

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: Liam Meinema

Degree: Bachelor of Biomedical Science

Name of Exchange University: University of Vermont

Country: United States of America.

Year of exchange: 2018 S2 Language of instruction: English

List courses taken abroad:

EC 12 Principles of MicroEconomics, POLS 21 American Political System; PATH 101 Intro to Human Disease; MMC 101 Microbiol & Infectious Disease
PEAC 047 Scuba; PEAC 027 Group Fitness

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:

If you're considering exchange and want to ask questions, feel free to message me on FB or email!
*liam.meinema@gmail.com.

3. FINANCES

Total cost: ~ \$20,000

Room: \$9000 (incl. meal plan)

Airfare to host institution: ~ \$2000 (return) Holidays/travel expenses: \$9,000

Other:

(incl. insurance, & travel before/ after exchange @ UVM)

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

I budgeted around \$20000 but didn't quite expect to spend the full amount. I've been doing a lot of travel & skiing which costs quite a bit.

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

Citibank Everyday Account (great exchange rate & no fees!)

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

Just keep track of what you're spending!!

4. ARRIVAL

Was there an airport pickup/ buddy service available?

There was a buddy service available - I only met them once and didn't really spend much time with them at all.

5. ORIENTATION

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

There were plenty of orientation activities during the first week which were great for meeting other exch. students & settling into UWA. However because exch. students arrive a week earlier than US students, I mainly only met other exch. students in this time.

6. ACADEMICS

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

Contact hours: ~ 3-4 hours M-F (more than UWA)

Homework: Much more than UWA (almost more like high school)

Course (lectures, tests, etc.): No recorded lectures so you have to go to all classes.

Workload (heavier/ lighter) and assessment (harder or easier): More work, but easier work (& lighter weighting on exams/assessments)

7. FACILITIES

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

WiFi all around campus
Only really used the library for studying/printing.

8. SOCIAL

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

There were a lot of events run by the OIE for the international/exchange students to meet people at (especially during the orientation week). Most of the exch. students live in the same building on athletic campus so it was pretty easy to meet other people.

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.

On-campus accommodation was compulsory (as was the meal plan). The rooms weren't great but the location of the res hall was really good.

10. PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION

What was the most difficult aspect of planning your exchange?

Getting units approved by UWA, and enrolling in units via the UVM system, I had to email a lot of people at UVM to get everything to work out.

What advice do you have for future exchange students?

- 1) Sort out your visa as soon as possible so you don't have to worry about ^{not} it arriving on time.
- 2) Pack light, but bring some stuff to decorate your room with (e.g. photos) so you don't get too homesick.

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

1. Laptop

2. Bluetooth speaker
3. Warm clothes (it gets cold real quick)
4. Stationery (so you don't need to buy it in the US)
5. Bathers (if you're going in the fall semester, the lake is really nice to swim in before it gets super cold).

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.

Exchange was one of the best things I've ever decided to do - it may seem like a daunting process at first but it was honestly so worth it! I met so many amazing people, both other exchange students as well as students from the US, and I got to experience the real American college experience. College sports, frat parties, house parties & the classes were all as fun as you'd expect them to be, and were probably the highlight of my exchange. Additionally, I've made so many lifelong friends from all around the world (even some from UWA!) who I will undoubtedly see & travel with again. The biggest disappointment of my exchange was probably my roommate, we barely spoke & didn't really get along but I didn't spend too much time in the room so it wasn't a massive deal. I went into exchange with the attitude of saying yes to every opportunity, and I couldn't recommend doing this enough; I had so many amazing experiences and probably the best 4 months of my life so far. If you're considering going to UVM on exchange and have any questions whatsoever, please get in contact with me! I'd love to talk to you about it!!

Thank you for your time.