I choose Baptist University because its Business School is famous, and I want to experience the education in Hong Kong. I go on exchange during 2017 Spring Term. The university is located in Kowloon Tong, and the two campus are connected together. It is close to the MTR station, shopping mall, and city center.

Preparation for exchange

Before going on exchange, except the documentation and paperwork, there are several things that have to get ready. The first thing to do is booking the flight ticket, as it would be more expensive when closer to the flight date. Therefore, once receive the confirmation, should book the flight. Also, when I decided the destination, I started keeping eyes on it as well, to find out the best price. When preparing for the personal belongings, can consider one week to two weeks necessary items. Because you will not have to worry and go out to buy any living items, such as shampoo, hair conditioner, hair dryer, clothes, before everything is settled down. Most international brands are able to shop in Hong Kong easily, so that do not need to worry about buying consumption items.

People in Hong Kong use the top up card, calls Octopus. It is very convenience that you can add funds in any convenience stores or retails, for instances Circle K, 7-11, Mcdonald’s, KFC, MTR station. Octopus can be used to pay for food, transportation, and shopping as well. The transportation in HK is well-developed, taking buses and trains can go everywhere. It is cheap too, it costs around 10 HKD, which is about 1.5 CAD, could take you to most places. Beside public transportation, taxi is the other option in any special circumstances, but a little bite expensive. HK is safe, and most shops would open until 10:30pm, and some restaurants would operate 24-7. The living cost is not high, as compared to Vancouver. For example, dining out costs about 8 CAD. Some shops and restaurants are cash only, so that it is important to bring both card and cash. Therefore, prepare some local currency on hand is more preferable. Also, preparing the local currency ahead of time is important, approximately 6000, then, do not need to worry about the money issue for the first week. Opening the local bank account as well, there is a branch inside the campus, so that it is convenience. I would suggest to bring the debit and credit to HK too.

During Exchange

When arriving HK, the university offers the pick up service as an option. Or students can choose taking bus, train or taxi, and it is convenience as well. The orientation is helpful as it provides information about living in HK, and academic resources, including how to add / drop, school events
and campus tour. The last day of the orientation is a local tour, the tourist guide takes us to the famous attractions, and shares the useful and fun living information with us. I was able to meet new friends from distinct countries because this local tour is prepared for exchange students, who are going to study in BU.

The courses include the lecture and tutorial, and the grading is clear with description and explanation. The local students that I have met are active, hard working and helpful who always help me to solve the problems. The professors are helpful and free to ask question during lecture, contact through email and office hour. They provide comments and suggestions about how to do better.

Hong Kong is an international city, that it is easy to see the diversity culture. It keeps the Chinese culture, while having the Western. Chinese and English are the official languages. Most people speak fluent English, therefore communication would not be a problem. The weather is nice for living, as it is not cold in winter. It does not snow in HK. In summer, it gets a little bit hot but there are air conditioner in dormitory and indoor. HK is well known for shopping and food. There are different cuisines over the world, such as Chinese, Thai, Japanese, Vietnamese, American, British, Italian, Spanish, etc. Chinese restaurants are extremely well-known where people enjoy eating dim sum in the morning. This is called Yum Cha. All you can eat hot pot is also common. In leisure time, my friends always take me to eat hot pot. Normally, the prices vary, based on the quality of meat that you choose. Each time, you can enjoy your meal for at least 2 hours. It is a good option to gather with friends. Also, You can find many different types of seafood and they are cheap. Meanwhile, in Mong Kok, the street food are popular, for example Egg Waffle, fish ball, egg tart, and pearl milk tea. There are many shopping malls located in the Kowloon and Hong Kong area, such as Mong Kok, Kowloon Tong where BU is located, Central, Causeway Bay, etc. Most shops are opened until 10, that is longer than the shops in Vancouver. There are two theme parks in Hong Kong, Ocean Park and Disneyland. Both of them are recommended to go. Beside rides, there are aquariums and animals in Ocean Park, it is important to visit the pandas. There are some exclusive facilities in HK Disneyland. The night view of Victoria Harbor is famous. Every night at 8pm, there is a light show, which calls “A Symphony of Lights”.

Reflection

During the whole exchange, it is a great chance to learn how to be independent, since you will be the only one to deal with any issues without parents, especially homesick. For example, you need to manage the budget on entertainment and daily life properly. I am glad to have this opportunity to go on exchange, this is a valuable experience. I have learnt a lot from the exchange, as I can see different culture, experience the different education, and personal growth. Going out the comfort zone allows learning, and that cannot be replaced by any knowledge from books. Beside study, I would suggest to take the advantage to travel in Asia during the holiday, since the flight is shorter. The destinations could be Korea, China, Thailand, Taiwan, Japan, Singapore, etc. These countries are worthed to visit as well, and the flight ticket is cheap. Time flies, therefore, it is really important to take the time to travel around, whether in HK or outside.
Pic 2: Entrance of the Campus

Pic 3: Little local market held in the campus for a week
Pic 4: Street food in city center