

Thomas Skjødt
MSc. Supply Chain Management
Copenhagen Business School
3. semester at Forster School of
Business
E-mail: thsk04ai@student.cbs.dk



WHY AND WHERE

I decided to spend one quarter at a MBA program in the US because I wanted to improve my analytical skills within economics. My studies in Copenhagen have been very theoretical so I wanted to learn some more practical applicable skills at a MBA program. I choose UW since the Forster business school had a good reputation and I wanted to study in a big city.

ARRIVAL/ON-SITE ORIENTATION

I did not use the FIUTS, ScanDesign fellowship coordinator or the homestay arrangement when I arrived in Seattle, but people I know who did use it recommended it for future students.

ACADEMICS

The teaching at the Forster School of Business fulfilled my expectations of being highly professional and challenging. The class registration system was a big help, since it allowed you to shop between different classes the first two weeks making sure that you got the classes that where of most interest to you. Facilities such as library, study rooms, classrooms and IT rooms were very good but that is also because the Paccar Hall building is brand new. The administration were very helpful and able to answer all my questions regarding studying at the MBA program and also questions regarding living in Seattle as well. The workload and quality of the classes depended on the professor but in general the professors at Forster deliver a very high quality of teaching.

HOUSING

I arranged housing through the administration at Forster before I arrived in Seattle. I rented a room from another master student in an apartment close to the UW. My experience regarding housing in Seattle is that it is very easy for exchange students to find housing opportunities and some of my fellow exchange students even used this opportunity to find new housing, because they were not satisfied with their first choice. In general I have been very satisfied with my rental room and it is a lot like the rooms you can rent back home in Denmark.

EXCHANGE SITE

The UW campus is very large compared to what I am used to in Copenhagen. The site is very beautiful with a mixture of new and old buildings. The surroundings and Seattle in general is an extraordinary city. This is because of all the trees and green areas in the city that makes the city more local and charming to live in.

CULTURAL ASPECTS

Experiencing the American culture was one of the main takeaways from my studies at the UW. To get to know the American business and work culture have been a great eye-opener to me, since I did not expect it to be that different from the Danish business culture. I have learned, that in the US it is all about who you know and not so much what you know, if you want to make a career within business. This is quite different from the Danish culture where I think we credit good results higher than business relations. The Americans also combine their social life with their business life and are working on average more hours a day than we do in Denmark. I have though discussed this subject with a lot of my classmates from the US, since I did not understand how we in Denmark can compete with American companies when they spend more hours on work in the US. The answer always ended up being a matter of efficiency – it seems as if we in Denmark achieve a lot more during one hour of work than in the US business market which mainly is a result of different work cultures and company policies.

FINANCIAL

I received \$2,000 from the ScanDesign fond in Denmark, which made a great difference for me. I spend the money on rent, food and social activities. In general I spend around \$1,500 on rent, food and other costs per month during my stay in Seattle. I did not experience any serious unexpected expenses that I had not already accounted for in my budget.

EXCHANGE/SCANDESIGN FELLOWSHIP ADMINISTRATION

I was informed about the ScanDesign scholarship after I was given the spot at Forster. As mentioned before I did not use any of the pre Seattle offers I received from the coordinator but that was because of a lack of time and not lack of interest.

STUDENT TYPE

Future students at the Forster School of Business should be interested in studying within different subjects since you have to choose classes between different topics. You therefore do not have the opportunity to only focus on one major topic as you can at Copenhagen Business School. If you are interested in only a few topics then I would advice future students should contact the Forster school of business before choosing the school to make sure what courses are offered that quarter.

OVERALL

In general I am very satisfied with the time I have spend at Forster. The positive sides about the studies have been the high quality of teachers and the opportunity to get to know the American work culture, which I can use in my future professional life in Denmark. A negative aspect was the fact that I did not know which courses that would be available to choose between before I put Seattle on top of my list. Because of this I ended up having to take some courses that was not that useful compared to my studies in Copenhagen.