

EXCHANGE STUDENT EVALUATION REPORT

Student Name: Emily Devine

Institution where you studied: Copenhagen Business School

Semester of participation: Spring 2019

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1. Pre-Exchange. Why and Where:

- a. Why did you decide to study in the US or Denmark as an exchange student?
 - I have Danish roots so I thought it would be interesting to explore the country of my great grandmother and grandfather.
 - I wanted to be in Europe so that I would have easier access to different countries and cultures. I wanted to be able to travel to as many different places as possible, while having a comfortable and safe home-base.
 - I was drawn to the active and healthy lifestyle that people said Denmark had.
- b. Why did you select the program/University?
 - I knew someone who did the program and recommended it to me because she loved the school and the environment
 - It was a less popular option within my university, which I thought would provide me with the opportunity to branch out and meet new people from different backgrounds – which I did ☺
- c. What were your expectations?
 - I expected for Copenhagen to be very dark and cold when I arrived. I was worried this would make me homesick and I would be less inclined to meet people. This turned out not to be the case. The weather was not nearly as bad as I expected, and I quickly made friends in my dorm. We explored the city even in the chilly weather!
 - I expected the classes to be a bit easier than Madison. I wouldn't say they ended up being easier, it was just a different learning style overall. Definitely an interesting experience.
- d. What preparations did you make prior to departure?
 - I knew that Copenhagen is known to be expensive, so I packed a lot of extra toiletries for the semester. I tried to bring as much as I could so that I didn't have to worry about stocking up on items once I got there.
 - I looked ahead to plan classes and ensure that I was taking classes that would count for my major. I also researched the process of getting a visa and started that early so that if there were any issues, I could sort them out as soon as possible.
- e. How could you improve your preparations?
 - I could have been more familiar with the language. I did not take the time to learn simple vocabulary which could have been very beneficial, especially when grocery shopping and traveling around on my own.
 - I could have looked into getting a bike earlier on or understanding public transportation more than I did.

2. ARRIVAL/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

- a. Recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

- Buy a metro pass on the app and/or a bike. Bike rentals for the semester are convenient but if you can buy one off of someone online than you might save money.
 - Go to a local grocery store / coffee shop / mall and just walk around to become familiar with where things are / the difference in language. Becoming familiar with where you live really makes you feel more comfortable and at home. You also will quickly learn how to get around and simple social behaviors that locals use.
- b.** Comment on the orientation and activities offered at both your home University and the host University, what did it cover and how did it help you prepare / adjust after arriving?
- At my University we had a study abroad class where we learned basic information about going abroad, along with getting the opportunity to meet students who are in your program or did your program in the past. This was a great opportunity to ask simple questions such as banking options abroad, phone plans, etc. I also met a lot of Danes and other students that would be in Denmark during the ScanDesign activities and dinner. This was also a great opportunity to learn more about what to expect and the culture.
 - CBS had one week of a Danish class that you could take upon arrival that had many social activities involved. I did not participate in this, but I heard good things from other students who said that it was nice to make friends so early on. I participated in the orientation week and paid for the additional social activities that occurred for that week. I highly recommend doing this as it was a great way to make several friends within your housing and in your program quickly. Just remember that everyone is in the same position and people are just as eager to find people to connect with.

2. ACADEMICS:

- a.** Evaluate the instruction you received. Compare the following to your home institution's system:
- class registration
 - A bit more confusing, only because I had to keep checking that the classes I was choosing would be approved as a class equivalent to the classes I needed at my home university.
 - I was surprised that, unlike at Madison, you cannot choose your own schedule. You just choose the classes you want and if they overlap, you are responsible for finding a new class. This also made it more complicated because I was trying to fit in all my classes and ensure that I was done by a certain date, so I had a lot of overlapping classes.
 - classroom structure
 - The lectures are much longer than at Madison. Lectures are about 3-4 hours long with breaks in-between. This was new to me and took some time to adjust to.
 - Because CBS has a large exchange population, classes are filled with students of all different backgrounds. This means that for group projects, you could be paired with someone who does not speak English as their first language. This can be challenging but it is also a great opportunity to learn about other cultures and work together to help each other out.
 - instruction
 - I was surprised that almost all classes were big lectures. Many professors encourage participation in the lecture, but it is not mandatory. Workshop classes, or classes that you work on practice problems, are especially helpful.

