



**ILLINOIS**  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

## **Exchange Report**

### **University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA**

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**Quantitative Finance, Year of 2018**

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## Part 1. Monthly Activity Log

### Feb

It was a month of exploration: new neighborhood, new friends, new restaurants, new courses, new student societies, etc. Brand new experiences lit up my days. After living in dorms and taking subway for commutation for years, I lived in a 3-story wooden cottage and drove to class every morning. I rarely went to gym before, but I joined the boxing club and started the intense practice with my American school mates. I took courses that I didn't have the opportunity to try before, such as social psychology and business negotiation, which opened windows to new fields for me. I felt intrigued with all the new routines and new activities.

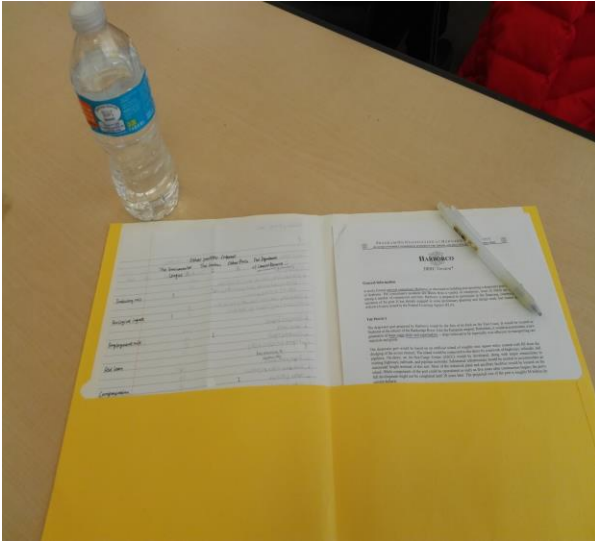


### Mar



Courses started to become deeper and I could feel the difference between UST and UIUC learning more clearly. In UST, we have good technical training and regular exercises help us lay a solid foundation in technical skills. But in UIUC





we had a lot of reading materials and I spent about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of study time reading. Cases used in assignments were so real that there were lots of complication, and professor didn't seem to care much about the answer itself as long as we could justify. It took time to adjust to the new learning style, but I felt it developed another area of skills, which is logical deduction and communication.

### Apr

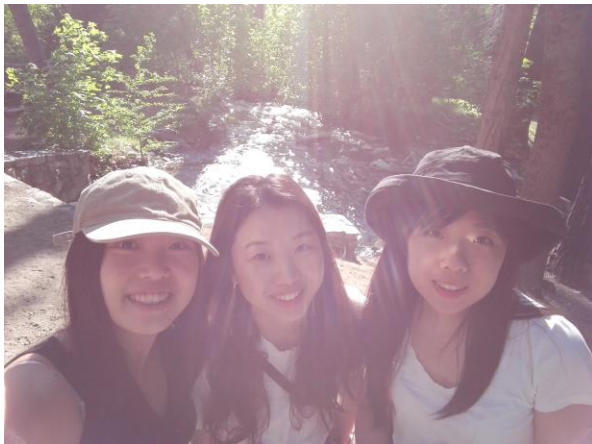
I were pretty comfortable with study and life in the US now so I had energy to cultivate deeper friendship with interesting people. I met a finance girl who was actually a great writer and published novel in series on her own blog. I met a CS guy who worked in university theatre art society for years and decided to defer his graduation to take a second major in theatre art. I met a super smart engineering master who studied mechanism because he had a family factory line to upgrade. I felt that people here came for different purposes, and had difference ways of living.



## May



This was my last month in the US. I finished all my exams in early May, so the rest was about exploring other parts in the US. Some other friends from UST and I had a road trip around major cities and national parks on the west coast. We jumped pebbles and flied saucer on the sunny beach in Los Angeles. We along the more than 45 degree steep streets in San Fransisco. We lived by the lake, far away from cities, with bright stars littering and glittering in the sky in Yosemite. We had a grand dinner and tried our luck in Las Vegas. These experiences were unique, and gave a good ending to our 4-month exchange life.



