Exchange Report

Last summer, I participated SFU exchange program and get some experience from this opportunity. I exchanged to Chinese University of Hong Kong as a second year business student and participated in their International Summer Program in July 2015. In my opinions, it is a good time to do exchange program during your second year especially you start to take upper level courses. However, I think it is more valuable to do the exchange program during Fall or Spring semester rather than in Summer. Also, doing exchange program is a little bit costly for an international student or renting a house here in Vancouver.

Preparation for exchange
As an international student in SFU, there are many type of scholarship that I cannot apply. As the result, when planning to go exchange, I fail to fully consider about how many money I should paid as an international student for these experience. For example, international Summer Program in Chinese University in Hong Kong only have 5 weeks but I paid the full term tuition fee in SFU. Also, I should take 9 credit in order to get $1000 scholarship but the summer program only have 6 credit maximum. On the other hand, even I get those $1000, it helpless in covering my tuition. Unfortunately, these $1000 may only cover airplane ticket because I exchange to a place that far away from Canada. Also, I waste money on rental fee because I was renting a house in Vancouver during that summer. Because I living along in Vancouver, I should get someone to take care of my house as well. I know I can rent some place to storage my personal belong but I didn’t want to find a new place to live when I come back from exchange. These process cost time and money.
Also, as a Chinese citizen, I checked clearly about some extra documents that I should provide for another multi-entry permit to stay in Hong Kong through my local Public Security Bureau office. This permit takes time and I should do it in person. These information didn’t provide from both SFU and my host university because most of the checklist provided assume that I am Canadian. [ISS Note: International Services for Students does not provide immigration advice and is a requirement for students to be responsible for ensuring that they meet the immigration requirements for their host country.] That is to say, if you holding Chinese passport, you have to spend more money on permit application and the transportation when exchange to Hong Kong. Fortunately, my families live in Canton so I don’t need to spend money to book another airplane to Hong Kong.

I exchanged some local currency especially cash before I went to Hong Kong. In China, people are more prefer to use cash so I held both RMB and HKD in cash. Also I held an Octopus card before and so I just deposit some money into the card as well. There are many different place and facilities on campus only accept Octopus card and I used this card to get food and transit. I also apply a credit card in Mainland before I went to Hong Kong as well.

Hong Kong is a big and international city so I bought many things in Hong Kong, as the result, I don’t bring many things to Hong Kong. However, I paid attention on my clothes. In summer, Hong Kong is extremely hot outside but super cold in door because there are strong air conditioner system everywhere. I always holding a coat and brought some medicines for cold. However, some of my friends got cold during exchange.
In addition, the size of clothes and shoes are designed for typical Asian, so my Japanese roommate could not find any clothes and shoes for her size.

During exchange
Chinese University of Hong Kong holding a very useful orientation for students who new in Hong Kong. This orientation talks many things about the facility, history and culture about CUHK. Also, they have many tours that helped me to know about Hong Kong and the business environment. I strongly recommend students to participate the tours there. You can make friends during the tours and even have many opportunities to travel around Hong Kong. Because I went to Hong Kong from Shunde, Guangdong so I couldn’t use the pick-up services form CUHK. I took public transit to CUHK and it was a nightmare to bring a big suitcase form main entry in CUHK to resident building. There is limited shuttle bus holding during holiday time and most of the bus not allow for a suitcase. I waited approximately 1 hour to get the bus with my families.
Accommodation in CUHK is reasonable good. There are two people live in one room and there is a public toilet and shower room every floor. There are two halls in one building. Each hall have one laundry room and one small evaluator. There is a big dining hall one floor down in the building but the food is the worst compared to other dining serves located in main campus.

Because there is only one month in summer program, there is a midterm in week three and there is a final exam or report you should handed in around week 5 or week 6. Those courses probably didn’t go though many things in detail and there are many reading assignments that I should completed in daily basis.

The grading is fair and much easier than in SFU. In CUHK, I don’t have to worry about the curve when I taking business course. It is enough for me to make an average efforts on course material. The most valuable part is the course discussion part. My classmates form all over the world and have different culture background, I learned a lot when spending time with different people.
Hong Kong is a very modern city with busy traffic. People in Hong Kong have freedom in academic and business. In Hong Kong you can enjoy both urban and country lifestyle.

Reflection

Thanks to this exchange experience, I gained experience about how to organize a big event like celebration ceremony. Also I had a chance to visit local soy source and understand how to run a family base business. And, the most important is that I made lots of friends all around the world. However, the most challenged thing is that student has to learn and completed many course materials in a busy schedule. On the other hand, since Hong Kong public transition is too busy and complicated so it is expensive and not convenience for student to go out.
Before I leave I wish I can learn more deeply about human resource management in Hong Kong. Also, I really interested in business environment and related policy in Hong Kong. However, I am little bit regret the fact that I didn't have many chances to try many famous restaurants in Hong Kong.

For students who going to apply to go to Chinese University of Hong Kong, you'd have to exchange some local currency especially cash before you go to Hong Kong. In China, people are more prefer to use cash. However, you can still easily to exchange HKD of you holding RMB or USD. In my opinion, you can exchange some RMB in Canada is the rate is high then exchange some HKD in Hong Kong because the rate between HKD and RMB is fixed.

you’d better register the pick-up services from the University because the resident hall is far away from main entry and the public transit in Hong Kong is busy all the time so that it’s hard to bring a suitcase to walk around.