

Exchange Report



Copenhagen Business School

Spring 2019 Yiming LI | GBUS&MGMT

Monthly Activity Log

January – Set off to Copenhagen

I arrived at Copenhagen at Jan.25th to settle down before 28th, when the compulsory orientation starts. My buddy picked me up at the airport and prepared me with everything needed. I received dorm key, international exchange program introduction booklet, hall introduction booklet, student societies booklet, sim card and so on...

It was snowing on the day that I arrived, which is amazing, and I played in snow with full excitement.



Thus, I unfortunately fell ill on the third day. I had such a high fever for a week and reluctantly skipped all the orientation activities. It was very fun according to my friends and previous exchange reports. I'm glad that I took some medicine with me, as the medicine in local apoteks (clinics) are all in Danish packages - I can't read any!

But I still managed to buy a secondhand bike online, which became my dearest friend for the following months.



February – School starts, and I gradually learn to conquer the cold weather

It was quite painful to start the semester. As I needed to go to 2 8 AM classes a week. The sun barely rises when I start to go to school. I celebrated the Chinese new year with a bunch of new friends.



I go to the civic center to apply for my residence ID and free medical ID. The process is very straightforward, I attached reservation link at the end of this report. I visited several museums and tourist spots in Copenhagen in February, which is amazing.



I finally settled down and got used to the cold weather. I can even ride the bike to school without hand gloves. It feels strange to wear such thick clothes to go out and take them all off when step inside. I made all my study plans(swapped some courses) and make travel plans accordingly in February as class schedules are released.

I found the small Chinese store in city center and developed the new interest of cooking. I cooked with my neighbors a lot to save myself from the miserable school canteen.



I went to Iceland and travelled around Denmark(Helsingor, Aarhus, Odense) during my small study break(the Danish teacher's day or so), and weekends. Odense is worthy of a visit as it is the hometown of Anderson. Iceland is even more amazing. I saw northern lights near Reykjavik after half a night's waiting.

I also started to join some student activities to make new friends and get myself active. My favourite is the CBS yoga club, which organizes yoga sessions 3 times a week.

March – busy studying and taking exams

March is a busy month. I have all 5 classes every week, and 2 Q3 course exams at the end of the month. I did not travel much during this month. What I found interesting is, during a group project, I met a Danish girl who spent a semester in China and is very interested in Chinese culture. I taught her Chinese and as exchange, she helped me practice Danish.



I also went to some interesting places during the month, a sustainable market, and the graveyard near city center for examples. I visited those places with local friends and got quite interesting insights from them on Danish life. The picture below is a shop that sells beans and other dry food without plastic bags. Customers need to bring or buy sacks to bag the food.



The 4-hour sit-in exams are quite tiring. But as you can take all materials into the test venue (which is near the airport and very far from main campus). But students are supposed to arrive at the venue 15 minutes before the exam. I didn't know that, as I skipped the orientation. The testers only let me in 15 mins after the exam starts. I wasn't able to finish my exam, but still got a decent grade of that course.

I went on a road trip with friends to Luxembourg and Cologne, and a solo trip to Brussels. It only took me 30 mins to go to airport from my dorm, so take the opportunity to fly around!



April - the freest month I have ever had

After the exams comes the freedom. But too much freedom kills a student. I only have 6 classes in April and had a 13-day super long spring break.

At the beginning of the month, I visited Czech, Slovakia, Hungary and Austria with my friend doing her exchange in the Netherlands. After that, I went on a biking trip with 2 other friends in Southern France, we spent 2 days biking and some other days visiting the local attractions.



However, I was too tired to revise my Danish course and failed my exam. I 'm informed to retake it in the end of May.

After I failed my exam, I went to Spain with my friend, and spent 6 days in Spain.

May – Step out of the continent using my Freetime and exam-retake

I went back from Spain in May 2nd, and flew to Los Angeles to visit my friend.

I spent 3 days in Los Angeles visiting the world's famous attractions, and went to the salt lake city to start our road trip in the yellow stone park. After returning, I went to the Netherlands and Switzerland. I prepared for my Danish exam retake on the way.

June – Heads down on Exam

I return home on Jun. 5th, during a take-home report exam from Jun 3rd to 10th. And I had another report from 11th to 12th. It's quite flexible as you can take the exams home. Before I come home, I sent some packages home first as I can't take much. It is suggested to use PostNord for its cheap price. It's very important to remove the limescale before moving out, requiring much hard and dirty labor. Get prepared for that!

