



My name is Wendy Blyth and I am originally from Huntington Beach, California. I moved to San Francisco after high school where I have been attending San Francisco State University (SFSU) for the past two years. I entered SFSU studying music but after finishing my general education, I soon found sociology to be more interesting, thus deciding to pursue a degree in social sciences. Along with sociology, I found classes in human sexuality and have also decided to minor and specialize in this field. Studying human sexuality at SFSU is exciting because the university is the only one of the few in the United States to have an entire program dedicated to the research and education of this field.

I am currently studying sociology at Cardiff University for 9 months as an exchange

student. Shortly after changing my degree to sociology and learning about the different ways people interact with other people, cultures, and society's, I felt it would benefit me to live in an entirely new country and experience a new culture for myself. Cardiff was recommended to me through the coordinators at the exchange student department at my home school due to its excellent reputation in the social sciences department.

When I first decided to study in the UK, I initially thought that the people and culture would be at least somewhat similar to the culture of the United States. Since arriving at Cardiff I have found this to be the exact opposite. Not only are the lifestyles of the people in the UK distinct and original to that of the United States, but there are many smaller cultures, ideas, and practices fragmented across the UK that you would only discover by immersing yourself and living within the society for a long period of time. For this reason alone I am glad I decided to study abroad, especially for the whole year, rather than my other option of 1 semester.

On campus at Cardiff I am on the universities ladies basketball team which has been an amazing experience. I have met the most incredible people and have made life-long friends. I have also been able to see much of Wales and England by travelling with the team to many away games which has also been so enriching to my study abroad experience.

My learning experience at Cardiff has been amazing as well. The professors and tutors are really knowledgeable and passionate about there subjects and are always willing to help. There is assistance to students through seminars and on-line tutorials as well as from personal tutors and lecturers. In general there you can always find someone from the department who is ready and willing to help you in your studies. I have also found that the university is very focused on creating opportunities for students by creating chances for each individual student to succeed both in their curriculum and after graduating.

Leaving Cardiff will be very hard for me. When I return to San Francisco I will have one year of study left before completing my bachelor's degree in sociology. After graduating I hope to return to Cardiff and pursue a higher education through a master's degree program. This school and my experience here has benefited me so much and I hope to one day return and take advantage of even more of what this university has to offer. Doing this program has showed me what I am capable of and of what I would like to do in my life. Whatever happens from now on, I will always remember my study abroad experience and will always be grateful for deciding to come to Cardiff University for opening my eyes to so many of the possibilities in life.