



Hannah's Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	Ivey Business School, Western University
Semester & Year of Exchange	2019 Sem 2 (September – December)
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Commerce
Major(s)	Major in Marketing Management, Double Minor in Finance and Entrepreneurship

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
4421: B2B Marketing & Sales Management	English	MART328	18
4564: Design Driven Innovation	English	200COMM	18
4535: Integrated Marketing	English	MART3XX	18

Any comments about these papers?

The two marketing papers I took (Business to Business and Integrated Marketing) had the same professor. If you can, I would suggest avoiding having the same professor twice, as although he was a good teacher, it would have been more beneficial learning from different teaching styles.

B2B - was my favourite out of the 3 as the professor is very good and the topics discussed in class are very valuable to learn and an easy going environment to contribute in.

Integrated marketing - was a very competitive class. If you take this class, I would recommend sitting in the middle seating section so that you have a better chance of being selected to contribute. Integrated marketing also had a simulation group project due every week. Personally, I did not learn much from this class however it did fit in well with my schedule to allow me to have a four-day weekend each week as the class was a double section on Tuesdays.

Design Driven Innovation - was an interesting course. You get put into groups with Engineering students from Western University to create a product so that was a great way to interact with more people outside of Ivey. Topics discussed in class are also pretty easy to follow and the teacher was a nice guy which made it easier to contribute.

Recommendation - If you are wanting to get further out of your comfort zone while on exchange, I would suggest taking the Performing Leader class. This was very popular among exchange students and they all seemed to love the course while gaining a lot of presentation skills which is always very useful.

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

I was accepted to take only 3 papers while on exchange where, typically, Ivey and exchange students will take 4-5. If you can take less papers, I would, as it honestly makes the transition so much easier in terms of prep work and you can enjoy more travel and social events. In general, Ivey courses are relatively easy to pass - you just have to show up to class and try to say at least one thing from the case. I think it depends on who your professor is, but they tend to be nicer to exchange students but make sure you do prepare



as you do get cold called sometimes. Classes are between 80 minutes and 3 hours long and class size is max 70 people. Classes are case based which means you have to evaluate a real-life business case before class and then have a class discussion on what strategies you would recommend the organisation should do. It was neat to be able to put the theory learnt from Otago into an actual business strategy. In terms of group reports, the standards were not as high as in Otago and could be written relatively last minute. Also, expect to change your paper selection from your original learning agreement choices. Ivey only offers exchange students the choice out of their elective papers so classes in the same category (ie. Marketing) often clash.

Accommodation

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

Unfortunately, my accommodation experience was a complete disaster on my exchange. Housing in London is super limited and I would definitely recommend sorting this out at least 4 months in advance to get something good. It is also rather difficult to get 4-month leases, so I would suggest looking at the UWO Off Campus Housing Facebook page and sign a sublet as that would take off a lot of unneeded stress.

I lived in the Marq 75 Ann street, and was on an 8-month lease. Their communication is awful so I was put into an apartment with two older girls who were working. One of the girls was particularly unwelcoming and I had to buy all of my cooking utensils for my short stay because they weren't open to letting me share their stuff. Part way through my stay, the Canadian media released that it is illegal to be rented a windowless room (to which I was put in) so I had lots of difficulty trying to terminate my less early and have ended up taking them to the Landlord and Tenancy Board. If you run into any troubles like I did, feel free to reach out because it definitely helps to have someone help you during these unknown legal situations. I would not recommend future students going to the marq as they have many law suites going against them right now and there is great uncertainty in the end outcome. They also no longer offer 4-month leases which I believe was a big incentive for previous exchange students living there.

I know a few exchange students found flats with other exchange and international students which worked out really well. If you're willing to sort it out, I would suggest posting on the Facebook page to find likeminded people and create your own group and house to rent.

Money matters

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

Accommodation: CA\$668/month + costs for laundry (approx. CA\$60). This was definitely overpriced where you could get rent for CA\$400-CA\$600/month with a fees-free laundry elsewhere.

Flights: approx. NZ\$2000 return. I would recommend purchasing a flexi flight so that you can adjust your return home depending on your after-exchange travels.

Visa: NZ\$140 for B1/B2 American visa and CA\$7 for ETA

Food: approx. CA\$30-\$50/week. One of my earlier cases was on food subscription boxes, so after discovering that Canada has a lot of different companies offering these boxes I ended up purchasing lots of different trials. This gave me 9-12 meals each week for \$30 so I really only had to pay for snacks and breakfast foods. In general, I found food in a grocery store to be more expensive when considering tax and currency conversion, but Canada is definitely cheaper than America.

Uni expenses: A further CA\$700 was required for course materials and student transit passes. These are mandatory payments and you pay in two slots – one early September and the other early December.

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

I did take a card that I could load multiple currencies on to, but majority of the time I just used my credit and debit cards as the fees were so low and it was more convenient. I know a couple of people that opened bank accounts, but I think it costs a fee to transfer money across from your NZ account each time so I didn't think it would be worth it. Cash is quite common in North America. Lots of the clubs in Canada also only accepted cash for door entry and at the bar. We would also often transfer cash between us exchange students when we split up the costs of our trips together. I would often just go to an ATM to get the required cash out when necessary.

I would recommend saving at least \$15,000 for exchange, with more needed if you wanted to travel both before and after the semester.

Visas & Insurance

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

Because I was going in and out of the US I had to apply for a B1/B2 visa, as the ESTA visa 90 day period continues to tick over even when you're staying in Canada. If you are wanting to do this I would suggest getting on to your application as soon as possible as interviews may not be available until a month or two after applying.

