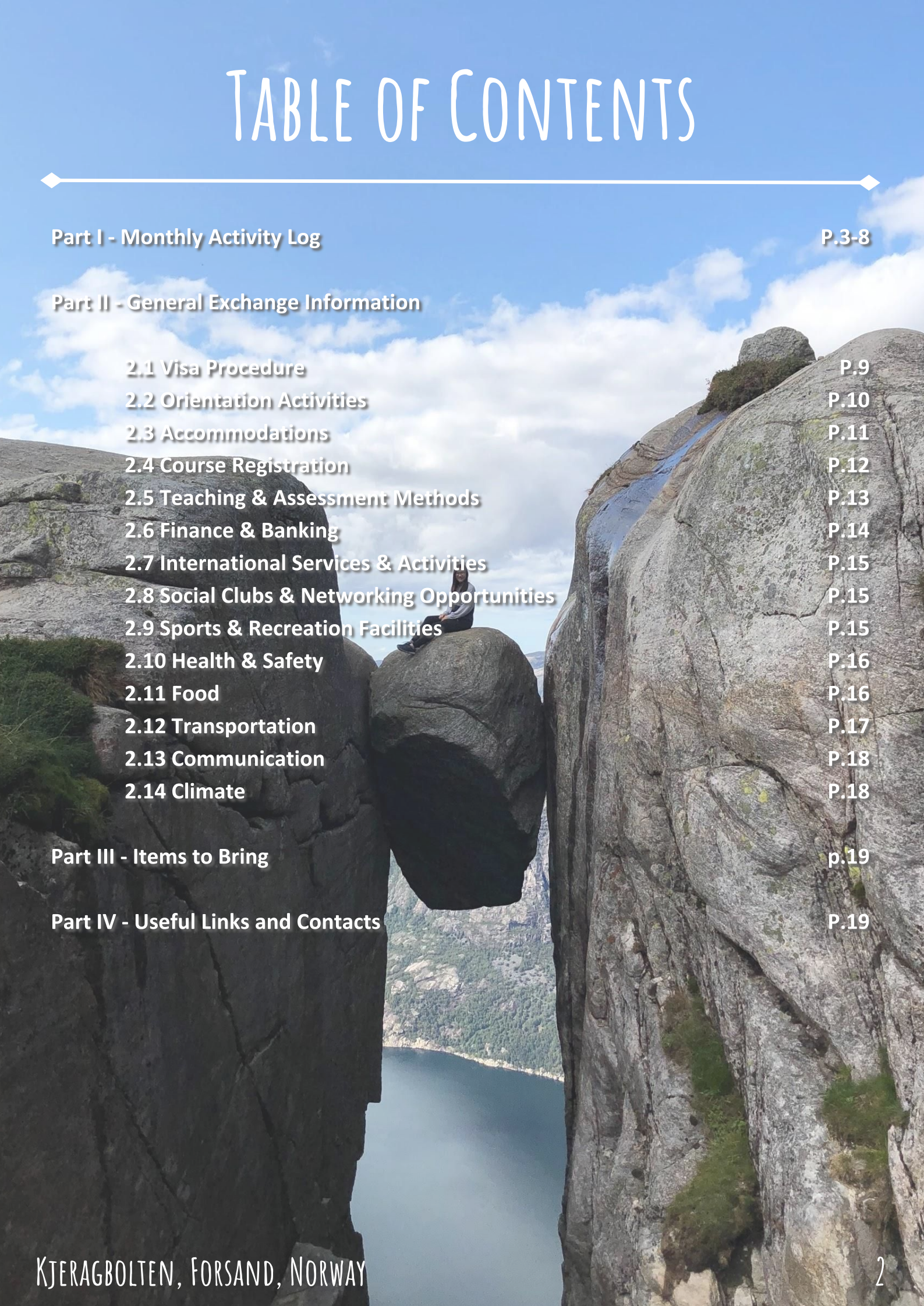




Exchange Report Fall 2018

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AUGUST

I arrived at Oslo on 7th August with two of my exchange mates, which was one week before the orientation started. We spent the week settling down, buying necessities and utensils from Ikea as well as locating grocery stores. The orientation week was started with an information meeting and a buddy group gathering where you could meet other exchange students. School started on 20th August.

