EXCHANGE PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

STUDENT INFORMATION
Faculty: Arts and Social Sciences
Major/Minor: French Major (with Concentration for Prospective Teachers)
Host university: Université François Rabelais
Host Country: France
Dates of your exchange: (month/year) September 2017 to (month/year) December 2017

TRAVEL
Approximately how much did air transportation cost? $1400 CAD
Approximately how much did any required ground transportation cost? €60
Do you have a recommended routing or airline? □ No □ Yes

VISAS
What is your citizenship? (voluntary; may impact following information) Canadian
Did you need a student visa/permit? □ No □ Yes: What was the cost? $0, due to the France-Canada Youth Mobility Agreement
If yes, what documentation was needed? Acceptance letters from both the home and host institutions, Canadian passport, proof of financial resources, two recent identity photos, student card
Did you need a visitor visa/permit? □ No □ Yes: What was the cost? 
If yes, what documentation was needed?
Where was your immigration documentation processed? Vancouver, Canada
How long did it take to procure your visa/permit? A couple of weeks
Were any other documents required (residence permit, etc)? □ No □ Yes
If yes, please comment:

AIRPORT RECEPTION
Were you met at the airport by representatives of the host university? □ No □ Yes
Is there easy transportation between the airport and university? □ No □ Yes
Please comment: I took a TGV (high-speed) train from the Charles de Gaulle (CDG) Airport in Paris to the Gare de Tours in Tours, France, and it was a relatively simple process.

What is the closest airport to the host university? Charles de Gaulle (CDG) in Paris, France

ORIENTATION
Is there an organized orientation session upon arrival at the host university? □ No □ Yes
Was there a cost for the orientation session? □ No □ Yes, how much? 
If yes, do you recommend that future students participate? □ No □ Yes
Please comment: The orientation session at the Université François Rabelais is mandatory for all exchange students. At the session, they explain important information such as how to get your student card and what paperwork you are required to complete, how to set up an account on the UFR student system, how to search and register for courses, university resources available to students (such as the library, printing services, sports, the Tandem-language program), advisors that students can contact, etc. The information presented was very helpful and pertinent for my exchange in Tours.
**LANGUAGE PROGRAMS**

Is there a language program available either before or during the term? □ No □ Yes

If yes, how long is it? During the whole term

Is there an additional cost for language training? □ No □ Yes: How much? Depends; usually around €50

Please comment:

To take CUEFEE courses (French-as-a-second-language courses), there is a fee that students need to pay at the beginning of the semester, but I believe that the fee varies with how many CUEFEE courses you are taking. Another language program available at the UFR is the Tandem-language program, in which two students are paired up and do a one-hour conversation session together, half of which is in one student's language and the other half of which is in the other student's language. The Tandem program is free of charge.

**ACCOMMODATION & LIVING**

Is on-campus or university dormitory accommodation available? □ No □ Yes

If yes, are you living in a university dormitory? □ No □ Yes

If yes, can you make a recommendation for a specific dormitory? □ No □ Yes

If yes, please describe: The Tanneurs Residence, as it is in a very central and convenient location.

What is the average monthly cost of accommodation? €264

Is there a meal plan? □ No □ Yes: How much is it?

If no, do you have access to adequate cooking facilities? □ No □ Yes

How far is your dormitory from the main campus? 1-2 minute walk to the Tanneurs academic building (the Lettres et Langues building). Other academic buildings are spread out around Tours.

Please comment on internet and phone access in your dormitory:

Wireless internet is provided by the dormitory. Phone service/access is available as well, however students first need to purchase a phone plan with a phone provider in Tours.

Did you have to make a deposit for your accommodation prior to arrival? □ No □ Yes

If yes, how did you arrange this? Wire transfer

Is off-campus housing easily available? □ No □ Yes

Please comment on off-campus housing:

I lived on on-campus housing, however I knew of several exchange students who lived with host families, so this would be another option in terms of housing in Tours.