General Exchange Information

Visa procedure

CBS will send you full reference materials for visa application, it would be very clear to follow the guidance. For your reference, I started applying for the Visa on September 24th, and most of my friends did that in September and October. The general procedure is to create an online visa application case - pay the fee of 2100 DKK - download the forms and fill them in, prepare the materials - go to Shenzhen joint visa application center to submit the materials, and pay about 1722 RMB in cash as handling fee- wait for the visa to be sent back.

There's no need to schedule an appointment to submit the materials, and it takes about 3 weeks to revert your visa back to you. One of the tricky things is, for mainland passport holders, the visa will be a big green sticker on your passport. But for some of my local friends, they only received printed approval of residential permit, and there is nothing on their passport. Don't panic if you found nothing on your passport :).

Orientation Activities

CBS will arrange an exchange buddy for you. They're very friendly and helpful! They'll greet you in the airport and brief you about the orientation schedules. Some orientation events are compulsory, and some are optional. The compulsory ones are mostly about the admin stuff briefed by school officers. It's quite strange because at that time class already starts and some of those information sessions have time conflicts with your class. It's thus fine to skip it (although it's compulsory) and ask your friends about the important information. You need to pay online for the optional activities and collect a wristband as a proof to join the events. I heard it's very fun and bought the whole package. But I fell ill straight after joining the first event and unfortunately fail to join the following ones.

Accommodations

Accommodations can be applied together with the course at a quite reasonable price. It is advised to do some research about each hall and indicate your preference during the application. One thing to note: in the application system, you first indicate your room preference (single/double, en-suite/shared bathroom...), and then indicate your hall preference. Your room preference may not be the same for all 3 halls you choose, but you can only indicate one type of room preference. Think about this before you apply.

I lived in Kathrine Kollegiet, which was a 5-min walking distance to the closest train and metro station Flintholm. The rooms are quite spacious (even for the smallest ones), equipped with an in-suite kitchen and bathroom. It's very scary to approach the washing machine room as you need to walk across a dark and quiet storage room full of iron cages. There is no common room in KK Hall, but the double rooms are very big, and sometimes we party in my friend's double room.

It's near the teaching building Flintholm, but very few classes are taught there. You need to walk about 20 mins to go to the main teaching buildings Solbjerg Plads and Dalgas Have. So, it's quite inconvenient if you don't bike your way there every day.

Course Registration

Course registration is like last-century-technology for exchange students. You need to send an email to the office to add/drop/swap classes. It's very slow as there is only one officer responding. And you never know your real-time waiting-list position to better decide which move to make.

Semester is divided into 2 quarters, and students can choose Q1, Q2 classes and semester classes. Q1 classes mostly finished in mid-March (Exam at late March/Early April), Q2 classes finished at June, and Semester classes finished at April (Exam at late May, early June). It's quite strange that the course schedules change every week. A course may be 2-hour-long for this week, and 1-hour-long for next week. It can be on Mon & Tue this week, and on Mon & Fri next week. So different classes can easily have time conflicts as they each moves freely and randomly on your timetable. The school approves registering time conflicting courses and you can decide which class to attend.

I applied for an overload of 5 courses (2 x Q1, 3 x semester), and the workload is still very light.

Teaching & Assessment Methods

For teaching, CBS has lectures, tutorials and seminars. All materials are uploaded on learn, a website similar to canvas. As CBS is very research focused, each course requires many extra readings that is only . All classes I registered has only lectures. It's interactive and may include team projects and presentations. The course may not be as structured as UST, as many courses are offered for the first time.

There are 3 types of assessments, which are take-home-report, sit-in-exam, and oral exams.

Finance & Banking

I use my own credit card (always using the Unionpay and mastercard channel) the whole time abroad. If you have cards with chip, better bring that. As my card has no chip, and needs to be swiped to use, I cannot use it in some shops.

Very few exchange students open a local bank account as it costs you 500DKK as a handling fee. It's so expensive so I chose not to open one.

Social clubs & networking Activities

A handbook of student clubs is distributed in your welcome package. I read it through and decided to join the Yoga club and Wine club. I strongly recommend the CBS Yoga club whose instructors are very passionate, volunteering CBS students (or ex-CBS students). And they only charge 20DKK per session. The wine club also organizes many wine tasting events, which allows you learn more about wine and network with some participants.

However, like UST, you don't have to join/subscribe a club to participate in the events. There are posters everywhere in school, and you can join whichever you like by dropping an enquiry to their Facebook Account.

