

## EXCHANGE STUDENT EVALUATION REPORT

**Student Name:** Krista Hertel  
**Institution where you studied:** CBS  
**Term(s) of participation:** Fall 2014  
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### 1. WHY AND WHERE:

**a.** Why did you decide to study in the US or Denmark as an exchange student?

I decided to study in Denmark for a variety of reasons. The most prominent reason was its reputation on the University of Wisconsin campus. Denmark was known to be an excellent host to exchange students. Not only did Denmark offer a great education but it also had a unique heritage. Scandinavia has a rich history of socialism and is a forerunner for environmental practices.

**b.** Why did you select the program/University?

I selected Copenhagen School of Business because it was the university associated with the business school at the University of Wisconsin – where I study. Both schools participate in an exchange program every semester.

**c.** What were your expectations?

My expectations were to explore Copenhagen, learn about Scandinavia, and meet lots of great people. When I first arrived, I expected the Danes to know English but was extremely impressed by the fluency with which each citizen spoke English.

**d.** What preparations did you make prior to departure?

Prior to my departure — I obtained my visa, registered for classes online, organized my housing, and checked that all my shots/medications were up to date.

**e.** How could you improve your preparations?

The University of Wisconsin requires study abroad participants to take a one-credit course before they leave. The course helps students plan for their time abroad and gives lots of tips on how to make sure they are prepared. This course and the Copenhagen Business School staff made my preparations easy. CBS provided me with housing and assisted with visa/resident permit information. In all, my preparations went very smoothly.

However, I did find that there was lots of information being thrown at me from UW-Madison and CBS. Making friends with others going abroad helped because sometimes they caught information I missed.

### 2. ARRIVAL/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

**a.** Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

CBS sets aside housing for exchange students every semester – this was where I stayed. My dorm was a great way to meet new people and find peers to explore the city with.

**b.** Please 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 adapt?

**The University of Wisconsin Madison** – offered a one-credit study abroad course. The course was required for all students going abroad. It covered a variety of topics including visas, travel trips, international health care, emergencies, and education. It was a great way to meet the people you were traveling with and make sure you were prepared to go abroad.

**Copenhagen Business School** – offered a full week of orientation activities. The activities typically included powerpoints filled with information about the school, administration, housing, grades, and clubs/activities. They also provided students with a buddy. Buddies were local students who picked exchange students up from the airport and provided them a contact for any questions they might have. In addition, a social week package was offered. The social week contained various activities and sightseeing events throughout the first week that got students acquainted with their peers and the city.

## **2. ACADEMICS:**

**a. Please evaluate the instruction you received. Compare the following to your home institution's system:**

- class registration – The process for CBS and UW-Madison were very similar. The classes and their descriptions were offered in advance. Then students were asked to enroll. However, UW-Madison based enrollment on seniority while CBS was random selection.

- classroom structure – Each class at CBS was typically once a week for several hours. Lectures included a presentation, group-activities, and periodical breaks. UW-Madison typically has each class twice a week. Like CBS, they do a great job of mixing presentations and group-activities. However, based on the size of the class, there may be a discussion once a week as well.

- instruction – Instruction was similar in both schools. Professors liked to get students involved. However, most of the learning came from PowerPoint slides that the professor presented to students.

- teacher/student relations – In both universities, this is always very dependent on the teacher. However, most of the professors I've had go out of their way to help students learn. They make themselves available for office hours and are always willing to answer questions.

- grading/exams – The exam schedule, homework, and grading system were significantly different between the two schools. CBS only had one exam at the end of the semester for each class. While a class may have a group presentation during the semester, the presentation wasn't graded. Exams were usually group projects with an oral exam, a four-hour sit-in exam, or a paper. This contrasts significantly with Wisconsin where there is usually a minimum of three graded exams a semester – two midterms and a final – and homework throughout. Instead of a letter grading system, Denmark had a numerical one.

- administration – The administration at both schools are very involved. They send out newsletters and important information. I will say that UW-Madison has a much faster turn-around for grades and administrative action. We were told our grades would transfer back in February and they didn't get them to us until mid-March.

