

2022 Fall Exchange Report

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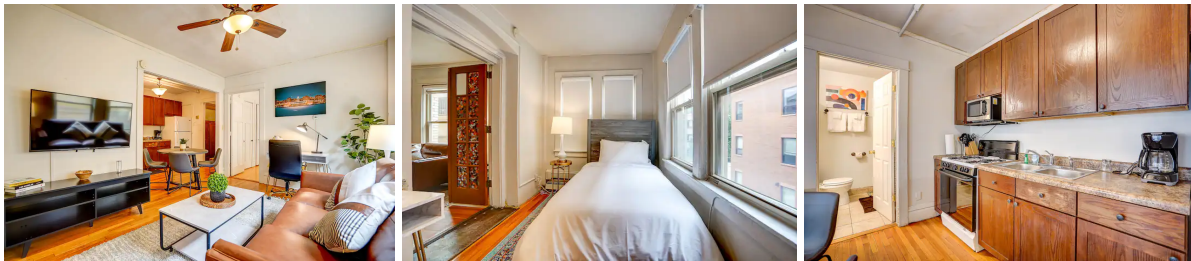
Exchange School: University of Wisconsin - Madison



A. Monthly Activity Log

September 2022

I arrived in Madison on 31 August 2022. The first week was mostly about settling in and attending orientations. Since the demand for on-campus housing during my exchange semester has increased significantly, most of the on-campus options were not available. I have to rent a private apartment with a roommate I matched on the Facebook exchange student group. The rent is around \$1500USD per month (apartment with 2 rooms, 1 washroom, kitchen and living area).



Orientation was on 2 Sept 2022. It was so exciting to meet other exchange students from all around the world and we had a campus tour together during the day.



October 2022

UW-Madison's annual Study Abroad Fair was held on 11 Oct and I am the representative of HKUST. It's glad to see lots of students are interested in coming to Hong Kong for studying/exchange. I also met some other friendly representatives for universities in Singapore and other Asian countries!



31 Oct is Halloween. I went to a haunted forest within driving distance from the campus with my friends. It was the scariest but funniest haunted house I have ever been to. From their decoration, special effect, sound, to real 'ghosts', they are so real and scary! You were sent to a haunted farm by a big truck as shown in the rightest picture.

Relevant link: <https://schustersfarm.ticketspice.com/2022-haunted-forest>



November 2022

I went to an event that invite people to cook their own country's cuisine. For my team mostly from Asian countries (thailand, Taiwan, HK), since we all were not so good at cooking, we picked easy recipes such as stir-fried basil beef and taro ball as our dishes. However, the taro balls we made still failed, probably because we add too less starch(tapioca) in it and it was way too soft after boiling.



It started to snow since Mid-November. It was my first time in my memory to experience snow.



December 2022

The first half month is the final exam season. I had 3 exams in total and the workload was manageable as the course content was not too hard.

In late December after exams, I started to meet all of my friends I met in Madison-Wisconsin and farewell to them. It was always hard to say goodbye

Farewell party:



B. General exchange information

Visa Procedures

For exchange student, you have to apply for a J-1 visa program.

There are several steps to apply for a visa. You need to complete the online Visa Application by filling the form DS160 and pay for the visa application fee. And you will also have to schedule an interview at the U.S. embassy or consulate in Hong Kong.

Orientation Activities

It was well organised. They will take you to get the student card (Wiscard) and you can get the BusPass immediately afterwards with your Wiscard. We had a campus tour on the orientation day and we also had the famous ice cream at the Daily Scoop in Memorial Union with local students there.

International Services & Activities

Their international student service center is located at the Red Gym where you can reach them for any queries and assistance.



Accommodations

It is quite hard to look for an accommodation for only half a year with limited student housing options in Madison. For on-campus and off-campus options, related information can be found [here](#). There are often housing Facebook groups as well where I matched with my roommate.

Courses Registration

You can access the course registration system after logging in to the student center. Their system is quite different from HKUST one. One thing to be aware of is that some of the course code are for graduate-level course which undergraduate students are not eligible to enroll in them. You can contact the advisors of the program to ask questions regarding the courses. Some instructions could be found [here](#).

Teaching & Assessment Methods

We have all F2F lesson throughout the semester. Even under heavy snow weather, the classes are held normally in person. Most introductory, undergraduate-level courses meet three times a week for 50 minutes or twice a week for 75 minutes.

Sports & Recreation Facilities

The Natatorium (2000 Observatory Dr), the Shell (1430 Monroe Street), the Nicholas Recreation Center ('The Nick') (797 W Dayton Street) and the Nielsen Tennis Stadium (1000 Highland Drive) are athletic facilities open and free to all students. Open gym/pool times are available online and unlimited group fitness classes cost about \$25.00 per semester.

Recreational Sports (www.wisc.edu/recsports) provide intramural and club sports and two opportunities for competitive sports. The Physical Education Elective Program offers one-credit courses throughout the semester. Refer to the Class Search timetable to determine which courses are still open.

Finance & Banking (including currency / expenses)

I applied for Chase Bank account where they provide student account without minimum balance requirement. You can also apply for a debit card that linked to your account. I also use my HSBC foreign exchange debit card linked to my bank account in HK and it is also convenient if you do not want to apply for a local bank account.

Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities



During the first week of semester, I went to their Fall 2022 Student organization Fair held at the Kohl Center where there are lots of Registered Student Organizations focusing a wide variety of interests. I joined their Women in Economics, Ceramics Club and also Hong Kong Student Association.

