



***FALL  
2019***

# EXCHANGE REPORT

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY, CANADA  
SMITH SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

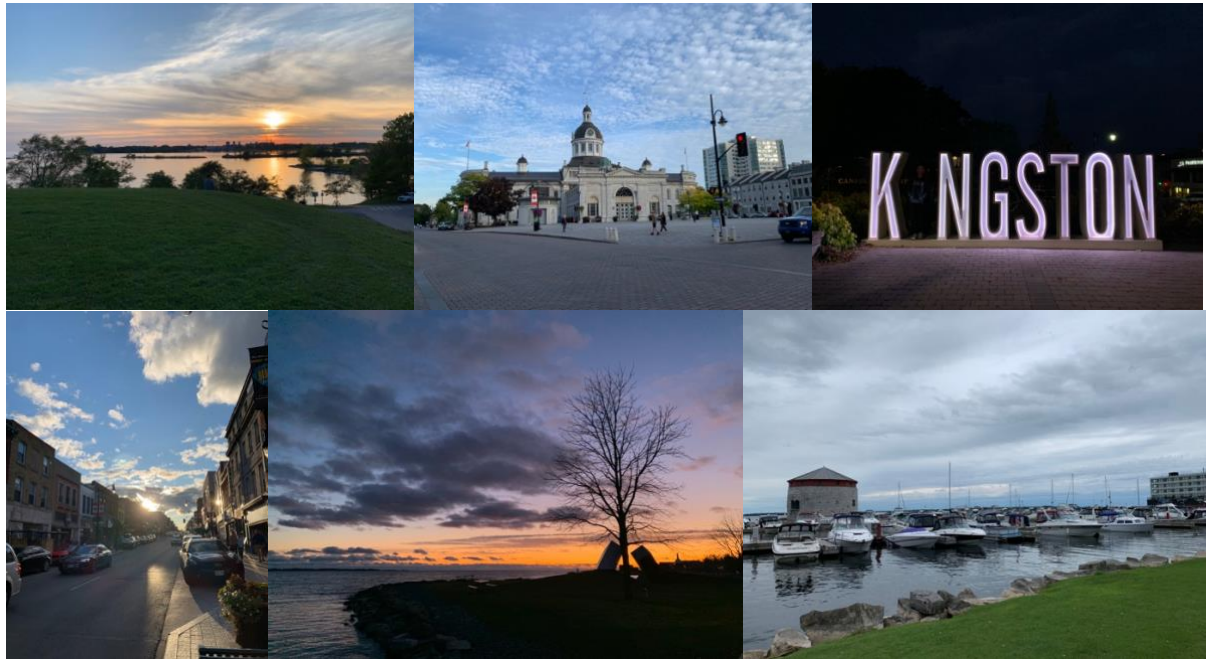
Rachel Wong (ACCT & IS)



## PART I: MONTHLY ACTIVITY LOG

### August

I arrived Kingston a week before class and explored Kingston downtown as well as school campus with other HKUST exchange students. The Japanese food in Kingston was exceptionally good and we had a nice time exploring different restaurants, authentic shops and outlet before the commencement of Fall semester.



### September

I attended the orientation day organized by the Smith's School of Business on 3<sup>rd</sup> September. It was a great opportunity for us to get to know some of the fun facts about Kingston and meeting other exchange students from different parts of the world. We also had a great time at the orientation night organized by the Exchange Transfer Committee of Queen's University!

Classes officially begins on the 5<sup>th</sup> September. We had reunion dinner with other exchange students from HKU, CUHK, UST in a Chinese restaurant near Queen's University. We also went to a Fall Festival in Kingston Memorial Centre with exciting rides and poutine! (see the picture below) During weekdays, I usually went to the gym or grocery shopping after class with other exchange students. I joined a one-day school trip to Niagara Falls and Ottawa during the weekends. The Niagara Falls was truly amazing during the Fall season and you could easily get some gorgeous pictures of double rainbow! I also enjoyed my time at Ottawa, the capital of Canada exploring the collectable coins and medals at the Royal Mint. During the last week of September, I went on a solo trip to Toronto to visit few of my friends studying there. The city vibe of Toronto was very much similar to Hong Kong, with many high-rise buildings and shopping centres. My favorite spots in Toronto were Toronto Islands, Distillery District, St. Lawrence Market. It might be a good idea to visit Toronto if you missed Asian food as well. The Asian restaurants located in Dundas Street were very authentic and affordable so I went food hopping there whenever I visited Toronto!



