



Exchange Report

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Year 3, BBA (MGMT)
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PART I – MONTHLY ACTIVITY LOG

January 2020

Everything was fresh and new. The first few days were all about settling down, attending mandatory orientation and exploring Singapore with several HKUST peers. Everywhere looked familiar but also foreign. We went downtown, watching the Merlion Statue and the light show in Gardens by the Bay.

By the end of the first week, I was able to meet my new group of friends during exchangers coffee gathering and NUS Business Orientation Day. We explored Singapore together for the following weeks. We went to Universal Studio, visited the flower dome, the gardens by the bay skywalk, Chinatown etc. It was also my second time watching the night show but with different people and it was all worth it. We also sang karaoke and went shopping in Orchard and Bugis. Bugis was way more interesting with cute souvenirs in our point of view. We were also able to watch the CNY fireworks during the Marina Bay Light Show.

We also tried out different food on and off campus. The Sin Kee Famous Chicken rice and laksa in the deck were very famous. We also tried out Tian Tian Chicken Rice, Satay in Lau Pa Sat Street as well as many other hawker centres in Chinatown etc.

By the end of January, we went to Batam Island as our 3-days-2-nights CNY Trip. It was my first time doing a massage and it felt amazing. We spent the rest of the trip hunting for surgical masks and hand sanitizers as it was the start of the virus outbreak. That's the reason why we got masks and hand sanitizers for the coming months.

On the last day in Batam, I received an email from PGPR, my residences, saying that I have to move from my original AC room to another non-AC room immediately as my original block was now used by the government as quarantine facilities for COVID-19. I quickly went back to Singapore, moved out and got settled down after all the moving and cleaning. Luckily, Batam Island and Singapore was only a ferry away.



February

After all the moving and cleaning, I wanted to exercise more and try something new during this exchange. Therefore, I joined Sunday Yoga and Salsa Dance. However, I ended up only joining one session due to the virus. Everything was moved to online gradually except some

small groups of tutorials and an 8am lecture which required intense case discussions. Nevertheless, I was able to join some virtual yoga and meditation sessions.

In early Feb, we went to Orchard again and went to Newton hawker centre. It was the hawker centre featured in Crazy Rich Asians. We tried delicious local food such as carrot cake and prawn noodles. We also went to some tourist spots such as Little India, Arts Sciences Museum, Night Safari, National Singapore Museum, Sea Aquarium and Alkaff Bridge near Clarke Quay. We also played the MegaZip in Sentosa. It might look scary at first. Yet, with my friends' encouragement, I was very glad that I walked out of my comfort zone and it felt really amazing. I'd say it's a must-try in Singapore as it shows the beautiful scenery across the Sentosa Island. The staff was very nice too. They reassured our safety and slowly pushed us out of the zip so it wasn't really that scary. As one of my friends was having her birthday in mid Feb, we celebrated with her in Clarke Quay and went to our first ladies' night.

After all the celebrations, it was the time when midterms started. I spent a few days revising with my Singaporean friends. After that, we did some food trips such as the Swee Choon restaurant for dimsums, Bedok Chwee Kueh, popiah, claypot rice in chinatown etc.

Here came the second long holiday – Recess week. We were planning on another trip to KL, Malaysia. However, because of the virus situations, we cancelled plans and decided to stay in Singapore instead. We did some shopping in several malls. We also did some food trips again such as the Clementi Soon Lee Porridge, The Roti Prata House, Bai Nian Niang Dou Fu, No Name Hainanese Curry Rice, Tiong Bahru Glacier Pastry etc. We visited some temples. We also went to MacRitchie Reservoir Tree Top Walk. The park was soothing and there were people playing golf near the reservoir. I'd say the hike was one of my favourite stuck-in-SG activities.



March

After the recess week, deadlines were coming up including individual essays, mid-term group presentations and reports. We spent most of our weekdays meeting the deadlines. It was also the time that I bonded with my groupmates. In one of the group projects for the course GET1003 Home, we were required to visit one of our groupmates' home and it was a very interesting outing. There were supposed to be other field trips but they got cancelled due to the virus. I also tried making my own food and baking in my residence. My exchange friends and I planned food, shopping and tourist trips during weekends. We visited the colourful stairs in Bugis, Chjmes where the Crazy Rich Asians' wedding was held, played the skyride and luge, watched the sunset in the floating bridge at Siloso Beach, and went to 1-Altitude to appreciate the night view. Another birthday celebration was held for one of my friends having her birthday in SG.

By mid March, many friends from US/Canada/Europe got called by their home universities and were advised to leave immediately because of the evolving virus situations. It was extremely sad and unexpected to see some of my friends leaving early. Yet, some of my Canadian friends managed to stay. I also decided to stay despite all the uncertainties. There were news of cancelling flights and possibilities of not having flights flying back to HK etc.



