

# Exchange Report

University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Haskayne School of Business



Wui Hei, Ho (Finance and Information Systems)

Spring 2017

## Monthly Activity Log

### *January 2017*

I just arrived Calgary on 1 Jan, a week before the commence of the semester. It was so cold that the average temperature was around -15 to -25 degrees. I met my mentor at the airport and he was so kind that he went back to the campus with me as I lived in campus hall. It was so snowy before the day I came and it became so hard to carry my baggage back to my room due to the heavy snow. At that time, the campus was all white and full of snow!

I spent some time to get used to the weather in Calgary and the difference in time zone (Calgary is 15 hours behind Hong Kong in Winter!). The most unforgettable event that I went was the Calgary Zoo's night. At that night, it was freezing cold and felt like -30 degree. I went there with my friends met in school. The Zoo had changed into a park with beautiful decorative lights and we went to skate that night. It was my first time to skate on real ice and under such a cold weather.

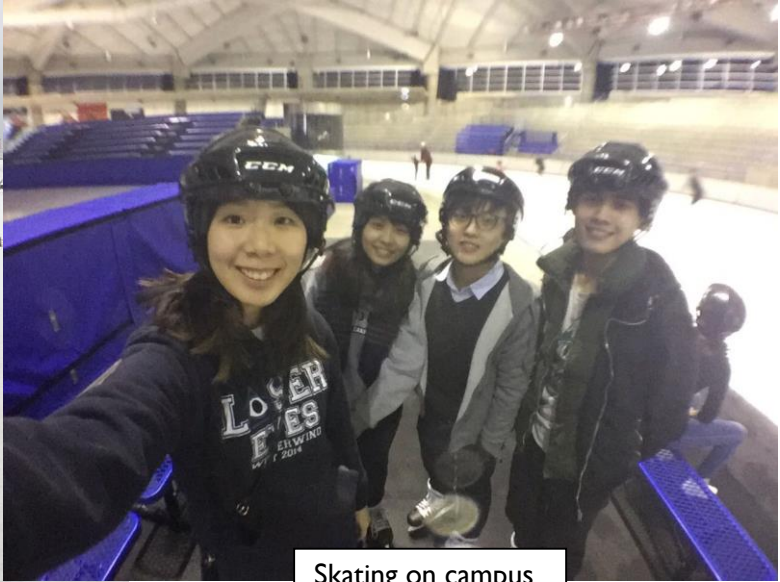


I also went to skate on campus – Olympic Oval. It was free-of-charge but you need to pay for renting the skating boots and gear. Remember to have a look at public skating schedule before you plan to go there!

Skiing is also another popular sport in Canada and there are many world-class and famous skiing venues in Calgary. I went to Canada Olympic Park to learn about basic skills and enjoyed skiing there for an afternoon. I felt so excited and enjoyed it very much as it was my first time to ski!



It was my first time to ski!



Skating on campus

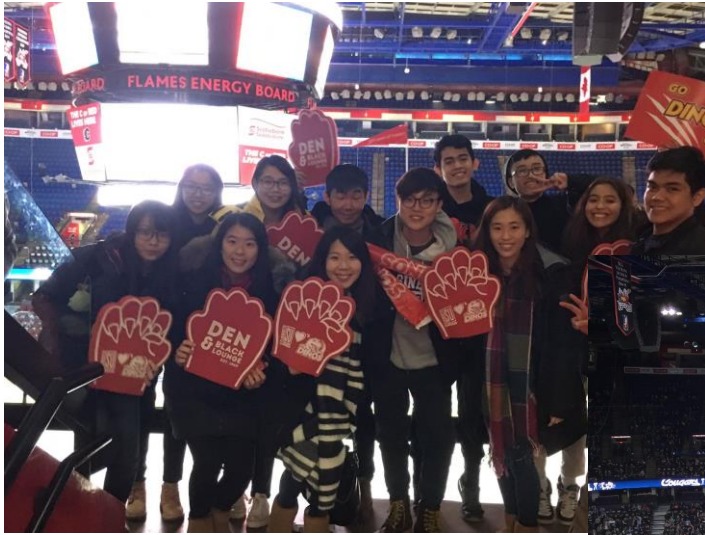


Chinese Lunar New Year's dinner with my friends in Canada.

