

Post Study Abroad Evaluation

THE BASICS				
Your Name	[REDACTED]			
Your Program of Study/Year	Graphic Design for Marketing / 4 th year			
Host Country	New Zealand			
Host School/Agency	Unitec Institute of Technology			
Participation Dates	February 2012 – June 2012			
Type of Study Abroad	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exchange	<input type="checkbox"/> Practicum	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
Section 1				
GENERAL EVALUATION				
Please rate your overall exchange experience on a scale of 1 to 10 (one being poor and 10 being exceptional)			8	
In a couple of sentences, explain why you rated your experience the way you did.	I had an amazing time in New Zealand and I would recommend that anyone go there, but I felt that the design classes were not at the same level as GDMA and I didn't learn as much as I wanted to.			
Section 2				
ARRIVAL				
How difficult was it for you to obtain your travel documents (visa, etc.)? <small>*Always verify immigration regulations with the consulate or embassy of your host country*</small>	It was pretty easy to get my student visa, however I didn't know that they wanted to me mail my passport to the offices in Ottawa so that was the only delay I had.			
Describe your transportation arrangements to your host country. Would you change any part of those arrangements?	I traveled in Australia for 1 month before going to New Zealand and I thought it was a great trip; I would definitely recommend it. The only thing I would change is to not get a connecting flight, try to fly direct.			
How was your experience clearing customs and immigration upon arrival in your host country? Any surprises?	It was very easy to get through customs and immigration. There were no surprises at all.			
Describe how you traveled to your host facility. How long did it take and how much did it cost?	I stayed in a hotel my first night in Auckland and the taxi to get there was about \$80. I would recommend booking a taxi ahead of time. Then I also took a taxi to the Unitec Residential Village the next day for about \$35; I would recommend booking with cheaptaxi.co.nz			
Section 3				
ORIENTATION AND ASSISTANCE				

How satisfied were you with the orientation and assistance available to at your host school/agency.	The design orientation and the international orientation were booked at the same time, which was very annoying because we could only go to one. I went to the international orientation and was happy with all the information they gave us.
What help did you receive from the international staff or office? What was your impression of the international staff or office?	I thought the office was well organized and I didn't need much help from them except on my first day because my insurance had the wrong birthdate on it and they helped me fix that so I could get my student ID card.
What was the orientation like at your partner university, if there was one? How well did it suit your needs?	The design orientation that we attended was for 1 st year students with 1 st year teachers so it wasn't very helpful except for them introducing us to one of the 2 nd year teachers. The international orientation was entertaining and helpful except for it being at the same time as our 2 nd year design orientation.
What was it like to adjust to the culture of your exchange site? Were there people you could talk to about what you were experiencing?	It was very easy to adjust to the culture because I found New Zealand to be very similar to Canada. There were mostly other exchange students living in the village that I could talk to.
How receptive were the local people in providing assistance?	The local people were very nice, but I would suggest getting someone to explain the transit discounts and service because the bus drivers weren't friendly.

Section 4

HOUSING

Describe your accommodation arrangements.	I stayed at the Unitec Residential Village in a 2 bedroom, 1 bathroom apartment with a friend from home.
How early could you move into housing before term and how long after the end of term were you allowed to stay?	I moved in 1 week before classes started because that was the day that the school recommended we arrive. I left almost 1 week after the official end of semester.
How comfortable were you with your accommodation?	I was very comfortable with my accommodation.
Describe what you did about meals and what other options were available. How satisfied were you with the food?	I went to the grocery store to buy most of my food; and there was a Subway on campus and some other restaurants and cafes walking distance away. I liked that I had a full kitchen to be able to cook my own meals.
How close was your accommodation to where you had to study?	I lived right on campus and had about a 15 minute walk to class.

Section 5

COURSE REGISTRATION

Please describe the registration process at your	In the first semester of Unitec in the design program, no electives were available which made choosing classes very difficult. I had
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host institution. What assistance was available to you? Were you satisfied?	one required class and the other two I just chose because I needed a class.
How successful were you in registering for classes? What advice would you offer to another exchange student about how to register at your host institution?	There wasn't enough space in the 3 rd year classes for us (myself and Cheryl) so we had to take 2 nd year classes. I would recommend going in the 2 nd semester because there would be more choices for classes.
How many courses did you take per semester? What course load would you recommend for future students? What particular courses would you recommend to other students?	I took 3 classes adding up to 60 credits. This was a good course load; I would recommend 3 classes.

