



Singapore Management University Exchange Report

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Fall Term 2022-23

Monthly Activity Log

August

I arrived on the 8th of August. The 9th of August is the national day of Singapore. There were lots of celebration events especially in Marina Bay. You can even see fighter jets flying around. I also visited Gardens by the bay, Lau Pa Sat (a famous hawker centre), Chinatown, Sultan Mosque and many other places during my first week in Singapore. During the city tour organized by SMU, I met many friends and was amazed by the diversity of exchange students. The fall semester started on the 15th of August. It took me some time to be comfortable with the 3-hour seminar teaching mode in SMU, but overall I like the interactive teaching mode of SMU. It was a month of discovery and adaption.



September

At this point, I was quite used to everything in Singapore. I started meeting more local students this month, because there were many student societies held their events in this month. One thing that you need to be aware is that midterm exams were at the end of this month unlike UST since the semester commenced earlier. I kept discovering Singapore this month. I went to the northernmost park of Singapore. You can literally see Malaysia there. I also visited neighbourhoods like Clarke Quay, Katong-Joo Chiat and Emerald Hill. There were many shophouses in these areas.

October

Many events and festivals were happening in this month, like Deepavali and F1 Singapore. Visiting little India on Deepavali is a must. There were colourful and festive decorations in Little India. You will also get chances to join local people's celebration events. I also went to Sentosa this month. If you are a roller coaster lover, Universal Studio is a right place for you. It is small but has lots of roller coasters. Don't worry if you are not, Sentosa also has beautiful beaches and historical sites for you to enjoy.

November

It was a busy month because of projects and exams. I did not get to explore the country a lot. Most of the time, I was in the library with my friends. I felt that SMU students are all hard working like UST students. The library was packed with people all the time. At the end of the month, I finished all my exams so I continued my exploration in the country with my friends. We were impressed by the beauty of Singapore Botanic Gardens and spent a whole day in those gardens.



December

During my last 8 days in Singapore, I revisited places I like in Singapore and had some farewell meals with my good friends. Looking back, it was really a fruitful journey. I experienced a different kind of teaching mode, met people from different cultural backgrounds and tasted unique local cuisine. Singapore is really an amazing country. It has diverse cultures and preserves its nature and history well. I will definitely recommend you to visit.

General Exchange Information

Visa Procedures

Procedures for getting a Student Pass is not complicated. You just need to follow instructions sent by SMU. You will not get a Student Pass before entering Singapore. Instead, you need to bring the IPA letter and eform-16 for entering Singapore. And the collection of Student Pass is also on campus which is very convenient.

Orientation Activities

There will be a mandatory orientation day which has a briefing and a city tour.

International Services & Activities

You will be added to a Facebook group which consists of other exchange students before your arrival. SMU ICON will also organize activities for international students. There are many student societies promoting different cultures.

Accommodations

You can apply for the hostel of SMU. It is not a residential hall of SMU but managed by a third party. If you want to rent a place by yourself, you can contact agents online. However, you need to be extremely careful. It will also be difficult to find a place since most of agents prefer 6 month lease.

Courses Registration

You are allowed to take not more than 4 courses. The course registration system is not 'first-come-first-served'. You will use 'e-dollars' to bid for courses you want. There will be historical prices for courses in SMU's course registration system for your reference. Exchange students normally will not need to compete with other students for courses since there is a separate round of bidding for exchange students.

Teaching & Assessment Methods

SMU emphasises on participation a lot. You need to have a name tent and actively participate in the class. The weight of participation is generally higher than UST. Most of the classes in SMU are 3 hours long, but you only have one class per week for each course.

Sports & Recreation Facilities

You can book SMU facilities online on student portal. SMU has a pool and a gym. Museums are free for university students. The National Museum of Singapore is right next to SMU.

Finance & Banking

DBS, POSB, OCBC and Standard Chartered are everywhere in Singapore, so you may want to open an account in one of these banks. HSBC has relatively less branches and ATMs compared to the aforementioned banks. You could also choose not to open a bank account but having a bank account will be more convenient. Young Singaporean often use Paylah by DBS, which is similar to Payme in Hong Kong, to transfer money between each other. And you need to have a Singapore bank account to use that app. To get an address proof for opening a bank account, you can visit SMU Student Services Hub.

I spent around 45,000 HKD in total. Most of the expenses is rent since I did not receive a SMU hostel offer. For food and transportation, expenses are similar to Hong Kong's.

Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

SMU has many social clubs and they will organize various activities for socialising and networking. Even if you are not a member, just pay attention to your email and register for events.

Health & Safety

Singapore is a very safe country. For health, you can visit the clinic at SMU for free.

Food

If you want to save money, cooking for yourself is the best choice. Food in hawker centres are also very cheap. At SMU, the food court 'Koufu' is the cheapest option. For other food choices, prices are around the same compared to Hong Kong.

Transportation

I used ez-link card to take MRT and buses. Credit cards can also be accepted. Some buses in Singapore do not broadcast or show the next station. Also, you need to tap out when you alight from the bus. Citymapper is an useful app for transportation.

Climate

Remember to bring an umbrella every time you go out. It can rain literally anytime.

Communication

Getting a simcard at the airport is much more expensive. You may choose to buy one in convenient stores like 7-11 or Cheers.

Young Singaporean prefer using telegram.

Singaporean mostly use English. Older Singaporean can speak Cantonese, Mandarin or Hokkien.

Cautionary measures

No.

Items to Bring

1. Passport
2. IPA letter
3. eForm 16
4. Summer clothes
5. Umbrella
6. Sunscreen
7. Laptop
8. Cash
9. Calculator
10. Singapore passport-sized photos

Useful Links and Contacts

<https://oasis.smu.edu.sg/>

<https://boss.intranet.smu.edu.sg/>

<https://elearn.smu.edu.sg/>

<https://maps.smu.edu.sg/>