



## Student Exchange Evaluation

### BASIC INFORMATION

<b>Otago degree</b>	Bachelor of Science with Honours	<b>Major</b>	Food Science
<b>Host University</b>	University of Minnesota	<b>Semester &amp; Year of Exchange</b>	Semester 2 2017

### ACADEMICS/ COURSE LOAD

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
<b>FScN 4131 Food Quality</b>	English	A module from FOSC 401/402/403 Topics in Advanced Food Science	10 credits
<b>FScN 4112 Food Chemistry and Functional Food</b>	English	A module from FOSC 401/402/403 Topics in Advanced Food Science	7 credits
<b>FScN 4122 Food Fermentations and Biotechnology</b>	English	A module from FOSC 401/402/403 Topics in Advanced Food Science	10 credits
<b>FScN 4312 Food Analysis</b>	English	A module from FOSC 401/402/403 Topics in Advanced Food Science	13 credits

#### Any comments about these papers?

FScN 4312 Food Analysis was the most time consuming course as lab reports were due every week and there were quizzes/exams every other week. I definitely learnt a lot in this course though and the professor was really good. FScN 4112 Food Chemistry and Functional Food is similar to the Food Systems courses at Otago, but with slightly more of a chemistry focus. FScN 4122 Food Fermentations and Biotechnology is the least time consuming course and one I found incredibly interesting. FScN 4131 Food Quality provided a good overview of US regulations which I found good to develop a global awareness on food regulations.

#### How did the academic experience/ workload/ style of teaching differ from Otago?

The academic workload varies a lot based on the course. University is much more independent in New Zealand and places a lot of responsibility on the students whereas in the US it is slightly more similar to high school (i.e. attendance etc.). A pass grade is 70% so the grading system is very different to New Zealand. Extra credit is a great way to help boost your grade and some professors offer extra credit more willingly than others.

I had to complete my thesis in the US. Fortunately, the departments in both Otago and Minnesota were incredibly supportive of this. I had chosen my thesis topic to ensure I had a contact/professor in Minnesota that was willing to help me with writing up my thesis whilst over there.

## **ACCOMMODATION**

### **What accommodation did you stay in? What were the pros and cons of your accommodation?**

There were two main options offered for housing: University Village, and off-campus housing. I stayed at University Village which are apartments mainly for exchange students, although there are a few Americans that stay there. Due to the number of exchange students, it can make it hard to branch out. The apartments are between 2 and 4 bedrooms each and can be shared or individual. They are self-catered with each apartment having their own kitchen. It's a nice walk from campus and close to the light rail and Campus Shuttle so it's easy to get around.

An off-campus apartment is also a completely viable option as there are plenty of Americans looking to fill spare rooms. A semester sublease is ideal if you can find one, otherwise, you can try and sublease your apartment once you leave (if you're there for the Fall semester). This was a benefit of staying at University Village as you have the option of a semester or full-year contract. Apartments in Minnesota are much nicer than housing in Dunedin: they have great insulation and often have their own gyms and games rooms. If you're looking for off-campus housing I would suggest looking for an apartment in Dinkytown, which tends to be the social hub for students; some suggestions would be Marshall, Floco, the Lofts and Bridges.

## **MONEY MATTERS**

### **Please detail your basic costs**

Accommodation*	USD\$3500
Flights*	NZD\$1900
Visa*	NZD\$500
Food*	USD\$70 per week
Insurance	USD\$1049

\*rough estimates

### **What means did you use to access your finances? What would you recommend?**

It's good to have a couple of methods to access your finances. I had a credit card and Air NZ OneSmart travel card: nearly either one or the other was accepted at every vendor. However, there is also an option to open up a bank account with TCF Bank through the University which provides you with a debit card. It's very easy to set up, though definitely not necessary.

## **VISAS & INSURANCE**

### **Did you have to apply for a visa? What was the process?**

A J1 Visa was required

1. Complete the DS-160 Form
2. Pay the Visa Fee
3. Schedule your appointment with the US Embassy
4. Visit the US Embassy at the date and time of your interview

For more detailed information visit: <http://www.ustraveldocs.com/nz/nz-niv-visaapply.asp>

### **Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?**

Health insurance is mandatory and international students are automatically enrolled each semester.

### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR/SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**

#### **What was the university/ city like?**

The University of Minnesota is breathtaking with gorgeous views of the city. It's also incredibly big so you're bound to meet new people nearly every day. Sports is incredibly important in the US college culture (although it's a bit rough being a Minnesota sports fan). American sports tend to drag on for hours but I definitely recommend attending at least one football game and get involved in the tailgating beforehand. Americans love supporting their sports teams and it's always fun to get dressed up in the team colours. The atmosphere at the games is so energetic, it's always fun even if don't really understand what's going on on the field.

#### **Any recommendations for things to do, places to visit, places to eat etc.?**

Things to do:

- Timberwolves (basketball) game at Target Field
- Twin Cities (baseball) game at Target Field
- Go to a play at the Guthrie Theatre
- Minnesota State Fair: the largest state fair in America running for only a couple of weeks from late August – early September

Places to eat:

- Al's Breakfast, Dinkytown
- Insomnia Cookies

Places to visit:

- Stone Arch Bridge
- Mall of America: American consumerism at it's finest
- Minehaha Park
- Duluth & Lake Superior: located in northern Minnesota, Duluth is a gorgeous place to visit particularly in the fall when the trees are a patchwork of oranges, greens and yellows. Would recommend hiring a car as there is a lots to see outside of the city that is difficult to get to without a car.
- Chicago: the biggest city in the mid-west, a cheap travel option from Minneapolis. It has beautiful buildings, amazing food and entertainment, and a history of contributing to art,

culture, and technology on a global scale. A classic American city that contrasts starkly with Minneapolis.

### **OVERALL EXPERIENCE**

I travelled for a month prior to starting my exchange. It's definitely a great way to get as much out of this experience as possible. I had an incredible time and it's a great opportunity to make friends that are based all over the world. Studying Food Science in the US gave me a greater global awareness of the industry and particularly how regulations differ to New Zealand.

