

## EXCHANGE STUDENT EVALUATION REPORT

**Student Name:** Lindsey Thompson  
**Institution where you studied:** University of Copenhagen – Direct Exchange  
**Term(s) of participation:** Spring 2015  
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### 1. WHY AND WHERE:

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

**My interest in Denmark started at a very young age. Thirty years ago, my grandparents hosted a Danish man and over the years they kept in contact and would visit each other. He came over to the U.S. when I was a senior in high school and I was inspired to visit Denmark. Freshman year of college, I signed up for classes that focused on Scandinavia, including Danish Language. The timing worked out perfectly for me to study abroad in Copenhagen for the Spring 2015 semester, so I applied in the fall and ended up coming to Denmark in January.**

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

**I selected the University of Copenhagen because I had heard a lot of great things about Copenhagen and the school program. There were many classes they offer that count towards my major, so it was the perfect fit. The direct exchange program with the University of Copenhagen worked out perfectly for the education standards I wished to pursue and the amount of free time that it allowed me was appealing.**

- c. What were your expectations?

**My study abroad experience was exactly what I was expecting. I was actually surprised about how the school system in my faculty, the Faculty of Social Sciences, was operated. I was expecting more homework and tests/quizzes in class, however, that wasn't the case. I definitely learned a lot about my class topics and understanding how Denmark takes different approaches to teaching their students.**

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

**Prior to departure from the U.S., I did a lot of research about things to do in Denmark, such as castles, museums, and tourist sites to visit, places to eat, how to get around in Denmark, what my school was like, and popular bars and café's to go to. I also prepared myself a lot for potential culture shock. I always kept in mind that I was in a completely different culture and really absorbed the fact that this is going to be one of the best experiences of my life. I haven't left Denmark yet, and don't leave for a little while yet, however, I have friends who have left so they are helping me prepare for coming back to the U.S.**

- e. How could you improve your preparations?

**I wish I had given more thought to what I packed to come to Denmark. I realized that I over packed. Half of the things I brought to Denmark I didn't even use or wear. I should have only brought one suitcase instead of two.**

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

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

If you are unable to move into your apartment right away I would suggest staying at a hostel in downtown Copenhagen. It is the easiest way to get a good feel of the city and meet people who will potentially be going to the same school as you. I also recommend getting a cab from the airport to your destination because figuring out the public transportation can be a bit overwhelming when first arriving in Copenhagen.

- 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?

Orientation was great at the University of Wisconsin – Madison. It was extremely helpful that previous study abroad students were there to give good recommendations about what to expect, how to rent/buy a bike, and the concepts of grocery stores and which are the cheapest, etc. In Copenhagen, my orientation was also fantastic. We talked about classes, exams, and other school related things. I also had the chance to meet most of my classmates, which helped me feel comfortable going to my first classes of the semester. We had dinner provided for us and we got to try a few Danish dishes that really gave us a good homey feeling.

## **2. ACADEMICS:**

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

- class registration

Class registration at the University of Copenhagen was different from my home university because it required emailing a registration form for each class I wished to take. At my home university, registering for classes happens all at once which is nice because you can see right away whether you will be in the class or not.

- classroom structure

Classroom structure was a lot different. I was not in any lecture halls. My classes were extremely small and each day there would be a different professor lecturing us on different topics related to the course.

- instruction

Since there were always different lectures in class, each class was a little different. Some were similar to my home university in the sense that there were more group discussions and more interaction between the students. Some instructors, however just gave us handouts and we followed along and took notes while they talked in detail about the topic for that day.

- teacher/student relations

Teacher/student relations were a lot different. Teachers weren't as focused on interacting with the students as much, however they were very helpful if I had questions about something I didn't understand during the class period. They were also helpful in clarifying questions via email.

- grading/exams

Exams were so different from my home university. At the University of Copenhagen, my exams included writing one long research paper at the end of each class. At my home university, I would have exams and quizzes throughout the entire semester.

- administration

Administration in Copenhagen wasn't centralized. Each department was separate, so if you were placed in two different faculties you had to contact each faculty individually to get questions answered.

