Exchange to the University of Cape Town, South Africa

Cape Town, South Africa (SA) became my exchange semester destination because it was my younger sister’s new home, having recently married a Capetonian. I was craving an adventure, some much-needed family time and was also fascinated by SA’s past and current social and political situation during apartheid, Nelson Mandela’s new democracy in 1994 and hopes, frustrations and lingering poverties, inequalities and social movements. My love of rugby as a player and spectator also drew me to this country with this huge rugby culture and the chance to see my favourite team, SA’s Springboks play live! My exchange to UCT was during Spring 2018, from February to July, their first semester of the year. I study sociology and communications (FASS & FCAT) at SFU and at UCT I focused on sociology through their Humanities Faculty.

PREPARATION FOR EXCHANGE

Logistics:

The UCT application process is pretty straight-forward and the SFU ISS (International Student Services) will give you detailed instructions from UCT of how to apply, usually an email with a step-by-step process of how to navigate their online application system. You just needed to research which classes at UCT you want to take from the faculty handbook of your choice (http://www.students.uct.ac.za/students/study/handbooks/current). This is not the official course registration to enroll you into those courses, it only helps SFU confirm with UCT that you have the pre-req’s to take it. Besides the online application, you need to submit 2 passport photos (South Africa regulation size) to ISS to mail to UCT for you. Once accepted, you will need to pay
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UCT an exchange fee via an international money order (at your bank) and keep a copy of the receipt for UCT registration process when you are there. The only problem is that you have to wait until the UCT online application system opens for the semester you want to go, which can cause delay for applying for your visa (as you need an acceptance from UCT for your visa).

Where the exchange prep gets extremely complicated and stressful is immigration - visa application. ISS does not help you with this, so if you follow the exact application requirements on the South African Consulate-General website (http://www.southafrica-canada.ca/immigration/immigration_visas.php), you will do just fine. Basically, in order to apply for exchange in SA, I needed a study visa for a stay of over 90 days which needed to be submitted in person to the Consulate-General of South Africa in Canada, which (of course!) the only location being in Toronto. Check the website for detailed information about address and hours of operation, but essentially what I did was that once I had obtained all the required paperwork and documents, I booked a plane ticket for Toronto and stayed only one day, long enough to submit the application, tour around, and then fly back home. The public transportation system of the subway and airport shuttle bus is relatively uncomplicated and you can find out routes and rates here (http://www.ttc.ca/Trip_planner/index.jsp). The Consulate-General was right by the Sheppard-Yonge station and try to get there right when they open in case you need the day to trouble-shoot any of your paperwork.

The documents you need for a study visa application could be found here http://www.southafrica-canada.ca/immigration/immigration_visas_study_visa.php
The Consulate-General is very stickler when it comes to having all your documents and if you are missing anything or is not exactly as specified they may deny your application, so have everything ready! It took them about a week to send back my passport with my visa, but give yourself 6-12 weeks before you fly out, just to be safe! In order to have all of these documents ready on time, the hardest part I found was securing accommodation and making sure that I applied to UCT early enough to get their confirmation letter to take with me and transferring money into my bank account (temporarily from family members) to show them I had sufficient funds.

To find accommodation, UCT has on-campus residence housing, but at times there is not enough space for everyone, so your best bet might be to secure off-campus housing. Once you get your UCT acceptance letter, they will send you a link for UCT-approved off-campus housing in the surrounding suburbs through a system called EduBed with varying options which you need to pay an initial deposit for. The only problem is that for my visa application, I needed to already have housing secured, but waiting until after I got the acceptance from UCT may have delayed the process and might be cutting it close. I secured off-campus through someone my sister knew in a shared house for students with landlords where I paid for my room with a shared meal plan. My situation was unique but there’s a big culture of student living here in SA, called "digs" where groups of 2-5ish students live together in a shared flat. There are external groups that organize digs accommodation (ie. "Digs Connect" on Facebook).

The international students program at UCT – IAPO (International Academic Programmes Office) provides you with a free Uber voucher to get you from the airport to your accommodation. There is no particular ‘best’ way of flying into Cape Town, although I opted for taking advantage of the long trip, starting off my adventure by going through The Netherlands with an extended layover in Amsterdam and exploring the city!