## October

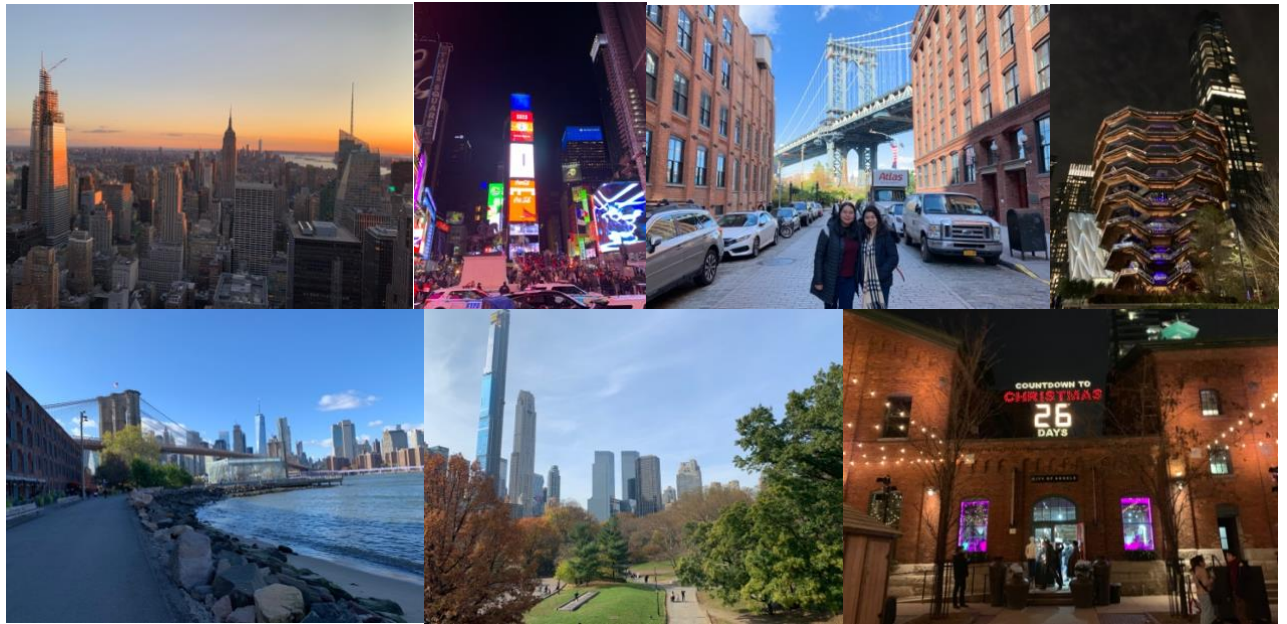
The pace of teaching was a lot faster compared to that in September, with quite a number of assignment deadlines and midterms in mid-October. I spent most of my weekdays for assignment drilling and revision for the upcoming midterm exams. I went on a weekend trip to Montreal with my housemates to kickstart October. The view of Old Montreal from Mont Royal was spectacular. Being one of the French colonies, there were a lot of well-preserved historical buildings, showcasing the history of the settlements of the indigenous people. I also toured around Banff and meet other UST students in Vancouver during the 10-day long Thanksgiving Holiday. I also travelled to Quebec City in a group of 8 exchange students during the 4-day long Fall Term break in the last week of October. It was one of my favourites cities so far in Canada because of the immersive French American culture embedded in every street corners.





## November

November was a month packed with deadlines of multiple assignments and group projects. I spent quite a number of days working on research papers and presentations in the Stauffer Library. There was one day that I stayed till 1 a.m. for essay writing, just an hour before the library closed. There were, in fact, many students doing their revisions or working on their assignments even midnight. I would say the stress and tension was comparable to that in HKUST at that time. However, I still managed to spend a weekend in the New York City with my housemate and cousin, exploring some of the iconic destinations such as the Statue of Liberty and Times Square. We even watched a Broadway musical which happened to be one of the most unforgettable night ever. While striving to meet different deadlines, I also went for Black Friday shopping and the Christmas Market with my friends in Toronto!





## December

We attended a farewell event for exchange student organized by the faculty. I had a week's time before the final examination began. I spent most of the days doing revision and working on the capstone presentation with my teammates. We also had fun playing in the snow at the front yard of our residence! I had all my exams finished on 16<sup>th</sup> December and this was when my adventure began! I visited Toronto, Orlando, Miami, Key West, Cuba and Mexico with other exchange students, marking the end to my life as an exchange student.



*Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario*



*Orlando, Florida, USA*



*Miami & Key West, Florida, USA*



*Varadero & Havana, Cub*

## PART II: GENERAL EXCHANGE INFORMATION

### 1) Visa Procedures

If you hold an HKSAR passport, you are required to apply for ETA (Electronic Travel Authorization) for entry to Canada online. It costs \$7 CAD (around \$42 HKD) and is valid for 5 years. However, if you wish to travel to the US, you will need to apply a visitor visa at \$160USD which is valid for 10 years.

### 2) Orientation Activities

A mandatory orientation session is required for all commerce exchange students. The day was divided into two separate sessions: first half consisted of information talk, which gave us a better understanding of the academic preparation and resources available on campus, and the second half was a lunch meeting and city hunt activity.

### 3) International Services & Activities

You may visit Queen's University International Centre (QUIC) where Student Advisors are available to help international students with their transition to Queen's University and Kingston through a great variety of activities, such as workshops, social and cultural activities and even day trips at discounted prices such as Niagara Falls, Ottawa, Montreal etc. They are really popular among international exchange students so make sure you sign up early if you would like to make some new friends!

### 4) Accommodations

Most of the students live off-campus and there is only one residence hall i.e. Jean Royce Hall located in Queen's West Campus available for exchange students. In order to secure a place, I contacted one of the UST seniors exchanging at Queen's University previously and was invited to join the WeChat housing group to look for potential landlords. There were also an unofficial Facebook group ran by Queen's student and other websites such as Kijiji for you to request on 4-month lease. However, most of the landlords prefer one-year or long-term lease which makes it extremely difficult for exchange students to look for residence. At last, we contacted the landlord via the Airbnb website who was willing to have a 4-month lease with us. The house was 20 mins walking distance from the Queen's campus.

### 5) Courses Registration

The course registration system used by the University is called "SOLUS". The interface is very much similar to that of UST in which you can add a course you wish to take to the shopping cart and confirm your enrolment during the assigned period. For all exchange students, at least 3 but a maximum of 5 courses are allowed per semester. Prerequisites are waived but some courses required prior approval for enrolment, for example, COMM401 Corporate Strategy. You will need to submit your HKUST transcript, an approval letter from HKUST via email to the course instructor before the course registration period.

### 6) Teaching & Assessment Methods

Course Title	HKUST Equivalent Course	Assessment Method	Teaching Comment
COMM311 Financial Accounting I (David McConomy)	ACCT3010	Group Assignment 30% Midterm 25% Final Exam 45%	Prof. McConomy was a Textbook author himself. He integrated a lot of real-life examples in his teaching but he had quite high expectations on his students regarding punctuality and quality of work.



COMM313 Financial Accounting II (George Boland)	ACCT3020	Homework 15% Midterm 20% Case Assignments 20% Final Exam 35% Individual Assignment 10%	COMM311 is the prerequisite of this course. The concepts are more advanced in this course and teaching pace was quite fast which takes much effort to understand each of the concepts thoroughly. There are weekly online homework assignments and in class case assignments so the course workload is quite heavy.
COMM317 Auditing (Erin Webster)	ACCT4510	Participation and In-class assignments 25% Midterm exam 30% Final exam 45%	Erin is a very friendly professor who encourages in-class discussions and cares about students' understanding towards the content. It is a very interactive class with various activities such as role plays and debates for students to apply different concepts into real-life cases.
COMM303 Business and Ethics (James Ridler)	MGMT2130	First Assignment (4-page retirement speech) 15% Second Assignment (12-15 page individual research paper) 25% Team Research Project 45% Participation 15%	The workload of this course is heavy with both individual and group research paper. The lecture content is a bit unstructured at times even though class discussions are encouraged.
COMM401 Corporate Strategy	MGMT4210	Capstone Simulation 30% Participation 15% Midterm 30% In-class exercises and cases 15% Discussion Leadership 10%	Workload is comparatively higher in which you are required to submit group decisions weekly in the capstone simulation. There are also case studies and presentations in which each group has to come up with recommendations for the assigned case company. There might be guest lecturer from that company sitting in and listening to group's presentation as well! The learning curve is steep for this course.

## 7) Sports & Recreation Facilities

Queen's students can access to the sports facilities e.g. gym room, basketball court at ARC (Athletics and Recreation Centre) with their student cards. However, sports equipment such as badminton racks are charged per rental.

