

Australian National University

Exchange Fall Semester 2016/2017

Canberra - Australia

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General Information

I got the honor to spend my exchange semester at the Australian National University in Canberra, Australia. At first, Canberra might seem like one of the most boring capital cities in the world. Even though it does not feel like a capital city, Canberra has a lot to offer. From the beautiful nature, to the must see sights as the parliament, and of course clubs and bars. After I had spent some time there, I did not want to leave. With ANU situated in the centre of Canberra, everything is within walking distance. Above all, I got to meet a lot of amazing people from all over the world.

Australia is also really expensive, so be prepared for this. Even though I spent a lot of money during my exchange, it was definitely worth it.



ANU Campus



Unilodge Skitrip to Thredbo



View from Mount Ainslie

Campus

The ANU campus is huge! They even have busses to get from one side to the other. Since I only chose (business) economics related courses, I had most of my classes at the College of Business and Economics (which was very close to my room). Most of the student housing is situated on campus, but they are not always as close to each other. Although some of the buildings may look a little bit outdated, it is a really nice campus with good education. There is a little food court on campus together with the ANU Bar. Furthermore, ANU offers a lot of sport options on campus as well.

Preparation

Before I actually got there, I needed to take care of several things. After getting selected by Erasmus University, I needed to apply at ANU as well. The ANU exchange department will send you an email with all the details on how to apply. ANU requires certain language requirements, but since I am studying the English program (IBEB), I did not have to take a TOEFL test. Instead, I could ask the ESE for a language statement that declares that all my courses are taught in English. This will be sufficient for the language requirements of ANU. Together with your application, you will have to pick your courses as well.

Around March you will receive your offer letter from ANU. You will need this to apply for your student visa as well. Together with accepting your offer, you will have to pay for Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC), which is mandatory.

The application for university accommodation started around April. If you apply before the given deadline, accommodation is guaranteed. You can only give one preference regarding accommodation. However, it is not guaranteed that you will get that one. You might have applied for a non-catered room, but end up with a catered room. I applied for a non-catered, six-bedroom apartment in Lena Karmel Lodge, but got offered a three-bedroom apartment in Kinloch Lodge. Around June I received my accommodation offer. You will have to prepay two weeks of rent, a deposit, an application fee and a contribution to the Community Spirit Program (if you're staying at Unilodge). You can also order a kit that includes sheets, pans, towels etc. You will have to accept the offer within 72 hours by transferring the money. I highly recommend staying on campus, as you will experience what it is like living on campus. Off-campus housing in Canberra usually is a bit further away from the campus and city centre as well.



Kinloch Lodge

Arrival

I booked my flight in April, just after I received my ANU acceptance offer. Even though I didn't receive my accommodation offer yet, I calculated when I needed to be there. I arrived on a Thursday but my contract started at Friday, so I stayed at a hotel for one night. ANU also offers a free shuttle service from the airport (Canberra Airport) to wherever you are staying, which I made use of. I did not know that there are also buses (Murrays or Greyhound) from Sydney Airport to Canberra that stop really close to campus. The bus ride is only three hours and costs only 30 dollars, a lot cheaper than a flight.

After you check in to your room (for me this was the 8th of July), your pre-ordered package (with linnen, sheets, etc.) will be there as well. The room will be completely empty, so I highly recommend to order at least the sheets. You will probably need other things for your room as well, which can be bought cheaply at Target.

The day after I arrived, I went to Vodafone to get a sim only plan. I got a plan that provided 3GB data and unlimited phone calls for \$35 AUD a month. You will also need to open a bank account, as your rent needs to be direct debited from an Australian bank account. I opened a bank account at Westpac, which is free for students.

In the first week, ANU has their own 'Eurekaweek'. This week is more focused on getting to know ANU and the campus, as they do not have fraternities or sororities there. There will also be an exchange meeting where you will meet other exchange students. These are probably the people you will hang out with the most, so it is vital that you will be there to make friends. The ANU Global department also organized a potluck dinner for all the exchange students, which was really nice. Furthermore, they also organized a surf camp for those exchange students interested, which took place in October.

