

JUL 08 2015

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## INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM/EXCHANGE EVALUATION REPORT

**Your Name:**

**Name of Study Abroad/Exchange Program:** UBC Exchange

**Quarter(s) of Participation:** A/W/SP

**E-mail Address:**

### 1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

**a.** Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

UBC has their own hostel, which is pretty cheap and right on campus, but there are also a plethora of other options downtown, which are very nice and in a great location.

**b.** If your program/exchange had an orientation, what did it cover and how did it help you adapt?

The orientation for international exchange students covers many things including registration, housing and things to do in Vancouver, but the most helpful is their run down of the insurance system, because insurance for international students is pretty complicated, so it is important to pay attention.

### 2. ACADEMICS:

**a.** Please evaluate the instruction you received abroad. Compare the following to the University of Washington's system:

- classroom structure: Same to UW i.e., lecture followed by quiz or lab sections
- instruction: Same
- teacher/student relations: Same
- grading/exams: Classes are weighted much more heavily towards end of term exams.
- administration: Same
- library, computer, and classroom facilities: Less libraries and fewer open hours, but otherwise the same

**b.** Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

The instruction for most courses is identical to that of UW, there will be no noticeable drop or increase in quality.

c. Are there any courses or instructors you would recommend to future students?

Art History 344 with John O'Brian and History 235 with Laura Inshiguro

d. How did your study abroad coursework relate to your UW education?

I was on a fellowship in Canadian Studies, so the majority of my courses were in related fields.

### 3. HOUSING:

a. What housing options were available to you?

All options were open.

b. Which did you choose, and why?

I chose to live in an off campus house with other students, because I was on exchange as a senior.

c. What would you recommend?

For upperclassmen off campus housing would be nice, but anyone below junior year I would suggest that they stay in the dorms.

### 4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

The campus is on a peninsula, so it is pretty removed from the city and the neighborhood directly surrounding the campus is very wealthy, so most students either live on campus or about 20 minutes away by bus.

### 5. HEALTH AND SAFETY:

UBC is a VERY safe place and Vancouver as a whole is very safe as well.

Please describe any health or safety concerns (e.g., quality of medical facilities, unsafe districts, theft, etc.) associated with your study abroad experience.

6. CULTURAL ASPECTS:

a. How did you integrate into the culture and meet members of the community?  
(e.g., clubs, sports, extracurricular activities, pubs, etc.)  
I played Rugby with UBC and worked with the Football team, but the majority of my friends I met through my roommates who were third years at UBC.

b. Describe cultural differences and challenges you encountered and how you addressed them.  
(e.g., gender issues, social etiquette, stereotypes, etc.)  
There bus system is fantastic, which was a pleasant surprise, but the city government doesn't allow Happy Hour deals at bars, which was a pretty big bummer. Also, they only sell alcohol in liquor stores and bars/restaurants, which was something I had to get used to.

7. FINANCIAL:

a. What is the best way to access/transfer money from the U.S.?  
Get a bank account with an American firm that does not charge foreign atm fees (like Charles Schwab), or one that charges a flat fee, like BECU (they charge 1%). You could setup a Canadian bank account, but that would only be advantageous if you are staying for the whole year.

b. How much spending money do you recommend per month? Please include rent, food, transportation, etc.  
Rent: \$650  
Food: \$500-600  
Transportation: they provide a UPASS  
Overall the cost of living in Vancouver is about 20% higher than Seattle, so plan accordingly.

c. Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.  
If staying longer than 6 months, you will have to buy a study Visa, which usually costs around \$170.

d. If you used Financial Aid to fund your program/exchange, were there any problems? If so, how did you address them?  
No, but be aware that Financial Aid disburses based on UW's schedule and UBC starts about a month earlier and UW Financial Aid can't disburse earlier...

8. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATION:

a. If the IP&E administered your program/exchange, please comment on the effectiveness of the office's services. What service could be improved?  
It would be nice to have more help with the Visa process. I was pretty much told by UW and UBC that I had to figure it out on my own, which was a bit frustrating. Everyone was very nice at IPE, but that was one step that was quite confusing and I kind of had to just figure it out on my own.

b. If the IP&E did not administer your program, please evaluate the program's administration, both in the U.S. and abroad.

9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE:

Please describe the type of student for whom this program is best suited.  
I think that younger students who want to experience what a global university feels like will enjoy UBC. UBC is a much more international school than UW, so you get to meet people from all over the world, but anyone interested in politics will find learning about the Canadian system fascinating.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?  
It was a great experience, but I was there for a very specific purpose i.e., my fellowship. If I was there without a specific purpose I would probably have felt very lost at UBC, because it is a massive school. Overall, my experience was really great though

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## INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM/EXCHANGE EVALUATION REPORT

**Your Name:**

**Name of Study Abroad/Exchange Program: UBC Winter Semester 2015**

**Quarter(s) of Participation: Winter and Spring 2015**

**E-mail Address:**

### 1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

**a.** Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

Coming from Seattle/the UW getting to Vancouver is super easy. I drove so I could bring all the things I needed and not have to worry about flying with too much stuff and getting a cab from the airport. If you have the opportunity to drive I highly recommend it!

**b.** If your program/exchange had an orientation, what did it cover and how did it help you adapt?

The orientation was very much like the UW's pre-orientation (I actually learned more from UW's). I feel that the UBC orientation is probably more for students who are coming from foreign countries where their English is more limited.

### 2. ACADEMICS:

**a.** Please evaluate the instruction you received abroad. Compare the following to the University of Washington's system:

- classroom structure (very similar)
- instruction (very similar)
- teacher/student relations (very similar)
- grading/exams (different/harder than UW and also on a number system ex: 75, 82)
- administration (very similar)
- library, computer, and classroom facilities (very similar)

**b.** Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

I had some amazing teachers at UBC! I think both the quality and content of the instruction is on par with the UW's.

**c.** Are there any courses or instructors you would recommend to future students?

They have an all-around introduction to Commerce (business) class at UBC where they teach you a little bit about all aspects of business. It was incredibly interesting and had a great teacher. There was so much to learn that it was actually quite difficult, but here is nothing like it at UW.



**d. How did your study abroad coursework relate to your UW education?**

I took a business class and two writing classes at UBC because I am a Communications major at UW (they do not have Communications at UBC). They were classes I would have never taken at UW but very interesting and helpful none the less.

### **3. HOUSING:**

**a. What housing options were available to you?**

Exchange students are given top priority for housing at UBC. There housing is very different than the UWs and even if you are an older student I highly recommend using it. Most of the living is apartment style with personal access doors, kitchens, living rooms and bathrooms. There are way less rules than any UW housing so it is a lot like living totally on your own.

**b. Which did you choose, and why?**

I lived in Fairview Crescent which is this really cool community/ complex right off of the main mall on campus at UBC. It is apartment style with 4/6 bedroom units. There are about 6 buildings all placed facing each other in this big common area where they walkways, grass lawns and places to store bikes. There is great coffee shop in the middle where everyone hangs around for a sandwich or sweet treat. None of the buildings are over three stories high and all have their own outdoor access (no hallways). The units come with kitchens, living/dining rooms, multiple bathrooms and extra closets.

**c. What would you recommend?**

I highly recommend Fairview Crescent! You do have to be 19 to live there because that is the legal drinking age and they allow alcohol in the units. The people that live there are also very social and lots of fun!

### **4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:**

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

The campus is kind of on the end of this peninsula that is surrounded with beautiful forests and beaches that are on campus. There are two small "villages" with restaurants, grocery stores, gyms, shopping and bus stops. They are on either end of campus which is a big long, straight, flat "mall". There is main mall ( the main walking and biking way through campus), west mall and east which parallel either side of main mall but are roads that cars and buses can drive on. Most all the buildings are in between west mall and east mall with student housing running along the opposite sides of west and east mall ( I hope that makes sense)! Campus is one of the safest neighborhoods/areas of Vancouver and a half an hour bus ride from downtown!

