

## Toronto Times

In the Fall-period of 2015 I studied four months at York University (YorkU) in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. The exchange took place from September until December 2015. Because the period was less than 6 months, I did not need any visa for studying in Canada. I did need to find the appropriate housing arrangement of course. I choose to live in residence on YorkU campus, where several residences were available and the host university would place you in one of them. Mine was Tatham Hall, where the living room, bathroom, and small kitchen were shared with about 20 other students living in the same hallway. I thought this was great to meet people and get together and hang out. In your private room you had a bed, closet, and desk; more than enough for four months.

## Introduction activities

There was an introduction one afternoon from the international office, in which you got some information and met a couple of other exchange students. This was just short introduction of the university, not really planned with activities. Although, they were really welcoming and told us we could always come by if we have any issues. I choose to join the 'Frosh Week', an introduction for freshmen at YorkU. This was a mistake for me; I did not attend many of the activities planned during Frosh Week. I was 22 at the moment and the frosh week was mostly attended by 18/19-year-old Canadian students. However, some of other exchange students I talked to did attend more activities of the Frosh Week and did enjoy it.

## Courses

I attended four courses in total, which I will describe now. *Supply Chain Management* and *Operations Management* will account for my obligatory courses and *Career Management* and *Reflecting on and Interpreting the International Educational Experience* will account for my electives. Every course accounts for 6 ECTS; in total 24 ECTS were accounted for.

1. **Supply Chain Management (SCM).** The course tried to provide strategies and knowledge about the planning, implementing, and controlling flow of material and

information in a supply chain. I thought this course was really interesting and useful for my studies as an economist. Although the lecturer took his time to get through all of the material, it was an attribute to my curriculum. The student's knowledge was tested by one midterm exam (30%), one final exam (45%), and two quizzes and three assignments (25%). It was a lot more work than courses at Erasmus, because of several moments through a term that knowledge was tested.

2. **Operations Management.** This course was actually a predecessor of Supply Chain Management, but the teacher made an exception for me because he was certain that a student from the Netherlands would be able to understand the material. The same lecturer as SCM taught Operations Management thus that made it easy to figure it all out. It was a bit easier than SCM, but still a nice attribute to my knowledge. The course gave mathematical solutions to process analysis, aggregate planning and other subjects such as inventory control. There were two Term Tests which accounted for 25% each, participation 5%, and the final exam accounted for 45%.
3. **Career Management.** Career Management was more a sociological or psychological course, although I would recommend it to all students. We learned about planning our careers and understand the rapidly changing environment in which our careers are set. We learned about how one should act during an interview, how one should manage one's career search, and certain theories that go along with this subjects. There were a lot of discussions in this course and I really liked that. The midterm accounted for 15%, 30% was a group project which consisted of a written report and a group presentation, participation was accounted for 25% and included group discussions, an individual essay was accounted for 10%, and a teacher-student oral exam was accounted for 20%. In this course again, a lot of assignments, but it really helped me in knowing what I want to become and want to pursue in my career.
4. **Reflecting on and Interpreting the International Educational Experience.** This course focused on the international educational experience and included not only exchange students with YorkU as a host university, but also YorkU students who had

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been away for a period of time to study abroad. That is why this course was so valuable; several students of Canadian, European, Chinese, and other backgrounds were put together to discuss the international experience and theories that tackle this subject. Attendance was accounted for 10%, an assignment for 20%, group presentation 25%, reflection paper 20%, final paper 20% and an individual presentation of 5%. Again, a lot of assignments.

### **Finances**

The housing and meal plan (that was mandatory living in residence) costed me a lot, about 3200 euros. But, this includes both food and living on campus. The sports facility cost 15 dollars, what was almost for free, and this was on campus so that was great. There were three bars at the campus, so it was really nice to go have a few drinks there most of the nights or just in the common living room. Alcohol is certainly much more expensive as in the Netherlands, so keep that in mind. Mandatory insurance was about 100 euros for four months and books about 200 euros in total. I spend about 800 euros for traveling, but this includes my plane ticket. A studying abroad experience costs a lot; I spent about 1500 euros extra unforeseen. But it was definitely worth it!

### **Daily life**

Now I will describe a 'normal' week for me at YorkU. I would play squash every week with a (Swedish) friend, I would play piano every week (free piano's on campus), I would study a lot as well, I would go to one or two of the students bar on campus a few days in the week, I would hang out in the common room in residence a couple of times a week, I would go downtown a couple of times a week visiting a game (football, ice hockey, baseball, basketball) or visiting theatre or museums. Most above described activities I would not do alone, but with other exchange students or Canadian students.

My experience was great! And if someone is interested in Canada or Toronto I would be happy to help and answer some questions!