

STUDY ABROAD

STUDENT REFLECTIONS

SUMMER 2023



MY NAME IS AYANA MURRAY, AND I AM A JUNIOR CONCENTRATING IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AT ALBANY STATE UNIVERSITY. I studied abroad in Ghana with ASU Professor Dr. Tony Owusu-Ansah. While there, I took my practicum course, which is for education major students to observe and get field experience. Dr. Owusu-Ansah had a lot of cultural excursions planned for us. We visited old slave castles, the bath of no return, and the house of W.E.B. Du Bois. We got to walk around several markets buying food and goods with Ghanaian money. Education majors have three practicums (60 hours each) so that when we graduate, we know what we're doing and are culturally responsive. A major goal in the education department is trying to make sure that all graduates are culturally responsive, and this trip helped with experiencing different cultures and working through it.

The education system in Ghana is very different than the education system in America. I did get the chance to "teach" while in Ghana. I realized they were learning French so I taught them the Spanish words of the French words they were learning. One teacher I met was teaching her students about the different religions in Ghana and had the students reenact what worship looked like in the three main religions of Ghana. Her integrity and initiative really warmed my heart.

Overall, the experience felt more like vacation than school, but I'm most grateful for the fact that I really needed the credit and I benefitted from taking it in the summer. Getting field experience in Ghana opened my eyes to teaching in a different way. I learned that I really do love kids. I learned that I would love to live and teach abroad. Africa is composed of a lot of different cultures religions and races. It really did help with learning to be culturally responsive.

I applied for another study abroad trip to Puerto Rico for education majors, because of how much I enjoyed my time in Ghana. One of the main reasons I chose to study abroad was because I thought studying abroad only happened in the movies. I felt as if it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I was supposed to have 6 classes this semester and it lightened my class load. This trip also aligned with my career path. When I graduate, I've thought about teaching abroad as a career path. I would recommend any student to study abroad. I learned so much while over there and experienced so much as well. Studying abroad is important because you get to experience so much while learning and getting credits for it. 10/10 recommend.

