Spring 2018 Term (January-June)

Major: Communications

You've made the spectacular choice of choosing to study abroad, and better yet- you're considering Lund. My exchange experience was extremely positive and honestly an experience that I wouldn't trade for anything in the world. I met amazing people, got to see a lot of Europe through my travels, and enjoyed living in a small university town and learning more about Swedish culture. A term abroad goes by quickly- so my one piece of advice is to live in the moment and soak up everything that you can, wherever you choose to go.

Preparation for exchange

To double check that you've got a firm grasp on what courses you're planning on taking (and if you're confused about anything at all), book an appointment with your exchange advisor. They're extremely helpful and will assist you in making sure all your future credits will transfer. From what I experienced and what I heard from fellow SFU students, Lund takes a bit longer in confirming your acceptance. Be patient and don't be afraid to connect with the advisor in Lund to check your status. I would recommend having all the deadlines written on your calendar so you're on top of everything. Packing was something that I struggled with. Since I was in Europe from January to June, I experienced the harsh Nordic winter, a slightly rainy spring (not a problem for Vancouver natives...like c'mon, it's just a little water), and for some reason- a sweltering early Swedish summer. I came prepared for everything but the heat. Key items to bring: a trusty parka/winter jacket, waterproof gloves, warm waterproof boots, and a rain jacket that you can easily layer with. Clothes are a bit more expensive in Sweden, but things like an extra pair of shorts or t-shirts are much cheaper to pick up than a brand new winter coat. Speaking of expenses- as you may have heard, Sweden is pretty much a cashless society. There are places that
take cash for sure, but most times, coffee shops and retailers will be card only. You’ll be receiving some conversion fees when charging your card, so keep this in mind when you’re budgeting. I would highly recommend building together a rough budget plan before you get to Lund. Throughout your first month, track your spending and you’ll see realistically how much cash is flowing out of your account.

**During Exchange**

Arrival Day! This was such a crazy whirlwind as you’re most likely sleep deprived and very jetlagged. The energy is amazing though, and I found the welcome team at Lund to be extremely organized in helping us figure out our accommodation and just get settled. I arrived at Copenhagen Airport on Arrival Day morning and we were taken by university representatives by train to Lund. It’s fast- approximately 40 minutes. Orientation week was action packed and filled with activities and mixers to meet fellow exchange students. I would recommend to attend as much of these events as possible, you’ll meet a lot of people this way. I lived in the Sparta International Corridor- known for its social atmosphere and shared living space. I would highly recommend Sparta if you want to experience the “true rez lifestyle” and are comfortable with sharing toilets, showers, and kitchens with 20+ exchange students. We spent a lot of our time together- cooking group meals, having friends over, and just enjoying each other’s company. Sparta is in a great location as well. You’re about a 20 minute walk from town and close to campus. There’s a supermarket (ICA) downstairs, and a gym (ACTIC) in the building. If you are looking for a social atmosphere but with your own washroom- Delphi and Parentesan are great choices. If you prefer completely having your own space, Palsjoang is a good option as it’s a studio style apartment that is still close to everything. I loved Lund so much for its small town vibes, cleanliness and comfortability. I felt safe and enjoyed being able to bike everywhere. Purchasing a bike is essential to experience Lund like a true Swede. They are easy to come by and can be inexpensive if you find a seller through one of the Buy and Sell Lund pages. I thoroughly enjoyed my exchange courses. I took one Communications course and three electives during my time there. The format of class was always built on discussion- it was interesting to hear the point of view of other exchange students. I have never met so many open minded people willing to learn
and from each other as well. During orientation week, you will have a meeting scheduled with your advisor. They will set you up with your course schedule and answer any questions you may have.

Nations and Valborg

Lund is the land of nations. During orientation week you can attend a “Club Fair/Nation Fair” where you can learn about the various nations. They are basically a mix between a sorority and a fraternity. You can join one for a small fee compared to how much you will use your membership— it’s called a Studentlund card and you will need it to attend club nights, bars, and some events. I joined Väsgota Nation, and enjoyed attending their sittning (a formal dinner filled with drinks and singing authentic Swedish songs) and club nights. Every nation has so much to offer and I recommend finding one that suits your interests. Some nations are known to have more Swedes than exchange students. An amazing thing about living in a university town is all the traditions you can partake in. Every year on April 30th, there’s an event called Valborg that everyone takes part in. Starting early in the day, everyone gathers in the park with their friends and plenty of food and drinks to welcome the spring. Valborg ends with a huge bonfire and events at multiple residences in the evening. This was so fun to experience as we don’t have anything quite like it at SFU.

Travelling (do it)

This is your time to get bitten by the travelling bug. My exchange wouldn’t have nearly been the same if it hadn’t been for the trips I went on around Europe. Your school schedule will allow you to find those long weekends or even mid week breaks to hop on a plane and explore a different city for a while. Modes of transport like airlines RyanAir, Easy Jet, and Veuling and bus company Flixbus will make travelling on a budget easy. Do some homework on the website Skyscanner a few weeks or even months ahead if you want to save more. There’s also a club called ESN Lund that organizes big group trips. With ESN, I went to Lapland in Finland to see the Northern Lights, and St. Petersburg in Russia to see some amazing architecture, art and my favourite ballet Swan Lake.
Reflection After Exchange

Be prepared for homesickness. Not everyone experiences it, but I sure did. The first week or even month can be an adjustment period. Know that it is definitely normal and you will get through it. It really helps to connect with your family and friends back home for little check ins. It’s perfectly healthy to miss out on some orientation events during the first week if you’re feeling overwhelmed. I chose to catch up on my sleep and missed a couple- but still made friends and met awesome people. For once in so long, I didn’t have a part time job to worry about while balancing schoolwork. Life feels unreal at times. You’re biking blissfully to class at 9:00 am, then you’re hoping on a plane to Helsinki in the evening. It’s easy to get caught up in having so much fun (because you should), but don’t forget that you are there to represent SFU and Canada. Get your assignments and exams done, and check with your professors if you plan on missing classes for a trip. Although you are at Lund to explore and travel, you are also there to work for your exchange credits and learn from a different style of teaching. If you’re having any doubts about going on exchange: I really recommend to take the plunge. If you are feeling nervous or anxious about the thought of going somewhere not knowing anyone- know that everyone else is on the same boat. Be vulnerable to new experiences and you will learn so much. Best of luck!
We organized a big table tennis tournament at the end of the term.

Having fika with my friend at Broder Jakobs- highly recommend their chai latte.
Lund on a clear winter day. This path takes you into town.

Lomma Beach in winter - a short bus ride from Lund Central Station. It was amazing to see this beach transition throughout the winter, spring and summer.
The beginning of a very sunny spring in town.