

# Carleton University – Ottawa, Canada

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## General Information

During block one and two of my third year of the international bachelor Econometrics and Operations Research, I went on exchange to Canada at Carleton University in Ottawa in 2016.

## Preparation

After I decided that I wanted to go to Canada on exchange, I choose three universities in Canada for my application at the ESE. In the beginning of February, I received a message that I was selected to go to Carleton University. As my bachelor is taught in English, I didn't need to have to do a language test. I only needed a proof of English from the university stating that I'm in an English taught program. Because the exchange was for less than six months, I also didn't need a student visa. However, since October 2016 an Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) is necessary. The ETA is similar to the ESTA needed for the USA and it takes only a few minutes to apply for one online.

After I received the email from the ESE that I was nominated, I started my application for Carleton University. I needed to send my academic transcript, the proof of English and the application form. On the application form, you already need to select the courses you want to follow. When choosing courses from the course calendar, make sure you also check the timetable if they are taught in the Fall semester.

In May, I received the acceptance letter from Carleton with my CU account information, so I could apply for on-campus housing. I applied for Leeds, because most internationals live there. I ended up as number 20 on the waiting list and got a room offer 3 days before I left. However, I had already signed a contract for another room a bit cheaper than campus residence. I ended up living at Envie, a student residence building right next to the O-train station one stop away from the university. The location is great and I met a lot of internationals and Canadians who also lived in the building. However, as the building was still under construction when I moved in and they're also building another building right in front of it, it was sometimes not the best place to live. I had three roommates, a Finish girl and two Germans with whom I traveled a lot.

Finally, I booked my flight. Check the plane tickets regularly, as the prices tend to change over time.

## Arrival

I arrived at the end of August, a few days before the introduction activities started. Everything went flawless and I just needed to show my acceptance letter of the university to pass customs. Because I flew to Montreal and then took the KLM bus to Ottawa, I couldn't make use of the Airport Welcome Program of Carleton. The next day I went to IKEA to buy some bedding and to the university to collect my student ID and U-Pass. The following days, the ISSO organized introduction activities like a movie night, a walking tour and a mandatory exchange orientation. The day after the orientation, the classes already started.

## Courses

At Carleton, I took four courses, each of them is worth 0.5 credits which equals 6 ECTS. The courses require more work throughout the semester, as the final exam is normally only between 30-50% of your final grade.

I will incorporate all the courses into my elective space.

### Survey of Accounting – 6 ECTS

This course gives you an introduction to financial accounting and managerial accounting. You will use a book that gives a good overview of all the material. Each week, there was one three hour lecture and an online quiz. Furthermore, after reading week there was a midterm and in the final exam period an exam worth 45%.

### Introduction to Information and Communication Technologies – 6 ECTS

This course gives an overview of ICT and the evolution of the web. The course consists of three parts, namely Excel, web 2.0/macrowikinomics and group assignments about the first two parts. The midterm and assignment about excel were worth 35%, the group assignments were also worth 35% and the open book final exam about web 2.0 and macrowikinomics was worth 30%. Each week, there was only a three-hour lecture as the tutorials were only for the business section.

### Introduction to Systems Programming – 6 ECTS

This is a second year computer science course, where you'll learn how to program in C. It focusses on typical C concepts, like pointers and memory management. They expect that you can already program in an Object-Oriented language.

Each week, there were two lectures of 1.5 hours and a tutorial. Each tutorial there was an assignment worth 1% of your final grade. Furthermore, each week there was another programming assignment worth 5%, two midterms and a final exam.

### Web Fundamentals – 6 ECTS

This is also a second year computer science course, where you'll learn HTML/CSS, JavaScript and Node.js among others. A lot of self-study was needed. The course consisted of two lectures of 1.5 hours and a tutorial each week. Each week in the tutorial session you could

earn 1% of your final grade and every other week there was an assignment worth 7%. The midterm and final were mainly about syntax.

## Finances

### Expenses in Euros (€)

Plane ticket	725
Housing	2500
Mobile Phone	180
Books	50
Fees (UHIP + U-Pass)	290
Daily Life	1900
<u>Traveling</u>	<u>1100</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6745</b>

## Daily Life

Apart from going to university, we often explored the city and made some daytrips to places close to Ottawa. RoundTours Ottawa also organizes a lot of great trips. In Ottawa, we mainly spent time Downtown and in Byward Market. I definitely recommend going to Gatineau park, as it is always really beautiful. We also travelled to Toronto, Kingston, Montreal and Quebec City by Greyhound Bus or Train. Furthermore, we went on a longer trip to Halifax, Nova Scotia, which is quite different from Ontario and Quebec.

I experienced real Canadian weather, when I arrived it was nice and warm, around 25 degrees. However, when I left Ottawa it got really cold with temperatures that felt like -25 degrees and there was a lot of snow.

As for public transport, the O-train almost always runs on time and quite frequently till around midnight. However, the busses are a bit unpredictable, sometimes you'll wait over 30 minutes when suddenly three busses of the same line show up. Uber is used a lot in Ottawa and not that expensive.

All in all, going on exchange to Ottawa has been one of the best things I've experienced and therefore I strongly recommend going on exchange too.