Exchange Report

I had an exciting exchange journey to the Australian National University in Canberra, Australia during 2014 spring semester. I have to say, it’s an unforgettable trip and I made a lot of friends all over the world. I’m now a senior majoring in Finance in SFU and I was studying in the college of Business and Economics in Australian National University. The weather there was exactly the opposite as Canada because Australia is in the southern hemisphere.

The preparation for exchange was pretty hard for international students who want to obtain an Australian student visa. The citizens of Canada can directly apply online through the website of Australian High Commission. However, international students in Canada would have to fill out a paper application form and send all supplementary documents with the form to the Australia Embassy in Ottawa. If you are an international student, please remember to do it as soon as you get the letter of confirmation from ANU. The processing time will be long for paper application and I didn’t get my visa until 2 weeks before departure. Remember to bring an international credit card and cash, it took 2 weeks for me to receive my debit card, you will need to pay quite a lot for your accommodation fees and other stuff in the first two weeks. The price level in Australia was nearly 2 times higher than that in Vancouver, I underestimated the cost of living before the departure and it was a disaster. I have to call my parents to wire me money during the semester 😞 For example, a can of coke in the vending machine usually cost 2.5 dollars. A regular dinner will cost you 15-20 dollars. The lucky thing is, you don’t have to pay either taxes or tips in Australia, the marked price on the menu will be exactly the same amount of money that goes out of your pocket. Generally speaking, there is nothing special to bring except cash, cash and cash.

The accommodation in ANU is also expensive, I chose the cheapest dorm on campus and it costs 380 dollars bi-weekly. The name of the dorm is B&G (Burton and Garran), every room in it have its own washing sink, table, bed and walk-in closet. If you are okay with the unisex bathroom, I strongly recommend you to live in B&G. Because the people there are really nice and it's a good opportunity for you make new friends in there. There will be a weekly chatting session on each floor as well as all kinds of activities hall-wide. ANU did a good job in the orientation week, it provides you with all necessary information you need as a new-coming student. So no panic, just have a look at the activity brochure they give to you and have fun!!

I travelled to almost all the places in the western coast of Australia: Cairns, Gold Coast, Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne and Tasmania. It’s literally a stunning country where you can see all incredibly beautiful views. The following are several pictures I took when I was travelling.
Well, the most famous landmark in Sydney, Australia. The Opera House!!

Caution!! Wild kangaroos appeared on campus!

Amazing beach in Gold Coast

Sunrise in Byron Bay, Brisbane
I have a lot more travelling pictures as well as travelling tips for exchange students who intend to apply for a college in Australia. The next I’m about to talk about the academic details in the Australian National University. It’s almost the same formats as that in SFU, all the business courses will have tutorial or so called discussion session. The professor will record every lecture just in case someone wants to catch up after missing the lecture. You can even enroll in two courses that conflict in schedule and attend one of the lectures and listen to the recording of the other. The grading is harsh in Australia, scores over 80 is a high distinction which is equivalent to 4.0/4.0 in Canada.

The exchange is the most exciting college term I’ve had so far, it’s a precious experience and I appreciate SFU could grant me such a chance to explore the world. Generally speaking, it didn’t take me so long to adapt myself into the culture and custom in Australia because it’s similar to that in Canada. The only thing that I regret during exchange is that I didn’t spend a lot of time visiting Canberra. It’s a perfect city for people who are into culture and arts. There will be tons of exhibitions held in National Gallery of Australia every year. Furthermore, the war memorial, the old and the new parliament house are all worth visiting.

For the last thing, I’m going to post some pictures of the downtown Canberra as well as the campus of ANU. I will also add some tips beside the picture so that you can have a rough understanding of the city center of Canberra. ANU is located at the center of downtown Canberra, which the people there call it CIVIC.
If you have any questions regarding any questions about ANU, feel free to join the pre-departure session and I’m happy to help!

ANU is surrounded by the Griffin lake and the Black mountain. It’s a perfect place for jogging and field trip.

Night view at Downtown Canberra!! You can get everything want for daily use in this area, just like the Metrotown. However, it’s a terrible place for shopping 😞

Bondi Beach for surfer lovers!!

ANU Campus.