For Canada I only needed the ETA which lasts for 6 months. This was super easy to get and only about CA\$7.

I purchased a comprehensive insurance plan from STA to cover my travels for 6 months. This was around NZ\$1,300. The Marq also required home insurance which cost about NZ\$47 a month with a company called SquareOne.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Yes – they had mandatory health insurance called UHIP which was around CA\$200

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

I joined multiple clubs at both Ivey and Western main campus. I would definitely recommend joining the Marketing and Sales club at Ivey as they have lots of big networking events and then I also really enjoyed SALSA club at Western where we had a proper teacher take dance classes every Tuesday. Most clubs have a joining fee of around CA\$20. I also signed up to the Western Outdoors Club, Western Board games club, and Ivey Women in Management Club, but wasn't really able to attend many of their events due to traveling. Ivey Women in Management was also pretty directed at HBA1's which meant many of their events were in the afternoon which was when we (HBA2's) had class.



Ivey was exceptionally good at organising social gatherings for us exchange students. Because we were such a small group (around 68 exchange students) it was easy enough to suss pres and house parties. Most of the events organised were drinking based which were fun, but I would definitely recommend requesting other activities like going bowling or ice skating to your exchange guru's.



During our final weekend of the semester a group of 30 of us hit the slopes at Blue Mountains which the Ivey exchange budget helped to cover. If you're a pro skier, it is definitely more of a hill than a mountain, but I found it good as a beginner. We got a house right on the slopes so it was so easy to get there and had an awesome view to watch others go down.

What was the university/ city like?

The city itself is not that exciting where the majority of our social activities just revolved around drinking and town. Ivey is a nice building, however I definitely enjoyed getting out and visiting the



Western main campus at times. There is a Starbucks and eatery in the Ivey building, but the Starbucks coffee is not great (North American coffee in general is not great). There is a cafe located in the Engineering building just across the road from Ivey which had slightly better coffee and cheaper food. The Engineering building is also a lot quieter to study than at Ivey and not as dark as the Western main library.

There is always something social to do at night in London. Karaoke at Molly's on Sunday and Monday, Ceeps Bingo on Tuesdays, Wine Wednesdays at the Pub on Richmond or \$1 beer at Jack's, Frogs on Thursday (well kind of any night as Ivey students love to go here), Cowboys Friday (learn to line dance) and Lost Love Saturdays.

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

The market place located on Talbot street is neat to go visit with both food and nick-nacky things. The parks in London are also nice to walk through during fall and lights are put up in December which is neat to see at night. To get myself out of my room I enjoyed going to different cafes to study - both the Commonwealth coffee co and Happiness Cafe were nice settings downtown.

I would also recommend going to as many hockey games as you can as the games are extremely exciting. Western Mustangs have games at the sport and rec centre on campus and is free for students. I also went to a London Knights game downtown which had more of an entertaining and competitive atmosphere. This was only CA\$30.



While on exchange, you have to get out of the city and explore! I travelled both before and after my exchange as I wanted to make the most of my time exploring North America. I began my travels in Chicago and then bussed out to the West Coast where I explored the National Parks and Vegas before hitting LA and Seattle. I then crossed the boarder into Vancouver and Vancouver Island which were both really pretty and it was nice to be welcomed openly by the Canadians after experiencing American Customs. I will continue my travels after exchange to Cuba and more of North America.



During my exchange I did Bruce Peninsula (go as soon as you can in the warmer weather to swim!), Algonquin Provincial Park (absolutely stunning in the Fall), Montreal, Quebec, Toronto, Niagara Falls, Washington DC and New York.



New York was my favourite and I ended up spending two separate weeks there because there is just so much to see and do. One trip that I did not go on that I would



recommend future students to do is travelling to 1000 Islands - this looked absolutely stunning, but you must go before mid October/thanksgiving as I think parts close down after then. Canada is geographically spread so busing to these places often took many hours. In the end it's not too bad though as you save a lot of money and if you do an overnight bus then

you pretty much have one free night's accommodation. I would definitely recommend bringing a neck pillow if you decide to travel these distances though as you can spend between 12-21 hours travelling. Also check out Flight Swoop which is a Canadian airline. Many exchange students scored really cheap tickets to Mexico and out West to Banff and Jasper which would also be spectacular places to see.



Any tips for future students?

North America is a pretty expensive place to travel so I would definitely try save up as much money as you can. Also try to say yes to as many things as possible. I definitely wasn't one to go out every night of the week back in Otago (I turned into a 4th year nana), but you just have to force yourself to go out because once you're there you always have such a good night. It's always the things you don't do that end up being the things you regret.

Overall Experience

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

Disregarding the issues with my accommodation, exchange to Ivey was brilliant! It was a great social atmosphere to be in and you are still close to other exciting places in Canada and the US. The people definitely played a big part to my experience, and it's awesome to have made so many new friends who live all across the world. Attending Ivey Business School provides you with the opportunity to step out of your comfort zone and prepare yourself for real world business decisions. You also get access to all the Western main campus facilities such as the gym, swimming pool and ice-skating rink.

The semester itself for me was only 3 months as I did not have any exams, so the time goes really fast. Canada is a lovely place with a very similar culture to New Zealand, but there are still many differences such as their involvement in Halloween and getting into the festive season. No matter where in the world you decide to go, I would 100% recommend you make the step and sign up for an exchange!