- library, computer, and classroom facilities

**I didn't use the library as often as I use the library at my home university. However, the computer room was extremely helpful if I needed to print off anything for classes and final exams.**

- b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

**I really got the full education I was expecting here in Copenhagen. I was extremely satisfied with the structure and way of learning here in Denmark.**

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

**I really liked the concept of final exams here in Denmark. I was able to pick a topic I wanted to further explore, which enhanced my knowledge on the topic even more. The hardest thing about academics here was the language and understanding the point the teachers were trying to get across. Simple things like misspellings, phrasing, and words were hard to grasp. It really took a lot of concentration to think about what point the teachers were trying to get across.**

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

**I highly recommend future students take a Danish Culture Course. They are a great way to learn about Denmark as well as taking you on excursions to see the city and different areas of Denmark you wouldn't see otherwise.**

### **3. HOUSING:**

- a. How would you assess the housing arrangements?

**I booked my housing through the Housing Foundation that correlates with the University. They are, however, extremely hard to work with and aren't as available as they should be when residents have questions or need something fixed in their rooms.**

- b. How did you locate your housing?

**Once I was accepted into the university, I was sent an email about the Housing Foundation. From there, I had to apply for housing and do research on which apartment buildings I wanted to be potentially placed in.**

### **4. EXCHANGE SITE:**

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

**My campus was absolutely beautiful. It used to be an old hospital many, many years ago. It is very close to the city center and a five-minute walk away from one of the main public transportation hubs. There is always a lot of things going on at campus and a lot of students hanging out on campus during the day and even at night.**

### **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.

**Once I received my CPR card, I didn't have any health concerns. I knew that if something went wrong, I would be covered without any issues. I never once felt like I was in danger or unsafe.**

### **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.)

**Campus really had a lot going on to get me involved and helped me meet a lot of my fellow classmates.**

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

## 7. FINANCIAL:

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

**Scan|Design Foundation helped me a lot with my decision to study abroad. With Copenhagen being an expensive city, the foundation helped me to afford the things I really wanted to do and allowed me to immerse myself in the Danish culture**

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

**Depending on how much your home bank charges to use your card abroad should depend on if you want to set up a Danish bank account or not. I did not need to set one up but I have friends that did. A debit card with a chip is very helpful because some places only take a card that has a chip. I also took advantage of using the ATMs. Copenhagen does a great job of having a lot of ATMs scattered throughout the city, making it easy to take out cash whenever I felt like I needed it.**

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

**Depending on the price of your apartment, you will need at least \$800 a month for rent, food, and transportation. However, transportation may not be too expensive if you invest in a bike. With Copenhagen being a huge cycle city, it was safe and fast for me to use my bike as a means for transportation.**

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

**I definitely spent more money in Copenhagen than I do in Madison, but the reason behind this is because I spent a lot of money trying different café's and places to eat. I also spent more money doing/seeing tourist attractions.**

## 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 activities were a great way for me to do fun things in Copenhagen. It was also nice to meet up and do things with Danes and people from the states, including people who study at my home university.**

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

## 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.

**The University of Copenhagen offers a wide variety of programs, which makes it easy for almost any major to come to. This exchange is best suited for laid back people who are really looking to get a good feel of a different culture and who are willing to immerse themselves into the culture.**

## 10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

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

**My study abroad experience was absolutely amazing and I would not trade it for anything in the world. I had the best time abroad and I will be extremely sad to leave this beautiful country**

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

**My expectations were spot on. Having taken a few courses at my home university about Scandinavia, I had a good idea of what it was going to be like. The Fellowship Program helped me put myself out there when it comes to meeting Danes. Some Danes are hard to get to know and hard to understand what the way they feel, but I was more confident after the Fellowship Program helped me get started meeting Danes.**

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

**The greatest challenge of studying abroad would definitely be personal challenges. This includes things such as finding out what I stand for and believe in. It is really an eye opener to see the way things work in a different country compared to the states.**