



BI Norwegian Business School

Exchange Report – Fall 17-18

Cheung Shuk Ting, Tammy
BBA (Accounting & Finance)

Part I: Monthly Activity Log

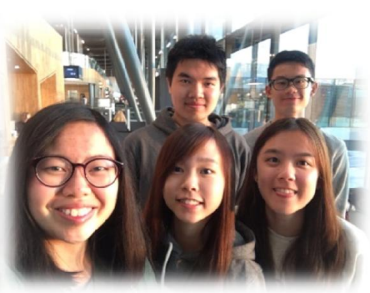
August 2017

I have arrived Oslo with another UST student on 7th August. Since it was outside the pickup service period, we needed to get the key of the student hall at SIO Office located at Blindern and settle down at Kringsja on our own. There was a heavy rain on the day of our arrival, so we went to IKEA the day after for the necessities. It is better to check whether your dorm kitchen equipped with kitchen utensils before you go to IKEA as there may be utensils left by previous students while some new hall may not have it. We spent this month in Oslo by exploring around the city and attending different orientation activities such as picnics, parties, Norwegian concert and workshops about Norwegian cultures that organized by BI. Sognsvann is a lake that located at 10 minutes' walking distance from Kringsja, which is also a great spot for relaxing. Therefore, I had several BBQ gatherings with other UST students there too!



September 2017

Since most of the courses do not have a high work load and only have a few assignments, project and final exam, we travelled during the weekends. Bergen is a nice place to visit if you enjoy natural views. Instead of joining the famous tour – ‘Norway in a nutshell’ to Bergen, we chose to buy ticket separately following the same route of the tour as it resulted in a lower price. You will surely be amazed by the spectacular scenery of the waterfalls and fjords during the trip! It is also a nice experience to participate in the Food & Beer Festivals in Bergen to try on some traditional food and craft beers too! Besides of Bergen, we also went to Stockholm this month. Visiting Vasa Museum is a must even you do not really like history stuff as the museum displayed the only almost fully intact 17th century ship that has ever been salvaged. You can also go to the Mall of Scandinavia if you want to shop since there are quite a lot of well-known brands!



October 2017

I went to Copenhagen, Iceland and Finland during this month. Since the day time will become shorter and shorter, it is better to visit Iceland and Finland before December. Copenhagen is more or less similar to Stockholm that there are quite a lot of colorful houses. Iceland is surely the most memorable trip to me! We have joined several tours which brought us to explore around the southern part of Iceland and the golden circle, which the views there are the most stunning one that I have ever seen. Northern light is definitely the focus of the trip and it is glad that we were able to witness it. For Finland, the weather there is not very good and most of time are rainy days and relatively windy. Therefore, it is important to wear enough clothes and always have an umbrella with you.



November 2017

As final exams usually start in late November, I spent most of the time on picking up my studies this month. Some lecturers might add extra problem sessions or final review sessions before examinations. Keep an eye on the update of schedule if you want to attend it. I also did some BI experiments to gain some money. These paid-surveys are first-come-first-serve, so register as soon as possible if you decided to join. Moreover, since I knew my exams will end at early December, I started to plan my trips a month earlier so that I can compare and get the cheapest price for both the air tickets and the accommodations in the destinations



December 2017

I have finished all my exams on 4th December. Afterwards, I checked out my student hall and started my one-month travelling. During this months, I have been to London, Ireland, Milan, Munich, Zurich, Frankfurt, Venice, Paris, Barcelona, Liverpool and Manchester. Skyscanner is a nice website for you to check for cheap air tickets!



Part II: General Exchange Information

1. Visa Procedure

If you are using HK passport, you will need to apply for a study permit for your stay over three months in Norway. (BNO passport can skip this step.) Since the permit takes around one month to be processed, it is better for you to apply it from the Royal Norwegian Consulate Hong Kong as early as possible. Just simply email the HK office by hong-kong@norwayconsulate.com to make an appointment for the application of the study permit after you have received the admission letter from BI. They will then reply you with the Student Visa Guide which provides you the information of the required documents for the application. Please note that only cash will be accepted and you need to bring the exact amount for it. It costs \$2921 this year.

2. Orientation Activities

There will be an orientation week before the start of semester. During the week, you will need to attend a welcoming seminar that briefly introduces BI and some important issues for living in Oslo. Also, a buddy group will be assigned for each of the incoming exchange students, which consist of around 10 students from both local and the rest of the world. It is a great chance to meet some new friends! You can also participate in other events such as coffee hours, party night and concerts throughout the week. If you are interested in Norwegian culture, there are free courses and workshops that allow you to learn basic Norwegian language and culture too!

