



SBM Exchange Report
2018 Fall
Cornell University
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Monthly Activity Log

August

I arrived Cornell on 15th August, 2 days before the start of the orientation. I spent these few days to settle down and buy all the groceries I needed. It was still pretty hot in the Summer. As orientation started, I met a few exchange friends from other universities. We all lived in the Collegetown Terrace, therefore we often gathered and had dinner/potluck together! We joined different orientation activities together and explored around the campus, and of course we climbed the clock tower to oversee the Cornell campus view as well as watching the Chime concert.

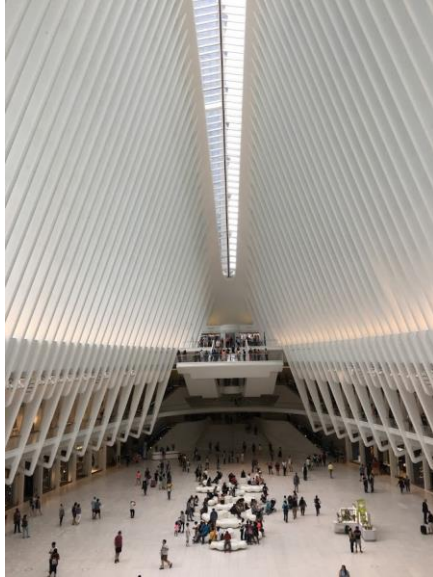


Then we spent half day exploring and hiking in the Robert H. Treman State Park. It was so fun and we even jumped into the falls! (with the presence of lifeguards)



September

It's Labor Day! I took a 4.5-hour bus ride and met up with another GBUS student in NYC for a short trip. We did a lot of sightseeing in the three days and had so much fun!



Then some exchange friends and I went to a park nearby for some exploration. My friend is an Entomology major, so she taught me a lot about insects as we explored around the park.



Then I had a nice dinner at Establishment, which is a Cornell student-run restaurant on campus as part of the Hotel School's hospitality program. Every week they have various theme that a student come up with! The food was pretty delicious, and the price was not expensive. Definitely try to get a reservation here if you can.



My friends and I went on another Cornell exploration at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. We managed to see a few birds and an amazing view!



October

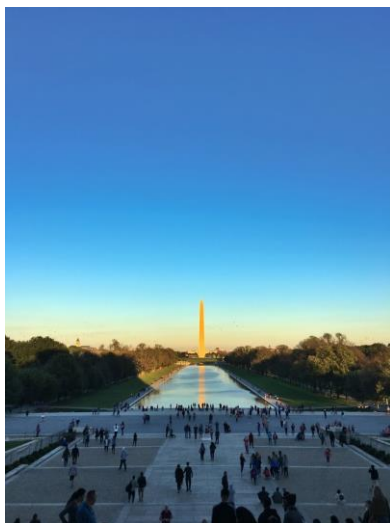
October was an eventful month for me. I managed to go multiple weekend trips because I had two days off every week. Let's start with the Fall break. I went on a solo trip to Chicago to sightsee and tried Segway for the first time.



And I had a short walk in the Cornell Botanic Gardens.



Then I took a 7-hour bus ride to Philadelphia to visit my friend who was having exchange at UPenn. The Cheesesteak I had at Jim's South Street was so yum! We also went to Washington and Six Flags (for rides! They have the tallest and fastest roller coaster on earth!!).



Then we had another trip to Havana, Cuba! We booked our accommodation on Airbnb in a local neighborhood. It was amazing to see how people live in a Communist country. The standard of living there was not high for sure, but people there were very friendly and helpful.



I went for a walk to the Ithaca Falls Natural Area, which looked so pretty in Autumn. It was just 10 min walk away from the bus station.



November

I watched the Cornell vs Yale ice hockey game. Everyone cheered so hard, and some alumni came back for the game!



I did a short hike to the Buttermilk Falls State Park. This was my favorite falls because this waterfall offers and incredible view of the ancient geology. The gorge trail is short enough that you can do it fairly quickly and the views are stunning. There is also a swimming area available during summer!



Then I had a weekend trip to Boston. My friend who was currently a visiting student at Harvard brought me around the Harvard and MIT campus. And of course I had the Boston lobster!



I went on a 2-day road trip to Niagara Falls with some other exchange students at Cornell.



As for thanksgiving break, we went to Montreal! We took 10ish-hour bus ride because the flight was so expensive during thanksgiving break. But the views were definitely worth it.



December

The semester just flew by. After finishing all finals, I met up with some friends at the west coast for San Francisco, Los Angeles and Yosemite National Park.





General Exchange Information

1. Visa Procedure

Act as soon as you receive the documents needed because the visa procedure takes time. The interview slots were quite full in Summer – the fastest interview slots I could get was 3 weeks later.

2. Orientation Activities

I would recommend you attend at least the first few mingling session with the other exchange students because these occasions were where I met my friends at Cornell. CALS also held bowling night, potluck, etc. from time to time.

3. International Services and Activities

Please feel free to reach out to the CALS exchange program for help because the person-in-charge is very responsive and helpful.

4. Accommodations

I stayed at off-campus Collegetown Terrace, which was arranged by the Cornell exchange office. It was quite expensive, but it came with a decent gym, big space, oven, microwave, washing machine, dryer, dish dryer, your own room and toilet and etc. Most importantly, it provides shuttle buses to school at weekdays and shuttle buses to supermarkets at weekends.

5. Course Registration

Its course registration system works the same way as the one at UST. You might have to send multiple emails to professors for approval and get yourself enrolled.

6. Teaching and Assessment Method

Mostly the same as UST. The number of homework and the difficulty is higher at Cornell.

7. Sports & Recreation Facilities

College Terrace, where most exchange students live, has a free and decent gym. You can also pay around 100 bucks for school gym facilities if you live somewhere else.

8. Finance & Banking

Cornell has two local bank branches – CFCU and Tompkins Trust Co. You can easily open a student debit account with your student card and passport.

9. Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

You could talk to representatives from different clubsoc during club fest and sign up for the mailing lists for event updates.

10. Health and Safety

Cornell has a school clinic. Remember to get vaccinated during the start of the semester to fulfill the requirements. Ithaca is generally safe – just be sensible.

11. Food

Collegetown has a lot of food options, e.g. Korean, Japanese, Poke bowl, etc. But I cook my own food most of the time to save up.

12. Transportation

Collegetown Terrace provides free shuttle service to Cornell to its residents on weekdays. Bus is also free for exchange students. But the bus schedule there is less frequent than that in Hong Kong.

13. Climate

Cold and snowy most of the time.

14. Communication

I bought a top-up sim card from Ultra in Hong Kong.

Items to Bring

1. CASH!
2. Credit card/ debit card
3. Clothes (both summer and winter clothes)
4. Adaptors
5. Medicine
6. Visa documents
7. Passport

Useful Links and Contacts

Course Roster:

<https://classes.cornell.edu/browse/roster/FA18>

Collegetown cab:

<http://collegetowncab.com>

For taxi booking for late night trips (There might not be any Uber during these hours)

Ourbus:

<https://www.ourbus.com>

Cheapest option for bus to NYC