Approximately how much money per month is needed for living, including accommodation and meals? About €350 - €450

Any other comments on accommodation:

My rent at the Tanneurs residence was €264/month. As for groceries, I spent about €20-€30/week, but it depends on what and how much you purchase, as well as where you shop. For example, I found that outdoor markets and bigger grocery stores had more produce for cheaper prices than smaller grocery stores. It is also helpful to budget some money every month for travelling/excursions, events, eating out-going out with friends, and other expenses such as shopping for clothes, souvenirs, etc.
FINANCIAL DETAILS

Have you opened a bank account in your host country?  

☐ No  ☐ Yes: What are the challenges/benefits to opening a local bank account?

I did not experience a lot of difficulties opening my bank account, as I went to Société Générale, which is the bank that the UFR suggests international/exchange students go to, so this bank is quite familiar with foreign students who are opening a bank account for just a short period of time. The process is more complicated, however, if you cannot speak French, so if this is the case for you, I would recommend asking if you can attend your bank appointment for opening an account with a friend who knows French just so that they would be able to help with communication. It was very beneficial having a local bank card, as I was able to use it in most establishments, and I was able to take out cash using this card instead of my international credit card, and thus save money on international banking withdrawal fees.

How would you recommend students bring money (Canadian/American cash, travelers’ cheques, local currency?)

I would recommend that students bring some local currency for when they first arrive, just in case their debit/credit cards don’t work right away or if some restaurants, businesses, or other services they access only accept cash.

What is/are the preferred method(s) of payment at most establishments?  

☐ Cash  ☐ Debit  ☐ Credit card

Please comment: Some establishments or restaurants only accepted cash, but most establishments also accepted debit cards issued by local banks or international credit cards.

ACADEMIC DETAILS

Was it possible for you to get all of the courses that you wanted?  

☐ No  ☐ Yes

Please describe the course registration procedure:

All students are given the first month of the term to try out different courses, and can browse available courses on the UFR student system once they arrive in Tours, register as an exchange student, and create an account on the system. Once we were certain of the courses that we wanted to take, we were required to fill out a “Learning Agreement” form, on which we had to get the signatures of all our professors confirming that they approved our enrollment into their course and that they were aware of the presence of exchange students in their class. After we gathered all of these signatures, we then needed to get the form approved by our assigned pedagogical coordinator at the UFR. Finally, we had to hand in the form to one of the advisors for international/exchange students so that he/she could officially enroll us into our selected courses.

What discipline(s)/program(s) are you taking at your host university?  

French/ Foreign Languages/ Education (Teaching French as a Second Language)

What is the language of instruction in your courses?

French

If not English, are English-taught courses available?  

Yes

Describe the manner and quality of instruction at your host university.

I found that most of the courses at the UFR consisted of lectures throughout the majority of the semester, and that our mark consisted of 1 or 2 big exams and/or assignments that were usually held or due near the end of the semester. Thus, even though I was taking a full-time course load (32 ECTS or 16 SFU credits) at the UFR, I felt that the pace was a little bit less intense than taking a full-time course load at SFU. However, because your final grade is based on fewer assignments or exams, these become more high-stake. Overall, it was very interesting to take courses in a different country’s education system and to expose myself to the different perspectives and teaching approaches that are prevalent there. My professors were very nice and accommodating as well when I informed them that I was an exchange student, and some of them created an evaluation schema specifically for exchange students to facilitate their learning and their unique circumstance.

What do you feel is/will be the main academic benefit of your participation in this exchange program?

The main academic benefit from my exchange at the UFR in Tours, France was that I was able to greatly improve my skills in all aspects of the French language. I was able to improve my oral speaking and comprehension skills, because I was immersed in a francophone environment and because I was interacting with native French speakers daily in everyday situations. As well, taking courses at a French university helped me significantly improve my comprehension skills because I had to keep up with course content that was being delivered for native French speakers. My classes also developed my writing and grammatical French skills, as I was pushed to think in French as I wrote (instead of translating from English to French), and to produce written work that was well-structured, coherent, and at an acceptable level for the standards of a French university.

Submission Instructions:

1. Please complete and return this form by E-mail to studyabroad@sfu.ca as a PDF.
2. Subject line of email: Questionnaire - [Host Country, Host University]
3. Please include your full name and student number in the body of your E-mail.