During the month, I began exploring the city and visited major tourist spots like National Gallery and Opera House, islands (Hovedøya, Gressholmen and Lindøya) and Sognsvann which is my favourite place of all in Oslo.

August ended with the hike to Kjeragbolten. I highly recommend this hike as the view along the way is stunning!

Travel Log 
 Norway - Odda

SEPTEMBER

After Kjeragbolten, here comes to the hike to Trolltunga. It took me 11.5 hours to complete the 28km hike which was really challenging and exhausting. If you would like to do the hike, it is better to make it in August or September when the daylight is long enough and the temperature has not turned too low.

There was a Norwegian food festival during a weekend where I could have a taste of various kinds of Norwegian salmon and many others. Make sure you check on interesting Facebook events to join and explore!

As workload at BI was much lighter than that of UST, I started to plan later trips. My roommate and I travelled to Stockholm and Copenhagen during the last two weekends with two exchange students from CityU we met in Oslo. Tivoli Gardens is surely a must-go in Copenhagen!

Travel Log 

 Sweden - Stockholm

 Denmark - Copenhagen

OCTOBER

As all my courses did not have mid-term exams, I had plenty of time travelling to more places. Before the trips, I had joined a hiking event organized by ESN Oslo. You could look up to their Facebook page to join events for exchange students. Early October is the autumn time of Oslo (though the temperature had already dropped a lot) when you can find golden trees around!

Then, I spent a week in Krakow and Prague. The price level in Eastern Europe is much lower than that in Oslo so I could finally shop a little more! Prague is an awesome city with the most classic architecture. During the last week of October, I had a road trip in Iceland with two friends from Singapore who know how to drive. Iceland is definitely the most incredible place I have ever been with all the breathtaking landscapes right in front of me. The view along the way around the entire Iceland is so flawless that I could hardly forget!

Travel Log ✈️

- Poland - Krakow
- Czech Republic - Prague, Cesky Krumlov
- Sweden - Göteborg
- Iceland - Reykjavik

NOVEMBER

Although I had two final exams and one project report due in late November, I still managed to travel during the first two weeks. I had my first solo trip to Brussels which was a little challenge and new experience for myself. After that, I went to London to visit my friend and had some sightseeing together. Right after I returned to Oslo, I started to catch up with my studies, prepared for exams in study room and had meetings with my groupmates to complete the report together.

Travel Log

-  Netherlands - Amsterdam
-  Belgium - Brussels
-  United Kingdom - London

DECEMBER

After two exams, I went to New York to visit my best friend studying in Long Island and celebrate her birthday. This could be one of the craziest decisions I made during my exchange as I even did my take-home exam there, but surely we had a great time together! I had my last final exam on 10th December. The rest of the month was all about travel! I started my 35 days travel in Rovaniemi with husky, reindeer and Santa Claus.

It was really festive to spend Christmas in Europe (but not on Christmas Day!), especially in Germany where Christmas markets are everywhere. My friend from Hong Kong joined us on Christmas Eve. We had lots of fun and kicked off 2019 with the countdown in Budapest!

Travel Log ✈️

- United States - New York, Long Island
- Finland - Rovaniemi
- Germany - Berlin, Munich
- Switzerland - Zurich, Interlaken, Bern
- Austria - Salzburg, Hallstatt
- Hungary - Budapest

JANUARY

Travel continued. To my surprise, Barcelona is a place I would go back for as all architectures are with its own uniqueness, unlike the typical European style. I went to Marrakech afterwards for Sahara Desert. Sunset, camel ride, starry night, sunrise... I could hardly tell how unforgettable it was. I went to UK again before I headed back to Oslo. I returned to Hong Kong on 19th January and ended my exchange journey. It is definitely the best 165 days in my life!

