

Chamonix, France

Brandon Dennison



Program: Wilderness Medicine in the Alps - Summer 2019

Major: Kinesiology

Earning the Career Development Badge:



This learning abroad experience has truly made an impact on my life. Through this experience, I was able to travel to a continent that I have never been to before and was able to spend time in three different European countries. During my time spent there, I learned more than I was expecting to about

the countries' customs, culture and languages. The main objective for this study abroad was learning and practicing wilderness medicine techniques in the Alps (or backcountry). I was enabled to learn more about backcountry safety and several vital emergency response techniques, essential packing items, treatment for various back country ailments such as altitude sickness and blisters, rock climbing safety, river rafting safety, and more along these lines.

As an avid hiker, I am confident that all of these skills will better enable me in my future adventures. In addition to this, I know the skills and techniques I learned will also benefit me as a future physician and medical care provider. Looking back at all of the things I was able to learn, perhaps the most important thing that I learned on this study abroad trip was about myself. After putting in many difficult years of college and various part-time jobs, my physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual health has taken a toll. It is ironic that my goal of becoming a physician, an occupation which is known for healing, has physically and emotionally worn me down at times. While the time I spent abroad challenged me mentally and physically, I was also able to truly enjoy myself and find solace. My time in Europe was educational, but also very spiritually healing; it helped me to refocus and remember my "why" behind my journey through schooling and future career.

Transferable Skills:



Within the two weeks I spent learning abroad, there were some very vital things I learned which will help me in my future medical career as well as recreational back-country backpacking. One of the key points learned was how to respond to someone in the back country who may be injured and/or in an emergency situation. We were tested on this in a very real life scenario after learning steps and techniques pertaining to this. When put to the test, I found myself critically thinking and working alongside my team to help the victim. After this live scenario was over, I felt empowered and prepared in the case of a real emergency.

Another career development aspect of this study abroad was working with and learning from a diverse group of students and doctors in the back-country. Working with other professionals is really important within any career, especially in the field of medicine.

"The best view comes after the hardest climb" - This quote is a reminder that often times, the best accomplishments or "views" in life come after you have worked hard and pushed yourself. I am a firm believer in working hard in order to accomplish hard goals.

