

EXCHANGE STUDENT EVALUATION REPORT**WHY & WHERE:**

I chose to study in Copenhagen as an exchange student this past summer because of my attraction to the progressive culture the city had to offer. It is truly ranked one of the most livable places in to world for a reason. I selected Copenhagen Business School (CBS) because I was able to take business classes that easily transferred back to UW-Madison.

PREPARATION:

UW-Madison offers a great course to prepare for your study abroad that is required when you go through the Business School. However, the best part about it was getting to talk with previous participants and get their recommendations about the city, the school and travel. Before I left, I did a lot of research on the country and government, as well as tourist information from websites like visitcopenhagen.com. However, I wish I had done more historical research on the country, especially the state of the country during World War II. Upon arrival, the school offered orientation about the city, classes and getting around campus. I couldn't lie and say the orientation events were terribly helpful, but they were certainly worth it to meet other participants and gain a better understanding of other opportunities the university offered for international students.

ACADEMICS:

Taking classes at Copenhagen Business School was certainly different from UW-Madison, but it wasn't bad. Good attendance was expected, yet in a class with 80 students enrolled only about 30 students showed up on a good day. Because I consistently went to my classes, I had a very easy time with the midterm assignments and final exams. I had the same professor for both classes, so he knew my name and generally really made an effort to include all his students in discussion. However, I think the quality of the class content might have been sacrificed some because he knew that so many people were not attending his lectures, so he was constantly reviewing. It was certainly an adjustment to have your entire grade rely on only a final exam, but I think the professors recognize how stressful it is and seemed to make it easier than in the US. The facilities at CBS were really nice and it wasn't hard printing out assignments or buying books, as everyone that worked there was always eager to help.

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I lived in Porcelænshaven, a dorm in Frederiksberg very close to CBS. I loved the location, it was in a quiet, quaint area but it was very easy to get downtown by metro or bike. There was a CBS library in it as well, which was a really great place to study. I would definitely recommend this dorm, especially because even the 'double' rooms mean you have a separate bedroom from your roommate, you only share a bathroom.

EXCHANGE SITE:

The CBS campus was in Frederiksberg as well, with the main building right across from the Frederiksberg metro stop. The buildings were all really well kept, and wonderful examples of Scandinavian design in their architecture. They were all fairly close and easy to get to by metro or bike.

HEALTH AND SAFETY:

I think the only recommendation I would make regarding health is to bring a good amount of cold medicine with you from the US. I luckily had some with and when a little virus went around my dorm, I was the only one with the cold medicine, which went pretty quickly after I started sharing. In Denmark, you have to have a prescription for almost anything except cough drops. Also, bring your own Advil or Tylenol, since that isn't easily found either. In terms of safety, I can't remember a time a really felt unsafe. Of course, I always traveled in groups when going out at night, but we never had a safety issue no matter what part of town we were in.

CULTURAL ASPECTS:

I think the most important thing I did to integrate into Danish culture was to buy a bike. Because I had a bike, I could really explore and see parts of the city I would never have been able to if I relied solely on public transportation. I got to know the city so much better by navigating it and being able to stop whenever I saw a cute cafe or good-looking restaurant. My friends and I made an effort to go to more local places, rather than the American bars. For example, one night when it was really nice weather, we went to the Norrebro Bridge, which is known to be a local hang out. Everyone there was so nice, inviting us to join the party and being so welcoming. Also, do the social program, as there are so many Danish students that volunteer and they often hung out with us outside of

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events as well. I would say, in general, most Danish people were really nice. There was the occasional barista or waiter that was cold, but most people wanted to see where in the US we were from and how we liked the city.

FINANCIAL:

The Scan|Design scholarship was a huge help in my study abroad experience. Having part of my schooling paid for gave me the ability to have funds to travel with the program to Berlin and take day trips by train to Sweden and other parts of Denmark. The way I accessed money with the lowest fees once I got there is through the ISIC student debit card. It had my picture on it so it couldn't be easily stolen, I was able to use it to get student discounts a lot, and was also able to use it as an ATM card. It wasn't the easiest to put money on, but I did it as a direct transfer from my bank at home. If I hadn't used the ISIC card, my bank was going to charge me 3% for the foreign currency fee every time I used my US debit card, so definitely check with your bank before you leave about unexpected fees. Denmark is certainly a more expensive place to live than the US. Expect to pay at least \$5 for a cup of coffee and a good \$8 for a beer or \$15 for a cocktail. To save money, I bought a French Press and my friends generally didn't drink much once we went out. I also cooked a lot. At the grocery store, healthy food is relatively well priced, but 'junk' food is more expensive because it's heavily taxed. Despite the high costs, I tried my very best to be in my dorm as little as possible and soak up my study abroad experience the fullest. You might come back to the US broke, but looking back, you won't regret a thing.

STUDENT TYPE/OVERALL EXPERIENCE

This program is best suited for someone who is looking for something a little more outside the norm of a London or Spain typical study abroad program. You definitely have to be willing to step outside your comfort zone, especially if you're like me not knowing anyone else on the program before leaving. While the social program can help you meet people, I met my closest friends by not being afraid to approach a group of students sitting in the common room or striking up a conversation at a party. Whether or not you're the kind of person to say 'yes' to every opportunity to see more of the city or experience something new, be that kind of person in Copenhagen. Go to festivals and concerts, go kayaking, bike to an art museum 2 hours away, go to Sweden just

to have dinner. It was saying yes to these types of things that defined my overall experience and these memories that will hold as some of the best in my life. I made friends that I continue to keep in touch with and already have plans to visit around the country and hopefully the world. The greatest challenge of studying abroad became my greatest benefit, as I learned that I had the ability to travel halfway across the world without knowing anyone and make it an experience I'll look back on for the rest of my life. I know have the confidence and will to travel as much as possible for the rest of my life.