

APR 19 2012

Name:

Program Location: Aarhus, Denmark

Term/Year: Fall 2011

Phone:

Email:

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

a. Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

*I have family in Denmark, so I stayed with them, but many people have had good experiences at hostels, because accommodations are so expensive in Denmark.*

*Danhostel is a good option, as well as other smaller hostels.*

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

*I could not attend my orientation, because it overlapped with my internship at the US Embassy. In hindsight, I think I really missed valuable networking opportunities by not attending the orientations.*

*I did however have a mentor who met me at the train station with my keys and a binder of information. This would have been helpful if I was not already pretty familiar with Denmark in general.*

## 2. ACADEMICS:

a. Please evaluate the instruction you received abroad. Compare the following to the University of

Washington's system:

- classroom structure
  - o *Teachers do not expect you to do a whole lot of homework and classes are largely discussion oriented.*
  - o *I found the teachers in general to be a little cold. One of my professors was a practicing lawyer and had little time to respond to emails or questions*
- instruction
  - o *Classes were often cancelled, but there was a generally larger reading load. I took all masters level classes so this was expected.*
- teacher/student relations
  - o *Again, teachers seemed a little disconnected. They don't schedule their own exams, so that is a bit bureaucratic, in that they don't have control over where or when you need to show up.*
- grading/exams
  - o *All of mine were oral and proctor sat in on them. The questions asked were often quite different from the study guides, which was a little frustrating.*
- administration
  - o *The administrator for the legal department was pretty fast in getting back to me, but again, it is all very bureaucratic. You could end up running in circles trying to get one answer about where to show up for exams or*

## 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 visited the hospital once during my stay, and it was when I was in Copenhagen (I lived in Copenhagen most of the time, since that is where my boyfriend lived). The CPR system is awesome. I went in to the ER, they took care of me, and there was no paper work or insurance worries to deal with. Really great. Everyone speaks English there too, so if you can't speak Danish, you have nothing to worry about.*

## 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 met a few people while interning at the Embassy that were really nice and I hung out with them a lot. Other than that, I had my family and boyfriend.*

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

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

*The only cultural barrier I faced was in class. My copyright professor occasionally made anti-American remarks, and as the only American in the class, I took this a little hard at first. Then I came to realize that ignorant comments come from every country, in every sector of society and that I shouldn't take it too personally.*

## 7. FINANCIAL:

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

*Using a debit card with a pin number. You can't use any sort of card in DK without a pin.*

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

*Rent: \$400-\$600/ Month*

*Food: \$600-800/ Month*

*Transport: \$75/ Month*

*Cost of living in DK is VERY high. Find all the scholarships you can. I was on four different scholarships during my time there.*

c. Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.

*-Security deposits are typically pretty high and unexpected. (Think 1-2 months rent)*

*-Visa application deposit is pretty expensive.*

d. If you used Financial Aid to fund your program/exchange, were there any complications?

*Academically, I didn't put in a ton of effort, but I think the experiences I had far outweighed any less than stellar grades that I received.*

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*how to get your transcript. My transcript wasn't available until 2 months after I took my final exam.*

- library, computer, and classroom facilities
  - o *The librarians are AMAZING! One librarian in particular printed out my 45 page term paper for free, because I was so stressed out about figuring out the printing card situation. Really nice.*
- b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.
  - *The old adage, you get what you put in, could never have been more true. The Danish school system really relies on your own ability to motivate yourself, since there are no assignments during the term, only one final exam.*
- c. Are there any courses or instructors you would recommend to future students?
  - *I would avoid taking anything too specific.*
- d. How did your study abroad coursework relate to your UW education?
  - *This is a little tough, since these were masters level and are law classes, which UW doesn't really offer at an undergrad level. I really wish I had taken political science courses so that it would have been easier to transfer the credits, but I thought it would be fun to try something I couldn't do at home. That was a big mistake. It has taken me at least six appointments with about five departments in order to find someone who will take my credits.*

### 3. HOUSING:

a. What housing options were available to you?

*I was put in Risskov Kolligiet. I would not recommend this living situation, since it is about 15 minutes outside of downtown, and is VERY quiet (and right on a major highway). If you don't speak Danish, it is very hard to meet people here, who are predominantly natives. I speak Danish and even had a little difficulty.*

b. Which did you choose, and why?

*Housing is very competitive in Aarhus, so I was not given any other options.*

c. What would you recommend?

*I would recommend putting location as your first priority on your housing application. Some people got places right across from the school and had a much more social experience.*

### 4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

*Aarhus is a student city, about three hours away from Copenhagen. The pace is a little slower, the people are a little nicer and the campus dominates the small town. Shopping is pretty decent in the town, but it gets pretty quiet about five minutes out of downtown. Transportation is a bit of a hassle, since the bike way of life is a little hard, since the hills are pretty big and pretty frequent. If you have a choice between Copenhagen and Aarhus, pick Copenhagen! Much more to do, much more going on. Transportation is easier and the city is a little more awake.*

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d. If you used Financial Aid to fund your program/exchange, were there any complications?

*The only complications I had was with the Gudrun Gytel Scholarship Fund. Funds were not deposited until about a month after they said they would be, which was very concerning for me because I had factored the money into my budget. The administrator who was supposed to give out the funds would not communicate with me, and would only respond to my uncle, who is a Danish lawyer.*

If so, how did you address them?

*I reached out to other scholarship recipients, the members of the board, and my IPE advisor after the administrator would not respond to my emails and phone calls. Finally, after he was pressured a bit, he answered my call and we spoke. The money was deposited about a week and a half later.*

#### 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 thought IPE did an awesome job, especially considering I applied so late in the game. Catherine did everything possible to help me before leaving and while I was over there, which I really appreciated.*

*The only thing that could have been helpful would have been a little warning to take only classes I can get pre-approved by my departments.*

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.

*This program is best suited to a student who has few connections in Denmark already and is willing to commit a significant amount of time hanging out with the people they live near and investing time in networking during orientation events.*

#### 10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?

*I had a great time in Denmark, because I made it what I wanted it to be. Because there are few assignments during the school year, it is easy enough to go off and do your own thing and to see the rest of Europe. If I had wanted to, I probably could have met and connected with more people, but as it was, I was content with the people I already knew in Denmark and really just used the time to immerse myself in the culture and to enjoy life, which was my ultimate goal.*

*Academically, I didn't put in a ton of effort, but I think the experiences I had far outweighed any less than stellar grades that I received.*

