

From Nicaragua to the Peace Corps: How Studying Abroad with SIT has Furthered My Life Goals

By Speare Hodges, Emory University

“When considering studying abroad my sophomore year in college, I knew that I wanted to gain international experience, build language skills, and spend significant time studying the many facets of progress in developing nations.



Nicaragua is an amazing country with a rich history, and the SIT program does a great job utilizing that history to create a terrific program that concentrates on the incredible transformation the country has taken since its revolution and brutal civil war.

Though the history is quite heartbreaking, Nicaragua provides a wonderful example of a country struggling with many of the greatest sources of conflict in the 20th century: globalization and its effects, the Cold War, societal and physical reconstruction after years of war, and many others.

I think that it is safe to say that without the experience of studying abroad in Nicaragua, I would not be currently serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Peru. The language and academic components of the SIT Nicaragua program—aside from simply living in a developing country in Latin America—proved invaluable in making my Peace Corps application as competitive as possible.



On a personal level, studying abroad also gave me guidance about my professional and private aspirations through my interactions with like-minded people and on-the-ground historical learning. Every student must search for the components that make up his or her intellectual development in college, and deciding how to best utilize the opportunity to study abroad is an especially difficult decision. I find myself exceptionally fortunate to have had SIT’s Nicaragua program as an invaluable part of my own collegiate experience.”