Health & Safety

Health Insurance: All international students and visa dependents are required to have UW-Madison approved health insurance coverage (Student Health Insurance Plan SHIP)

Safety: Generally the campus area is safe. However, I would say it could be sketchy to walk alone in the downtown area near the capitol at night with lots of drunk people. It is better to be with friends when you walk back home. Else, you can ask for SAFEwalk or SAFERide bus which will provide free escorts or rides to or from campus buildings after dark. ([link](#))

Food

There are a variety of food choices from asian to westerns. Some of the good restaurant i would recommend includes Morris Ramen, Freshfin Poke (Hawaiian), Gotham Bagels, Dotty's Dumplings (Burger), Tippy Cow(Western), The Old Fashioned(Western), Ian's Pizza, Shoppee Ice Cream, etc; For grocery, there are Walgreens, Target, capitol centre market around the campus where i usually buy grocery from there.

Asian

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| Nani | Dim sum/ Chinese |
| Morris Ramen | Ramen |
| Ha Long Bay | Vietnamese/ Pan Asian |
| Sala Thai | Thai |
| Freshfin Poke | Hawaiian |
| Red Sushi | Sushi |
| QQ Express | Chinese |
| Little Tibet | Tibetan |

Bakery/Café/Coffee Shop

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|-----------------------|------------------|
| Greenbush Bakery | Bakery/Donuts |
| Madison Sourdough | Café/Bakery |
| Café Brittoli | Café/Coffee |
| Michelangelo's Coffee | Coffee/Bakery |
| Indie Coffee | Coffee |
| Ancora | Coffee/Café |
| Barrique's | Coffee |
| Sun Room Cafe | Coffee/Breakfast |
| Johnson Public House | Coffee |
| Gotham Bagels | Bagels/Coffe |
| Colectivo Coffee | Café/Coffee |

Transportation

Bus: BusPass is provided by the school. You can have access to all bus routes by using the buspass for free. Routes and schedules are online at [link](#). You can check Googlemaps for accurate arrival/departure times.

Bicycle: Madison is a bicycle-friendly city. B-cycle is one of the mostly used bicycle around the town, students can have their student membership for really low price (~\$20/year). ([link](#))

Climate



From September to Mid-October, the weather was pretty comfortable at around 15 - 25 degree celsius. Moving on to November, the temperature difference within one day could be quite large or even drop to negative degree during nighttime. From December, the weather is snowy and the coldest could be -15 to -20 degree.

Communication

I bought a 3-month valid US&Canada Sim Card from Hong Kong Apliu Street, Sham Shui Po. For the last month, I used their local sim card from AT&T. Most of the student use T-mobile/AT&T/E-sim.

Cautionary measures

Be careful of people approaching you on streets especially when you are out of campus area. There are gunshots happened in downtown area during my stay there. It is also very often for students to travel to Chicago due to its proximity, but also you need to be aware of danger anywhere (only walk on main streets with friends, keep close eye on personal items, etc).

There are also scams in Madison. Please be careful if you decide to send any money to reserve an apartment prior to your arrival. When possible, we encourage you to instead arrange appointments so you can see apartments upon your arrival. There have been quite a few incidents where students have lost money in housing scams.

Other

Many students will take weekend trips to Chicago. The easiest way to get to Chicago is via the CoachBus USA, which depart from campus and take 4 hours.

Things to do in Campus:

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| Memorial Union Terrace | Views of Water, Beer | Free/ \$ | On Campus |
| Chazen Art Museum | Art | Free | On Campus |
| Olbrich Botanical Gardens | Botanical Gardens / Beer | Free/ \$ | East Side |
| Wisconsin State Capitol | | \$ | Downtown |
| Dane County Farmer's Market | | Free/ \$ | Downtown |
| UW Arboretum | | Free | East Side |
| Sports Games | Basketball and football are most common. Check out the Madison Mallards Baseball, Madison Capitals Hockey, and Forward Madison Soccer. | \$-\$ | Varies |
| Paddle Boarding | | \$\$ | On Campus/ Lakes |
| Comedy on State | Cheap Student Tickets | \$ | Downtown |
| A Room of One's Own Bookstore | Bookstore | \$-\$ | East Side |
| Movies at Union South/The Terrace | Free movie showings | Free | On Campus |



Important contacts:

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>International Academic Programs & Engineering Exchanges <i>Andy Quackenbush, Paige Navis & Amanda Hammatt</i> exchange@studyabroad.wisc.edu 608-265-6329 3rd floor, Red Gym 716 Langdon Street www.studyabroad.wisc.edu/exchange</p> | <p>College of Agricultural & Life Sciences Exchanges <i>Kim Kroeger</i> exchange@studyabroad.wisc.edu 608-265-5759 116 Agricultural Hall 1450 Linden Drive www.studyabroad.wisc.edu/exchange</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Wisconsin School of Business Exchanges Global Programs 3150 Grainger Hall 975 University Avenue https://bus.wisc.edu/current-student-resources/bba/study-abroad/incoming-exchange-students Han Sol Meining incoming.exchange@wsb.wisc.edu 608-265-5017</p> | |

Items to Bring and Useful Links & Contacts

- Warm clothes (down jacket, gloves, etc) (for winter)
- Snow boot (for winter)
- Scarf
- Laundry bags
- Charger Converter
- Medicine
- Clothes clips

