

Exploring the world, expanding the mind

JACOBS SHARES POSITIVE EXPERIENCES STUDYING ABROAD IN SEVILLE

By Audrey Dieckman

School and vacation usually don't mix. However, studying abroad involves exactly that, with an immersive classroom across the world. This is what Yutan graduate Brennan Jacobs (class of 2022) experienced when she studied in Seville, Spain, for five months during the spring 2025 semester.

"I did it, and I don't regret it for a second. It was the happiest I've ever been for my life, and I was opened to a whole new perspective of the world," Brennan said.

This Creighton senior was a little apprehensive at first but spontaneously decided to sign up to travel abroad only three days before the deadline.

"I mean, I knew I wanted to, but I just didn't think I could afford it. But then, I just submitted the application to Creighton," Brennan said. "And then I was like, I'm gonna do this."

On the contrary, Brennan's father, Yutan sixth-grade teacher Trent Jacobs, was a little concerned when his daughter told him her plans to travel to Seville to study abroad.

"I was very apprehensive and honestly a bit worried. I never had the opportunity to do something like that in college myself, so the whole idea felt unfamiliar and a little intimidating. My biggest concern was her safety, especially being so far from home," Trent said.



BRENNAN JACOBS (THIRD FROM LEFT) EATS WITH HER HOST FAMILY AND HER VISITING SISTER (SECOND FROM LEFT). THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME SOMEONE FROM HER FAMILY COULD VISIT HER AND EXPERIENCE THE CULTURE. (COURTESY PHOTO)

Despite his worries, Trent knew his daughter would benefit from this experience.

"Living in a different country forces you out of your comfort zone—you're navigating a new language, a new culture and a completely different way of life," Trent said. "Brennan had the chance to travel to several other European countries, meet all kinds of people and make some amazing friends along the way. I think that kind of experience helps you grow in ways that a classroom alone just can't."

When deciding where to study abroad, Brennan had the option to travel to one of a few places but ended up choosing Seville

due to the warm temperatures.

"Honestly, I wanted to do Spain or Italy, but everyone goes to Italy. I always thought Spain was so cool, and also the program fit in my scholarship that I have," Brennan said. "So Spain, I was drawn to it...I chose Seville because it was warm."

Another reason Brennan chose Seville was because of the financial benefits.

"It was actually cheaper than my tuition right now at Creighton because you have to live in the dorms for freshmen and sophomore year at Creighton. It was cheaper to live in Spain than it was to live at Creighton. That was beneficial," Brennan said.

Brennan lived with a host family during her five-month stay, which was a challenge with her limited Spanish.

"The host family I lived with, the parents spoke no English, and in Spain, in Seville, the region is Andalusia. They speak the fastest Spanish in the whole world...It's so difficult... but, I think we did a really good job using Spanglish," Brennan said.

Thankfully, Brennan said most people her age spoke English in addition to Spanish, which helped her immensely, especially in the school aspect. In Seville, Brennan studied high-level marketing classes, European politics, strategic planning, public relations and education. Brennan's schedule was the same each week, but each day had a different routine, similar to college in the United States.

"A normal school day really varies. There wasn't much of a routine, but in a good way!" Brennan said. "During the weekend, it would vary as I would usually spend the evenings with friends."

When she had the time between classes, Brennan toured the area as much as she could to experience the culture and surroundings.

"The architecture is so beautiful. It's very vibrant and colorful there, which I thought was amazing," Brennan said. "I thought that was really cool because we got to see a lot of different traditions."

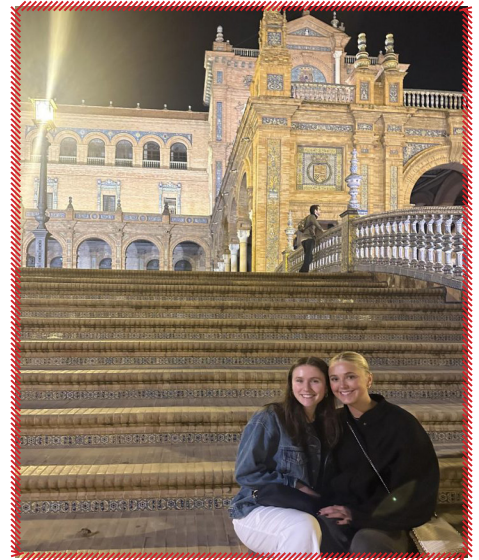
Brennan got to see many of the sights Seville had to offer, including some of her favorite spots like cathedrals, parks, places to watch the sunsets and her favorite by far, Plaza de España, where a "Star Wars" scene was filmed.

"It's got little boats and is in the middle of the park. It is jaw-dropping for sure and my favorite area in Seville," Brennan said.

While offering many beautiful views, one thing Brennan did not have in Seville was air conditioning.

"It's very, very hot there. They don't have air conditioning, and by May, it's in the hundreds, so at night, if you have your window open, they don't have a screen on it. So you're either gonna be sweating or get bitten by a million bugs," Brennan said.

Another culture shock Brennan experienced and expressed to her parents was eating the evening meal later than she was used to. In the United States, families eat dinner around 6-7 p.m., but in Spain, it is common to eat dinner after 10 p.m.



BRENNAN JACOBS (RIGHT) AND A FRIEND SIT ON THE STEPS OF PLAZA DE ESPAÑA. JACOBS USED MOST OF HER FREE TIME TO TRAVEL AROUND SPAIN AND THE SURROUNDING COUNTRIES LIKE ENGLAND, FRANCE, IRELAND, PORTUGAL AND MORE. (COURTESY PHOTO)

"That really stood out to her—and to me—as a major lifestyle difference. She also mentioned how laid-back and social the culture felt overall, which was a big change from what she was used to here," Trent said.

Regardless of the extreme heat and culture shocks, Brennan truly enjoyed her time in Seville. Her biggest takeaway from studying abroad was that everybody is in similar situations, even though people all have different lives.

"It really changed my views on everyone in the world because I made friends from all these different places," Brennan said. "We all have the same problems, you know? We're all the same people; we're studying right now. We have maybe a problem with friends, maybe a problem with our family, and we're all so similar. We just grew up in different places...No matter where you're from or your upbringing, we really are all the same people."

Her parents agree that this experience has helped her become more confident in traveling and other ways.

"Brennan has really developed a love for travel. She's much more confident now when it comes to navigating airports, unfamiliar cities and different cultures," Trent said.

As a result of all her experiences, Brennan would definitely recommend studying abroad to current or incoming college students.

"For those considering study abroad, just do it. You are young and you only live once. Worse comes to worse, you can always go home," Brennan said. "You are young and you never get this time back, so do it and I promise you won't regret it. From traveling, you learn so much about who you are and others around you when you are immersed in another culture."