## *February 2017*

I got busier this month as the mid-term examination was scheduled on late February after the reading week. Studying in Canada was quite different than that in Hong Kong as the school would arrange all the assessment and assignments throughout the semester. It would try to keep you busy starting from the first day of school. My approach was to study and start to finish the assignments earlier so that I could have more time for travelling and entertainment. Early in February, I joined the day tour to the Banff organized by CISSA. It was one of the most famous national parks in Canada with Rocky Mountains. The views are so stunning that you could not believe what you see. It was a nice visit even though that day was cold and snowy. You would certainly regret if you don't spend some time there!





Besides, I watched my first ice-hockey game – Crowchild Classic in Soctiabank Saddledome. It was the annual competition between the University of Calgary Dinos and the Mount Royal University Cougars. The competition was so exciting that we all cheered for our own team and finally Dinos won the game!

During the reading week, I went to join the Aurora tour in Yellowknife. It was the northern part of the country. The temperature is usually -30 degree there or even lower! You have to wear as much as you can if you plan to go there. Due to the bad weather, I could only see very weak and not so obvious northern lights. I also enjoyed some other activities there including dog-sledding and riding snow mobile.



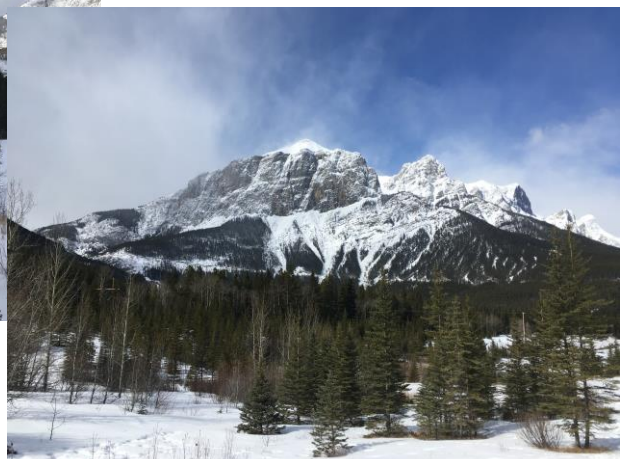
**March 2017**



The weather was still cold but a little bit warmer around 10 to -10 degree. It was the month of presentations, assignments, group projects and mid-term exams. It was the most demanding month of my exchange study since there were many deadlines to meet.

But I still spared some time to visit the Heritage Park. It was a very old village and displayed the old living of the Canadians long time ago. It was so snowy that day and the weather dropped back to around -20 degree. It was worth going as the historical village showed a lot of antiques, old trains and houses.

Another crazy thing I did in March was joining the snow-shoeing event in Canmore (one small town near Calgary) organized by CISSA. Snow-shoeing was actually hiking in snowy mountains. I had to wear a special snow shoes which was really flat and big in size. That was a big challenge to me as the weather was cold and the hiking trails were so slippery. Except me and other Hong Kong exchange friends, there were a lot of participants from other countries and I was impressed by their physical fitness as they could walk up so fast without resting.



