

EXCHANGE REPORT
University of Manitoba, Canada
Asper School of Business



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Professional Accounting & Information Systems, Year 4
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part I

Monthly Activity Log

Part II

General Exchange Information

Part III

Items to Bring

Part IV

Useful Links

PART I – MONTHLY ACTIVITY LOG

September 2017

When I arrived in Winnipeg, it was an unforgettable moment. My first impression of the city was “only the sky, grasslands, roads, cars, short structures and nothing else”. To me, the place is completely different from Hong Kong’s dense transport network and high-rise building feature. My buddy picked me up in the airport, drove me to the residence and helped me with the check-in. Before the start of the semester, there were several orientation activities which helped students get to know each other, do registration, open local bank accounts, etc. Other than studying, I joined a karate class and an ice-skating class organized by the fitness center for leisure.

October 2017

There is a Labor Day in October. At the beginning of the month, I flew to Yellowknife, which is one of the best locations in the world for viewing the northern lights. Just be reminded that there are not many spots to visit and the tourist activities there are mainly joining aurora night tours. After the trip, assignments and quizzes started coming up and most midterm exams took place around the end of the month. I just spent enough effort to ensure I understood the basic knowledge without placing much emphasis on doing class and assigned exercises. I still went hanging around with my friends after school. After all, exploring the new environment and culture has a higher priority than studying during the exchange study.

November 2017

Remembrance Day is in November. During the first week, my friends and I travelled to Banff National Park, where there are spectacular natural sceneries. It is a wonderful place you should go if you would like to explore the beauty of the nature. Be reminded that the summer (around September – October) and winter (around November – December) views are amazingly different. You better decide what time you go depending on what seasonal sceneries you would like to see. When not travelling outside, my friends and I would go to the

ice rink to watch ice hockey games, which were interesting and exciting competitions among university teams across Canada. Besides, the ice rink would be open to the public for free during weekdays. You can bring your own skates and skate with your friends. I did learn how to skate there!

December 2017

Before the end of the semester and final exams, I went to Toronto for taking the Hong Kong Government Common Recruitment Examination and Basic Law Test (CRE and BLT) and travelling. There is just a reminder for Year 4 students that if you would like to apply for the Hong Kong Government posts after graduation and cannot take the CRE and BLT in Hong Kong in October, you could consider taking it in Toronto or Vancouver in Canada in December. After that, I travelled around the City of Toronto and Toronto Island, which respectively represents the vibrancy and silence of the cosmopolitan city. Be reminded that the world's famous waterfall – Niagara Falls is a must-visit spot when you go to Toronto. For the final exams, although the study pressure was not as heavy as that in HKUST, I did spend my whole study break to revise the materials without hanging around to ensure I could pass all the courses. After all the academic work, I spent the last few days of 2017 to travel to Montreal, Quebec, Ottawa and Vancouver before flying back to Hong Kong.

PART II – General Exchange Information

Visa Procedures

There is no need to apply for a Visa to study in Canada if you stay there for less than 6 months. However, you must apply for an Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA), which costs you \$7 CAD, to fly or transit through a Canadian airport. It can be done online and takes you only few minutes to complete.

Orientation Activities

There are orientation activities organized by the University and School of Business to help you get prepared for everything including meeting new friends, doing registration and buying a U-Pass (somehow like an Octopus Card). There would be emails sent from the University and School to remind you when and where to attend the activities from time to time and therefore not many to be worried about.

International Services & Activities

The Student Union of the School of Business AIMS and the Residence Coordinator RA would organize regular social and cultural activities such as camping, watching movies and BBQ for both local and international students to have fun with others. Some activities are free while some are not, but all of them are on a voluntary basis. You may follow the Facebook page of AIMS to keep track of the updates.

Accommodations

There are four student residences on the campus while Arthur V. Mauro Residence (AVM) is the most economical though it is without a meal plan. The walking distances from residences to academic buildings do not differ a lot. Living off-campus can save money the most. However, you need to find an apartment and your flatmates on your own.

