



## My Exchange Evaluation

### Basic Information

Host University	University of California Santa Barbara
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester One 2018
Otago degree(s)	Political Science and Classics
Major(s)	Political Science and Classics

### Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
<b>POLS106 MI – Politics of the Military</b>	English	200/300-level Political Science Paper	
<b>POLS119 JW – Ethical Issues IR</b>	English	200/300-level Political Science Paper	
<b>POLS 126 – International Security</b>	English	200/300-level Political Science Paper	
<b>POLS 142 – Decision Making</b>	English	200/300-level Political Science Paper	
<b>CLAS 60 – Science in Greece</b>	English	200-level Classics Paper	
<b>CLAS 170 – Pompeii</b>	English	300-level Classics Paper	
<b>CLAS 171 – Art and Architecture in Greece</b>	English	300-level Classics Paper	

Any comments about these papers?

I'm glad to have taken them because most of the papers I took weren't offered topic wise at Otago, and not from the American perspective

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

Having a quarter system made things different. With a semester system they space things out over the weeks, but for a quarter system, while there are less things to remember, having a fast paced system can be trying, especially with the amount of assignments and tests given out. There were a lot more midterms, and part of the ten week system included finals. It kept us busy, but it was still a great time.

## **Accommodation**

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

I subleased from two different girls for both quarters that lived in the student area next to the university. It was a really great way to experience the student life, while also saving money (because living in the dorms on campus were quite expensive and required you to have a meal plan). The only issue I faced was the density of the population of the student area where most of the students lived within a square mile – so weekends could get a little rowdy. But everyone living close to each other also meant that plans were easy to make with friends, and you ran into people.

## **Money matters**

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

Accommodation; flights (to Auckland for my visa and to and from the states); food; insurance for travel, school and my places; travelling (to Coachella, different National Parks, etc.)

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

Venmo is a big thing in America, so I had to open an American bank account (I went with Wells Fargo) where I would transfer money through TransferWise. Otherwise, my ANZ card was good enough and didn't charge extra to use internationally

## **Visas & Insurance**

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

Yes, I did. I had to wait for my I-94 and DS-2019 document, before I could apply to the U.S. Embassy I had to fly to Auckland for. I waited almost three hours for a five minute interview.

*Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?*

Yes, they did. They also accept using a different insurance company as long as you sign the waiver.

## **Extra-curricular/Social Activities**

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

At UCSB, I would recommend the Excursion Club which is a student run organisation – you meet other students outside of class, you can use equipment and they organise so many activities weekly for a cheap price (so long as you take advantage of it). The school's Adventure Program Club was also incredibly cool and offered other, longer activities (it is a bit more expensive but worth it).

*What was the university/ city like?*

The University was big – big enough that it required a lot of bike paths (which were almost hazardous to cross). It is very much a beach university, with palm trees and warm weather all around. The university buildings and classrooms are relatively modern.

Going to the “city” part was a twenty minute bus ride (students get to ride all the city buses for free). A lot of the architecture is influenced by the Spanish style and clean which made

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

Coachella was an incredible time if you are the type of person who likes the music there. I also had the opportunity to go to numerous National Parks with other exchange students and friends which was an insane time and not like anything else (within the state of California itself, the incredible scenery changes are so drastic). Yosemite was definitely my favourite, but the others were also incredible fun.

*Any tips for future students?*

Save up a lot of money – there are going to be so many things you are going to want to do in America and having the funds really helps.

More importantly, try and say yes to as much things as possible.

## **Overall Experience**

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

My exchange had me pushing my limits and doing things I never even considered doing.

Physically, I did a number of activities I had never done before – surfing, stand up paddle boarding, kayaking, etc. that I never really sought out to do before. My Spring Break was an entire adventure consisting of hiking around Zion National Park, canoeing several miles up and down the Colorado River, and climbing around Joshua Tree National Park. I conquered (more or less) my fear of heights and rock climbed every other day.

I was studying things from a different perspective, with a player who had a lot more to worry about in the world than New Zealand might have.

I also met so many incredible people from all sorts of places in the world, and bonded with them on so many different things.