In SA they use the rand (R) for their currency, but you don’t need to bring any rand with you because it can be easily withdrawn from any ATM. I brought enough euros for my Amsterdam trip and airports, but that’s about it. I brought my Canadian credit card (a literal life-saver – you really can’t financially live and convert your CAN dollar in SA without one) and then my debit card for online banking and paying my credit card while away. Your initial estimated budget for the SFU application is very helpful, but I recommend revisiting that budget again once you get ready to leave for your exchange. Roughly, you will need at least $7000 CAD for the entire exchange, depending on what kind of trips and recreational activities you plan to do,
how much and what you eat, and how much your rent is. A key source of funding can come through the many scholarships (many exchange program-specific) that you can apply for that ISS will let you know about. Just be aware of the deadlines and if they require references!

I booked my flights to fly in for early February, a few days before the official IAPO orientation began so that I could settle in. The “first” (spring) semester at UCT ends after final exams, which for me was June 15th. My visa let me stay until the end of July, so I chose to book my flight home at the end of July to take advantage of the time I was allowed and I’m so glad I did! There are so many things to do and see in Cape Town and SA in general that you really don’t have time for while you are in the thick of studying. I would recommend on your visa application to ask for some time after your semester ends, as UCT is known to have student protests which often interrupt exam timetables. You also need to apply in person at UCT to get your transcripts sent back to SFU after the semester ends and my results didn’t get released until July 6th. So as a safety net, make sure you give yourself enough time in the country to sort out any logistical issues before you fly out as well as time to travel!

DURING THE EXCHANGE

Daily Life:

Finances - To pay for things, having an SA bank account as well as carrying small cash is definitely easiest/safest. The conversion rate is about $10 CAD to R1 (1 SA rand) and no other currency is taken here. Most places take debit, credit card and cash. Don’t carry crazy amounts of cash on you in case it gets stolen, probably not more than R300-500 ($30-50).

It’s a lot easier to pay for things on a bank card than using your credit card everywhere (high fees & easier to be scammed) or carrying large amounts of cash with you. I used my credit card like a debit card at the bank ATM (Standard Bank, FNB, Nedbank) to take out cash and then pay it off online later (be careful about being at ones on public streets and try to give yourself some privacy), then I would at the same machine immediately deposit the cash (R) into my SA bank account I had opened so that I could use my SA debit card. You can’t really e-transfer CAD dollars to anyone in SA so I would pay people back (and my rent) in rand cash.

But getting an SA bank account is definitely not without its challenges! It’s a long/complicated bureaucratic process there and I probably went to the bank 7 times before I finally got that magical bank card – no word of a lie! You will need proof of your accommodation (a form for your landlord to sign verifying that you live at their house – no typos or else they will
make you go redo it – and a photocopy of your landlord's bill/bank statement with their address on it), your passport, and your UCT student card for a student account. If you are over 23, then you don't qualify for a student account (I was 24) and will need to also provide your SIN number to prove that you pay tax in Canada.

One thing that there’s no real way of getting around is having your credit card get flagged for “suspicious purchases” you make online while overseas. Apparently the way the credit card fraud system works, even if there is a note on your card saying you are overseas, they will flag individual purchases that seem suspicious and freeze your card, on a case by case basis, thus making it impossible for you to prevent it from happening. When this happens, most banks want you either to reply to their text or call a number verifying that you made the purchase. Both those options don’t work when you are living overseas, so the only way I got around it was by loading calling credit onto Skype online and then using Skype to call the number for my credit card in Canada, tell them I had made the purchase and to “unfreeze” my card.

**Housing** – As I mentioned, I had a unique living situation paying for a room in a shared house including amenities and internet (not splitting the cost of a shared flat) and was on their meal plan where I only cooked once a week and on weekends, paying for the food I bought. Your living space and financial arrangement of rent and groceries will differ depending on what you choose. Unless you are an extreme introvert, I would recommend living with others – a mix of South Africans and internationals – so that you have that company and friendship while studying overseas and keep your costs down.

**Groceries** – There are lots of great places to get groceries similar to back home. The most popular affordable stores are Pick N Pay and Checkers. Woolworths (Woolies) is a bit more pricey (like a Thrifty’s or Whole Foods).

