

Public Health in Cape Town, South Africa

Cape Town Summer – Health Studies 2018

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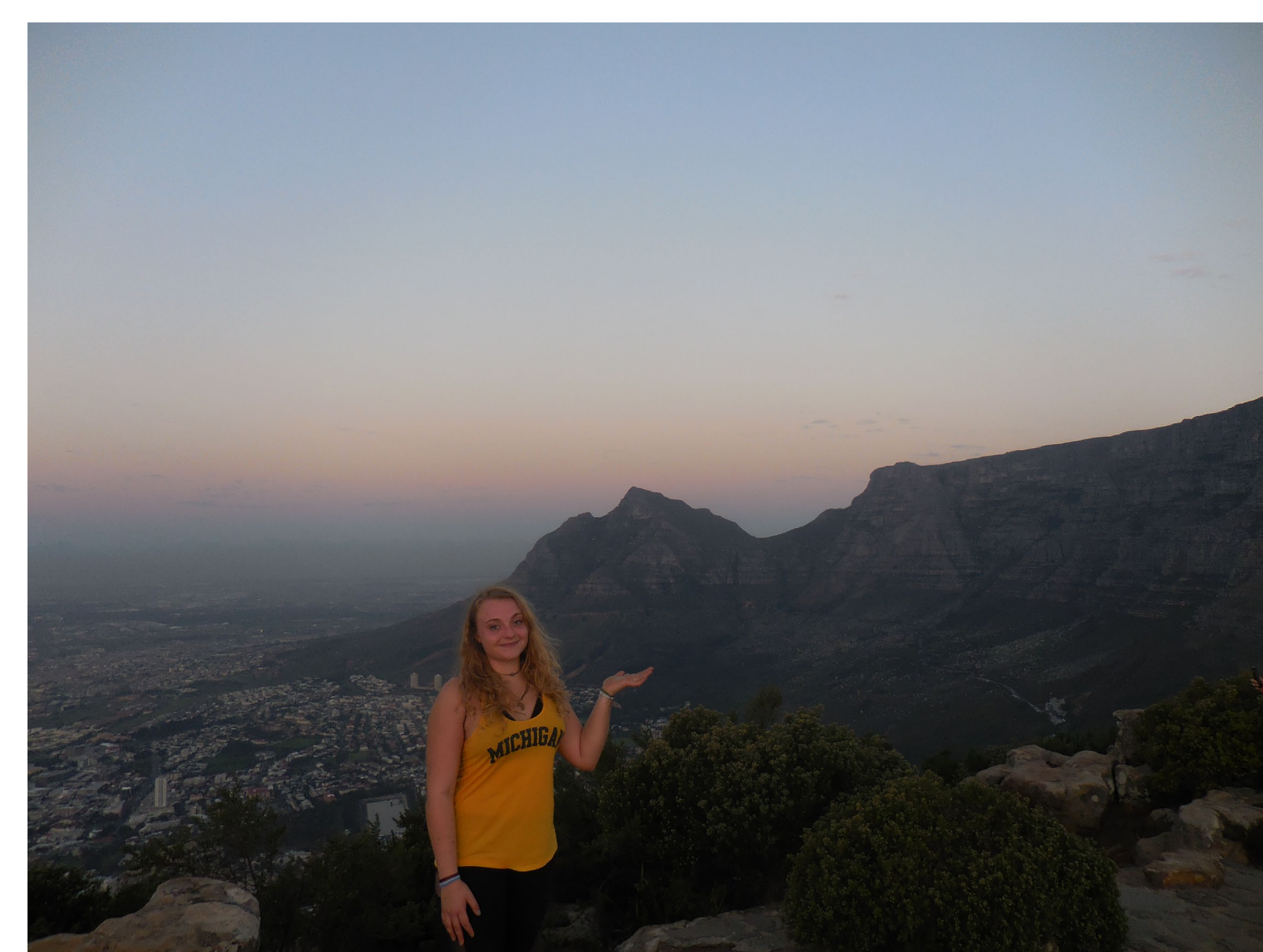
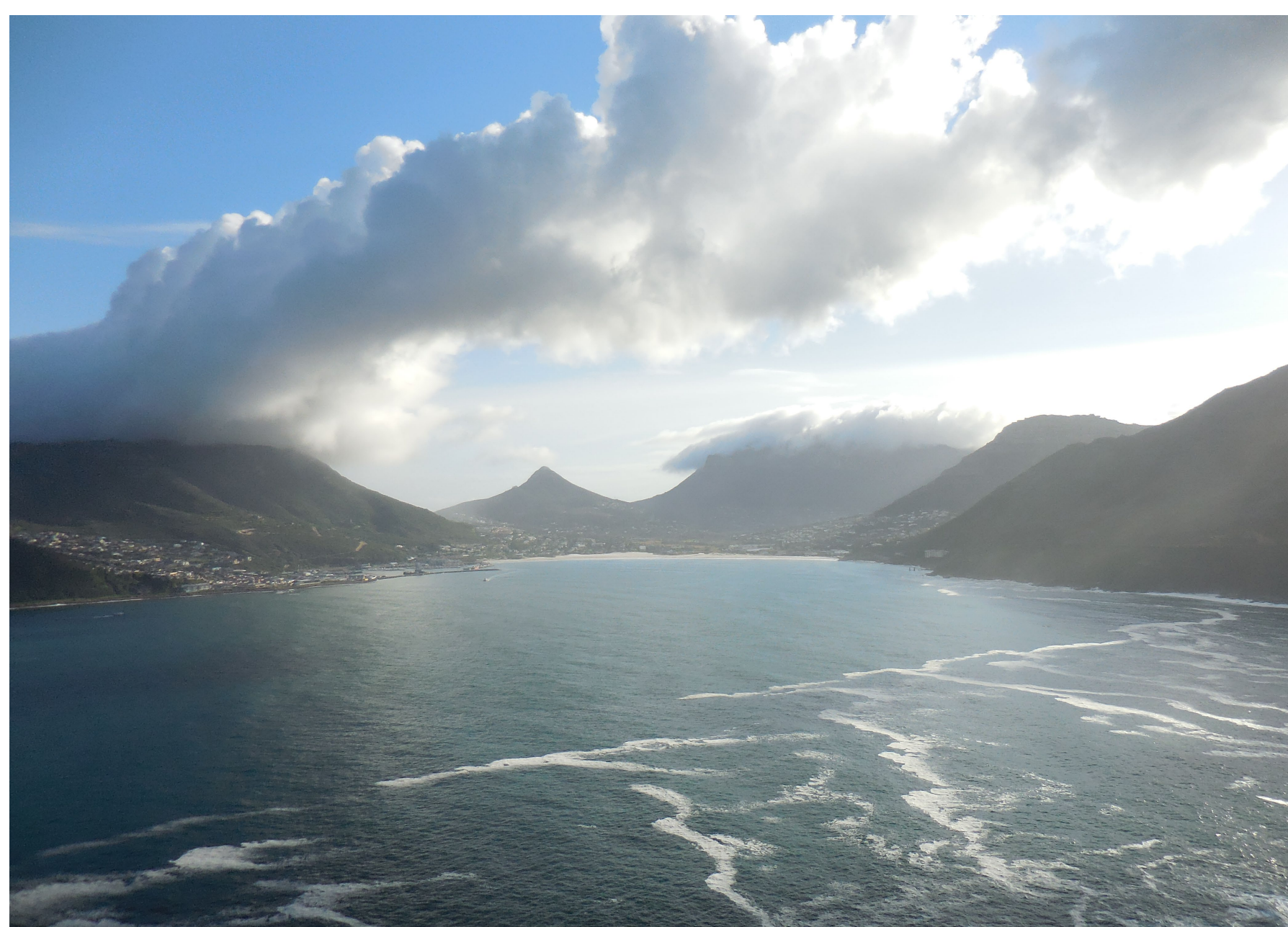
Courses: Endemic Diseases, Health & Community

