

Student Exchange Evaluation

Every student loves to hear of other's exchange experiences. These forms are very useful when selecting your exchange destination.

Please include as much information as possible. Feel free to use additional pages, enclose photos, links to blogs/ videos etc.

1. PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: Mitchell Blott

Degree: Juris Doctor

Name of Exchange University: University of British Columbia

Country: Canada

Year of exchange: 2018 Language of instruction: English

List courses taken abroad:

Mining Law	Intellectual Property	The Law of Homicide
Introduction to Asian Legal Systems	Topics in Intellectual Property: Video Game Law	

2. EXCHANGE EXPERIENCE

How would you rate your overall exchange experience on a scale of 1 to 10?

Poor

Excellent

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments:

Going on an exchange was honestly one of the greatest experiences of my life! I will forever cherish the friends I made and the journey I had

3. FINANCES

Total cost: \$20,000 Room: \$4000

Airfare to host institution: \$2000 Holidays/travel expenses: A lot... \$10,000

Other: \$4,000

Did you spend more than you expected? What was more/ less expensive than you expected?

I spent a lot more than I expected, however this was mainly because I decided to travel before, during and after my exchange program. I also found the accommodation in Vancouver to be particularly expensive - most places were upwards of \$250 per week for non-on campus residence. Activities like snowboarding / skiing and so forth are also extremely expensive

What was the best way of accessing money during your exchange programme?

I used a Commonwealth Bank Travel Money Card which worked great - you can also open a student account with banks such as Scotiabank over there

Do you have any advice about finances, budgeting or the cheapest way of living/travelling?

Make sure you save enough money so that you don't feel restrained from doing anything while you're over there. My mantra is that you save to travel, you don't travel to save. In terms of budgeting however, you can pick up your groceries at really cheap prices from a supermarket called "No Frills". Also try and avoid the Uber Eats devil and cook your own meals to save money!

4. ARRIVAL

Was there an airport pickup/ buddy service available?

No there wasn't. Also, an extremely important thing to note is that VANCOUVER DOES NOT HAVE UBER! I was stuck at the airport for an hour before realising this. You have to either get a taxi or public transport out of the airport.

5. ORIENTATION

What was Orientation like? Was it useful? Were there social activities?

Orientation was a really good way to meet a lot of people and familiarise yourself with the university. UBC has an exchange club, similar to UWA's Perth International club, which organises O-Week. This week involved a Campus tour, a Downtown Vancouver Tour, a pub crawl and a clubbing night. It was a great event and I made a lot of my closest friends from exchange during the Orientation week

6. ACADEMICS

What differences did you find between the UWA system and the system at your host university?

Contact hours: 12 - 15 Hours, which is similar to here, except you do an additional unit. They don't have tutorials, only lectures

Homework: Hardly every any homework (because of course structure). My units were either 100% exams or 100% essays

Course (lectures, tests, etc.): Units are usually either examined through a 100% exam or a 100% essay. Units only taught through lecture

Workload (heavier/ lighter) and assessment (harder or easier): Easier / lighter workload when compared to UWA until the end of semester when your exams / essays are due. But overall much lighter than UWA's workload

7. FACILITIES

What were the library/ Wi-Fi/ email facilities like at your host institution?

The library facilities were great! There is about 4-5 libraries on campus which are huge, however they are usually packed with students throughout the entire semester. Law students have access to their own library however which is reserved for law students

8. SOCIAL

What kinds of social events were there? Was it easy to meet people?

ESC is the UBC exchange club and they hold numerous social events - almost one every week. Some notable events that I can recommend include the trip to Banff as well as the Whistler trip. Both of these events were amazing! Also, ESC runs a weekly "Exchange Student Night" at a club located on the UBC campus. It is extremely easy to meet people through these events and everyone is looking to make mates!

9. ACCOMMODATION

Was on campus housing available? What were the rooms like? Were you on a meal plan or did you cook your own food? Are the residences close to the university?

Please add any additional information that you think be of interest with regard to housing.

The campus did have housing however it is extremely competitive to get it. You enter a lottery and if you are fortunate, you receive a spot on campus. I unfortunately did not succeed in getting a place on campus, however was able to find a house about 15 minutes outside of the University. It is really important to be careful of scammers when looking for off-campus accommodation because the Vancouver housing market is particularly prone to it. You can contact the UBC Housing Staff for assistance in finding off-campus residence

10. PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION

What was the most difficult aspect of planning your exchange?

Making sure you haven't forgotten anything! If you are planning on travelling before or after your exchange, make sure you plan all of that prior to leaving for your exchange.

What advice do you have for future exchange students?

Be a yes man/woman. Exchange can be such an amazing opportunity to experience new things, people and cultures but you have to be receptive to change. Try things you wouldn't usually do. Get involved in University clubs. Explore as much of your host country as possible and just get out there!

What are the 5 most important things to take with you when you go to your host university?

1. A Sense of Adventure

2. Travel Money Card
3. International Adaptor for your Phone / Laptop Charger
4. Passport
5. BOSE noise cancelling headphones

11. General impressions

What were the most rewarding aspects of biggest disappointments of your exchange experience? How has your perspective changed as a result of your exchange experience?

Remember that students are interested in reading about both good and bad experiences.

The most rewarding aspect of my exchange experience was definitely the opportunity to meet people from all around the world, all with unique experiences and perspectives. I was also in a position to travel throughout Canada and America before and after my exchange, which I cannot recommend enough. From snowboarding in Whistler, to dog sledding in Alberta, to Partying on the Vegas strip - exchange allowed me to do it all, and all the while accompanied by the life-long friends I made throughout my exchange program. I cannot put my finger on a 'bad' experience that I had whilst on exchange, because even the more difficult things (i.e. having to learn how to cook more than 2 minute noodles) have made me stronger and more capable as an individual.

My most important tip is to SAVE SAVE SAVE before coming on exchange! You never want there to be a situation where you have to say no to an amazing opportunity purely because of money restraints.

My perspective as a whole has also positively changed following exchange. By meeting so many new people from many diverse cultures my outlook on the world definitely changed for the better. If anything, it has made my travel bug grow even more!

Thank you for your time.