



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	Yonsei university
Semester & Year of Exchange	Second semester, 2022
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of science
Major(s)	Chemistry and pharmacology

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent
Virus and host	English	18 points
Nano medical biotechnology	English	18 points
Intensive Korean language course	English/Korean	36 points

Total Otago credits gained: 54 points 72 points 108 points _____

Any comments about these papers?

No

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

- The work load was a bit less than at Otago and the style of teaching was also different. The science courses aren't required to take labs so it's a lot less hands on and more classroom focused. As well as this there are no breaks in the semester or really any time off from class to study for midterm or final exams which is quite different to Otago so the course load can be a bit heavy at those times due to this difference.

Accommodation

Money matters

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

- Accommodation = \$2000 (NZD)
- Flights = approx. \$2000 (NZD)
- Visa = \$60-90 (USD)
- Insurance = \$500 (NZD)
- Korean health insurance (required when you apply for your ARC) = 50,000 (KRW) per month (depends on length of stay)
- Food = approx. 20,000 (KRW) (per day)

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

I just used my debit mastercard most of the time which worked well but I also used a fair bit of cash, they use it a lot more than in New Zealand so I would definitely take cash. I didn't set up a Korean bank account because you are required to have an ARC to do this which takes quite a while to receive.

Visas & Insurance

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

Yes, it was not a difficult process. I applied for my visa in Christchurch where there is no south Korean embassy so I could apply completely online. If there is an embassy however you can apply in person. The website states all the paperwork that's needed to submit, and the actual visa application form is easy enough to fill out with only a few questions difficult to answer due to the translation into English. Once the paperwork and fee is submitted they promptly emailed me a copy of my visa, so overall it was a very easy process.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

No, but when you stay in Korea for over 90 days you have to apply for an ARC (Alien Registration Card) which automatically registers you for the Korean national health insurance which you can try to get an exemption for.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

There were a lot of clubs available at Yonsei university although not all of them catered to exchange students. There were sports clubs e.g. lacrosse and soccer as well as arts based clubs and a whole array of random ones such as tea club. I would recommend maybe joining the clubs set up for international students that offered to pair you up with Korean students to work on language skills if that is what you're interested in, or joining any clubs that don't take up too much time so you still have time to experience Seoul.

What was the university/ city like?

The university campus was easy enough to navigate once you become familiar with it, although it is quite overwhelming at first as the buildings are quite immense. I feel this mentality can be applied to all of Seoul. With the use of naver maps and their efficient public transportation the city can be easily navigated. The city at both night and day was quite different and enjoyable in different ways.

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

I would definitely recommend going to Busan during nice weather, the beaches and views there are beautiful. In Seoul I would recommend going to namsan tower and bukchon hanok village as well as walking around insadong and myeongdong areas. For cheap traditional Korean food near Yonsei university I would recommend a restaurant called dalgi (달기골분식)

Any tips for future students?

Make sure you have cash, and perhaps set up something like paypal so that you can easily pay back other international students. For the national health insurance exemption your insurance has to specifically say the amount of coverage it provides in figures.

Overall Experience

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

I absolutely loved my exchange experience in South Korea! From the first moment I arrived, even though I was scared and tired, the drive through the city at night was unbelievably beautiful and instantly had me enjoying the experience. During my first few days in Korea I visited many major tourist attractions such as namsan tower and bukchon hank village, and even though the days were action packed and super tiring, they were also a lot of fun, exploring with and meeting other exchange students. Going in the second semester was also really enjoyable because I could experience summer, autumn, and winter. Getting to see the city in these different settings is very rewarding and contrasting. Some of my most treasured memories I made in Korea were not dependent on where I was however but on the fun things I was experiencing with the friends I had made, such as nice dinners out on school nights, going to the movies, and shopping in new areas.