Cape Town, South Africa

- We stayed in Cape Town, South Africa for six weeks while we took two classes. We also went on various field trips in the area, such as Cape of Good Hope and Robben Island.
- After we finished classes, we traveled north to Kruger National Park and spent a day in Johannesburg as well.

Other Important Background

- The program consisted of 38 students in health-related fields. Most students were from the University of Michigan, but there were also some students from universities all over the country.



Experience

Information

We took two classes for 6 credits. They included two course-related trips each to places such as the Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation Youth Centre and the Brooklyn Chest Hospital for tuberculosis patients.

We also were placed at different local hospitals and clinics for observational rotations. This allowed us to compare and contrast the public and private sectors of the South African healthcare system, as well as compare those with our healthcare system in the United States. We were able to talk with healthcare providers and patients to learn about their perspectives on the controversial system.

Purpose of Trip:

Cultural immersion, clinical immersion, and complete classes pertaining to public health and diseases in the context of South Africa.

Outcomes

After each field trip, we completed a paper reflecting on our experiences and analyzing strengths and weaknesses in the system. Each class also included a midterm and final exam.

Skills Utilized/Developed

In this unique setting, we learned to be culturally sensitive and acknowledge different identities. Additionally, we learned how different healthcare systems affect the role of nurses. Lastly, we saw how the political climate can have detrimental effects on the health of populations.

Lessons Learned

We learned how limited resources and limited healthcare workers can affect the quality of care. We also learned the importance of being aware of patient's cultural and socioeconomic background, and how it ties into aspects of their health. Beyond healthcare, we learned to take risks in life and take advantage of every opportunity as it comes.

Career Connections

- We both learned the importance of cultural sensitivity in the healthcare setting. This is extremely important in a career in nursing.
- We also realized how the many dimensions of health affect your patients, so listen to your patients to identify any unique barriers to their health.

Advice

- Engage in the community! Get to know some locals.
- Try new things – push yourself outside of your comfort zone. Eat local foods, take advantage of activities and opportunities unique to South Africa.

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