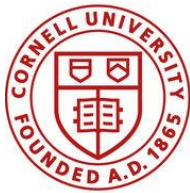




Exchange Report



Dyson
Cornell
SC Johnson College of Business

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GBUS & FINA
Spring 2017

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January 2017

I cherished finally arriving at my room at Cornell on January 18, 2017. It had been 28 hours since I had boarded my flight from Bangalore, India. After one connecting flight, I arrived at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York City. But, that wasn't the end of my journey. I had to take the NYC Airporter Express shuttle to Port Authority (a bus terminal that you will become familiar with). After which, I took Shortline's (Coach USA) 6-hour bus to Cornell's Baker Flagpole. There was a dinner organized by the inbound exchange team at Cornell – proper food at last!



My date of landing was a week before classes began so I had quite some time to explore the campus. The inbound exchange team at Cornell had organized events and presentations for which were useful in acclimatizing us to our new surroundings. Through these events, I met other exchange students from around the world whom I befriended. They would form a bulk of my friend circle for the duration of my time there.

February 2017

Classes had begun. Cornell was strangely beautiful, but very cold. I found the course enrolment system to be very similar to the one at UST. It is important that you check whether you can get a majority of your credits on exchange to be transferred back home, so that you can have some peace of mind while on exchange. The professors were similar to the ones back home, it was not very hard to adjust to the new surroundings.



Collegetown is a key attraction nearby. It hosts most of the retail stores and restaurants outside of Cornell. However, you may be disappointed if you keep Hong Kong as a yardstick. I would suggest two workarounds around this. First, do most of your shopping before landing. Second, try and use Amazon's Student Prime. You get 6 months of free access as a college student before you pay.

March 2017

I travelled along with my friends to New York. We took an Airbnb for our accommodation and split the bill. The resulting cost was quite low compared to hotels. The Metropolitan Museum and Museum of Modern Art are wonderful. I am not one to usually recommend museums. But, these two did really have something for everyone. I came to realize that New York City's culture changes quickly from locality to locality. The feeling in Brooklyn is quite different from that in Manhattan. This should serve as even more of an incentive for you, as a tourist, to explore the city.

The gorges around Ithaca are beautiful. I frequented these locations with my friends often to admire the nature in Cornell. The sheer size of the university allows you to always be able to find a quiet place to contemplate life and be at peace with yourself. Hiking around the surrounding area is also recommended if you have the time.

April 2017

The first 10 days of this month usually coincide with Spring Break. My friends and I rented a minivan and had a car trip through Canada. I had to apply for a visa, but I believe that Hong Kong citizens would not need one. We visited Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal. We stayed in Airbnb accommodations for the duration of our trips. These helped keep our costs low. The highlight of my exchange. I learnt a lot from my friends, especially related to cooking.



May 2017

Exams were overarching theme during my last month of study in the U.S. I had taken 18 credits, which is a bit higher than what an average student in Cornell would take. However, I did not find exams to be exceptionally difficult. The exceptions being higher level AEM courses. Some of these like Prof. Turvey's Futures, Options and Financial Derivatives could be challenging if the student did not attend classes regularly.

Slope Day is an annual day of celebration held at Cornell University held after the last day of regular classes. It would be useful if you find the time to get tickets beforehand and attend this festival. This was a great experience for me and is a fun way for you to meet new people at Cornell.

General Exchange Information

Visa Procedures

Cornell University emailed me the necessary F1 documents to complete. I would advise that you book an appointment with the U.S. consulate as soon as possible after you receive this document. You would have to prove that you are liquid to the tune of the expenses stated on the document, so please also coordinate with your bank.

Orientation Activities

There are a series of events organized by the inbound exchange office that cover this aspect. You will receive emails from the exchange coordinator about them. It is a great opportunity to mingle with students who are in a similar situation to yourself. And, sometimes there is free food as well!

Accommodation

Please remember to apply for on-campus options early. Dorms in West Campus were brilliant. I had been allotted a single room with an attached bathroom – very unusual. There were buffets for every meal provided inside the dorms. The food was tasty and healthy. Albeit, the meal plans were expensive compared to HKUST and did get repetitive.

Off-campus accommodations are cheaper, but are hit-and-miss.

Courses Registration

Same as UST. Please understand that it is your responsibility to send professors emails, meet them in-person, and get yourself enrolled. Despite the fact that it is stated that certain courses are cannot be taken by exchange students, if you try hard enough, if there are enough empty slots you will get in.

Teaching and Assessment Methods

Same as UST. Only difference being that at Cornell, the problem sets are harder and require some effort.

Sports & Recreation Facilities

Students need to pay ~100 USD for gym facilities. This can be refunded if you go to the gym enough times. The gym is far superior to the one at HKUST.

Finance & Banking

There are local banks who have full-service branches on campus as well as conveniently located ATM's. I would suggest CFCU or Tompkins Trust Co. Representatives from these banks are present on campus to assist students with their banking needs.

Health and Safety

Cornell Health is great. Please remember to take any required vaccines before attending Cornell though. I had to visit the clinic many times to meet the school's health and safety requirements in this aspect.

Transportation

Lacking. Be prepared to walk. Get yourself familiarized with the arcane Ride 14850 app (which displays Ithaca bus routes; you have free access) or be prepared to walk for your morning classes.

Climate

Quite different from Hong Kong. Be prepared for some snow.

Communication

You can purchase sim cards from AT&T at Ithaca. Alternatively, go to the Cornell store and see what they had there. Some friends got their SIM cards online.

Items to Bring

Clothes

I would suggest that you bring along as many winter clothes that you have. That would mean sweaters, jackets and inner clothes. Investing in a good outer layer should be considered.

Boots

Snow makes drudging along to class even harder. At least you can have the comfort of knowing that your feet aren't wet!

Bedding

This could be hard if you're having an international flight as it is unnecessary baggage. I would recommend that you visit Target or Walmart to find something that can last you a semester if you're not too picky.

Kitchen Utensils

I was perfectly fine with Cornell food and as such rarely cooked. However, if there are certain dishes that require utensils that may not be easily available in the U.S., you may consider bringing some utensils along.

Medicines

Please carry any medicines that you may need for the journey. Cornell Health does take great care of its students, but it may be difficult to access the exact medication you are looking for in an emergency.

Useful Links

Course Catalog

<https://classes.cornell.edu/browse/roster/FA16>

Cornell Dining

<http://living.cornell.edu/dine/>

Cornell CashNet bill website where you can pay the bills on the student card:

<https://www.dfa.cornell.edu/bursar/students-parents/paying-your-bill/cashnet>

Student Center

<https://studentcenter.cornell.edu/>

Ride 14850 App

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/ride14850/id461812141?mt=8>

Cornell Exchange and Visiting Students' Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/255735344827020/>

Other Information:

If you have any questions, please contact the SBM Office for my contact details.