April

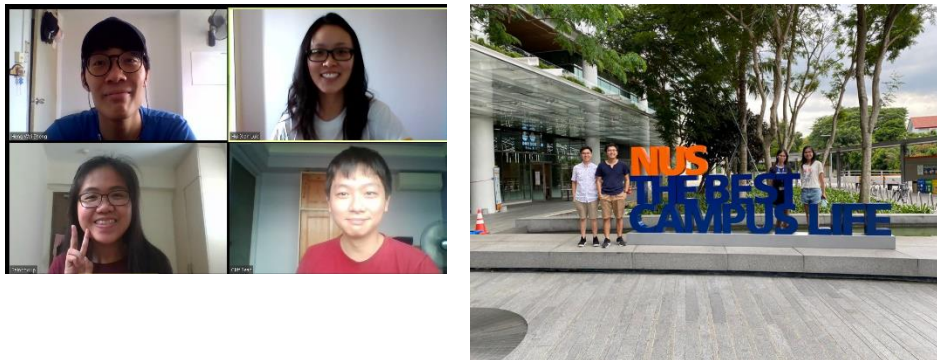
After staying home for the last weekend of March due to the evolving virus situation, my friends and I planned a takeaway trip. We tried out the crispy 4fingers chicken and Tiong Bahru Bakery - the croissants were so good, another must try in SG!

With the potential community virus outbreak, SG govt imposed circuit breaker – another word for lockdown. Only essential activities such as food, clinics, grocery shops were allowed to open. Only takeaway was allowed though. Before the circuit breaker, my friends and I went out for last minute souvenir shopping and buying essential stuff such as raincoats for our return flights. It was actually my one last time for going out in SG sadly.

I spent the rest of April appreciating the beautiful campus, exploring different food options on campus and my microwave recipes. I also bonded with my neighbours as we all spent most of our time staying in the residences. I got to study and prepare for my exams during the third long holiday- revision week which I didn't expect to do them at all.

It was fun but short times. We always said that if it wasn't the virus, we would have done this and that. Things definitely did not go as planned. Yet, I am grateful for everything that happened. Thanks to all my exchange friends, my neighbours, my SG friends who added colours to my exchange life and to make SG a little more like home. Until next time:)

SG was not my first choice, but it definitely gave me pleasant surprises. Everything happens for a reason and we'll see where life takes us next.



PART II – GENERAL EXCHANGE INFORMATION

1. Visa Procedures

Procedures are simple. After receiving an offer from NUS, there will be emails sent to you about the procedures on applying for a student visa online. Just follow the payment deadlines and you'll be fine. Remember to print all the required forms before setting off to Singapore and bring some passport size photos. You will have to submit the hard copy for the collection of student visa. There will be details in the emails.

2. Orientation Activities

There are many orientation activities. There was a mandatory orientation session that gathered all the exchangers in one lecture hall reminding us the logistics such as collection of student cards and student visa, completion of mandatory modules and the respect and consent workshops. There were also other optional orientation activities such as Food Hunt and Night Tour organized by nus peers. There were supposed to be more activities, but they were all cancelled due to the virus. There were also coffee gathering that allowed us to mingle with each other outside Starbucks and it was the time that I met some of my exchange friends. There was also business school orientation organized by NUS Bizard Club and PGPR orientation held by my residence PGPR. There was also a welcome party on the first day of school. I recommend you to join most of them as they are precious opportunities to meet your friends and there will be free food.

3. International Services & Activities

There are support from the Global Relation Office, ipeer as well as other student societies. However, due to COVID-19, many activities were cancelled starting from February so things might have been different.

4. Accommodations

Accommodation was not guaranteed. The application procedures were simple. There were two rounds of results released and I eventually got a space during the second round – PGPR AC Room. It was newly renovated and the room was comfy

with ensuite bathroom. However, due to the evolving situation of the virus, PGPR AC room was said to be used for quarantine purposes by the SG government by the end of January. Unfortunately, I had to move out within 24 hours from the AC Room to PGPR Non-AC Room (Type C). It was supposed to be under renovation this semester. Therefore, it wasn't cleaned for a month. The fan in my room was broken down and there were cockroaches in the kitchen. However, the management office and the maintenance team quickly cleaned the mess up and offered us \$200 SGD worth vouchers which could be used in all CapitalLand malls as compensation. Pest control was conducted approximately twice a week. You can buy your own AC, but I got used to the fan eventually. I sometimes slept with a wet towel with some iced water which was put in the freezer. Most people chose to move out, but I chose to stay.

