

EXCHANGE STUDENT EVALUATION REPORT

Student Name: Alison Scoffins
Institution where you studied: Copenhagen Business School
Term(s) of participation: 2 (Summer and Fall)
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1. WHY AND WHERE:

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

Having decided to do a study abroad program fairly late, beyond most program deadlines, Denmark was one of the few programs still accepting applications, although I did have specific requirements. I was seeking an English-speaking program at a highly rated business school, where the costs were comparable to PSU tuition. Copenhagen Business School was the best choice. I didn't apply to any other exchange programs after doing research on Denmark and Scandinavia.

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

CBS is a fairly renowned institution and they are known for their faculty research department. Since it was a business school, I was able to transfer all my credits as if I had taken the core requirements at PSU.

- c. What were your expectations?

To be frank, I had no idea what to expect. I went in with very few expectations because I knew that no matter what I went in expecting, things would likely be different. I was anticipating the education style to be more rigorous, the entirety of your grade is in the final exam, which was stressful.

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

Prior to leaving for Copenhagen, I had to pack up my apartment, work out my financial aid, put my entire life in two suitcases and print a lot of documents for travel, housing, school, etc. OUS provided timelines that were really helpful. They also had great tips for traveling light. It didn't take that long to prepare for the trip: it was more a matter of knowing that what you take, is all you have for the next 7 months and if you forgot something just buy in there.

- e. How could you improve your preparations?

I could have benefitted from allocating and forecasting my finances better. I also would have had my family ship my winter clothes when the weather turned. Too much space was taken up with winter gear and I ended up not really having enough clothing. It was recommended to me to bring my own bike lock, helmet, etc. rather than purchasing it in CPH because of the high prices but after arriving, I didn't need any of those things.

2. ARRIVAL/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

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

- 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?

OUS held an informative session on what to expect when traveling abroad. It was a good way to get oriented with the program and meet others traveling to the same place. They discussed the differences in education, our responsibility as students representing Oregon universities, and culture shock. It did little to help me transition to being a student because it was more a general overview of being an exchange student than what it was actually like in Copenhagen. Most of the students were only 19-20 years old and hadn't traveled so I felt the lecture and information was directed more towards them regarding behavior, etc.

CBS had an amazing welcome party, a long day of orientation, and a lot of activities that we could participate in. They did a great job helping us transition into the university culture and guiding through the first few days. You could sign up for the buddy program and you would be assigned to a local student. I was really impressed with the high level of involvement between CBS and incoming exchange students.

3. ACADEMICS:

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

- class registration: an outdated and confusing system. I ended up having to meet with an advisor to sort it out.

- classroom structure: the classrooms were all lecture style in auditorium type rooms and attendance was never taken.

- instruction: The professors were required to use Power Points and share them with students after each lecture. The lectures varied based on professors but overall the depth of content was much more intense than at PSU and it was challenging at first but helped me develop more critical thinking skills.

- teacher/student relations: Professors were very willing to help students but more often than not, they were not the main contact for the class. It would be someone from administration.

- grading/exams: Your entire grade is in the final exam.

- administration

- library, computer, and classroom facilities: every classroom had tons of outlets, the majority of students brought computers. Everything was very clean and well designed.

b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

I was very satisfied with the quality of instruction; the professors are all highly qualified in both their fields and academic history. Only one course of the six I took didn't meet the standards but it was a fairly dry subject.

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

I loved the engagement with the professors. Most forced you to debate and think critically. The challenging part was not being able to really measure your comprehension of the material until the final exam which typically only covered a fraction of what was covered during the course.

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

4. HOUSING:

a. How would you assess the housing arrangements?

CBS offers international undergrads the opportunity to rent an apartment or dorm style room. While the university doesn't claim ownership, they facilitate the rental agreement and process. It was fairly confusing and extremely expensive considering what other students outside of the program were paying for rent. However, housing is very competitive in Copenhagen and it was definitely the easiest option. Students that didn't sign up right away were left to their own devices to try to find housing and those that couldn't had to stay in hostels or cancel their trip altogether.

b. How did you locate your housing?

I stayed in the dorms offered by CBS for the summer term and it was easy. For the fall term I decided to try to find more affordable housing. It was stressful, but I got lucky and met a girl that was looking for someone to take over her room in an apartment close to the city center. It was less than half of the cost of the dorm.

5. EXCHANGE SITE:

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

CBS has a clean and beautiful campus just north of the city center in Copenhagen. Everything is new or being updated, the food on campus was surprisingly affordable and delicious. Wi-fi and outlets are available pretty much everywhere on campus.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY:

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

7. 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.)

I integrated into the university life fairly seamlessly. It was easy because you were in a program with hundreds of other exchange students from all over the world. In order to meet people outside of the university, I used meetup.com to find common interest groups and events and met many people in class. I didn't meet enough Danes but I volunteered with TedxCopenhagen in order to do so.

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

8. FINANCIAL:

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

I don't know that I would have been able to study abroad without my scholarship, I am incredibly grateful I was given the opportunity.

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

All the financial aid is routed through PSU and deposited into your account after tuition is taken out. I also had a Visa where I didn't get charged exchange rate fees and could take cash out when needed, it was very convenient but may become difficult if more places stop accepting US credit cards versus the chip-and-pin cards.

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

This is hard to calculate, I would use the cost sheet provided by OUS for proper estimations.

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

Rent and transportation in Copenhagen are surprisingly affordable (assuming you are not in student dorms). It's everything else that is expensive. Food, books, going out, clothing, etc. are all very costly compared to Portland standards.

9. 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?

The coordinators did an excellent job organizing events during the fall but because I arrived in the summer, no one was running events during that time. The summer fellowship was also brand-new so I imagine that's why nothing had been organized. CBS did such a great job during the summer that I didn't feel like I was missing anything. That being said, most of the events Scan Design ran in the fall, I had already experienced with CBS. I wish I would have been able to participate in more of the activities but I chose to travel on most weekends.

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

The administrative offices were very kind and responded to all inquiries I had but they can be a bit delayed, particularly during the summer when everyone is on holiday. It was somewhat challenging finding out specific information, it seemed that many of the staff just didn't know the answers to things

10. 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.

This program is best suited for students that are non-traditional students looking for an exchange program in a very socially progressive society. Students looking to just party and drink would be better suited somewhere other than Copenhagen. There's so much culture and so many things to do that don't revolve around typically college life. The best advice would be to go open-minded and willing to meet people outside of your university and home country.

11. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

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

I had the most amazing experience in my entire life. CBS was a fantastic university and Copenhagen was beautiful. I met tons of incredible people, learned a lot about myself, and became much more aware of the world around me.

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

I struggled with personal expectations of how I would manage myself emotionally while abroad. And while I knew it was wrong to think this way, I went in thinking all my problems would disappear as soon as I was in Copenhagen. I got through the summer just fine but when I suddenly had a lot of time to myself, my mental state suffered as I was left alone to my thoughts and got very lonely and the significance of all the incredible change that I had just gone through finally sunk in. I would have been better off having more time to myself prior to departure, but I made it through! The Scan Design Program alleviated any sort of financial

stress that would have made things worse and there was a great group of people at every event. It was nice to know there was support there if I needed it.

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

Greatest benefit: Personal growth and developing critical thinking skills.

Greatest challenge: Personal growth and developing critical thinking skills.

FEEL FREE TO ADD OTHER COMMENTS YOU MAY HAVE.