## *April 2017*

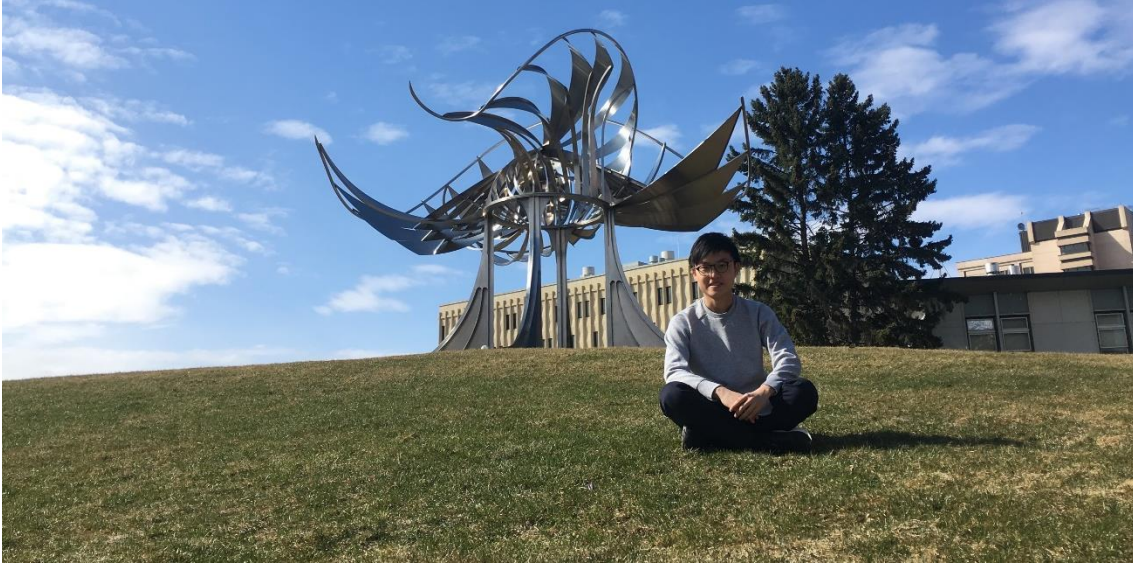
As the school started the class quite early in January, the last day of class came on mid-April. On the last day of class, there is a celebration event called Bermuda Shorts Day. All students would attend this event to enjoy alcohols and the party. Some of them event wore in special costumes to have fun with their friends and classmates. It is the most important day to most students in UoC and they really enjoy this day.

After enjoying this day, it was the time to prepare final exams. Students here are really hard-working and they would start their revisions quite early. I had 4 exams with 5 registered courses and fortunately I survived from the intense exam period in UoC (only about one week to finish all exams!).

In April, the weather was getting better and better. It became warmer just like 5 to 15 degree. Most of the days were sunny and more and more animals were coming out for activities. There were so many wild animals in Canada and I could always saw wild rabbits, squirrels, Canada goose, ducks and crow.

After finishing all exams, I started my travel to Canada and the U.S. After travelling around a month's time, I took the flight back to Hong Kong from Vancouver and ended my exchange study with all the happy memories.





## Visa Procedures

No Student Visa is needed for one semester's exchange in Canada for Hong Kong students. But you do need to apply eTA for your first time's arrival in Canada. Do apply it before you arrive and it is pretty easy and convenient to finish the procedures online. You do have to be careful to choose the right website for applying eTA as my friend had been scammed for money by an unofficial and fake website. Here is the link for more details:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta.asp>

## Orientation Activities

There is an orientation seminar for exchange or international students before the commence of the semester. Do check your school's mailbox to know the exact date in advance. Also, there is an orientation week for school clubs to recruit new members and it will be a chance to know about people in different clubs and find out your favorites to join.

## International Services and Activities

CISSA is the center for promoting international student's activities and providing services. They will organize some day trips for international students to visit some of the popular places around Calgary such as Banff, Lake Louise, Edmonton and Canmore. These events are great opportunities for you to know more international students and get to the nearby cities around Calgary as they would provide transportation.

I also joined some of one career event for international students and it was the CV workshop. It was really useful and helped me improve the quality of my CV.



## Accommodations

I lived on campus – the Glacier Hall. I paid CAD\$3,800 (including the advanced application payment) for 4-month's accommodations on campus. It was really a nice experience to live there. I lived in two bedroom with 2 separate rooms, 1 bathroom, 1 kitchen, 1 living room and 1 washroom. Glacier is the most spacious hall and it is certainly the best choice for exchange students as it is the nearest hall to the academic buildings among all other choices.

