

Amman, Jordan

Jessica Arthurs



Program: AMIDEAST Area and Arabic Language Studies in Jordan,
Academic Year

Majors: Political Science, International Studies, and Middle Eastern
Studies

Earning the Language Immersion Badge:



While earning the language immersion badge, I was able to continue learning Arabic and intimately learn about the community I was living in. Before studying abroad, I had studied Arabic at the University of Utah for three years but deciding to focus on language immersion helped me connect my previous studies to a truly culturally immersive experience. I

targeted my language immersion skill by using my growing understanding of Arabic in and outside of the classroom, I spent hours conversing with my host family, made local friends and chatted with falafel vendors and cab drivers. I spent the year reading complicated texts, learning to text in Arabizi and memorizing my favorite songs. With my language immersion skills, I traveled throughout the Middle East. I was able to spend my breaks in Beirut, Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Moreover, focusing on language immersion helped me develop such an appreciation of Jordanian culture I would not have been able to otherwise. After a year, I am proud to say my Arabic was good enough to argue my way through the soups (markets) in downtown Amman and enjoy a plate of hummus at Hashem after.

Transferable Skills:



Since returning home, I have made it a priority to continue working on my language skills. It is really shocking how fast you start to forget when returning home. I have enrolled in Arabic classes here at the University and still listen to my favorite Arab artists and keep up with my friends from Jordan. While living abroad, I learned how to speak colloquial Arabic by practicing it everyday. I

have continued to use this skill upon returning home by talking with my Arab friends, fellow students and my professor. This skill helps me connect with people in my community I would traditionally not. My language has been a resourceful skill for me, because it broadens my understanding of diversity. Furthermore, I have taken my language skills and applied this to research since returning home. My language skills are helpful in research as I am able to access Arab news sources, databases in this language, and use my language skills to translate, adding to the depth of my research. Currently, my research is in English but focused on refugee studies. I hope to eventually use this as a platform to launch into integrative studies of refugee populations by using Arabic as a transition tool.



“Studying abroad has been the most valuable experience of my undergraduate studies. It inspired me to seek more diversity in my education, network internationally, and push myself out of my comfort zone.”