



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	University of Hawaii at Manoa
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 1, 2018
Otago degree(s)	Commerce
Major(s)	Tourism

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
Hotel and Convention Sales Tim 334	English	Tour 305 Tourist product development	
Marketing Research Mkt 321	English	Tour 309 Tourism Research	
Tim 420 Sustainable tourism	English	Tour 306 Ecotourism	
Tim 369E Hawaiian culture	English	Tour 301 Cultural and Heritage Tourism	
Microeconomics Econ 301	English	Econ 201	

Any comments about these papers?

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

Its more work than in Otago, smaller classes, seating plans, lecturer know the students, you need to be prepared every time for class.

Accommodation

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

I lived in a flat not on campus, pro: I had my own room (no sharing), con: quite loud because it was next to a busy road.

Money matters

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

US \$750 per month for rent, insurance US\$250 for 6 months, food US\$80 per week, I can't remember how much I spend for the Visa but it was quite expensive, same with the flight.

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

Open a bank account in America.

Visas & Insurance

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

Visa application is online, at the end I had to fly to Auckland to have an interview at the American embassy, I bought the insurance online in America.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

No, I had to buy one online from a third party.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

There are all kinds of activities, I didn't sign up for any though.

What was the university/ city like?

Honolulu is not the most beautiful city! It is 40% more expensive than any other state on an average in America with many homeless people in Waikiki. The University is nice though!

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

I would recommend exploring north shore, Arizona memorial, Diamond Head, Waikiki, Cheesecake factory and Maui Brewery. Also, buy a plane ticket to Big Island, Maui and Kauai!

Any tips for future students?

I highly recommend taking many economics papers in Hawaii because they are easier there.

Overall Experience

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

I take it to be trivially true that any exchange experience will be your best semester. However, after completing five months at the University of Manoa I realised it was one of my best decisions in my life. I wanted to spend my time in Hawaii to learn more about different cultures, aloha spirit and lifestyles. I applied to come to Hawaii because I really like the state and I wanted to explore more of what the amazing destination has to offer. For me it was a great opportunity to personally grow and learn about the Hawaiian lifestyle. In my time there I discovered Hawaii to be an easy place to live but very expensive. Hawaii is an unforgettable tourism destination, which is associated with beaches, surfing, the Hawaiian culture, incredible landscape and a peaceful place.



The University of Hawaii has one of the best tourism programs. The university has approximately 20,000 students located 20 minutes from Waikiki. Its campus is relatively big but you should never get lost finding a class although if you do there is always someone friendly who is willing to help you. When you are on campus there are many options in a huge food court for you to buy a cheap lunch between your classes – this rescued me when I was too lazy to cook. In my first week I found it confusing to find the buildings for my classes but University website makes it easier to find your lectures in time because it shows all the locations and important alerts. The University has 2 main libraries spread over the campus; and some smaller ones for every major. The University has a lot to offer for their students, especially the free events every couple of weeks such as taco nights or cinema days. The campus has many CCTV cameras to ensure your safety.

I am studying Bachelor of Commerce majoring in Tourism and I completed five papers on my exchange semester. The typical week I had less than 15 hours of class a week. These classes varied in size with from 20 people (tourism papers) up to 30 people (business papers). The lecturers made classes enjoyable and their extensive knowledge made the content easy to follow. Most class days started at 9 am and finished no later than 6 pm with lots of free time in-between. I never had classes on Wednesdays and Fridays. The classes were not too difficult which meant I was not too busy with study all the time. You get your own account and student ID to have access to University website. All new students get a student ID which you use to print documents, have access to the library and can be used for the busses. All students have access to gym facilities that are directly on campus. These offer a huge choice of recreational activities, including cardio and weights, sports halls, group fitness, outdoor rental, social sport and outdoor adventures. Entry into the Gym is free for students with presentation of a student ID card. The Gym offers many discounted trips and activities throughout the semester like surfing lessons, hiking tours and so on.

During my stay in Honolulu I lived in a flat and not on campus. It is cheaper to rent a room off campus than sharing a room with a random student. Hawaii is every expensive, so I paid US \$750 per month for my own room with bathroom. I had to take the bus to university - this was not too bad because it only took me 10 minutes. You can use your student ID as a valid bus ticket. I found my flat on Craig's list.

There are many Asians (Korean, Chinese and Japanese) in Hawaii. At first, I thought I ended up in an Asian country. However I realised that almost everyone I met is friendly and relaxed; the mindset is different to New Zealand. Americans are every talkative. You will be surprised how helpful and friendly they are! I felt within a short period of time welcome in my new home. When I look back now it was an extremely exciting semester with more ups than downs and the time flew away too fast. I've met some great people along the way and made amazing friends in Hawaii. I can assure that if you choose to study at the University of Hawaii you will make some good friends (both local and exchange). In summary do it! I promise you won't regret it. It was a life changing experience that I will forever be grateful for.