**Transportation** – There are many different ways you can get around in CT but as a student, the most common way is using the UCT Jammie shuttles. The Jammies are a UCT bus system that transports student for free (show your student card) and run quite frequently on clean, safe and mostly reliable routes. You can find updated timetables online as well as pick-up and drop-off spot maps ([http://www.students.uct.ac.za/students/services/transport-parking/jammie-shuttle](http://www.students.uct.ac.za/students/services/transport-parking/jammie-shuttle)).
It's not safe to walk from the Jammie stop to your home after dark, no matter what
neighbourhood you are in. If I was on campus or anywhere else after dark, I would always use
Uber (very exciting, since Vancouver doesn't have it yet!) It's quite affordable and small 10-15
minute trips cost about R30-R50 ($3-5). Your other options are taxi mini-buses that travel along
Main Road that stop if you flag them down and usually advertise by pulling over and hollering
and whistling at passerbyers. They are very affordable but can be a bit sketchy, mostly locals
use them. I would only use a taxi with a friend. There's also trains that run along to most main
suburbs and can be great to get to places that are further away to get to (ie. Kalk Bay, Simon's
Town, Muizenburg) but they can also be very sketchy, as people have been robbed on them
and will often be delayed and cause long waits. I went on one on a Saturday morning when it
wasn't rush hour and didn't feel unsafe, so you just need to be careful. I would recommend
going on one for the experience and to see what kind of transportation the locals use.
(https://moovitapp.com/index/en-gb/public_transportation-line-SOUTHERN_LINE-Cape_Town-
1883-1002865-596190-0)

Communication – Connecting and chatting when you make new friends is key. What's
important to know is that the primary mode of communication there is WhatsApp, not Facebook
Messenger or texting (ie. SMS). WhatsApp is connected to a phone number and so I found it
helpful to actually get a South African phone number to help blend in but also many things you
sign up for or purchase from SA websites ask for a phone number. If your phone is locked on a
Canadian phone plan and rejects a new SIM card, go buy a crappy loaner-phone to use as your
“SA phone” during your exchange. There is good WiFi on campus but if you are hanging out
with friends and need to Uber somewhere or get a hold of someone, you will want to have some data purchased to connect online. Data is relatively cheap (100MB for R20-30) which you can buy from cashiers at Pick N Pay or other grocery stores.

**Water Crisis** – Coming to live in Cape Town means that you need to learn to live in an extreme drought/water crisis situation (which is actually a healthy learning curve for us Vancouverites, who literally see more than our fair share of water pouring from the sky). Anywhere you stay will explain their daily strategies for saving water to you and your IAPO orientation should go over some water-saving tips as well. I found bringing hand sanitizer helpful especially when out in public, as many places have turned off water taps in the bathrooms to save water.
Weather – Most people think of palm trees, beaches and eternal sunshine when they think of Cape Town but what they forget is the rain, cold clouds and hectic wind classic to a CT winter! If you are going to be in CT between April-August, pack for a Vancouver winter! The wind cuts right through you and especially in the mornings it can get to as low as 10°C. The kicker is that homes don’t have indoor heating, fires or insulation. The temperature you feel outside is the exact same inside, a real shocker. Bring some rainboots, rain jacket, a regular “fall” jacket that you can layer with, scarves, warm socks or slippers for your feet, hoodies, sweaters, and long-sleeve shirts. I also brought a blanket-scarf which was my saving grace as I used it not only as a scarf but as a blanket to curl up with while studying. You will definitely need summer clothes, bathing suits and sunscreen for the hot summer months (October-March) but do be forewarned about the winter!
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Academics:

When you first get to UCT before the semester starts, IAPO does a great job of giving you a week-long orientation full of information and logistics that you need to know, including an introduction to SA culture, a campus tour, a “fresher’s braai” (first-year BBQ), a bus tour of the Cape Peninsula, general UCT registration and course selection. Each part of orientation is super relevant and valuable and will set you up for a great exchange academically!

You can buy school supplies at the chain store Bidvest Waltons, as well as stationary stores located on campus. The campus is gorgeous, so I loved the sun on beautiful days and if you can work with the background chatter of other students or wear earphones, the Jammie Steps or picnic tables around Jammie Plaza are great places to be in the middle of all the hustle and bustle while getting a suntan! I spent most of my time in the library with cool study spaces (you need your Student Card to enter each time, so don’t lose it!) as well as the Learning Lounge. There are some really cool coffee shops around CT that I loved studying in, just make sure you don’t forget your plug adapter so that you can plug in your laptop!
The teaching and learning style is very similar to SFU. However, lectures at UCT are spread out across the week with each lecture only 45 minutes long with 3-4 lectures per week for each class. Then there’s also a 45-min tutorial that you attend. For the humanities, assignments are generally one or two major papers per class, along with a mid-term test and a final exam with not much group work at all. Some professors take attendance if they don’t have tutorials and this will factor into your course mark. There are interactive discussions in tutorials, but tutorials usually have a separate tutorial assignment where you would have a 2 page write-up (mini essay) each week about the readings you did. It’s not graded but rather given completion marks. UCT’s incentive for students to come to tutorial and submit the assignment is a system called DP, “duly performed.” In order to get your ‘DP mark,’ you need to hand in every tutorial assignment and are only allowed to miss 2-3 tutorials. If you get ‘DP incomplete,’ then you can’t write the final exam and thus fail the course because you cannot pass without having written the final exam.

