



Jeanne
Fall 2014 Semester by the Sea
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I loved my experience with Stony Brook University's Semester by the Sea program. Going from a very large school to a tightly knit organization with close relationships between students and professors was very welcoming. The SBTS program focuses on honing in your ecological foundation and scientific analysis skills within marine science, offering a variety of different classes that you can mold to your interests. My favorite part of living in Southampton, NY was the beautiful campus and opportunities to experience the renowned Hamptons. I lived a 5 minute walk from the marine station with the most beautiful view of the water. Living, learning, and traveling with my classmates for the whole semester gave me some of the best friends I could ask for that I'll be friends with for life.

The amount of history on Long Island that the experiential field trip class, Coastal Cultural Experience, lends you during your time is phenomenal. There were times I could not believe I was actually in class. From kayaking all day in the beautiful salt marshes, to ending the day with a seafood cookout, swimming at the beach, and singing sea shanties around the bon fire, I might have thought I was on vacation! The classes are so well integrated with fun that we would forget we were learning at the same time.

This program was very easy to work with logistically as well. As a non-matriculating student, I had great communication with the Faculty Advisor of the Semester by the Sea Program, and both my advisor and professor, Kurt Bretsch. He gave me plenty of resources for available internships, undergraduate research opportunities, and volunteer opportunities both within Stony Brook University, and with outside organizations. During my own time there, I interned with The Riverhead Foundation for Marine Research and Preservation working with sea turtles, seals, whales, and dolphins. I also was able to work with a post-doctoral researcher with the Shinnecock Bay Restoration Program on a fish behavior project. There are so many opportunities to connect with top scientists, working professionals in marine science, and academics focused on the ecological intricacies of marine habitats in Southampton, it can be hard to choose what you prefer to do! Overall, my academic experience with SBTS was complemented by intense field experiences that I would not have been able to get with many other programs. Not only do I now have a strong foundation in the marine sciences, but I also have a keen understanding of Long Island history and fisheries, along with great connections and friendships that continue to help me today.

