to go to soccer games, or float down the river, or go hiking. We even had one student who found a musical group and he plays with them every week now. It has been really rewarding to go in there and meet other students who go to school in Sevilla, and live in the city, who can then take us and show us around the city and around their country on their terms. That is really kind of the goal of the whole internship, is to get students to engage in an authentic way with the city. The only way that you can do that is by making friends with people who live there, who know the place, and it has just been really awesome. I don't think I will

ever forget the friends that I have made during this internship because they are the reason that I have some of my greatest memories from studying abroad.

Interaction with Community

Something I do for my internship is keep my eye open for interesting events and things going on in the city that we can participate in. Not too long ago, there was the International Film Festival that was held in Sevilla. I thought that was just an awesome opportunity to participate in an annual event in the city. We actually go to participate in a scavenger hunt that was held throughout the city center. Each clue in the scavenger hunt was actually themed off of one of the movies in the film festival. It was really interactive with the film festival and then it has some history about the city of Sevilla. It was actually a really cool theme because we all showed up and there were community members that came to compete and we all got a t-shirt to participate. We all got our clues and we were literally running all over the city, for like two hours, participating in this scavenger hunt. It was just really awesome to be able to feel like you are part of the community, and to play a game with people in the city, and even though I am not from Sevilla I definitely felt that I was a part of something unique there. It is stuff like this that we really try and do with my internship, is let other students know about opportunities to go and participate with the local people and do what the local people do for fun because that is just a really important part of learning about the culture of anyplace that you are staying in.