Daily Life

First of all, be prepared for cold weather the first three or four months. You will need a winter coat, trust me. Canberra can be quite cold during the winter months, unlike Sydney where it never actually gets cold.

There is quite some things to do in Canberra or just outside of Canberra. You can check out the parliament, chill at Lake Burley Griffin or the Commonwealth Park, go up Black Mountain, visit the War Memorial or go up Mount Ainslie (where you can spot a lot of kangaroos around sunset). You can also rent a car (or become friends with someone who has a car or can rent a car) and visit Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve, where they have koalas and a lot of kangaroos as well. You can also go to Sydney for a weekend

As for Canberra nightlife, it was way better than expected and really cheap as well. On Thursdays (student night) entrance is free everywhere, the whole night. On other days they will charge you only 5 or 10 dollars. Most of the times I went to Mooseheads downstairs first (cheap drinks before midnight!) and after midnight I would go to Academy.

Public transport can be a little bit hard to understand at first, but I didn't really make use of it that much, as almost everything was on walking distance. If you decide to make use of it, you will need a public transport card, which you can get for free.

Courses

I used the courses to incorporate them into my elective space. ANU requires you to take 4 courses that are worth 6 units. Each course will be worth 7.5 ECTS, which means a total of 30 ECTS. Personally, I found the level of education at ANU a bit lower than at Erasmus University. The teaching method is quite the same as EUR, with tutorials and lectures. They do, however, have more assignments than here. My tutorials lasted only for one hour, as well as most of my lectures. I chose the following courses:

Development Poverty and Famine (ECON2900)

This course focused on the question of why some countries are richer than others. The topics covered included explanations on why countries develop differentially, the effect of geography, institutions, foreign aid, corruption and differential, and saving rates on the large disparities across countries. Some of the topics that were covered, were also covered in the Macroeconomics course at EUR. There was a STATA assignment to be completed, as well as a midterm and a final exam. The midterm was part multiple choice and part essay questions. The final exam was only essay questions.

Corporate Finance (FINM2001)

This course is similar to Finance 1, but with more topics added. Specific topics to be covered include: financial mathematics, security valuation, techniques for capital investment decisions, financial decision making, corporate capital structure, cost of capital, dividend decision and policy, leasing decision and the analysis of mergers and acquisitions. For this course there was a midterm and a final exam, both only essay questions.

Introduction to Commercial Law (BUSN1101)

This course introduces you to the Australian legal system and the law regulating business activities. Particular focus is given to the law of contract. The course also covers the laws relating to particular types of business contracts such as sales of goods and insurance contracts. Aspects of property law and negligence are also covered. Since this course was related to the Australian legal system, it did not really make sense for me to choose this course. However, it was actually very interesting to know how things work in Australia. To complete this course I had to write two problem papers and one assignment. The final exam consisted of one part with multiple choice questions and one part essay questions.

Management Accounting (BUSN2011)

This course was similar to the management accounting part in the Accounting course at EUR, with some new topics added. A group assignment, midterm (part multiple choice, part essay questions) and a final exam (part multiple choice, part essay questions) were part of the course.

Finances

I spent more than I had in mind, but in the end it was all worth it. I did a lot of extra activities during my time traveling as well, which I did not take into account beforehand. The exchange rate was around 1,40-1,45 (so for 1 Euro you would get 1,40 AUD).

	€	\$
Flight	1450	
OSHC		322
Visa		550
Deposit + CSP + Application fee		1170
Linnen	85	
Travel insurance	35	
Hotel 1 night	55	
Sim only contract		210*
Rent		7200
Traveling	4800	
Daily life	+/- 2000	

* The guy who helped me with my contract put in the wrong bank account number. So the first three months someone else was paying my phone bill! When I figured out that he made a mistake, I changed my bank account number online. So I actually paid only 105 dollars.

This all sums up to more or less €15000, but once again, it was all worth it.

I have had the best time of my life during my exchange and would recommend it to everyone. It is a unique experience and you will not regret it for a second.

If you got any questions, or need any tips, don't hesitate to contact me!

