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Dear UW International Programs Office and SCAN/DESIGN Foundation:  
Thank you for the opportunity to study abroad during the 2008 Winter and Spring quarters at the University of Copenhagen on a SCAN/DESIGN graduate fellowship. My five months of study and life in Denmark were an enriching experience which I believe has and will continue to serve me professionally and personally throughout my life.

The SCAN/DESIGN fellowship made it possible for me to engage in intense study while also absorbing the culture around me. During my five months living and studying in Denmark, I visited a number of classes at the University of Copenhagen, including advanced Danish language courses offered through Studieskolen, the film course "Ingmar Berman: The Magic Lantern," and the literature class "The Australian Environmental Imagination." These small classes, conducive to discussion, allowed me to experience the Danish education system and to exchange ideas with Danes, as well as individuals from other countries. Simultaneously I was able to develop my Danish language skills and my understanding of Danish culture through independent reading and study.

During this time, I also completed an internship at Museum Tusulanum Press, an academic publisher affiliated with the University of Copenhagen. The welcoming staff there allowed me to experience working for a nonprofit publisher that is committed to the sharing of ideas. This opportunity moreover allowed me to develop friendships and social contact with Danes and to practice my Danish language skills. I am grateful to MT Press's generosity.

Marianne Stoelen's mentorship and the many activities and excursions which she organized, and which the SCAN/DESIGN foundation funded, were especially enriching aspects of my study abroad experience. Thanks to Marianne and to the SCAN/DESIGN Foundation's generosity, I and the other participants enjoyed multiple Danish meals and comraderie in Marianne's home; visited such cultural places at the Louisiana Art Museum and Statens Museum for Kunst; and experienced Danish and Scandanavian culture at Marianne's summer home Oasen and in Lillehammer and Oslo, Norway. These opportunities made my abroad experience one of greater cultural and personal meaning, as I was exposed to more of Scandanavian culture and developed friendships with others reflecting on their relationships to Scandanavian culture.

I was also quite pleased with my housing situation at Bikuben Kollegiet while living in Copenhagen. Though this dorm was a bit more expensive than most, its studio apartments and accompanying communal areas provided me with a perfect balance of community and privacy.

As with any enriching experience, I faced challenges during my stay in Denmark as well. I initially found the Danish university system a bit difficult to navigate, though the staff at KU's International Office was helpful in this regard. I initially was under the impression that one can visit most classes during the first week of courses without registering and then decide what one would like to enroll in. I found, however, that many courses were already overenrolled, so this approach did not prove feasible. Another confusion involved taking exams: because the UW Scandinavian Department had informed me that I would have completed all coursework by the end of May, I scheduled to return to the States on May 30. I learned in April, however, that university exams did not begin until June 2. Though I was able to work around this, I would have preferred to have left at a later date so that this issue would not have arisen. I realize that the University of Copenhagen unfortunately does not have a set schedule for examinations, and I would suggest that future SCAN/DESIGN fellows be informed of this. Another matter regarding exams: I did not initially know that one must be registered in a particular department in order to take exams through it. If a student wishes to take exams in multiple departments, she should be sure that he is registered as a student in each of those departments.

The financing of study in Denmark is another challenge. Because Denmark, and Copenhagen in particular, is rather expensive, this required being very careful with my money. I appreciate the SCAN/DESIGN Foundation's generosity in supporting students financially. I would suggest that students be made aware of the expenses which they can anticipate having while living in Denmark (I found generally expenses are about twice what they might be in the United States), and I recommend that students have an additional source of money should they find themselves in need of it.

Here are some additional pieces of advice that I would recommend giving to future fellow recipients:

- Many of my friends had difficulty setting up accounts with Danske Bank – I used Nordea Bank without troubles
- Both I and another fellow had trouble wiring money from our American accounts once we were in Denmark, despite that our American banks had told us this would not be a problem (students may wish to have a transfer arranged through family or friends, or else make a special appointment with a bank manager who normally handles such transfers)
- The KU online calendar (which can be found through KU's homepage) provides a list of events and lectures which students might not otherwise learn about.
- The Latin Quarter has some more affordable cafes and restaurants than much of the rest of the city.

I hope that this information proves useful for UW's International Program's Office, the SCAN/DESIGN Foundation, and future fellowship participants. Thank you again for this enriching experience, and please let me know if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,  
Andrea Baer