

# Exchange Carleton University - Fall Semester 2015

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

I studied abroad in Ottawa (Canada) at Carleton University from September to December 2015.

## PREPARATION

When I heard it was possible to go on exchange in your third year, I immediately started to think about where I wanted to go. This was a difficult choice, because there were many interesting countries to choose from. I did however wanted to go to an English-speaking country and I heard many good things about Canada. After choosing for Canada, I compared the several universities and then decided I wanted to go to Carleton University in Ottawa. Also, an advantage of going to Canada is that you do not require a visa if you are a Dutch citizen.

After I got selected by the ESE, I had to start collecting the required documents (copy of passport, official transcript and proof of English proficiency) and filling in the incoming exchange application form. One of the requirements for going to Carleton is that you have to submit proof of English proficiency. This can be done by taking a test and getting a high enough score. There are several tests that they accept. One of them is the TOEFL test, which I took. There is no reason to be afraid for this test, it should not be a problem to obtain the required score. However, you should do the test as soon as possible. It can take a few weeks before you receive your score. After I had all the required documents and filled in the application form, I had to give it to the exchange coordinator at the EUR, who sent it to Carleton University by mail. You should keep in mind that this takes some time to arrive by mail, so be sure to account for that as well.

I received my letter of acceptance and student number in June. This allowed me to login to my student account. Here, I had to pay my student fees, which include fees for the U-Pass (public transport card) and the UHIP (university health insurance plan). You have to make sure to pay all fees listed on your student account, or else you won't have access to your grades at the end of the semester.

Another thing you can do with your student account is applying for residence. I would not recommend doing this, because to apply you have to pay quite a lot of money and you are not guaranteed to get a room. None of the exchange students I met were able to live in residence.

I also made use of the exchange student checklist which the university has on their website. This checklist showed exactly what needed to be arranged before and after arrival.

## **ARRIVAL**

Three weeks before the start of the academic year, I left the Netherlands and flew to Canada. It is important to have your letter of acceptance with you, because you will have to show it to the customs at the airport when arriving in Canada.

I arrived three weeks in advance, because I did not have a room yet. This gave me enough time to search for a place to live off campus. However, it did require me to stay in a hotel till I found something. The university has a list on their website with rental listings. This made the search a lot easier. It took me three days to find a room close to the campus, but it can take a bit longer because most landlords do not like people that only want to rent for four months.

Before the classes start, you can pick up your student card and U-Pass on campus. The U-Pass is only valid after September 1, so if you arrive before you will have to buy a ticket if you want to use public transport.

In the first week of September there was an introduction week planned by the International Student Services Office (ISSO). There were a lot of activities for both international and exchange students, which allows you to meet other exchange students from all parts of the world.

## **COURSES**

I took four courses during the fall semester. All courses were 0.5 Carleton credits which is equal to 6 ECTS credits. Each of the courses had one lecture of three hours every week, so I had more than enough free time. The large difference compared to the ESE is that the final is a much smaller part of your final grade. Every course had assignments and a mid-term exam that together counted for around 50% of your total grade.

All courses were incorporated into my elective space.

### ***ECON3601A: Introduction to International Trade:***

This course showed us a few economic models that can be used to explain why countries trade and how certain trade patterns are formed. There were weekly in-class multiple-choice tests, three assignments and two large tests. This course was quite easy compared to the economics courses at the ESE.

### ***ECON3807A: European Economic Integration:***

In this course we looked at the history of European integration, using economic tools to examine several issues that occur with integration. We had to do two assignments, a mid-term exam and a final exam. The exams consisted mostly of essay questions, which made it a

bit more difficult compared to ECON3601, but still relatively easy compared to courses at the ESE.

ECON4025A: Game Theory and Economics

This course gave an introduction to the field of Game Theory. There were not many other students in this course, so the professor was very approachable and willing to help if needed. We also did several experiments in class, which was quite fun to do. By doing these experiments, you gained points for participation. This was 10% of your final grade. Other than that, we also had a mid-term exam and a final exam.

ECON4460A: Health Economics

This course showed how health care systems in various countries work and what kind of problems they face. This course was quite interesting and the professor was really nice and helpful. We had to do three assignments (mostly calculation problems), a mid-term exam and a final exam.

**FINANCES**

The total costs were a bit higher than expected, but this should not discourage you. Going on exchange is really worth it. This is an overview of my budget of my exchange:

<b>Expenses</b>	<b>€</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>€</b>
Flight tickets	1050	Holland Scholarship	1250
Housing	2120	Studiefinanciering	1100
Hotel	400	OV-card refund	400
Food	1100	Savings	3770
Travelling (Toronto, Montreal, Niagara Falls, etc.)	900		
U-Pass	130		
UHIP	135		
TOEFL	180		
Books	220		
Leisure	115		
Mobile phone (prepaid)	90		
Other	80		
<b>Total:</b>	<b>6520</b>	<b>Total:</b>	<b>6520</b>

**DAILY LIFE:**

Ottawa is the capital of Canada, and home of the Parliament of Canada. Even though the city is larger than Rotterdam, it certainly does not feel as a big city. There are a lot of things to do in the city itself, but most of the student activity happens on campus. There are many student associations you can join. Also, the ISSO plans all kinds of activities during the year.

The people in Ottawa are very friendly. If you ever need a recommendation for a place to go or if you are lost, most people would love to help. Also, Ottawa has a very good public transport system. You can get almost anywhere in the city by bus, and this is especially easy by using the U-Pass.

It is also really easy to travel during your exchange. Montreal is only 2 hours away, so you can get there in the weekends. And during the Fall break (one week) you could easily travel to Toronto, Niagara Falls or New York. There is also a lot of beautiful nature in Ottawa itself, but especially if you go a bit up north to Quebec. So if you are able to get a rental car, I highly recommend exploring the area.