3. International Activities

You are highly recommended to join the Facebook Group for exchange students as it provides you all important information and details of events during the semester. The BI international office will organize diverse activities including sightseeing tours, dinners, parties and presentations for students irregularly. Since most of the events are first-come-first-served with limited quotas, keep an eye on the updates and register as early as possible if you want to participate in these activities! Don't miss the chance to join BI-nner! It is held once a month, which allows you get acquaint with other exchange students during the dinner and free food is provided!

4. Accommodation

There are three accommodation providers for students which are SiO, BSN and Diakonhjemmet. The most popular one is SiO and most of us chose to live in Kringsja Student Village this semester. The monthly rent is around NOK3400 depends on the block and floor you live. Some of the blocks do not have elevator so remember to ask clearly when you choose your dormitory if you need it. There is a metro station in the Student village and it takes around 15-20mins to BI and 20-25mins to the city center (Oslo S). There are also two supermarkets located near the entrance of the student village called 'Kiwi' and 'Meny'. The living environment is comfortable in Kringsja and

Sognsvann lake is just 5 mins walk from the village.

5. Courses Registration

Before the start of registration, you will receive an email about the details of courses that will be available for the coming semester and the registration procedures. Just simply follow the steps and submit the registration form before deadline and the result will be released after few weeks. Each course counts for 7.5ECTs and exchange students are only allowed to take at most 30ECTs for the semester.

6. Teaching and Assessment Methods

EXC 3611 International Finance (=FINA 4403)

Three individual assignments count for 30% of your final grade while one written exam counts for the other 70%. You are encouraged to discuss the assignments with your classmates since some of them are quite challenging and time-consuming. It is highly recommended as the topics it covers are interesting and the lecturer taught well. If you can follow the concepts, it is not difficult to nail the exam!

EXC 3671 Corporate Finance (=FINA 3303)

One MC final exam counts 100% towards the total grade. There are exercises provided during lectures, only the final answer (without steps) will be given to you one week after. The teaching is a bit disorder and the powerpoint using in class are relatively simple, you may need some more time to understand and prepare for the final.

EXC3505 Strategy (=MGMT4210)

The workload for this course is not large. Only one oral presentation and a final exclusive report are needed during the semester. Each of them counts 50% of the final grade. There will be two graders on the day of presentation and they will give you advices on the content of your project. Make sure you make amendments according to these recommendations.

EXC3736 Real Estate Finance (=FINA3000)

Only one final written exam which last for 5 hours and counts 100% toward your grade. Lecturer will demonstrate on how to solve different problems in class. Since the answers will not be provided online, you may need to copy lots of notes during lectures. Practice with the past exam paper can help you better prepare for the final as they are somehow similar.

7. Sports and Recreation Facilities

There is a gym room in BI. Subscription fee is required for using this facility. You can get more information about it in the welcoming seminar.

8. Finance and Banking

I spent around \$80000 for the exchange and most of the spending came from travel. Oslo is a cashless society, credit card is commonly used there. You can pay with cards even that is just a small amount. Therefore, I mainly use credit cards for my expenses during the whole exchange. Also, I have brought few thousand cash of Euro and NOK in case the credit cards do not work. If you want cash, there are ATMs in city center for cash withdrawal too.

9. Health and Safety

Norway has low crime rate and most of the people there are nice and friendly that they will lend you a helping hand if you need. Moreover, as the weather in Oslo is quite cold, it may easy to get sick. It is better to bring some more medicine here since visit clinic or purchase medicine from pharmacy store might be expensive.

10. Food

Dining out is not cheap in Oslo so I usually cook in dormitory. 'Kiwi' and 'REMA1000' provide relatively cheaper choice among the supermarkets. Another choice is the Asian market in Grønland which sell diverse types of vegetables, fruits and other daily necessities at a lower price. There are Asian market in the city center too. Please note that most of the shops including supermarket will not open on Sunday.

11. Transportation

The monthly student pass for Zone 1 costs NOK425 and you can access to all transports including the tram, T-bane metro, buses and ferries. Remember to activate the card every time after you renewed the card. There will be staff checking whether you have a valid travel card randomly during your ride. The travel card does not include the train service between Oslo city center to Oslo Airport. You will have to pay NOK60 to extent your ticket each time when you travel to airport.

12. Climate

Oslo weather is cold but dry. First snow this year happened in November. August to September still have a long daytime. However, it became shorter start from October and sunset at around 15:30.

13. Communication

There is no communication problem since most of the Norwegians speak fluent English and there are English menus provided in most of the restaurant too.

Part III: Items to Bring

- Study permit
- Admission letter
- Passport
- Credit cards / cash
- Medicine
- Laptop
- Router & LAN cable
- European adapters
- Warm clothes
- Comfortable shoes

Part IV: Useful Links and Contacts

- BI Portal
<https://at.bi.no/en/atbi/it/it-services/login-for-@bi>
- Ruter
<https://ruter.no/en/>
- SiO
<https://www.sio.no/en/housing>