I was able to travel to Queensland, Australia for 11 days where I went scuba diving at the Great Barrier Reef, stayed in the oldest rainforest in the world, and spent a day on the beautiful Fitzroy Island. While in Australia, I also got to hold a koala bear, see kangaroos daily, and learn heaps of Australian lingo.

While I explored Australia and hung out with some kangaroos, I also got to explore myself personally. Being far away is not easy, but it allowed me to learn more about myself, my motives, and my passions. I learned the value of independence, my passion for nutrition, and that in order to experience new things, I had to put myself out there and be vulnerable to the unexpected. Australia is similar enough to America that you will not feel out of place, but different enough that you will want to travel around, see the beautiful landscapes, and meet the friendly Aussies.
Aside from the weekly trips to different beaches across the continent, the typical Australian’s outlook on life is that of positivity and not taking anything too seriously. My favorite place in Australia had to be Byron Bay because, it was a place where the people and culture was expressed and I felt welcomed. That feeling of being content and happy when far away from everything you know is truly magical.

Snorkeling in the Great Barrier Reef and visiting the Australia Zoo, are my favorite experiences while studying abroad. Swimming with the diverse marine life and the beautiful coral and fish was something I never thought I would be able to do. The zoo Steve Irwin represented was equally as magical, because he was a childhood hero of mine, where he always advocated for the welfare of wildlife. Studying abroad definitely made me a more independent and adventurous spirit.

Studying abroad is an amazing experience, and Australia in particular is an amazing place with the friendliest people. The views and the beaches in Australia are unlike anything I have ever seen before. Scuba diving at the Great Barrier Reef was a particularly unforgettable experience. Also, Bondi Beach was one of the most beautiful beaches to go to.
Mary Kate Foust  
Univ. of Wollongong – Faculty-Led  
Summer 2016

Studying abroad in Australia was an amazing opportunity to experience another culture on the other side of the planet. It's a wonderful place for students to go because there is no language barrier, but there are still communities of people from all over the world. The best part of my study abroad experience was snorkeling and scuba diving in the Great Barrier Reef. It was by far the most amazing thing I've ever done, swimming among the wildlife of Australia!

Jacqueline Hartman  
Murdoch Univ. - CIEE  
Summer 2016

Australia is well known for Marine Biology because of its beautiful coral reefs and crystal clear waters. Perth, Australia offers historic downtown areas and beaches within a 20-mile radius. My greatest experience was being able to travel to the remote and pristine Ningaloo Reef that most locals do not even have the opportunity to visit. At Ningaloo Reef, I was able to perform a week’s worth of research, hike along creeks, see wild kangaroos, and swim with a whale shark. Traveling specifically to Perth gave me an insight into true Australian culture because it is not as congested with tourists as Sydney or Melbourne. Studying abroad is about experiencing something greater and seeing a different way of doing things.

Tanner Inscoe  
Experiencing Australia – Faculty-Led  
Summer 2016

Australia is such an awesome place to study abroad because there aren't any language barriers so it was easier for me to learn and become fully immersed within their culture. I had long, intriguing conversations with Australians and was able to really get into their mindset since they could understand me and vice versa. Being able to talk to and understand how they view Americans made me realize how ethnocentric as a nation we are and opened my eyes to realize that there is a much bigger world out there than just me here at UNCW.
Samantha James  
Univ. of Wollongong – Direct Partner  
Spring 2017

While studying in Sydney, Australia, I flew with a group of friends to Alice Springs, Australia and spent several nights in the Outback. Hiking around the base of Uluru, to climbing up Kata Tjuta and King's Canyon, the sparsity and beauty that the Outback held was breathtaking. Sleeping under the stars in Swags (sleeping bags), I gained an understanding of the rich Aboriginal culture, which made for an unforgettable weekend.

James Mershon  
James Cook Univ. – Direct Partner  
Spring 2017

Australian universities, have living spaces called colleges that compete against each other in sports such as basketball, water polo, and rugby, which I was able to play. Before our rugby championship game, we huddled together and cheered in a local aboriginal tribe’s language and I just remember feeling that I would never have an experience like this anywhere else in the world. Growing to understand and become a part of another culture is a fantastic part of the whole experience.

Casey Moore  
Univ. of Wollongong  
Fall 2016

Students should take the opportunity to study abroad because it truly is a life changing experience. Going overseas exposes you to uncomfortable situations that you ultimately work through on your own. I loved these challenges, because it made me feel and act like an actual adult and like a local. I also loved to learn about Australian culture which I still use today!
Australia had always been such a fascinating place to me and after attending a few Study Abroad Fairs, I knew that I would never have such an incredible opportunity again. If students are looking for an experience that will surprise them, challenge them, and ultimately change their life forever, they should be heading 10,000 miles away to the land down under. The most enriching aspect of my experience abroad was learning critical skills that you can only gain halfway across the world; from learning to travel efficiently, how to communicate with strangers from different countries, and even budgeting (with no help from mom and dad!), I doubt that I could have ever found a better way to develop these skills.

