Going on exchange was one of the best decisions I made in my university career. It was an amazing experience and a great big adventure. My name is Evelyn, I am a Communications major with a Publishing minor. From September to December 2014 I attended school at the University of East Anglia in Norwich, England.

My semester at the University of East Anglia took quite a bit of preparing, I was not a Canadian citizen so I had to apply for a student visa. If your exchange is less than six months and you are a Canadian citizen then I believe you could get a visa stamped at the airport but check the UK immigration and visa website for current laws and rules. One piece of advice I would give about packing is do not pack too much. I over packed for my exchange. Just remember everything you bring to your exchange you will bring back plus any items you buy while your on exchange.

I caught a direct flight from Vancouver to London Heathrow airport and used the university’s meet and greet pick up service. You can also fly to Norwich airport via Amsterdam and the university also does a meet and greet pick up service from the Norwich airport. A coach took us to the university and we got checked in at Chancellors Hall. After we got checked in a mini bus to us to our accommodation. I lived in University Village which is a ten minute walk from the main campus. The village is great accommodation with eight people per flat and two flats per floor. The reason I picked this accommodation was because of the en suites which is really nice to have. The kitchen was up to date and also served as the common room or living room of each flat. There was also a house keeper that came and cleaned the kitchen once a week and your en suites. They just did general cleaning though, they did not do dishes! I had friends who lived in the terraces on campus that were a bit older and cheaper but
enjoyable as well. Mary Chapman which I believe is the cheapest is in the city centre but public transport is more expensive and they do not have student fare. Whatever accommodation you decided to go you will probably meet some awesome people. I had a blast with my flatmates and we became really close friends.

The university campus is very similar to SFU, there is a lot of concrete everywhere. There is a beautiful lake less than five minutes from the campus. You can walk around the lake, it takes about fifteen to twenty minutes depending on your pace but the best part is the docks around the lake. Go to the lake on a sunny day and you can sit on the docks it's really a peaceful and tranquil place. Earlham Park is next to the University and is pretty big. The university has lots of green space and great little spots to study or meet with friends. Also keep an eye out for the rabbits!

The academics are similar to SFU but I found that there is more independent work. Also transferring classes is hard, so pick your classes wisely and make sure they are the ones that you want. They did not have a specific communications program like SFU so I took some media classes. My modules were both more practical than theory based like most communication classes at SFU. Both of my modules had professors who were either currently in the media industry or used to be. I workload is similar to SFU with final papers and mid term paper or test. Attendance however is mandatory, even for lectures.

Norwich is a beautiful English City. It as an old world charm with cobbled streets and historic buildings. Some places to explore are the Cathedral, the Forum, Adam and Eve pub which is supposed to be the oldest pub in the city. Go to all the churches you
can visit because they are spectacular. Explore the city it is not that big and you can find your way around it after a couple of trips.

While on my exchange I also did some travelling to other parts of the United Kingdom. Megabus is a cheap way to travel around England and it is only a four hour bus ride to London for under ten pounds if you book in advanced. Europe is quite easy to travel around and if you plan your trips ahead of time then you save lots of money. If possible try to look at the academic dates or see if there are any public holidays during your exchange to take long weekend trips. I went to Bath, Dublin, Edinburgh and London a couple of times. The university’s study abroad department also plans trips, I attended their first trip to Cambridge. The planned trips are nice, but sometimes they can be a bit pricey and you have to stick to a timetable.

During my exchange I met an amazing group of people, my flat mates and I became really close friends and I even made some friends from Vancouver. I grew as a person and learnt so many different things such as putting several alarms on because you will miss your coach to London. Be prepared for the unexpected because those are the best experiences sometimes. Come with an open mind and be a little bit adventurous. It is a scary concept to leave your home and city but the adventures and friends that I have made was worth the jump. An exchange is a way to get to know another countries culture, their education and travel around all in one experience. University of East Anglia is a great university that has passionate professors and they have a phenomenal student life. My exchange was one that has helped me grow as a student and also grow as a person. Going on exchange helps you see the world and understand it in another light.