For the last 9 or so months I was lucky enough to study for two semesters at the University of South Carolina (the real USC). While I was only meant to attend the University for one semester, I found it so exciting and different that I had to go back for a second semester. To say that the time flew while I was there is certainly an understatement.

I found USC college life to be so much different to University here in Australia. For starters, nearly everyone lived on campus or only a short distance from it. This meant that every day, and every weekend would be spent hanging out with your mates when you weren’t busy with classes or study. It was a real sense of community at USC between the students, as we all had to live with each other rather than our own families. As a result, I developed some truly special friendships that have still continued since I have been back at home. In the future, I hope to see some of the friends I made over there again.

During my time at USC I was fortunate enough to be a part of their Rugby Club team. The trips to Florida, Atlanta and Wake Forest with the boys were great, and our positioning at the end of the season in the top 10 in the country was just the icing on the cake. If I can recommend anything to anyone going on exchange, it would be to make sure you immerse yourself as much as possible in the college life and opportunities that present themselves to you. Joining the Club Rugby team was a decision I am so happy I made, as the experience and friends I made while playing with the mighty Gamecocks was awesome.

Study wise, USC and I believe American Colleges in general had a different approach to assessment. The format at USC was more like three exams spread out over the semester, as well as one or two assignments per subject. I found this to be a smarter approach, as it made sure students were keeping up with their work and not just ‘cramming’ towards the end. I also found the Professors to be most helpful if you were ever in need of some extra help.

The Study Abroad experience also allowed me to get some travelling in around America. I went to so many cool cities along the West and East Coasts, including New York, Miami and San Francisco to name a few.

Finally, I would strongly recommend that anyone and everyone that goes to University partake in the Exchange program. It is a once in a lifetime experience.