Health & Safety

Copenhagen is generally considered to be a very safe city to live in. Maybe the most common watch-outs in the city is bike-stealing. And you need to walk carefully on the road without always looking at your phones, as bikes passing by are unimaginably fast. If you want to ride a bike to commute, you'd better learn online about the common biking rules in Copenhagen, e.g. raise your hand when turning, always get helmet when biking, turn bicycle lights on at night, what traffic light apply to you... In Copenhagen, everyone rides a bike and they're bike experts, even baby strollers are adapted to bikes with a baby carrier in front. If you're a beginner to biking and didn't learn the biking rules, you'll be quite troubling for local bikers and it's also very dangerous for you.

Food

Copenhagen food is very healthy and light, including salad, open sandwich and so on. I'm the kind of person that can enjoy western food but cannot stay with it for too long. So, I started cooking from the first week. If you're like me, I suggest you buy the rice cooker in Copenhagen, because it's quite cheap (~149DKK) and you don't want it to take up too many spaces in your luggage.

I buy from fotex, lidl, and Irma for daily groceries, which are quite near to my dorm. And I buy Asian food from 津天超市 (Today market, near Copenhagen central station), and Sari Sari mart near the P student hall. I bought various condiments and Chinese food from these 2 shops (See below).



Transportation

Taking metro in Copenhagen is very expensive, especially when you don't have a transportation card (Rejsekort, Rejse means travel and kort means card). It's useful for all public transportations, which is very convenient. And the ticket price is about half the price

of normal tickets. I get the card with the help of my buddy in a 7/11 in the first week. The tricky thing is you need at least 70DKK in the card to take any transportation.

However, as I lived a bit far from school (~20min walk), and sometimes I needed to go to another building to take the next class in 10 mins (however, I still needed to walk 20 mins to that different building, which is a strange setting), it is still too expensive to take the public transportation(say 5 trips per day, 12DKK each). I joined the Facebook “Copenhagen Secondhand bike group” and got a secondhand bike for 500DKK only. After that, I rely on my bike for daily commute, and my transportation card for longer travels (e.g. to the airport, to the city center...).

Climate

The winter in Copenhagen is very long. But it’s not as cold as I thought it would be. My standard clothing to go to school during JAN-MAR is heattech + sweater+ down jacket + waterproof coat+ normal trousers (those I wear in HK) + boots. Summer starts to kick in at around mid-to-late May, with significantly longer day time and much pleasant outdoor atmosphere.

But do bring/buy very creamy lotion. It is very dry when you turn on the heater, and it’s quite painful without lotion.

Communications

Email is widely used for communications. Facebook groups are the most common ways of setting up a discussion group for projects. Hall and student society also use official Facebook groups to spread some information.

Students are given a SIM card in the welcoming package. The SIM package I chose is very cheap! 99DKK(~120HKD) a month for 99GB of data, including 5GB for other European countries. It is highly recommended to just use the package.

Cautionary Measures

Better bring or buy waterproof coat and bag as it rains very often

Items to Bring

Cloth	Travel Documents, etc.	Others
Waterproof coat	Passport	Phone
Down jacket	Residence permit	Portable charger
Heattech x3	Acceptance Letter	PC
Scarf	Photo copies of your travel documents	Chargers
Gloves	Printed rental contract	Adapters (must bring, very expensive in Denmark)
Wool cap	Student ID	Stationary
Waterproof boots (Recommend Timberland)	Home Country ID	Medicine

Summer clothes	Photos at different sizes (may be useful)	Back pack (cabin size)
Suits (if seeking career-related events or joining case comps)	Cash	Toiletries
Formal dress for girls (use in orientation party)	Debit card, Credit card	Make up and skin care products
Underwear		Travel size toiletries or sub-bottles
Pajamas		Hair dryer
Flip flops		Neck Pillow
Swimsuit		Sunglasses
Sports suit		Water bottle
Sports shoes & other shoes		Chinese condiment & food & chopsticks (if applicable)
		Personal accessories

Useful contacts

Residence Permit application reservation: <https://frederiksberg.reservetid.nu/Start/1288>

Course Catalog: <https://www.cbs.dk/en/international-opportunities/internationalstudents/guestexchange-student>

CBS International Office: receipt.intoff@cbs.dk

- CBS Exchange Information (including all useful info): <http://www.cbs.dk/en/international-opportunities/international-students/guestexchange-student>

- CBS Library: <https://www.cbs.dk/en/library>

-CBS housing housing.intoff@cbs.dk

Please feel free to contact SBM Exchange Team for my contact if you have any inquiries.