



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	University of Alberta
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 1 2019
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Science
Major(s)	Psychology

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
PSYCO 241: Social Psychology	English	PSYC 212: Social and Applied Psychology	3
PSYCO 239: Abnormal Psychology	English	PSYC 203: Abnormal Psychology	3
PSYCO 258: Cognitive Psychology	English	PSYC 211: Brain and Cognition	3
PSYCO 275: Brain and Behaviour	English	PSYC 211: Brain and Cognition	

Any comments about these papers?

Most papers are offered in both the semesters but despite having multiple professors teaching the same paper for different classes, they get filled up really quickly so enrol early. Do not blindly accept any stream check the professor reviews on ratemyprofessor.com to get a basic understanding of what the professor is like according to his previous students.

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

For psychology, I was used to having different lecturers for their area of expertise but in U of A I usually only had one lecturer per class. The workload is similar but the way it is tested is very different. Most of my midterm exams held about the same weightage as my finals, this meant that all the midterms were important. For example, for abnormal psychology I had two midterms and a final and they were 33%, 33%, and 34%.



Accommodation

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

I stayed at International House (I-house).

Pros: I-house has a very diverse community which allows you to interact and befriend people from all over the world. It is a easy to meet people because I-house is a dorm-like living situation with shared kitchen and lounge. It is easy to make friends because of all the social events that I-house holds. I-house is also located on campus so you do not have to walk

outside in the winter because of how close it is to the faculty buildings, which are mostly connected. I have heard that it is cleaner and more resourceful than some other residences.

Cons: It is a bit more expensive than other residences.

Money matters

Please detail your basic costs, e.g. accommodation, flights, visa, food, insurance

Accommodation: I stayed at I-house for 4 months and that was about \$3,501

Flights: I got lucky because I booked through STA so my roundtrip International flights were \$1400 (without the domestic flight to and from Vancouver and Toronto)

Visa: \$150

Food: I went grocery shopping once every two weeks and it came about \$50 on average for me (but I am mostly a vegetarian so this price may vary for you)

Insurance: I only got the health and travel insurance issued to me by the university and that was less \$130.

What means did you use to access your finances? What would you recommend? (Credit card, Cash passport, foreign bank account, etc.)

I got a Canadian Debit-Credit Card because I am staying in Canada for two semesters but I knew other exchange students just using their New Zealand Debit card.

Visas & Insurance

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

Yes. I applied for visa from Indonesia so it went relatively quickly with an online application followed by a few necessary documents. It took me less than a week to receive my Visa.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Yes

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

What organised activities were available to students? What extra-curricular activities would you recommend to future exchange students?

There was no shortage of extra-curricular activity for students even in the harsh Canadian Winter. I honestly did partake in many extra-curricular activity but there are various ways to get involved in the residence you are staying at and if you want to get involved with the university itself there are ways you can do that as well. It would be better to go on exchange in the September session because that is when there are more opportunities to do things. I was actually involved in a student led club called NeuroAlbertaTech and I had the opportunity to be part of the research team for project/competition where we developed a game called Alphablaster, controlled by Brain-computer interface.

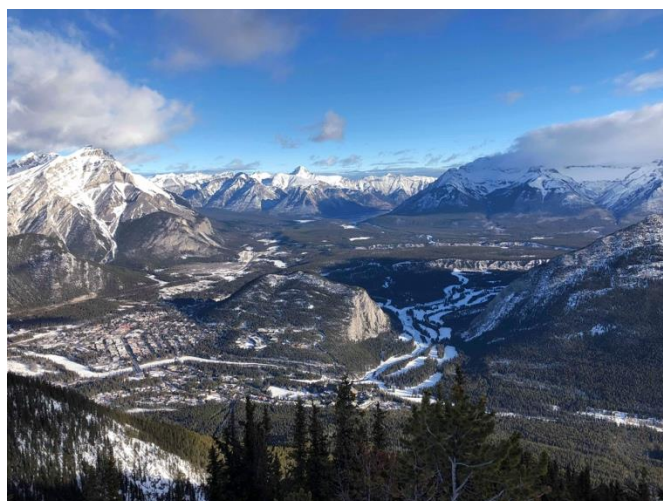
The international office regularly organizes trips to nearby tourist destinations such as Banff, Lake Louise, and Jasper. It also organizes other activities around Edmonton, and if you go on exchange to U of A you must follow their Facebook page for all of these updates.



What was the university/ city like?

U of A is an amazing university academically and for extra-curricular. Everyone in the international office are super patient and supporting. The campus is larger than that of Otago. The public transport like bus network and LRT are right on campus, so it is easy to commute to and from the university to almost anywhere in the city.

Edmonton is very different from Dunedin, it is bigger and definitely not a student city but that is not necessarily a bad thing. There is always something going on in Edmonton and it is named the festival city of Alberta for a reason. Edmonton is about a 3 hour drive from Calgary and Jasper and about 5-6 hours from Banff. I knew people who went out of town almost every other weekend so there is a lot of opportunity to explore Alberta and British Columbia while on exchange at U of A.



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

I would recommend going to the West Edmonton Mall, Alberta Legislature Building, Downtown, and Muttart Conservatory.



Places to eat: The Pint on White Ave on Wednesdays because it has half priced wings (\$4.50!!) with around 40 flavours to choose from.

Any tips for future students?

Be prepared for the Canadian Winter and it might be a bit overwhelming and difficult in the beginning, your exchange experience is going to be a lot of fun; you should enjoy every minute because before you know it 4 months have passed in the blink of an eye.



Overall Experience

Please write one paragraph (or more) about your exchange experience. Please include some photos!

Overall, I have had the best time in Canada and U of A. I have met some of the loveliest people while staying at I-house, I do not think I would ever have met such a diverse group of individuals if I had not gone on exchange. I also saw some of the most beautiful places in the world (BANFF!!) and created the best memory. This Global Exchange had pushed me out of my comfort zone and forced me to involve myself in situations I wouldn't normally do and somehow living by myself has allowed me to become a better chef (something I never expected would happen). Although, I am going to continue my exchange journey in Canada for the next semester, my only regret is not going on exchange to U of A for the whole year because 4 months is just not enough. If you are thinking about going on exchange to University of Alberta I say GO FOR IT, it is an amazing university in one of the most beautiful parts of the world.