Other choices include Olympus, Cascade and Aurora. Cascade is also a good choice but that hall is famous for parties and it is further away from the academic buildings (opposite to Glacier, within 1 min walking distance). Another point to note is that Glacier, Olympus and Aurora all can be accessed through the tunnels so it would be good in winter to avoid the cold weather outside. You could directly walk through tunnels to get to the academic buildings. But living on campus is much more expensive than renting a room outside. So, you have to consider whether you prefer convenience to school or a cheaper choice of accommodation.

P.S. You have to check out from the hall after 1-2 days of your last examination. So, remember to prepare earlier for your check out.

Check out more information here:

[https://www.ucalgary.ca/residence/placestolive/upperinternationaltransfer/aurora\\_hall](https://www.ucalgary.ca/residence/placestolive/upperinternationaltransfer/aurora_hall)

Another reminder is that you could apply on-campus accommodation even you have not received your student i.d. or offer letter from the school. You could apply anytime online through <https://residence.ucalgary.ca/StarRezPortal/>

## Course Registration

You could see what courses are available for different semesters from

<http://contacts.ucalgary.ca/info/ha/courses/w18>

However, do bear in mind that courses appeared on that website does not guarantee to be opened in your exchange semester. You have to check the availability from student's portal (only accessible when your exchange advisor has given you the student id and pw for student's portal). Do contact your advisor earlier for details of course registration and ask for course outlines to assess course equivalence by ARO credit transfer department.

I have taken 5 courses in total during my study including FNCE445 Futures and Options, FNCE451 Advanced Financial Management, BTMA465 Enterprise Systems, MGST453 Ethical Leadership and PHIL249 Morality, Virtue and Society. Business courses are quite challenging (especially Finance) and demanding in UoC so that the best recommendation is at most 4 business courses to be taken at the same time. If you want to transfer more credits, you may take one more common core course or anything you like that is less demanding.

## Teaching & Assessment Methods

Teaching: Case materials, lecture notes, class discussion

Finance: Assignments, Group Case Assignments, Mid-term exam, Final exam

Management: Group project (group paper, group presentation), Mid-term exam, Final exam, book report, in-class exercises

Philosophy: Term paper, quizzes

## Finance and Banking

It is easy to get a free bank account with your passport and student id card. I do recommend you to apply one from CIBC or TD Canada Trust as these two are popular banks in Canada and they have a lot of ATMS which also accept UnionPay (to get your money from HK's account).

## Social clubs and Networking Opportunities

Do remember to join the International Mentorship Program and the school will assign you a mentor who is really willing to take care of you and give you guidance on campus.

## Transportation

Every student in UoC will be required to buy an UPass which is a pass for unlimited rides in Calgary's buses and Ctrains within one semester.

## Climate

It is extremely cold in Calgary's weather and do remember to wear in layers if you go there in Winter. Calgary is one of the cities in Canada with the most number of sunny days. It is sunny in most of the days but sometimes the weather is quite unpredictable and fluctuates a lot. It has a wide range of changes in temperature within a day (it could be sunny and hot in the morning but extremely windy and cold at night).

## Checklist

- ✓ Sweater
- ✓ Jacket
- ✓ Notebook
- ✓ USB
- ✓ Camera
- ✓ Charger
- ✓ Hand Cream and body lotion
- ✓ Clothes for Winter
- ✓ Medicine
- ✓ Formal suit for presentations
- ✓ Sport shoes for gym
- ✓ Gloves
- ✓ Passport
- ✓ Offer letter: for immigration

## Cost

Air ticket (round trip): HKD\$7,000

Tenant Insurance: HKD\$1,000

UPass: CAD\$130

Canada eTA: CAD\$7

Hall Fee: CAD\$3800

If more information is needed, get my contact from SBM Exchange Team by emailing at [bmugexch@ust.hk](mailto:bmugexch@ust.hk).