



Student Mobility/Exchange Program Returning Student Report

Student Name:

OCAD U Program: Graphic Design

Host University: Penninghen

Host Country: France

Faculty/Department at Host Institution: Art Direction

Semester: Winter

Date of Report: January 22 - June 5

1. OVERALL EVALUATION

How would you rate your exchange experience overall?

Poor **Excellent**
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Why did you choose this host institution? What key factors or issues influenced your decision?

First I chose this host institution because it was located in Paris (a city I have never been and was very excited to visit). But the true reason in which I pursued Penninghen was because of their course selection which was similar to OCAD's yet in a different environment.

Please share a couple of your most positive experiences and a couple of the biggest challenges you faced.

Some positive experiences were that the profs are such incredible designers who really care about students success and will call you out on your design faults. They push you in a way that may seem hard at first but it helped me become a better designer. A challenge I faced was the group design projects. We do not do a lot of collaborative work at OCAD and it was difficult not

2. PREPARATION

Please describe your preparation for the exchange, including banking, travel documents and student visa application. In retrospect, would you have done anything differently?

Preparing to study abroad was very difficult because I only found out a little less than 2 months before I had to move across the world that I had been accepted. My parents supported me with the banking issues and I got a credit card to use. Getting the VISA with such a little timeline was difficult because it was during winter break where the hours had changed and there wasn't as

Are there any important items (e.g. art and design supplies, documents, specialty foods, health items) that a student should take to your host country?

Take your favourite cold and flu medication. They have pharmacies in Paris but they give you way too many pills to take when you could simply take an Advil Cold and Flu pill. Bring copies of your picture since they ask for it on multiple documents. Design supplies you can buy there, the most I used was an exacto knife and a cutting board.

3. ARRIVAL

Was anyone at the airport, train station, etc. to meet you? Did you experience any difficulties upon arrival?

I had a taxi meet me at the airport to drive me to my residence. No difficulties at all.

When should students plan to arrive at the host university? When did you arrive? Would you have benefited from arriving earlier?

I arrived a week before classes started because I had a holiday trip with my family and it was just the right amount of time to settle in. If you could go sooner like 2 weeks before then you should do it, but a week is more than enough time.

Was there an orientation session offered at your host university? If yes, did you attend and what did you learn?

Yes there was orientation for international students. They showed us the classrooms and we had our student ID picture taken.

Is there a coordinating office for international students, including exchange students, at your host university? Is there a staff person you would recommend students approach with their questions?

The woman who deals with all student issues is the person who helps international students.

4. ACCOMMODATION

Where did you live during your exchange? Were you happy with your accommodation?

I lived in the Maison des Etudiants Canadiens at Cité Universitaire. I LOVED IT SO MUCH.

Did you have any difficulties arranging accommodation? Did the host institution assist you?

The host institution did not help at all with arranging an accommodation. I had to apply through the residency website and luckily got accepted.

5. STUDIES AT HOST INSTITUTION

To better understand the similarities and differences between academic studies at OCAD U and at your host university, please comment on the following:

Level of academic difficulty and challenge: More difficult

Time spent in class (# of hours per week) : 24

Time spent working on projects outside of class (# of hours per week) : 20

Studio-based work: 10

Written assignments: 0

Interaction between students and professors: 8

6. SERVICES

Were there any extracurricular activities/events scheduled for exchange/international students at your host university (cultural visits, trips, workshops, etc.)? Which ones would you recommend?

None through my host institution but because my friend was in an international program at her school I was able to join some of the trips that her school had arranged.

What were the library and computer facilities like?

The school is so small that they don't have a library and only a few computer facilities.

7. COST OF LIVING

How did you prepare yourself financially for your exchange? Did you pay for the experience entirely out of your own savings? Did you receive loans and/or financial awards (scholarships or bursaries)? Did you have help from family?

I helped pay for my exchange from my savings as well as a lot of help from my family. I did not get any scholarship or bursary.

In general, was the cost of living in your host country higher, lower, or similar to that in Canada? Please explain.

The cost of living is higher only because I live at home and do not have to pay rent here. But if I lived downtown the pricing would be very similar.

8. EXPENSES

Exchange rate with host country: 1.54%

Time spent in host country (month/year - month/year): January 2018 - June 2018

Would you estimate that you spent more, less, or the same amount as an average, local student attending your host institution? more

Please complete the following budget to give other students an idea of what they can expect to spend in the host country.

Basic Expenses in Canadian Dollars:

1. Tuition and general fees (paid to OCAD U): \$	3000\$
2. School supplies: \$	500\$
3. Rent or university residence: \$ /month = \$	784\$
4. Rent-related expenses:	
A) Electricity/Water: \$ /month	included in rent
B) Telephone: \$ /month	30
C) Cable: \$ /month	
D) Other (specify) \$ /month	
5. Groceries or Meal Plan: \$ /month = \$	400
6. Personal expenses (toiletries/cosmetics, etc.): \$ /month = \$	200
8. Laundry: \$ /month = \$	60
7. Transportation: \$ /month = \$	110
9. Leisure (Sports, Entertainment, etc.): \$	100
10. Travel health insurance: \$	120\$
11. Medical expenses in host country: \$	100\$
12. Round trip plane ticket: \$	1600\$
13. Travel/trips during exchange: \$	5000\$
14. Student visa: \$	0
15. Other expenses (please specify): \$	
Estimated Total Expenses: \$	20,000

9. ADAPTING TO YOUR HOST COUNTRY

Did you experience any “culture shock” during your exchange? How did you deal with it?

Do you have any advice for students on how to adapt to life in your host country?

Yes I experienced culture shock. The people in France will sometimes live up to their stereotypes and aren't as friendly as Canadians. Also living for 6 months in a country that speaks French was hard. Before going you should definitely know some French to not feel out of place.

Was there a lot of interaction between local students and exchange/international students? What is the best way to develop friendships with students from your host institution?

There were many group projects where I would work only with local students. Just be friendly and try hard to speak to others.

Was there anything that you felt was strikingly different from what you expected?

If the students aren't your friends then they probably won't speak to you. But that's just how the French are.

10. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

10/10 WOULD RECOMMEND!!!! I LOVED IT

Please email your report to International Student Services at international@ocadu.ca.