Travel Log

- Austria - Innsbruck
- Switzerland - Lucerne
- Spain - Barcelona
- Morocco - Marrakech
- United Kingdom - London, York

VISA PROCEDURE

After receiving the admission letter from BI, you will have to apply for the resident permit. We planned to apply for it in early May but soon found that the Norwegian Honorary Consulate in Hong Kong was closed until June. You have to submit your application through the link I attached below and pay online. Remember to choose the Beijing option so the Consulate could help sent our documents to the Norwegian Embassy in Beijing. The application fee was increased to 5300 NOK. You then have to bring all supporting documents to the Consulate in Wan Chai. Make sure you don't miss any of the documents in the checklist and your photo complies with the requirements. You do not need to make an appointment in advance. At the end, you have to pay an extra HKD395 for submitting the document to Beijing. The permit was approved two weeks later.

ORIENTATION ACTIVITIES

Orientation activities were organized by a student body called Fadderullan. As I mentioned above, the orientation week started with a buddy group gathering. There were two Norwegian buddies in my group and other groupmates were all from different cities.

However, the gathering was not that well-organized and so I found it hard to stay close with my buddies. I had joined the Fadderullan Festival during the week to have a taste of the party culture in Oslo. You may choose to join the activities that interest you.



ACCOMMODATIONS

BI international students have guaranteed housing during their term of study. There are three housing providers to choose from: SiO, BSN and Diakonhjemmet. I chose to live in Kringsja Student Village provided by SiO. One of my exchange mates and I decided to share a furnished studio flat for single with private kitchen and private bathroom. It is a good way to save money with better privacy! When you pick up your key at SiO office, you could suggest which block to stay (eg with laundry or the newer ones). It takes around 15 minutes to BI campus by metro. There are different facilities in the student village, including a supermarket called Kiwi, a gym and a study room. I highly recommend Kringsja as it is near Sognsvann, where you can find a lake to chill and relax. I always go for a walk there during my exchange!

COURSE REGISTRATION

The course registration is simple that you just have to fill in the online registration form with the course codes of courses you would like to take. I have taken the following 4 courses during exchange:

ELE3702 Social Entrepreneurship
= MGMT2130

60% term paper, 40% take-home exam
I had to work on a group project on analysing a social entrepreneurship that we chose with 4 other groupmates.

EXC2901 Norwegian Culture and History
= HUMA Common Core
100% final exam

You have to pick 2 out of 5 essay questions to answer in the exam. You could find the popular topics that form the questions from past paper. It is mainly about how much historical facts you recited.

ELE3715 Logistics & Marketing Channels
= Free Elective (4 cr)
100% final exam

This course is related to OM and involves calculations using excel. Exam questions were quite straightforward to test whether you have revised in details.

ELE3709 Project Management
100% final exam

I took this course out of interest as I did not have other courses that I could do the credit transfer. This course is a easy one that questions in exam were just similar to those in past paper.

*MGMT students should note that most of the MGMT courses in the credit transfer database are not open in Fall Semester so you should consider this before applying for exchange in BI.

TEACHING & ASSESSMENT METHODS

All courses have only one lecture per week. Each lecture lasts for 3 hours, with 15 minutes break every 45 minutes. All examinations at BI are digital exams, which means we have to finish the questions using school computers instead of writing on papers. All reports and papers are submitted through Digiex. The examiner would tell you the instructions during exams and assist you when needed. Besides, there may be take-home exam which you could prepare materials beforehand and finish it with your own laptop at home.



FINANCE & BANKING

As what past exchange students suggested, I opened a Citibank account as it would not charge you when you withdraw money. The debit card is also a Master credit card which is convenient to serve two purposes. Unionpay cards are generally not accepted in European countries so make sure you have visa or master cards with you.