## **Part 2. General Exchange Information**

### **Visa Procedure**

UIUC provides the documentary support for visa procedures. UIUC sent us an email with detail instructions and links that we could use to register and apply for DS-190. Around November 2016 I got the DS-190 mailed from UIUC. Then I applied to the US Embassy for visa. It took less than 2 weeks after application that I received my US visa.

### **International Services & Activities**

There was a Facebook group for exchange students, and there were a welcome party organized for us as well. Apart from activities specifically for exchange students, student

societies organized a lot of events throughout the semester. Most of them had Facebook group where they posted information about the upcoming activities.

### **Accommodations**

We could choose to live in on-campus or off-campus housing during our exchange semester. For on-campus housing, application was around November and UIUC sent an email specifically for housing application guidance. For off-campus housing, most of them were leased for a longer term, so it was not very easy to find. Most information came from leasing group on social medias.

### **Course Registration**

We could get registered for some of the courses before arrival, and continued to register for the remaining in add and drop period. Within school (SBM) and depending on different majors, we could directly register for certain courses, but for other we need the course registration coordinator to register for us. If we wanted to register for courses in a different school (non-SBM) we need to write to corresponding departments and ask for their approval first.

### **Teaching and Assessment Method**

In course syllabus there will be a list of all assessments and their weighting. Tentative time of each assessment is also included.

### **Sports & Recreation Facilities**

UIUC has a one of the largest gyms in the US called ARC, which has fitness equipment, dancing & yoga rooms, basketball courts, swimming pool and so on. Apart from ARC, there are skating field and soccer pitch on campus as well.

### **Finance and Banking**

It is pretty convenient to apply for a debit account in UIUC. Most students choose Chase or PNC. PNC allows one free money transfer per month, and has many ATMs around

UIUC. Chase is also widely used for its convenient Quick Pay function, but it has fewer ATMs on UIUC campus.

### **Social Clubs and Networking Opportunities**

There are many types of social clubs—by region, by interest, by major, etc. I joined the Illinois Boxing club, which has regular activities twice a week. Some student clubs may have periodic activities, such as Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA). Most of them update their members about upcoming events via social medias.

### **Health and Safety**

UIUC has university clinics on campus, and also provides some free body check services to all registered students.

### **Food**

There are a lot of restaurants and many types of cuisine on campus, especially on Green Street, which is the center of UIUC. There are also good restaurants in downtown.

### **Transportation**

Usually we take the Champaign-Urbana's public transportation bus (CUMTD) to get around. UIUC students can take the shuttle for free with student ID card. Also we can rent a bike from the rental store on Green Street. With driving license, we can apply for ZipCar and there are several ZipCar sites on campus. Uber is also a good choice when going to off-campus locations.

### **Climate**

From Jan to Mar the weather was pretty cold. But since most of the places have heater, we actually didn't need thick sweaters—just a down jacket for outdoors and a thin sweater for indoors. It starts to get warmer in April and could feel like summer in May.

### **Communication**

I used social media and email a lot in UIUC. There is wi-fi on campus but signal isn't very good outside buildings, so it's better to have mobile data. On Green Street we can purchase sim card, and the most commonly chose service provider are AT&T and H2O.

### **Part 3. Items to bring**

There are two grocery store on campus so there's no need to bring too many stuffs. The following might be useful, either because you will need them immediately upon arrival or they are expensive in the US:

Checklist	
√	Jacket, scarf, gloves, boots and other daily clothes
√	Notebook & charger
√	Phone & charger
√	Medicine
√	Stationary
√	Visa, filled vaccination form, driving licenses and other required documents

### **Part 4. Useful links and contacts**

#### **Shuttle between Chicago and Urbana-Champaign:**

<https://peoriacharter.com/> (With shuttle between Chicago airport and UIUC campus)

<https://www.greyhound.com/>

#### **UIUC student information system:**

<https://apps.uillinois.edu/selfservice/>

#### **Course explorer:**

<https://courses.illinois.edu/schedule>