



## My Exchange Evaluation

### Basic Information

<b>Host University</b>	University of Richmond
<b>Semester &amp; Year of Exchange</b>	Sem 2 2022 & Sem 1 2023
<b>Otago degree(s)</b>	BCom
<b>Major(s)</b>	Marketing and Management

### Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent
Bargaining and Negotiations		MANT343
Professional Selling		MART304
Market and Media Disruption		MART330
Strategic Brand Management		MART301
International Marketing		MART326
International Business Environment		MANT3XX
Strategic Marketing Management		MART3XX

Total Otago credits gained:  54 points  72 points  108 points  \_\_\_\_\_

Any comments about these papers?

Majority of the papers I took at Richmond were really interesting and not topics that would usually be offered at Otago, they have more of a hands on practical approach, and the professors usually have professional experience in the topic they are teaching, for example Professional Selling and Bargaining and Negotiations the professors were incredibly knowledgeable about the topics. If you can take any paper with Bill Bergman or Jeff Carlson I highly recommend they are two of the best professors I have had in my time at university.

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

It's more of an intimate experience, the classes are way smaller (max about 30 people). It's more work throughout the semester with homework and assignments rather than it all being weighted toward a final exam. The teaching style relies on class participation more than Otago, this takes some time to get used to but the professors are really supportive and involving yourself in class discussion is how you get the most out of the class. The professors are really friendly and will definitely know your name by the third week of classes, Richmond as a whole is a small school so the

community is very supportive and the professors are always there to help you if you are struggling or just want advice.

## Accommodation

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

I stayed in a dorm my first semester, you don't get to choose where you stay on campus, but you have to have a roommate. My roommate was also an exchange student from Scotland, which was super lovely, and we had an adjoining bathroom with a single room. If you live in a dorm you have to get a meal plan at the dining hall and have very limited cooking facilities/storage in your room unless you rent a microwave or fridge. In second semester I lived in a University Forest Apartment, which is more like a house, you get your own kitchen and living room as well, but you do still have a roommate.

## Money matters

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

You have to cover most costs at Richmond, my room was \$10,000 for both semesters, and meal plan was around \$5000 for both semesters, being in an apartment you can choose which meal plan you get, but if you are in a dorm you have to get a full meal plan. Flights were around \$2600 return (I came home for Christmas) and then around \$1300 one way going back in January. Flying into Richmond specifically makes it more expensive, but lots of people I know flew into Washington DC and caught the train down, which is around 2 hours and can be cheaper.

Applying for a visa is around \$200 and you have to go for an appointment Auckland

You have to get health insurance from both Richmond and Otago, I think it was around \$1300 per semester from Richmond and \$860 for the one affiliated by Otago.

You can get a job on campus at Richmond if you need, there's quite a few to choose from and it's really common for students to work at the different outlets around campus. I got a job in the athletics department which was really fun and allowed to get fully immersed in the college football and basketball culture, which is a really big thing at Richmond.

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

I used Wise Card, its super easy to use and highly recommend it. The exchange rate when I went was pretty bad so it was quite expensive when you converted money. I also got an American bank account over there, which is free and super easy. It was also convenient for me as I had a job at the University and if you don't have an American bank account it is a hassle to get paid.

## Visas & Insurance

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

Yes, it's a really easy application process but it was a bit of a hassle trying to get an appointment

*Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?*

Yes it was around \$1300 a semester and is included in the fees you get with your room and meal plan invoice.

## Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

There are heaps available, at the start of each semester there is a clubs day and each day there is an email sent out called "spiderbites" which has a whole range of different activities happening each day. At the start you have an international orientation before all the other students come and there are a range of different activities on this week as well to get you accustomed to the Richmond life and the surrounding area

*What was the university/ city like?*

Richmond itself is a really small university I think all of undergrad is around 4000 students, so that definitely takes some time to get used to and it is a true 'campus' rather than being in the city, it's around 10/15 minutes' drive from downtown Richmond, but the campus is beautiful especially in the fall and the spring. You kind of get to know everyone which is really nice but sometimes you can kind of get into a 'Richmond Bubble' as you don't really need to leave the campus for much. Downtown Richmond has a lot of history, as it was the capital of Virginia during the American Revolution, most of the seniors go down town to on the weekends for the bars, but there are really only two main ones, although heaps of fun. There's a river not too far away from the campus called "Pony Pastures" where lots of students go on hot days. Carytown is a really nice part of Richmond with shops and nice restaurants. The VMFA (Virginia museum of fine arts) is a really cool place to visits and in the warmer months most Friday's they have live music outside and everyone brings their picnics which is really nice.

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

Richmond is really well situated on the east coast and super close to Washington D.C and New York so I definitely recommend visiting each of those places. You get fall and thanksgiving break in the Fall semester so I definitely recommend planning a trip somewhere, for Fall break a large group of us exchange students went to Miami which was so much fun and I highly recommend and then for thanksgiving I went to New York which was a cool atmosphere to see the parade and how Americans really celebrate thanksgiving. In the spring semester you only get 10 days off for spring break, and for this another group of exchange students and I went to Puerto Rico, this was such a cool trip and something I probably a country I wouldn't have got the chance to visit otherwise.

In Richmond definitely go to Jack Browns a really yummy burger place, and there is a pie shop called proper pie which is actually owned by a Kiwi guy, and they do really authentic pies which are nice if you're missing a bit of home. Carytown is also a really nice area of Richmond and only 10 mins away from campus.

*Any tips for future students?*

Just embrace it all make the most of the American college experience, definitely go to Football and Basketball games (especially the VCU basketball game), they usually always do a free giveaway for students. Don't get too bogged down with all the homework, it does take a while to get used to it, and utilise your professors as much as you can, they're all there to help and are really accommodating. Cellar Wednesday is a weekly highlight for all of the senior students and is something we looked forward to every week.



## Overall Experience

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

Richmond is a beautiful place and the campus grounds are amazing, I had the best year there and was so lucky to be able to travel to many other places in the states as well. I went to NYC, DC, Miami and Charleston which are all so close to Richmond by either train, bus or plane and highly recommend utilising your weekends, majority of students don't have classes on Friday, so your almost guaranteed a 3 day weekend every week. The school hosts lots of fun events so there's always something to do and the facilities at Richmond are incredible.

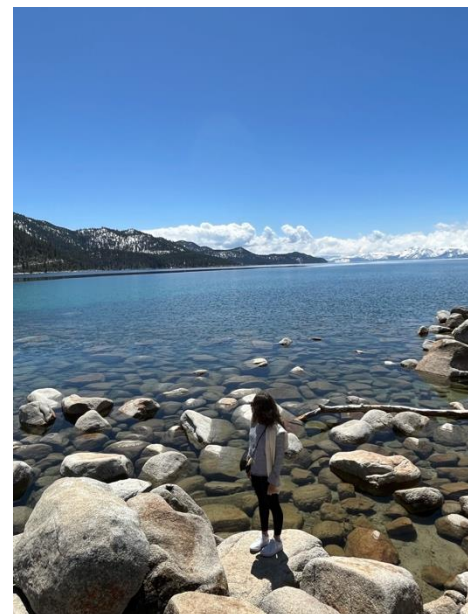
I definitely recommend utilising the extra month you get on your visa after school finishes to travel around, I went to California with a couple of girls I met at Richmond which was super fun! My exchange experience was more fun than I expected and the network at Richmond is so tight knit, they really welcome you in as family, along with the others on exchange as well.



Ice hockey game at Madison Square Garden



NBA game whilst in Miami



Lake Tahoe, California

Sitting outside the library