Partner University: University of Sussex
Country: England
Faculty: Law, Politics, & Sociology
Term: Spring 2019

Preparation for Exchange:
Preparing for my exchange went smoothly as University of Sussex sent us a manual of everything you should know and do to prepare to come to the United Kingdom. That is where I got all of my information for visas, banking, etc. While I was researching what courses to take abroad, I realized that in England (not sure about the rest of the U.K.), what we call “courses” here in Canada, they call “modules” and what we call “majors” they call “courses.” So when researching what “courses” to take, make sure you are looking under “modules.” Packing was pretty simple; I pretty much just packed all of my clothes. I personally wanted to save room in my suitcase to pack as many clothes as possible, so I decided not to pack certain things I was able to buy in England, such as bathroom products like shampoo and conditioner, and school supplies. Brighton is closest to Gatwick airport so I highly recommend flying there as opposed to Heathrow. Westjet offers direct flights there now and once you arrive, Brighton is only a half an hour train ride away! I would also highly suggest getting a U.K bank card while living there. There are lots of places that only accept U.K bank cards, so it came in very handy. Barclays is a wonderful bank that has a student bank account if you are staying for a year, as well as a regular Barclays account if you are only staying for a semester. Both have zero fees! You really don’t need the travel Visa credit cards that a lot of people say you do as the Barclays debit card works all around Europe too, as well as your credit card. So as long as you have a credit card, you really don’t need a travel Visa credit card. The pound is also worth double the Canadian dollar so be prepared to be spending double what the price says.

During Exchange:
University of Sussex offered great orientations around campus that were both mandatory and optional; I would recommend participating in the optional ones as well. In terms of
accommodation, I would HIGHLY suggest not living on campus and living in Brighton. Sussex is definitely a commuter campus and it is about a half an hour bus ride away from Brighton. Brighton is definitely where you want to spend the majority of your time as it is incredibly lively and there’s lots more to do there than on campus. Sussex offers on and off campus housing, however they also have home-stay options which is what I did. They have a Sussex Student Pad website where you can look at all of the different options for home-stays; and please note that not all of them are families! I stayed with a wonderful lady in a beautiful house in Brighton. She did a lot of traveling so for most of the semester it was just me and my wonderful roommate in the house! It is a lot cheaper in the long run than staying in Sussex managed housing as most of the time, the houses are equipped with everything you need kitchen and bathroom wise; with Sussex you have to pay for all of it. Sussex has a different style of teaching than SFU does. They focus on “independent learning,” so there is not much in-person classes, however you are still expected to keep up with your readings and assignments. England is an amazing country! Brighton has a very similar weather to Vancouver, so keep that in mind while packing. It is also only an hour away from London, however I loved Brighton way better than London, and so did everyone that I met there. There are SO many places to see that are only half an hour to an hour away from Brighton, or even directly there! Definitely visit Seven Sisters! Pub quizzes are also a very popular thing to do in Brighton and they’re so much fun with a group of friends!

Reflection After Exchange:

I didn't have many challenges while I was abroad, or regrets for that matter. Some advice would be definitely travel Europe and the rest of the U.K while you are there, but don’t beat yourself up if you don’t get everywhere. Europe is always going to be there and you can always go back one day! Appreciate every single moment of your exchange because it goes by in the blink of an eye!
Brighton Beach/ The Old Pier

First day of classes with my friend and roommate!

Seven Sisters Cliffs (only an hour away from Brighton city centre!)
One of the many beautiful sunsets Brighton gets in the Spring (taken from the Brighton Palace Pier)!

Brighton Beach Huts (just a taste of how colourful Brighton literally is!)