### **5. HEALTH AND SAFETY:**

Please describe any health or safety concerns (e.g., quality of medical facilities, unsafe districts, theft, etc.) associated with your study abroad experience.

I had no bad experience with health and safety. I got strep throat while at UBC and just went to a nearby walk in clinic and they gave me the antibiotics. It was super easy and hassle free! UBC is such a safe area so there are not really any safety concerns other than to lock your door when you

leave or at night and always make sure you lock up your bike if you have one! Bike theft does happen occasionally. Vancouver is a big city so always be aware of your surroundings, but I found it way safer than Seattle.

## **6. CULTURAL ASPECTS:**

**a.** How did you integrate into the culture and meet members of the community?

(e.g., clubs, sports, extracurricular activities, pubs, etc.)

I joined the UBC Ski and Board facebook group and ride share program to mountains like Whistler (which is an hour and a half from campus). I also attended events put on by UBC's greek system. It is very small there and different from UWs. The SUB (our equivalent to the HUB) is always buzzing with people and activities!

**b.** Describe cultural differences and challenges you encountered and how you addressed them.

(e.g., gender issues, social etiquette, stereotypes, etc.)

UBC was very similar to UW in terms of student ethnicities and cultures. I did not find I had any challenges while I was there. I had one roommate who was from Japan who spoke very little English and hid in her room most of the time, but there were no problems. I just tried to speak slowly and clearly when I spoke to her.

Smoking is allowed all over on UBC campus which was strange to get used to as a nonsmoker, but that's a very insignificant detail.

## **7. FINANCIAL:**

**a.** What is the best way to access/transfer money from the U.S.?

I just used my debit account and withdrew from any of the main banks or atms around Vancouver/UBC. I did get charged a 2-3\$ fee with each transaction so I tended to withdraw 100-200 in cash each time. (Using credit cards was fine, but I did get dinged for each transaction with my banks so I choose to use cash instead).

**b.** How much spending money do you recommend per month? Please include rent, food, transportation, etc.

I paid my rent in advance (because it was university housing) which was \$1600 for four months. I found that to be very average rent because Vancouver is expensive. Groceries are significantly more expensive there, also if you go out to bars/get drinks that can add up fast, but UBC gives you a bus pass so your transportation is free. Excluding rent I lived on about \$200/week.

**c.** Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.

There were a couple fees for housing, UBC card, health insurance that they make you pay but if I remember correctly it was less than \$500.

Also I purchased a student season pass to Whistler which cost me about \$550 but was totally worth it!

d. If you used Financial Aid to fund your program/exchange, were there any problems? If so, how did you address them?

No I had no financial aid.

#### **8. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATION:**

a. If the IP&E administered your program/exchange, please comment on the effectiveness of the office's services. What service could be improved?

I am not sure if they did, but whoever was in charge (UW or UBC) everyone was incredibly helpful and worked with me 100% of the way! It was a great experience.

b. If the IP&E did not administer your program, please evaluate the program's administration, both in the U.S. and abroad.

I am not sure if they did or did not, but whoever was in charge (UW or UBC) everyone was incredibly helpful and worked with me 100% of the way! It was a great experience.

#### **9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE:**

Please describe the type of student for whom this program is best suited.

Outgoing, outdoorsy student who wants to be in a more international place without going to a country where they do not speak English. Don't get me wrong, you by no means feel that you are still in the USA, it feels like another country (the smallest things are different and strange) but you don't feel completely out of your element. Vancouver is a lot more of an international city than Vancouver and the culture is very different, but I feel in love with British Columbia and its love/closeness to nature and the environment. It also hands down one of the most beautiful places I have ever been to where the mountains extend all the way to the ocean. People are very adamant about protecting the environment at UBC.

#### **10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:**

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?

I had the most amazing time at UBC! The academics were actually harder than I expected, but the people and culture there are wonderful and I would jump at the opportunity to return. I cannot speak highly enough about the time I spent there!