Printing your assignments is quite accessible from the UCT library. You will need to load credit online just like at SFU (http://www.ccp.uct.ac.za/electronic-web-deposit) and then print from library computers. Finding a stapler to secure your essays, on the other hand, is quite a mission! My solution was to go to my faculty where the hand-in box is and just ask someone in the office to borrow their stapler, there aren’t any in the library.

The hand-in process for essays is a bit complicated and they don’t really tell you about it as an exchange student (I learned the hard way!) Some professors just want you to hand it in
online through a platform called Vula (like Canvas) and others want a hard-copy hand-in. Regardless if you have an online or hard-copy hand-in, you need to submit it on Vula by the deadline so that it can go through a program called ‘Turn-It-In’ that checks for plagiarism. The hard-copy is handed in at the faculty office of the subject you are taking where there will be a hand-in box marked for your class. The hard-copy essay also need to have an attached “Plagiarism Declaration” page printed off and filled-in, available for all classes on Vula under course resources.

The quality of lectures and tutorials, professors and tutors (TA’s) are excellent. UCT is the best university in SA and on the entire continent. They don’t give out easy grades and give great feedback, really challenging students to do their best and work for their marks, learning and understanding. The instruction is practical and applicable to both SA and global life and social problems.

In the second week of classes, there is something called “Plaza Week” where all the UCT clubs and societies come out on Jammie Plaza to get you to join their club. Get involved with campus life! I have to say that this was one of the most enriching parts of my UCT exchange! I joined the women’s rugby team, Ikey Swifts and social rugby club called Varsity Vibe for watching the games. I met so many amazing people and had an incredible time playing my favourite sport in a different cultural context.

You will need to order your transcripts in person to be sent back to SFU, as UCT may not automatically send them. You can visit the Student Records Office after your semester is over to order and pay for them (https://www.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/434/current/student_records/academic_records/Transcript_Request_Form_Updated_20180119.pdf). I ordered one copy mailed to SFU and the other I collected and picked up myself, just to be safe.

Be sure to have all your SFU courses researched and ready to go if you are staying in SA long enough after your exchange semester to need to enroll for the next SFU semester while you are away. It’s a little stressful being so far away where you can’t to talk to an academic advisor, but just do your best to have some back-up courses prepared in case you don’t get into the ones you want.
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Studying as an exchange student at UCT, I feel like I was held to a higher standard and am a better student now because of it, more aware of my weaknesses, strengths, areas I need to grow in. I have been immersed in a lively environment of debate, discussion and wrestling with deep social issues, forced to think long and deep about my place in the world and how social issues in South Africa parallel those in Canada and the rest of the world. I have been exposed to scholars and authors from the Global South (GS), interacted with issues of post-colonialism and post-apartheid in a tangible way and have been introspective about my own positionality and opinions. UCT has a deep culture of university protest in an academic and political way within a country of protest and struggle. From this exposure, I’m challenged and motivated to stand up for what I believe in and carry this back to SFU and Canadian life. I am a better student and scholar as a result of learning at UCT.

Travel & Adventures:

If you are one for adventures, then you will have a field day in CT! I honestly believe that it rivals Vancouver for the most beautiful city in the world and you will see why when you go. It’s hard to know how much to do with the short time you have there while trying to study, but a CT friend of mine who had gone on exchange to the States gave me some wise advice: “You’re only going to be here once, so always say ‘yes!’”
There are many classic tourist sights to see and places to go such as walking in the cute Kalk Bay and Hout Bay, the colourful historic homes of Bo Kaap, lounging at Camps Bay & Clifton Beaches, seeing the penguins at Boulder’s Beach in Simon’s Town, going to Cape Point, the V&A Waterfront, classic hikes and look-out points such as Table Mountain, Lion’s Head, Devil’s Peak and Signal Hill and going for wine and beer tours in Stellenbosch (Stellies) or Root 44 Market.
I also recommend getting involved in local life and community – I loved experiencing art through ‘First Thursdays’ nights in ‘town,’ going to a ballet at the Artscape, checking out the modern Zietz Museum as well as adventuring and sports with watching Springboks and DHL Stormers rugby games, going surfing at Muizenburg, going sokkieing (a kind of Afrikaans dancing like swing) at Opskop in Stellies and seeing South African music artists Jeremy Loops and Matthew Mole live in concert!
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If you can, go outside Cape Town to see other beautiful surrounding areas in the Western Cape (I took roadtrips to Wellington, Hermanaus and Witsand) as well as other parts of the country instead of going to another African country. There is so much richness and diversity to see in SA. I went on a two week trip to Durban in Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN) and volunteered at LIV Village (a friend I know worked there) [http://www.liv-village.com/](http://www.liv-village.com/) and then spent another week vacationing with friends on the South Coast.

The stunning rugged coast of Hermanus, in the Western Cape
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Make an intentional point in immersing yourself in South African culture and language, allowing yourself to learn and adopt a way of life different than your own, enriching yourself. South Africans have different lingo and slang that is fun to pick up on and absolutely delicious new food to try. Push yourself to embrace going outside your comfort zone!

POST – EXCHANGE REFLECTIONS

What I’ve Learned:

It’s really hard to put into words what I’ve learned after six months in a different culture and context, but it’s enough to say that I cried on the plane ride home because I left behind incredible friends behind and a piece of my heart in this beautiful country. Being on exchange taught me to see the world from a different perspective, immersing myself to gain an understanding of a whole different culture, language and way of my life in stark contrast to my North American one. I was able to learn academically and first-hand through friends and experiences of the living realities of poverty, inequality, post-apartheid legacy, racial conflicts, resiliency, social movements, social change, as well as creative and innovative self-development initiatives. I learned how to let my heart fall in love with another country, to put
down roots and let another place become my home, build global friendships and establish a community there. I developed a love for the warm culture in South Africa.

Challenges I Had:

A semester away from community, family and my home country would not be complete without some struggles and challenges I had to push through and learn from. I found the daily logistics of dealing with the drought quite hard, especially the cold stop-start showers, washing dishes in a bucket, flushing the toilet with buckets of the grey water from the washing machine, or only being able to wash clothes every few weeks. The need to constantly be vigilant about safety and security became exhausting, not being able to take out my phone, checking over my shoulder, doing banking, careful about transportation methods, especially after dark continually balancing being smart/wise without being paranoid/over-fearful while walking outside. I grew quite frustrated and jaded about SA bureaucratic processes like in-person course registration at UCT, in-person essay hand-ins, or applying for a bank account that revealed how truly impatient I was as a product of western instant-gratification.

I also felt lonely at times and it was hard to not have my close friends always around me. It was hard to know how to be fully present there while still keeping in touch with people back home and quite exhausting replying to everyone. I found I needed to set boundaries and not feel guilty when I needed rest or ‘me’ time. It was also a struggle trying to balance when to go out and do fun “touristy” things while still doing well in academics. It was good having SA friends
who were mostly locals, yet because I didn’t have many friends who were exchange students or internationals, I wasn’t able to do many of the “touristy” things I’d wanted to.

Things I Wish I Had Known:

Before I’d gone on my exchange, I wish I’d had my post-exchange self share some wise insight with me. If so, I would have told myself: It’s going to go by so quickly – make the most of each and every moment! Don’t be afraid to invest and build deep relationships with the people around you. The hardest part of the whole exchange is really the visa application to get there. Once you are settled, it’s really just a breeze, so sit back & enjoy your exchange!

Don’t let people scare you about the drought or talking about crime and danger. Yes, it’s real and you need to be aware and vigilant and the drought is an adjustment, but it just becomes normal life after a while. Thousands of people in this world are faced with water crisis and live in unsafe conditions daily. Step outside your comfort zone and protected space as a North American and step into the life of people in the Global South. (I only had “shady” people come up to me twice while I was there and never really felt unsafe.) You need to understand the social reasons of poverty and inequality underpinning crime and your privilege as an outsider. People who commit crimes are normal people and not to be irrationally vilified or terrified of. Don’t normalize the poverty and inequality you see all around you. It should shock and bother you and that’s okay.