- Lectures cover a vast amount of material in a short time. Therefore, professors focus less on the details and try to give a big-picture understanding of the material. Missing one class could mean missing information on four chapters.
- teacher/student relations
 - Similar to Madison, student / teacher relations are not as personal among big lectures unless you take the time to go to your professor's office and talk to them one-on-one.
 - Volunteering and asking questions throughout lecture help the professor get to know you and remember you, which is very useful if you need their help on projects or preparing for the exam.
- grading/exams
 - Grading is very different from at Madison. For most classes the final exam, whether it is a paper, oral, or written exam, is your final grade for the class. Therefore, attendance and exercises are all optional. However, the only way I was able to learn the material was through these exercises and through attending lectures.
 - The written exams are longer than exams at Madison. It was a new experience being able to use notes and other materials for open-note exams. Furthermore, oral exams were new to me as well. It was interesting being able to talk one on one with my professors and have a conversation showing my knowledge of the material.
- administration
 - There were no occasions where I had any issues with which I had to contact administration while attending CBS.
 - Before coming to CBS I knew I had to leave my program early due to a wedding I had. Administration was helpful in working with my counselor at home to suggest classes and schedules that would allow me to finish my classes on time.
- library, computer, and classroom facilities
 - The classroom facilities exceeded my expectations. They were all modernized and clean. They were also easy to navigate. I often chose to do my homework in the school buildings because of their environment.
 - There were issues with wifi within the buildings occasionally, but overall I was satisfied with the accessibility of the internet and tools such as printing and copying.
- b. Evaluate the quality and content of instruction.**
 - I was surprised at the difference in the lack of detail we went over with the content compared to Madison. The general content itself was probably similar to what I would have learned in Madison. However, at CBS the professors mainly focus on the big topics and look for students to interpret the content themselves.
 - Although this was different than what I was used to, I enjoyed this approach to the content and found less pressure to memorize small details. Instead, I challenged myself to think of the content on a personal level and establish interpretations myself.
- c. In general, what did you like best and least about the academics?**
 - I least liked the pressure of having one exam grade determine your grade for the course. I am not the best test taker, so I would have preferred to have been evaluated based on more criteria.
 - I mostly enjoyed the conversations professors started in lecture and how they used just the general concepts of the course to ignite these conversations. Avoiding memorization of, for example, equations and

vocabulary, allowed me to apply the concepts to a greater context and on a more personal and useful level.

- d. Are there any courses or instructors you would recommend to future students?
- I really enjoyed Global People Management.

3. HOUSING:

- a. How would you assess the housing arrangements?
- I am happy with where I ended up. I had no idea what to expect but with satisfied with the set-up and location of my dorm (Porcelæshaven). I had my own space an ability to cook within my room, which was very useful.
 - It was very helpful that kitchen supplies, bedding, cleaning equipment etc. was all provided. There was very little that I had to purchase for my room.
- b. How did you locate your housing?
- I talked to people who did the program and they made recommendations.
 - I looked into good locations in Copenhagen to live along with researching the distance from different dormitories to campus.

4. EXCHANGE SITE:

In general, please describe your impressions of the host University campus and its location and surrounding community.

- I loved the area in which I lived and the location of the campus (mainly the Frederiksberg area). I felt extremely safe and public transportation was easily accessible, so I could venture into the city center conveniently. I lived by a beautiful park and felt so lucky to be surrounded by such a welcoming and friendly community.

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Describe any health or safety concerns (e.g., quality of medical facilities, unsafe districts, theft, etc.) associated with your study.

- I felt extremely safe and comfortable throughout my study.
- We received our own medical card and doctor information from the Danish government. I had a hard time figuring out how to schedule an apartment but was overall satisfied with the convenience of having medical assistance easily accessible.

6. CULTURAL ASPECTS:

- a. How did you integrate into the host country culture and meet members of the community? (e.g., mentors, clubs, sports, extracurricular activities, pubs, etc.)
- The social activities I participated in during my first week ignited my involvement within the community by introducing me to other students and members of the community that volunteered to provide Danish meals and taught us elements of the culture such as Danish Folk Dancing.
 - I also met a lot of students who had been studying in Denmark for a year prior to my arrival. They welcomed me into the community by inviting me to dinners, going shopping with me, visiting parks and historical buildings, and teaching me the bike rules ☺
- b. Describe cultural differences and challenges you encountered and how you addressed them. (e.g., gender issues, social etiquette, stereotypes, etc.)
- N/A

7. FINANCIAL:

- a. Describe how the Scan|Design Foundation Fellowship assisted you / made a difference in your decision to study abroad.