Course Registration

There are not many to worry about. The program coordinator would send emails to you from time to time to guide and remind you when and how to register for courses. What you need to do is to keep track of the email box.

Teaching & Assessment Methods

They are similar to that in HKUST. However, the academic pressure is much less in University of Manitoba. The instructors value interaction with students. Everyone is welcomed to express their opinions and concerns during and after classes.

Sports & Recreation Facilities

There are an active learning center and other buildings which have various sports and recreation facilities including gym rooms, swimming pools and an ice rink for students to enjoy doing exercises. Moreover, there are a variety of sports skill classes for students to join. I learnt ice-skating and karate there.

Finance and Banking

Credit and debit cards are accepted almost everywhere in Canada. You may choose to open a local bank account, apply for a debit card there and bank in your cash for safety purposes.

Social Clubs and Networking Opportunities

There are different student clubs and societies organizing activities for students. I did not join any of these because travelling and hanging around used up most of my spare time.

Health and Safety

Exchange students are not covered by the health insurance there. It could cost you a lot if you need to see a doctor and therefore you better bring enough medicine and stay healthy. Besides, Winnipeg is a safe place where you do not have to worry too much about your safety.

Food

Food courts and restaurants are everywhere and offer various types of food ranging from Western, Asian to Middle-eastern food. If you would like to cook by yourself, Walmart and Superstore offer most of the ingredients you need.

Transportation

The only public transport in Winnipeg are bus and taxi. It is recommended to download an application called “Transit”, which shows different bus routes and their expected arrival times. It is particularly necessary in winter time when it is too cold to wait for buses outside. Be reminded that when it snows, buses may delay because of unstable road conditions.

Climate

The weather in September and October is nice, cool and like autumn in Hong Kong. It snows sometimes in October and starts to get cold in November. Winter is extremely cold and dry especially when it is windy. It makes you freeze. The coldest day I experienced there in December could be as low as -25 degrees Celsius, which however was not the coldest possible.

Communication

Most of the students I met in the University use Facebook Messenger instead of Whatsapp for communication. For communication with professors and staff, emails and face-to-face interaction would be the best ways.

Cautionary Measures

Winnipeg is a safe place in general. Just be reminded that there are the homeless and some drug-takers near the Chinatown area, where you should be aware of when hanging around.

Other Notes

In winter time (around November and December), almost everywhere in Canada is covered by white snow. If you would like to travel to other places to

view colorful and beautiful sceneries, it is suggested you go in September and October.

The battery of iPhone may not be able to bear low temperature. It would be good if you prepare enough chargers for recharging your iPhone.

Expenses

Items	Cost (HKD)
Round-trip flights	7052
Residence fee	25000
Food and necessities	5000
Transport	850
Travelling	25000
Phone plan	1500
Sundry expenses	15000

They are only rough amounts.

PART III – Items to Bring

Checklist

Sweater	Notebook	Medicine
Jacket	USB	Face / Hand Cream
Waterproof Gloves	Mobile Phone	Lip Balm
Toque	Chargers	Lotion
Scarf	Adaptors	Gift to Buddy
Clothes for Winter	Stationery	Food and Snacks
Blanket		
Bed Sheet		
Pillow		
Waterproof Boots		
Clothes Hangers		

You can always buy the necessities you need in Winnipeg.

Part IV – Useful Links and Contacts

1. University of Manitoba Homepage

<http://umanitoba.ca>

2. University of Manitoba Course Catalog

https://aurora.umanitoba.ca/banprod/bwckctlg.p_disp_dyn_ctlg

3. Winnipeg Transit App

Apple Store

<https://itunes.apple.com/hk/app/transit-bus-subway-times/id498151501?mt>

[=8](#)

Google Play

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.thetransitapp.droid&hl=>

[zh_HK](#)

4. Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA)

https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/visit-canada/eta.html?utm_source=slash-eta_ave&utm_medium=short-url-en&utm_campaign=eta

If more information is needed, get my contact from SBM Exchange Team by emailing at bmugexch@ust.hk.

END