

Michael Lantier
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MPA & MUP Candidate
michaelslanthier@yahoo.com

I believe it was in the stairwell of Parrington Hall as I was on my way to meet with an Evans School professor, with a little time to spare, that I spotted a flier with opportunities to travel to Denmark. I was considering a concurrent degree with Urban Planning and thought travelling to Denmark could be a fascinating trip. At the Q&A orientation I listened to students just back from Copenhagen share the excitement of their Scan Design inspired travels. And so it was that I became motivated and determined to apply.

Summer worked best for me, though a whole semester would have been incredible. I worked with a professor of mine at the Evans School to sponsor an independent study and give a little guidance on what that would entail. The Scan Design and UW Study Abroad staff were of great help, answering my many innocuous questions.

As an independent student, all accommodations were to be made by myself. This gave me great flexibility to research and discover my particular interests, but I soon realized, without a school cohort, it takes extra work to get entrenched into Denmark culture. Luckily, I was introduced to great people by a friend of mine that used to live in Copenhagen. I also met wonderful and open people after becoming a regular at a café and also on a basketball court in a local park. It was through these experiences that I learned the most about the culture of Copenhagen. I also learned that an independent study in the summer can be very difficult since so many leave for a month in June for their summer vacation. Such time for rest and relaxation help define Copenhagen as such a happy place.

Finances are a difficulty as well. Scandinavia is expensive, but that said there are many ways to make your experience less costly. First, housing! I stayed at a place on Airbnb for five days until I found a cheap place for the next 5 weeks. Two great places to look: <http://www.dortrinnet.dk/> and <http://boligsurf.dk/>. I found a room for cheap as two roommates took off to bike around France for their summer vacation. With a kitchen, food became much cheaper. Living in the Nørrebro neighborhood, there are many inexpensive markets and great kebabs for something quick. And with drinking in public completely acceptable, it's much less expensive to grab a few beers at a corner market and head to the park or beach or canals. And definitely get yourself a bike. It is incredibly easy to get around the city and beyond with a bike. I was able to borrow a bike for free from the hosts I rented my room from.

Life in Denmark was an incredible adventure. Most everyone I met was extremely helpful. For my independent study, many were very willing to make time for me and/or invite me to contact other knowledgeable individuals. The fact that many were on vacation in June was difficult, but August worked well for most. Working in the more diverse neighborhood of Copenhagen did provide some language barriers for deeper conversations. With a significant immigrant population, many are not only learning English but also Danish. For many it seemed their Danish was better than their English. Also expect that many resources and reports that may be of interest, may not be translated into English. So be prepared to have some things translated if they are important. This may become an additional expense.

Also, remember that the staff and professors in connection to Scan Design are not only helpful, but have great connections in Denmark. Professor Nancy Rottle was able to make a wonderfully helpful

connection as I did my research work. However, six weeks in Copenhagen can go quickly, so planning ahead is incredibly important or else you could find yourself quickly behind. The effort I put into research and sending out emails before heading to the airport, was incredibly helpful to get me on the fast track to finding what I needed.

I was interested in how urban environments can encourage connection and political participation, particularly in diverse neighborhoods. Denmark is an incredibly interesting place to engage in these questions. They take urban design as seriously as they do political participation, consistently experimenting. My favorite was the idea of "Free Range Children," making all environments safe and accessible to youth.

Scan Design inspired my travels to Denmark, affording me an inspirational trip and learning experience. I met incredible people from the Municipality and around the Nørrebro area who were more than willing to work with me and provide great insight into Danish culture. I would most definitely encourage all to apply.