



My study abroad experience in North Carolina State, was extremely rewarding and challenging at the same time. It was definitely the opportunity of a lifetime that I will never forget! I challenged myself to try something new, so I learnt how to sail by joining the sailing club where I met and made friends for life. American college is totally different to university in England, and it was great to experience American culture first hand.

A big challenge for me when I first arrived in America was finding the confidence to travel solo. Travelling is a big passion of mine but I'd never gone out on my own before. Before I got to college I flew to Florida and New Orleans, big

tourist destinations but which yet both had completely different atmospheres. In addition to travelling, I remember feeling overwhelmed with the amount of admin that was required in order for me to study, including compliant vaccinations, visas, flights and organising my own accommodation. It's so important to keep on top of all these tasks to help make your study transition as smooth as possible when you arrive and my advice would be to always reach out for assistance from the International Engagement Office if you need it!

One of my biggest takeaways from the whole experience was how motivated my American peers were when it came to studying. The competition for placements and internships was fierce and the amount of societies available to support you in your career journey was amazing, in particular the leadership and community support available to women who wanted to be in business. In college, part of your grade is assessed by your participation in class which meant class lectures and seminars were usually lively discussions. It was quite intimidating but also inspiring to be surrounded by this buzz.



I didn't expect to feel culture shock before I arrived in the USA. However, once I had started college and proceeded to get involved in campus life, I started to notice small differences. Firstly, everything was bigger; the buildings, the cars, the roads, the portions of food, and even the school spirit! Everyone rallies around the NCSU football team in huge stadiums and the atmosphere is something I have never experienced before. Also, all the buildings are very new in North Carolina. It's difficult to find a structure that is more than 100 years old which is in steep contrast to the UK!

Overall, I had a fantastic time studying abroad at North Carolina State University, and I am so grateful to Surrey for giving me the opportunity to do so. I learnt a lot about myself, gained huge amounts of confidence and got to travel to some incredible places. I cannot wait to return to the US and visit more states and cities!

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