5. Courses Registration

Course registration was stressful. During application, we were asked to indicate our course preferences and rank them. We were then pre-enrolled in three courses (five max, but there would be three assigned in this application stage just to secure at least three business courses). However, in my case, the third one assigned was not even on my list. Therefore, I ended up registering for the three remaining courses when I arrived SG on the first day. Course registration system for exchangers was different from the rest. It was not based on first-come-first-served basis. Priorities would be given to those with relevant majors (ie marketing major students would have a higher chance getting into marketing courses). We were again given a time range to submit our course preferences and rank them. There were quotas for the courses listed this time so that we could make a more informed choice. Results were not the most ideal, but I ended up getting enrolled in three business courses and two arts courses which was still fine so I did not appeal. The next thing would be registration of tutorial slots. It was smooth and most of my friends got our preferred slots.

6. Teaching & Assessment Methods

For business courses, most of them were intense case discussions and it was very insightful. The quality from the class was high and the professor expected a lot from us. I took Leading in the 21st century, Corporate Entrepreneurship & Business Model Evaluation and Technological Innovation for business courses. Technological Innovation was the most intensive one as the prof used to teach the MBA venture capital and tech strategy course, but it was very rewarding. One thing that I appreciate most is that all the profs gave feedback and comments quickly after marking the essays/reports/presentations.

The assessment methods were slightly more intensive when comparing to HKUST, but it was still manageable thanks to my groupmates. There were group projects for all of my courses. We could form our own groups for most of the courses and I took this chance to meet some Singaporean friends. All of my groups consisted of mostly

locals. We collaborated well so the workload evened out. There were individual assignments like case write-ups and reports.

7. Sports & Recreation Facilities

There were gyms, an infinity pool, central libraries, and plenty of quiet places for you to just enjoy the peace and study when the room is too hot. My friends used to do climbing in the sports centre and they enjoyed a lot. I did yoga and it was in Utown. Basically, the facilities were quite comprehensive until there was a close of facilities due to COVID-19.

8. Finance & Banking (including currency / expenses)

Food in hawker centres are cheap and awesome. It tastes authentic. Of course, dining in restaurants would be more expensive. However, in general, the cost of living is still manageable. I carried all my cash to Singapore. Some people would prefer to press the overseas ATM. It charges \$20 each time. I also open a DBS bank account. It is quite convenient with paylah and Digibank. Paylah as well as the DBS debit card are widely accepted. It is a safe place to store money too. Therefore, I would open a bank account even though it is only a few months.

9. Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

There are many networking opportunities. I personally joined the orientation activities, the NUS Art of Living – Sunday Yoga lessons, and NUS Salsa Dance. However, due to COVID-19, many of the activities were cancelled unfortunately.

10. Health & Safety

If you are sick, you can visit University of Health Centre to seek medical advice for free. We have to pay for NUH so usually we will not go to NUH if things are not that serious.

Safety is ensured in general in Singapore.

11. Food

There are plenty of food options on campus and off campus. For on campus, the Indian stall I like most is in UTown due to its crispy prata. There are usually long queues for Laksa and Chicken Rice in the deck in Faculty of Arts and Sciences. I also tried PGP canteens – congee, Korean stall, Taiwanese, Takagi Ramen. There are also waffles sold in Supersnacks. I usually go for late night waffles there. In frontier, there is the yummy chee cheong fun sold as well as the famous noodles stall. The pasta express and Taiwanese stall is quite good as well. I also tried the Mee Siam and Thai tea cake in Royal Bistro in my last week. They were awesome!

For off campus, I usually go for authentic local food – the hawker centres. They are affordable and yummy. I still miss the food there. The newton food centre is by far my favourite. Just follow Singapore foodie on Instagram and google search food

guide for every hawker centres. The French bakery in Tiong Bahru Bakery, Ah Chew Desserts, 4Fingers Chicken etc are also my favourite.

12. Transportation

MRT is very convenient. Bus is sometimes recommended as well. It is because my friends and I live in different residences. For buses, sometimes there are stops for both university town and pgpr. Therefore, neither of us need to walk or wait for shuttle after parting in Kent Ridge MRT station.

13. Climate

It is sunny and wet all day long. The sunshine is awesome. The showers will not be too long usually. The rain gets more frequent in later months.

14. Communication

Singaporeans will use social media like Telegram, Whatsapp to communicate. For telecom, I used Singtel as it was stable and the monthly plan was similar to Hong Kong's telecoms. Starhub was not that stable according to my friends' experience. Mobile data could not be accessed in MRTs.

15. Cautionary measures

Umbrellas should always be brought. Do not violate Singapore's laws.

PART III – ITEMS TO BRING

Checklist

- Documents to obtain the Student VISA, passport-sized photos
- Passport
- Insect Repellent
- Bed sheets
- SG currencies
- Credit card
- Umbrella
- Sunscreen
- USB

PART IV – USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACTS

Timetable

<https://nusmods.com/timetable/sem-1>

NUS BBA course list

<http://bba.nus.edu/academic-programmes/module-registration-information/general>

Emergency contact

<https://uci.nus.edu.sg/ocs/contact-us/>