- ScanDesign allowed me to meet so many Danish students in Madison that helped ease my stress of moving across the country. They answered so many of my questions and were available while I was in Denmark to assist me and hang out. ScanDesign also created a community within Denmark of students from my home country. While in Denmark, we were always provided with amazing opportunities to join on tours and other activities. This made me comfortable, knowing I have that community if I ever feel alone in Denmark. I also could always look forward to the next activity if I didn't have my own plans.
 - Because I would continue having to pay for housing in Madison on my own while I go abroad, I do not think I would have been able to go abroad or have any of the traveling experiences I had without the financial assistance of the Fellowship.
- b.** What is the best way to access/transfer money?
- I used my Visa debit card for almost all transactions abroad. It was the easiest and simplest.
 - Because apps like Venmo do not work for students from different countries, TransferWise is a great app to transfer money to other students that have foreign bank accounts.
- c.** How much spending money do you recommend per month? Please include rent, food, transportation, etc.
- Approximately 1,000usd. A monthly transportation pass is \$60, phone bill through Lebara is \$20, groceries are approximately \$100, and rent is around approximately \$700.
- d.** Comment on the relative "cost of living" between your home University and the host University.
- Copenhagen is extremely expensive compared to Madison. It definitely involved adjusting my spending behaviors. Choosing to cook for every meal, packing snacks, going to discount supermarkets, and avoiding buying drinks on a night out were all things that helped me cut costs.

8. EXCHANGE/SCAN | DESIGN FELLOWSHIP COORDINATORS AND ADMINISTRATION:

Coordinator team

Comment on the assistance by the Scan|Design Fellowship coordinators and administration before your departure, upon arrival, and during your stay. What worked and what could be improved or changed?

- Scan Design was extremely helpful, especially before my stay. They laid the foundation of what I should expect and allowed me to meet both Danish and American students that I would stay in touch with throughout my stay.
- They provided so many activities and opportunities to sight-see during my stay, which I really appreciated. I wish there would have been more activities during the week, since I was away a lot of weekends.

Activities

Comment on the number and type of activities arranged by the coordinators. What worked and what would you like replaced with some other activity.

- I thought it was the perfect amount – I wish I could have attended more.
- Suggestions for activities we should add to the program
- N/A

9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE:

Describe the type of student for whom this exchange is best suited and what advice would you give to future students.

- This exchange is best for students who can be independent, open to make new friends, able to control expenses and adapt to a new environment, and interested in living an active and adventurous lifestyle.
- My advice is to not be afraid to make new friends and ask people to hang out. This program offers the amazing opportunity of becoming friends with people from all over the world and learning new things. One of my favorite things to do was to invite a group of people to go to the park and have a picnic. It was cheap and a great way to enjoy the weather and talk.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

- a. How would you rate the quality of the overall experience?
 - The experience exceeded my expectations. I truly think I made the most of the time I had. I surprised myself on how much I grew, everything I learned, and how much it shaped me into a stronger person.
 - I made friends from all over the world that I will have for the rest of my life. I was exposed to so many different cultures and embraced the cities I visited in every way I could. I learned how to adapt and overcome challenges I faced.
- b. How realistic were your academic and personal expectations and how did the Scan|Design Fellowship Program make a difference?
 - My expectations were mostly accurate. I ended up having to teach myself a lot more than I expected, academic wise, due to the independent learning environment. But I loved learning about business from the point of view of foreign professors and peers.
 - Overall, Scan Design made my whole experience and transition smoother and more comfortable. I felt as though I had a solid community and support throughout my experience. I knew I could reach out to them if I needed anything, which was extremely reassuring.
- c. What did you consider to be the greatest benefit and challenge of studying abroad?
 - The greatest benefit of studying abroad was learning more about myself. It was so hard leaving my family and friends and moving to a foreign country without knowing anyone. I became so independent and realized the vast amount of challenges I can overcome on my own. I made an amazing group of friends who I will remember forever and plan to visit in the future. I tried my best to live in the moment, go out of my comfort zone, and just have fun. I learned so much and will be returning home with insight and strengths that I never had before.
 - The biggest challenge was being independent in a country where I was not completely familiar with the culture and language. There were several times where I felt homesick and lonely and wanted the support of my friends and family. Overcoming this, as mentioned before, became my greatest strength. I could not have done it without the presence of my new friends who pushed me to enjoy every moment I had abroad.