- library, computer, and classroom facilities – Both schools offer libraries for students to study at. CBS recommends students to sign-up for a spot in the library if they wish to use it. UW-Madison has better computer facilities and more libraries. However, the school has more than double the student population so that isn't surprising. Classroom facilities are always hard to judge. The newer the buildings on any campus have better the facilities. There are some great lecture halls and classrooms. Then there are a few that are a little more uncomfortable since they have not been updated in years.

**b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction –** In both schools, you got out of each class what you put into it. I had teachers at CBS who kept my attend better during class so it was easier to follow along. Then there were teachers to who were very boring and mono-toned. I think that comes with the territory. However, at both schools I felt that I had learned a significant amount at the end of each semester.

c. In general, what did you like best and least about the academics?

In the context of study abroad, I believe only having one exam at the end of the semester worked well. This freed up time to explore the city, meet new people, and try new things. However, I'm not sure this would be my favorite method of examination. It is difficult to motivate yourself to stay on top of readings and lectures when there is only one exam.

d. Are there any courses or instructors you would recommend to future students?

I took a negotiation course at CBS that was interesting. It taught you a lot about compromise and finding situations where everyone wins. Also, I took two classes on European topics – The European Union and Scandinavian sustainability. These classes were great because you got to learn about another country and how it differed from your own.

### 3. HOUSING:

a. How would you assess the housing arrangements?

During my stay, I lived in a dorm with 65 other exchange students from around the world. My housing was clean (with the exception of the communal kitchens), up-to-date, and all the furniture was included. Bedding, towels, and Internet were included into the monthly rent.

b. How did you locate your housing?

Copenhagen Business School works closely with exchange students to make sure they find housing. They have a fair amount of housing set aside for exchange students. However, the students that do not register early enough for housing are given alternative contacts for private housing options.

### 4. EXCHANGE SITE:

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

My campus was located in Frederiksberg. This location was great. It allowed us to be outside of the city center, which was always busier. However, we still had easy access to downtown. Getting there by bike, metro, or bus was easy and hassle free. The campus itself was very spread out. Luckily all of my classes were in the two closest buildings. CBS had a bar/cafe on its main campus and during the beginning of fall semester there was always plenty of room outside of the building to hang out and enjoy the sun before it got cold.

### 5. HEALTH AND SAFETY:

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

I had no health or safety concerns during my time abroad. All the areas around me were safe and filled with friendly people.

### 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.)

CBS set students up with 'Buddies' before we arrived. Buddies were local students who picked you up from the airport, answered questions, cooked traditional Danish dinners, and provided you with a friend upon arrival. Buddies were a great way to meet locals and find out more about what it was like to be a Danish citizen.

b. Describe cultural differences and challenges you encountered and how you addressed them. (e.g., gender issues, social etiquette, stereotypes, etc.)

Before I say anything else, I will say that Denmark might be the only country with its own color – Black. While Danish citizens wore other colors, there was a heavy emphasis on black. Upon my arrival back to the states, I noticed my wardrobe started to mimic this as well. As in most European countries, smoking is more common in Denmark than the United States. It was common to see Danish students outside buildings taking a smoking break. Students were even allowed smoking breaks during some exams. This was challenging since I prefer not to be around smoke. However,

its easy enough to avoid and people were generally very respectful. Danish people are also a bit more reserved at first. However, after getting to know them a bit more they are super friendly and entertaining.

## **7. FINANCIAL:**

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

Honestly, my heart had been set on studying abroad in Denmark since I was a sophomore. Since I studied abroad as a fifth year senior, this meant Copenhagen was my dream location for two years. I even postponed study abroad a semester to make sure I could go to Copenhagen. Therefore, the Scan|Design Foundation fellowship did not influence my decision at all. However, it did help with the financial burden and made my experience much more enjoyable.

- b. What is the best way to access/transfer money?

Many of my friends opened a Danish Bank account. They seemed to enjoy the flexibility it allowed them. However, I used a credit card that didn't have international fees for everyday purchases. To withdraw money from ATMs, I used my debit card. My bank is a small, local bank and the fee to withdraw money from abroad wasn't that bad. However, I still made sure to withdraw a decent sum of money each time to make the fee worth it.

