

## **CET Colombia, Fall 2023 | Anonymous**

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**Who are the intended audience(s) of your Perspective Piece?** "Student going to Colombia."

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### **Overall Experience**

Studying abroad was a transformative experience that was beyond any expectations or information given. This adventure, I was able to go beyond academic knowledge while gaining a global perspective on race and identity beyond the definition of my home country.

Initially, I was hesitant to go on an unknown journey to a new country with vastly different cultural practices. However, this was quickly overtaken with excitement of a new culture, surrounded by unfamiliar faces and landscapes. This experience was both exhilarating and overwhelming, but in these moments of discomfort, personal growth was evident. From navigating the language barriers to trying exotic cuisines, every day becomes a lesson in adaptability and resilience.

Among the highlights of studying abroad was the opportunity to exchange ideas with various people. Classrooms offered space to share ideas with people from different states and with different experiences. This allowed for thought-provoking conversations that would consider cultural, racial, and socioeconomic differences. This resulted in a broadened understanding of social relations among my peers and academia in general.

Language played a pivotal role in the study abroad experience. While there were courses focused on the language, everyday interactions were fundamental to immersion. Learning cultural expressions through interactions with Colombian roommates or various outings aided in cultural immersion. The ability to communicate was essential for cultural understanding and creating a sense of connection.

In the end, study abroad goes beyond the academic sense allowing a chance of self-discovery and growth. This experience forces reflection on your outlook regarding previous bias, cultural practice, and interaction with countries. Despite the inevitable challenges, this was an unforgettable experience that shaped my perspective on the world.