

- *What is your name?*

Shawna

- *What do you study?*

International Studies with a minor in Linguistics.

- *Where, when and how long did you go for your study abroad experience?*

I studied in Poitiers, France, from August 2008-May 2009.

- *What were your motivations before going?*

I had planned for a couple of years to study in France, and I particularly desired to stay the full academic year to get the fullest experience possible.

- *How was your exchange?*

My exchange was beyond amazing. Although there were things I might have done differently, I don't regret a bit of it. It's difficult at times, but it's completely worth it.

- *What was the hardest thing for you?*

The first most difficult thing I experienced was Thanksgiving. It's the first holiday away from home, and to everyone else in the world it's just another Thursday. The second most difficult thing was leaving France, even though it's exciting to go home, the sense of it being over can be hard to cope with.

- *What was the greatest thing for you?*

The greatest thing was feeling integrated into their culture and society, even if only for a few moments.

- *Would you recommend your experience to other students?*

Absolutely, even if you don't study in Poitiers, or even in France, go somewhere. The experience is life-altering in the best way possible.