Greyson Poutas
Charles Sturt Univ.
Spring 2017

Australia is a strikingly gorgeous continent, with massive ranges in the Blue Mountains and clear waters of the Manly Beach. My favorite place in Australia is definitely Melbourne, Victoria! This big city is a giant hidden treasure map, with bizarre and intricate art covering the walls in the majority of its alleyways, and coffee shops that are found in extremely odd places, I even found one in an abandoned subway tunnel. Australia truly has something for everyone.

Sydney Stark
James Cook Univ.
Fall 2016

What I really loved about Australia was experiencing the spirit of the country everywhere I went. I loved being there because no matter where I went, I felt like I was exploring my backyard; It was home. If a student wants to have an experience where they feel accepted, where they feel at home, but at the same time experience unparalleled diversity in wildlife and landscapes, then Australia should be their first pick because there's no other place like it.
While in Australia, I had the opportunity to go to Uluru / Ayers Rock, which is a famous red rock that is an extremely sacred place for Aboriginal people. I went with a tour group that had people from all over the world and was able to learn about Aboriginal culture and the natural land. This was such a unique experience that helped me have a better understanding of Australian history and culture, and see the world from many different perspectives.

Katherine Southard
Experiencing Australia – Faculty-Led
Summer 2017

Studying abroad in Australia was amazing. Experiencing Australia was the perfect program for me since it was in an English-speaking. While abroad I learned a lot about public transportation, made friendships that will last a lifetime, and tried to explore as much as I could with my friends. One day after class our whole group hopped on the train and spent the afternoon walking along the beach, taking pictures, and even swimming in one of the infinity pools at Coalcliff.

Victoria Vaillancourt
Univ. of Wollongong
Summer 2016

My experience as an international student in Australia was truly life changing. The time that I spent there helped me to realize how wonderful the world is. From exploring where I was, to diving the Great Barrier Reef, each day brought a new adventure. The faculty-led program I attended allowed me to have the comfort of a UNCW professor, while still being able to immerse myself in a new learning environment. I made lifelong friends, and learned a great deal about myself along the way. I highly recommend studying abroad in Australia, as it was the best few months of my life.
Throughout my time in Australia, I was able to turn many of my dreams into reality, including finally scuba diving the Great Barrier Reef. For this reason alone, Australia is a great destination for anyone interested in biological conservation. Not only is Australia one of the most beautiful continents on Earth, but the people are all so welcoming and relaxed there.

Maddie Welch
James Cook Univ. – Direct Partner
Spring 2017

My favorite place in Australia was Byron Bay, when we went to at a music festival with no housing, so we decided to go camping. All four of us slept in a 2-door Fiat in the rain and it was freezing. We had one mishap after another, but that’s what made it most memorable. We laughed as we made it through our Aussie Adventure. Being alone in a new country and making my own decisions, was one of the most enriching & beneficial parts of my study abroad experience.

Leah Wills
Univ. of Wollongong
Summer 2016

The University of Wollongong is a coastal university in Australia, and is home to many beaches. Some of my favorite memories are on the beaches, rock pools, and lighthouses that were only a ten-minute walk from my dorm. When a huge storm would come in, I would head down to Flagstaff Lighthouse with my friends and watch in amazement as the enormous waves would crash against the rocks.
New Zealand

Karli Wilson
Charles Sturt Univ. – Direct Partner
Fall 2016

My favorite part of being abroad in Australia was living in a solar powered sustainable cottage that included a composting toilet. I could see kangaroos at dawn and dusk hopping through the car park and I even went to a koala hospital. The wildlife and natural beauty of Australia is outstanding.

New Zealand

Hannah Croxton
Univ. of Waikato – Direct Partner
Spring 2017

New Zealand is a great choice for students who are looking for a unique experience, yet want to stay in the Anglophone world. Students are able to witness the Maori culture while also taking in the natural wonders New Zealand has to offer. Images from Lord of The Rings and The Hobbit movies don’t even compare to real life! New Zealand has excellent universities, hostels and adventure excursions. Once I kayaked with seal pups in a lagoon situated in a marine reserve in Abel Tasman National Park!

New Zealand

Shelton Harder
Univ. of Auckland
Fall 2016

New Zealand is a very green and beautiful country with more animals than people. There are so many fun and recreational things to do, like snorkel and surf. It’s the optimal place to try something new and get out of your comfort zone while being surrounded by natural beauty and awesome people. The Kiwi culture is friendly and laid-back, and the spiritual Maori culture is integrated in New Zealand through greetings, places, and academics. New Zealand helped me to learn so much about myself through exploring the country, getting out of my comfort zone, and meeting so many culturally diverse people.
While studying in New Zealand, I visited Cape Farewell, which was the northern most part of the south island and it was beautiful. I called it the Shire, since it looked how I would imagine the real life Shire would look, rolling green hills that stretched forever, with sheep scattered all over, overlooking a beautiful water view, with no other people to be seen. I felt connected to nature in New Zealand, so it is a great place to go and find yourself and become the real you.

Annalise Hiskey
Massey Univ. – Direct Partner
Fall 2017