



## Alexis Ryckaert

**High school:** Rockridge High School

**Hometown:** Taylor Ridge, Ill.

**Majors:** Political science, English

**Activities:** Political Science Student Advisory Council

**Internships:** Research and analysis intern, MetroLINK, Moline, Ill., and legislative intern, The Office of Senator Richard Durbin, Washington, D.C.

**Post-grad plans:** Working on Capitol Hill

“Alexis is an exceptional student and a wonderfully generous person, with confidence and humility to spare. She displays maturity well beyond her age and tremendous motivation to learn, and she is not afraid to venture outside her comfort zone. I have had only a handful of students in the last few years with such a unique set of skills and dispositions. I have no doubt that Alexis will be highly successful in whatever she chooses to apply her considerable talents.”

— Dr. Mariano Magalhães, professor,  
political science

## MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2020

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

### Why Augustana?

My high school principal graduated from Augustana and was such a great role model for our entire community that I was inspired to apply. The small class sizes and campus community I saw on my visit here convinced me to attend, and I am grateful I did.

### Are you where you thought you'd be when you first came to campus?

Not at all. I never dreamed I would have had two great full-time internships and the opportunity to study away three times. These experiences changed my life, and it was with the help of my professors that I achieved them. I feel prepared to begin the next phase of my life.

### Who helped you get to where you are now?

My advisor and political science professor, Dr. Magalhães. I won't forget going to his office hours my freshman year and rambling about all of the things I wanted to do during my college career.

He listened, encouraged and assisted me every step of the way. He worked with me to find a way to fit all of my study abroad and internship experiences into my schedule and still graduate on time. With his help, I was also able to present and publish my own research paper.

Without his support, I would have found it difficult to accomplish all that I have. He has been an incredible mentor for me all four years.

### Peak experience?

My internship in Washington, D.C., was my peak experience. Serving in Senator Durbin's office was the opportunity of a lifetime. The fact that Augustana has a program in place that assists you in finding an internship in Washington and provides support while there allowed me to focus on my internship and make the most of my time there. I learned so much about my field and myself while I was there, and I am so much better for it.

### What surprised you?

I never dreamed I would go to India or Brazil to study abroad. These programs were both excellent experiences for me, and I am so grateful my professors introduced me to them. I likely wouldn't have ever traveled to either of these countries on my own, but I learned so much when I was there and developed a deep appreciation for both countries.

### How did you use Augie Choice?

Augie Choice made it possible for me to study abroad in Brazil.

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## What will you miss the most?

I will miss being surrounded by such a strong support system. From my advisors and professors to the dining hall staff and CORE advisors, I never had trouble finding assistance when I needed it. The Augustana community is privileged to have so many thoughtful, hardworking people.

## Advice for the Class of 2024?

Talk to your professors. Build relationships with them and maintain them.