You may exchange some NOK in Hong Kong or withdraw cash with your debit card in Oslo, but actually you can pay with credit card almost everywhere. The exchange rate of NOK to HKD is about 1:1, it is easy for you to convert the currency.

The following is the estimated expenses for my whole exchange for your reference:

Expenses	HKD
Flights	6500
Accommodation	13000
Visa	5700
Insurance	2000
Daily Expenses in Oslo	15000
Travelling Expenses	60000
Total	102200

INTERNATIONAL SERVICES & ACTIVITIES

You could join the Facebook group 'BI Exchange' to get updates of activities and events that are organized for exchange students. BI-nner is one of the most popular ones. It is a free dinner for BI exchange students once a month but you would have to register as soon as possible to get a ticket.

SOCIAL CLUBS & NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

To meet more people, you could join events or trips to other countries held by Erasmus Student Network (ESN) Oslo. The hike to Store Åklungen I mentioned above is one of them.

SPORTS & RECREATION FACILITIES

You can join the membership of the SiO Athletica and get access to 5 gyms and a swimming pool. Two of the gyms are located at BI campus and Kringsja Student Village. I did not join as it was quite expensive.

HEALTH & SAFETY

FOOD

Oslo is a safe place to stay but still be careful when you are going out at night. SiO provides healthcare services. You may check it out on its website if you need, but I would suggest you to bring some medicine with you in case of getting sick.

It is expensive to have meals outside so I would cook with my roommate most of the time. You could look for cheaper groceries in Grønland while Kiwi, Meny and Rema1000 are major chain supermarkets in Oslo. If you love Japanese food like I do, I would highly recommend you to try sushi of Sushi Rose in Majorstuen and ramen of Koie Ramen in Oslo S. Check them out!



TRANSPORTATION

It is a good deal to buy a student monthly pass (Ruter Card) which is valid for 30 days and costs 442 NOK. The card itself costs 50 NOK. You have to top up the card every month and activate it for the first time after topping up. You can take all kinds of transports with your Ruter card. In Oslo, you do not need to tap your card. Instead, just bring it with you will be fine. There would be spot check. If you do not have a valid card with you during checking, you need to pay a fine of 1000NOK.

However, the monthly pass does not cover the way travel between Oslo Airport and city centre (Oslo S). With your pass, you can enjoy a discount buying an extension ticket (66NOK) to get to the airport with NSB train. Another option would be taking Flytoget Airport Express costing 95NOK.

COMMUNICATION

Most Norwegians speak English fluently, so there is no problem using English to communicate with them in general. People in Oslo are all friendly and helpful.

CLIMATE

It is still summer when I arrived Oslo in August, but not as hot as the summer in Hong Kong. The weather turns chilly pretty soon and temperature varies a lot between day and night. Starting from late Oct, temperature goes below 0°C and it starts snowing. Do enjoy the long daylight in summer as sun would set at 3pm during winter.



ITEMS TO BRING

- HKID Card
- Passport
- Resident Permit Letter
- Admission Letter
- Cash (NOK and Euro)
- Debit and Credit cards
- Router & LAN Cable
- Portable Charger & Adaptor
- Medicine and skincare products
- Hair dryer
- Laptop
- Thick clothes & heattech
- Down jacket
- Windproof jacket
- Waist bag
- Optional: cooker, HK food, bed sheet

USEFUL LINKS & CONTACTS

Visa application:

<https://selfservice.udi.no/en-gb/>

BI student portal:

<https://portal.bi.no/en/>

SiO:

<https://www.sio.no>

Travel:

<https://www.skyscanner.com.hk>

<https://global.flixbus.com>

BETTER TO SEE SOMETHING
ONCE THAN TO HEAR
ABOUT IT A
THOUSAND
TIMES

IT'S YOUR TURN TO SEE THE WORLD!