

Student Testimony Jarrod Houseknecht, Pepperdine University 2023

Why did you decide to come to Augsburg for the Summer Program?

To be honest, I had never heard of Augsburg before Pepperdine informed me about the program. After doing some research, I knew I had to jump on this opportunity. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, I had my previous study abroad experience pulled out from under me and when the chance to spend the summer in one of the cutest cities in Germany arrived, I had to jump on it. Plus, doing the program is giving me the chance to extern in the spring when I get back to California, since the credits I gained here alleviated my courseload during the traditional semesters.

Why do you think it is worth participating in the Augsburg Summer Program?

If you truly want to be immersed in another country's classroom experience, then this is for you. My biggest pushback against doing other programs was that you travel with a group of students from your school and only take classes with those students with American professors. At Augsburg, the American student is definitely the minority in the classroom, and it allows you to easily meet other students from different countries. The professors are so kind and want to see you succeed. The program as a whole is an encouraging environment to explore a foreign country and the beautiful terrain that is Bavaria.

What did you enjoy and like the most about your classes? What did you maybe not like as much or what are your suggestions to do differently?

I was originally worried that I would have a hard time adjusting to a German classroom or understanding a professor with a thick accent, but the professors make the classes. Specifically, professors Kort and Hübner are incredibly proactive about English being their second language, remaining as courteous as possible to students. I truly enjoy both of them as study abroad professors, and I am glad that I took their classes. Doing the program in Augsburg definitely is an immersion into a new place. The first couple days of class were rough for me, figuring out the local tram system, navigating the campus, and adjusting to a new time zone, but the professors and program leaders made this transition as smooth as possible.

What did you like about the city of Augsburg, how and where did you spend your free time?

Augsburg itself has so much opportunity for a good time outside of class. I'm a big foodie, so one of my favorite parts of Augsburg is how I have never had a bad meal here! Whether I am at Picnic, Rice Bar, Rice Fusion, the Ratskeller, Tutti Frutti, or Enzo's, the food in Augsburg never misses. Outside of that, Augsburg's close location and Germany's efficient train system allows for an abundance of day trips. I've participated in so many day trips to the lakes, castles, mountains, church towers, and cities of Bavaria that would never have been possible without living in Augsburg.

Where did you travel to? Which destination did you enjoy the most/what can you recommend?

Over the course of the summer program, I have been to Ulm, Nuremberg, Murnau, the Bavarian Alps, Füssen, Neuschwanstein Castle, Munich, Andechs Monastery, Ammersee, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Salzburg, Venice, Milan, Genoa, Baden-Baden, Lindau, and Copenhagen. I cannot think of another program that would have allowed me so much flexibility in such a short amount of time. To be able to do all of this and still stay on top of my schoolwork truly shows how great the location of Augsburg is.

My favorite unique trips were the Alpine Coaster in the Bavarian Alps, Nuremberg for the rich history the city offers, Neuschwanstein Castle with its gorgeous scenery and dazzling architecture, and Venice for the immense culture and cuisine the city offers.

Do you have any conclusionary words about your time in Augsburg?

Augsburg was a once in a lifetime opportunity that I will never take for granted. I am super appreciative to have gotten this chance to explore Bavaria and appreciate its beauty. I've made incredible connections with students and professors, and hopefully I get the chance to come back later in life.