- c. How much spending money do you recommend per month? Please include rent, food, transportation, etc.

Unfortunately, I was poor at keeping track of my expenses. I will say that my biggest expense abroad was food. My guess would be 100 DKK a week. I only ate out four or five times in Denmark because of the cost. It was easy to spend 15 to 20 dollars on a very basic meal out. For any student going to Denmark, I would recommend a bike. They typically cost anywhere from 600-1200 DKK. However, it saves you a lot of money in the long run since you can avoid using the metro/bus on a regular basis. My rent was 6008 DKK a month for the dorm.

- d. Please comment on the relative "cost of living" between your home University and the host University.

I will say that autumn was the wrong semester to go abroad from a financial standpoint. When I wire transferred my rent to the landlords, the Danish Kroner/Euro was strong against the dollar. Therefore, my rent was exceedingly high -- over a \$1000 a month. My average rent at UW-Madison is about half of that. However, dorms tend to be more expensive than private housing. When I was a freshman at UW-Madison, I paid \$850 for my dorm. Food is also cheaper at UW-Madison where my money stretched a bit farther. However, I found that clothes costs were fairly similar at places such as H&M. In addition, the campus at UW-Madison is less spread out so it is easier to walk. However, if a student wanted a bike at Madison, the prices would probably be comparable.

## **8. EXCHANGE/SCAN|DESIGN FELLOWSHIP ADMINISTRATION:**

- a Please comment on the assistance and activities by the Scan|Design Fellowship coordinator before your departure, upon arrival, and during your stay. What worked and what could be improved or changed?

Scan|Design reached out to us before we left the states. Once I arrived in Copenhagen we were invited to a dinner where we got to meet other participants. They planned several trips and activities throughout the semester for students. This included a tour of The Deer Park north of the city, a soccer game (which I was sadly out of town for), and a trip to Aarhus.

- b. Please evaluate services and effectiveness of the University administrative offices.

Everyone involved was friendly and went out of their way to make everything as easy as possible.

## **9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE:**

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

I think one of the greatest things about Denmark is that it is so diverse – it can appeal to a variety of people. It's full of history, scenery, parks, and shops. There's a large student population and plenty of cafes, bars, and clubs to go to. Some of the best activities were things like Culture Night where the city had events going on to showcase all Copenhagen/Denmark had to offer. It would be hard to find someone who couldn't love Copenhagen or this exchange. Well maybe if a student hates biking or bikers, then they might be in for a shock.

**10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:**

**a.** How would you rate the quality of the overall experience?

10 out of 10! I don't think there's a day that's gone by where I haven't wished to be back in Copenhagen.

**b.** How realistic were your academic and personal expectations and how did the Scan|Design Fellowship Program make a difference?

When I went to Copenhagen, I wanted to see and do everything. The Scan|Design Fellowship Program helped lift the financial burden so I could focus less on cutting costs and more on exploring Copenhagen. In addition, they held amazing events that allowed students to see important parts of Danish culture with tour guides that made the experience even better.

**c.** What did you consider to be the greatest benefit and challenge of studying abroad?

The greatest benefit was the friends and memories I made. At my home university, my focus is on school. It was rare for me to go to local activities and events. However, in Denmark my goal was to learn and see as much about Denmark as I could. We went to Culture Night, The Deer Park, explored local shops, and went to museums and historical buildings on a regular basis. While I am sure that Madison has similar offerings, I never felt rushed to see anything. My time was limited in Denmark so I wanted to use it wisely. One of my favorite days was biking three hours in the rain with a group of friends to the Louisiana Museum. I never would have done this at home. We would have drove and missed out on the whole experience. Studying abroad is an experience – the more adventures and trips you take, the greater the memories. The only challenge was being away from my family during holidays. However, my dorm always did group dinners that made being away from home easier.

**FEEL FREE TO ADD OTHER COMMENTS YOU MAY HAVE.**