## 8) Finance & Banking (including currency / expenses)

Most of the restaurants or stores accept cash/debit/credit payment. There are representatives from Scotiabank on the orientation day for students to open their bank accounts free of charge. You can also visit other local branches such as CIBC in Kingston to open a bank account as well. ATMs of CIBC (with Union Pay logo) is also available on campus but it charges around \$1.5CAD per withdrawal of cash. You may withdraw a maximum of CAD\$400 cash per time.

Expense breakdown:

Round trip ticket	HKD 14000
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UHIP	CAD 200
Course Packs and Case Materials	HKD 1500
House Rental Fee	CAD 3000
Living expenses	CAD 3000
Travel	CAD 9000

### **9) Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities**

There are quite a number of student societies and sports/social clubs, for example, yoga, skiing etc. They have different trainings and activities provided to their member according to their proficiency level. Some of them charge membership fee from students on a yearly basis. They have their own membership requirement and therefore might have some constraints on exchange students.

### **10) Health & Safety**

UHIP, an university insurance plan, is mandatory for all exchange students. Although there are not many street lights like what we have in Hong Kong, it is still safe to walk from campus back from my residence since it is a college town. Walk-home service is provided to students. You may also access to the emergency phones on campus.

### **11) Food**

There are some fast food shops available at the ARC, such as Tom Hortons, Pita Pit etc. You can also grab a cup of coffee at Starbucks on campus. If you strolled down Kingston downtown, there are many local authentic coffee shops and restaurants ranging from Japanese sushi to Vietnamese Pho and Gelatos. If you wish to save some money, you can also visit the Metro supermarket or Food Basics (cheaper) in Downtown area, Loblaws (near Kingston Centre, around 15-20 mins bus from Queen's) and Walmart. They also offer student discounts on specific days of the week, for example, Metro offers 10% discount for students on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

### **12) Transportation**

Your Queen's student card with a coloured label on the back provides a pass to use the Kingston Transit. A waist band distributed upon registration at Queen's can be used as a substitute for you to access the public transit free of charge before collecting your student card. You may download the Transit app for you to access the real-time bus schedule in order to plan ahead of your travel schedule.

If you would like to visit cities outside of Kingston, you may either take Viarail (most expensive) / Megabus (they offer CAD\$10 per trip irregularly) / Rideshare offered by Queen's University (you may visit their Facebook group if you wish to ask for a shared ride).

### **13) Climate**

You should pack your luggage with mostly winter clothes such as sweaters and pants. If you arrived Kingston in late August, you may experience some summer vibes at around 20-25 degrees Celsius. The weather gets breezier in late September so a water-proof jacket and shoes comes in handy. However, the temperature drops quite sharply during late October. I had my first snow in mid-November so make sure you have heat-insulated shoes or boots ready for the winter! The temperature can range from -10 degrees to 5-6 degrees during winter time.



#### **14) Communication**

I brought along multiple prepaid phone card with limited access to 4G network. You may also join data plans offered by local telecom providers, but they only offered very limited data access to regions/cities outside of Kingston and can cost around HKD\$300+ per month.

#### **15) Items to Bring**

- Letter of acceptance
- Identification documents (HKID, passport) with photocopies
- Credit card
- Cash (CAD, USD, HKD)
- Personal medicine
- Skincare products (moisturizer/cream/lotion)
- Power adaptors, chargers
- Laptop
- Stationery
- Calculator, Financial Calculator
- Summer Clothes
- Winter Clothes
  - Waterproof jacket/ windbreaker
  - Heat tack
  - Sweater
  - Down jacket
  - Jeans/pants
  - Scarf
  - Hat
  - Heat-insulated socks
  - Gloves
- Waterproof shoes/boots
- Business formal
- Carry-on luggage (for travel purpose)/ backpack

#### **16) Useful Links & Contact**

ETA (Electronic Travel Authorisation) Online Application

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/visit-canada/eta/apply.html>

University Website

<https://www.queensu.ca/>

Smith's School of Business Commerce Portal

[https://smith.queensu.ca/academic\\_programs/student-portals.php](https://smith.queensu.ca/academic_programs/student-portals.php)

Queen's University International Centre (QUIC)

<https://quic.queensu.ca/>

Kingston Transit

<https://www.cityofkingston.ca/residents/transit>

If more information is needed, get my contact from SBM Exchange Team by emailing at [bmugexch@ust.hk](mailto:bmugexch@ust.hk).