There are far more similarities and commonalities between Canada and SA, Vancouver and Cape Town than you think. Look for those and ways to bring back your learning home. You won’t be able to do/see everything and that’s okay, too. Make a list, but don’t hold to it uncompromisingly. Be flexible, open to spontaneous trips and adventures and if you don’t get to do everything, just plan another trip – that’s your reason to come back. 😊 Finally, be present in the moment. Documenting special memories is important but it’s okay to remember through your eyes, your mind and your journal, not always your phone/camera. People value you being present and you will remember sunsets, coffee dates and laughter better if you are fully present.

Tips / Advice for You:

So you’re thinking of going on exchange to UCT in South Africa, but you need that final last push to become fully convinced, or just really want some insight from someone who’s been there? Here’s my advice to you! 😊
Don’t ever be afraid to ask questions of your friends, classmates, tutors, or lecturers! Ask in a humble and respectful way, but you have the advantage of being the outsider and are given a kind of “hall-pass” on being ignorant. Don’t project all your “Canadian academic knowledge” on them, but listen quietly and respectfully, seeing what understanding you have to gain. You don’t know everything. As my one UCT sociology professor said, “they who feel it are they who know it.”

Also don’t be afraid to educate people on the (messy) realities of North American and Canadian life, especially our colonial history, government relationship with First Nations communities, extreme poverty on First Nations reserves, the realities of urban homeless, the Vancouver housing crisis and gentrification. Because of Western (American) movies and media, many people in the GS have a very unrealistic, utopic and skewed perspective of the affluence and greatness of North America. It’s a great opportunity to bring our struggles, failures and mistakes to the global scene and reveal that we are human, a flawed society and that we actually have a lot to learn from SA.

Don’t just stick with exchange students. It’s comfortable to stay in our box with other travellers and tourists, but you can really be a tourist anywhere. You don’t get many opportunities like this on exchange to build real friendships with locals (of all races and all cultures) and enter into their lives. You will have to be intentional about this on campus and in your daily life and choose to push yourself out of your comfort zone. It’s so worth it!
Take an African language course if you can, which is one of my only regrets about exchange is not doing that. One of the best ways to connect with people and bridge cultural differences is language. I would recommend Xhosa, the language that black communities in the Western Cape speak, or Afrikaans, which white Afrikaaners (not all white South Africans) and coloured people speak.

Get involved!! You are only going to be on this exchange once and there is such a wealth of experience in being involved in extra-curricular activities you are passionate about and enjoy.

I joined the first women's rugby team at UCT with some amazing ladies
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Connect and volunteer with SA organizations that are already established and where you are actually doing good and not just making yourself feel better (SHAWCO with UCT and Common Good in the community). These are great initiatives partnering with and empowering communities. If you get a chance to respectfully go visit a township – go. Don’t participate in “township/poverty tourism” but if you are going with one of the above organizations with an existing relationship with the community, then there’s a healthy power dynamic and you’re not going in as a “rich foreigner” to gawk at their poverty. These are valuable people in SA society and it’s important for you to see their struggles and how they live but in a way that’s respectful and humble. Don’t take any pictures. Respectfully talk to people on their level.

Take advantage of what UCT offers in terms of guest lectures & seminars that interest you. Take every opportunity to educate yourself and learn from world-class lecturers, scholars and professionals. Educate yourself on SA history (especially the colonial period, apartheid, 1994 democracy, post-apartheid and present social struggles and politics), especially if you are studying in the humanities. Many of this is expected to be common knowledge at UCT and it’s your responsibility as the outsider to catch up. You are going into a very politically active and aware campus and protest-culture country (read Long Walk to Freedom – Mandela, I Write What I Like – Steve Biko, Buckingham Palace: District Six – Rive, present day news articles, watch Long Walk to Freedom and Invictus, visit District 6 Museum and Robben Island). Also read up on UCT’s history of protest culture & the “Fallist Era” (ie. #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall). Listen to some good South African music artists before and during your time there (you can find them on Spotify/Apple Music: Jeremy Loops, Matthew Mole, Opposite the
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Other, Beatenberg, Al Bairre, Majozi, GoldFish, Bongeziwe Mabandla, Desmond and the Tutus) to help immerse yourself into SA culture and society.

Finally – have fun and just do it!! I can honestly say that my exchange to Cape Town was hands-down my favourite part of my undergrad at SFU. I not only grew and was challenged academically but I fell in love with another country, made life-long global friendships, experienced so many beautiful SA cultures and languages, learned about experiences outside of my own, saw so many unique and beautiful places and most of all – had so much fun! I can’t wait for you to start your own adventure 😊