Section 6

ACADEMICS

How satisfied were you with the amount of knowledge/skills you obtained from your host?	I was not satisfied with what I learned at Unitec.
How did the style of teaching compare with that in Canada? How did the workload compare to what you would expect in Canada?	Compared to GDMA, the course load was very light. The teachers I had in the studio class did not seem very involved or hands on with the student's projects. The computer class had teachers that would willingly answer any questions and very fairly helpful.
How many courses did you take during your time abroad?	I took 3 courses.
What impact did the language barrier have on your learning?	There was no language barrier.
What was your impression of the computer facilities, library, internet access, specialized equipment and supplies available at your host facility?	Their computer facilities, library, specialized equipment and supplies available were up to date and very good. The internet access was good except in the residential village.

Section 7

COSTS

Books and Supplies – per term	
Flight	\$2000
Accommodation – per month	\$600
Meals – per month	\$300

Local transportation – per month	\$20 (get a hop card)
Health insurance – per term	\$200
Communications (internet, phone, etc.) – per term	\$80
Travel documents (passport, entry visa, etc.)	
Vaccinations	
Personal Spending (eg. entertainment and extra travel) – per term	\$3500
What unexpected costs did you encounter? What items were less or more expensive than you expected?	

Section 8

EXTRA-CURRICULAR/SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

How satisfied were you with the out-of-class opportunities at your host site?	Very satisfied.
What organized activities (clubs, sports, etc.) were available to you while in your host country? What extra-curricular activities would you recommend to future students?	Weekend trips with the USU (student association). BBQ's, tickets to rugby games, bus tour of Auckland, etc.
What opportunities were there to work or volunteer. Did you require special permits to do this?	I chose not to work or volunteer.
What do you recommend other visiting students see or do on their weekends or holidays?	Go on USU trips, travel around New Zealand. Go to another country during the semester break (I went to Fiji).

Section 9

SAFETY AND HEALTH

Describe any safety concerns you had during your experience.	
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Section 10

PERSONAL AND CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

What was it like making	Very easy to make friends because a lot of people in the village
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friends? How successful were you at making friends with local (i.e., not international) people?	were also exchange students and they were very open to meeting new people and making friends. The students in my design classes did not make very much of an effort to be friends with us.
What was it like to adjust to the culture of your host site?	Very easy to adjust.
What, if any, cultural differences did you find particularly challenging?	Driving on the opposite side of the road, walking on the opposite side of the sidewalk.
What parts of the culture did you most appreciate?	
How were you treated by local people? By university staff and faculty? By students?	Most of the people on campus were very nice. One of the studio teachers either referred to Cheryl and I as "The Canadians" or got our names mixed up. The students in the studio class seemed to already be in their friend groups and didn't make an effort to let us in.
As far as you could tell, how easy would it be for students with disabilities to study at your partner university?	Very difficult in the design building (1).
For students who are visible minorities in your host country?	Very easy.
For students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered?	Very easy.

Section 11

TAKING STOCK

What are the 5 most important things one should take with them when going to your host country or region?

1
Rain boots and a rain jacket

2
Warm clothes

3
Summer clothes

4
Computer

5
A small bag for weekend trips

What are the 10 most important things you would tell another student who is going to your host facility/agency:

1	Go in a semester where design electives are available.
2	Participate in the village events (if that is where you're living).
3	Don't take school too seriously. You're there to study, but also to get the experience of being there.
4	Go on the USU trips.
5	Explore Auckland.
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What was the most rewarding part of your study abroad experience?	Meeting people from all over the world.
What was the greatest challenge you faced during your experience abroad?	Getting used to the classes.
As a result of your study abroad experience, how has your perspective changed?	I want to travel more.
What else do you want to say about your study abroad experience?	I would recommend anyone go to New Zealand, I had an amazing experience and I would never change it but I would also recommend that some connections should be made with other schools in New Zealand or for the next students going to choose their classes more carefully.