

# ***Studying abroad in Toronto, Canada***

4. Semester at Humber College  
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## Introduction – why I wanted to study abroad

I originally wanted to go abroad on my 5th semester. However, when the option for going away on my 4th it seemed to fit me much better, especially with how the semesters are designed at KEA. I wanted to go to an English talking country; my first thought was the States. However, because no schools was available I choose the next best North American country, Canada. KEA just started a new cooperation with a college in Toronto, Humber College. Another reason why I chose to study abroad was that I really wanted to improve my English skills both spoken and written.

## Experiences at Humber College

The program I studied at Humber College was Architectural Technology. I had the option to choose between classes from their 2nd, 4th and 6th semester. I had to choose five classes and I chose three from their 4th semester and two from 6th semester. In two of my classes I had to do group work, otherwise it was just individually work. They use an electronic platform called Blackboard to give out information about the classes, the materials for the classes and the grades/marks throughout the semester.



*Humber College, North Campus*

### Drafting and detailing 4 (D&D 4), 4th semester

Drafting and detailing was a class where it was optional to work in groups or alone. I worked in a group with 2 other Danish students from KEA. We had to design an office building (specific for 4th semester) in Revit and then work on it throughout the semester. There were some criteria that the building had to live up to, given by the professor. Not only did we design the building in Revit, but we also had to build an actual model as one of the assignments. There was an assignment due every 2 weeks.

### Materials and Methods 3 (M&M 3), 4th semester

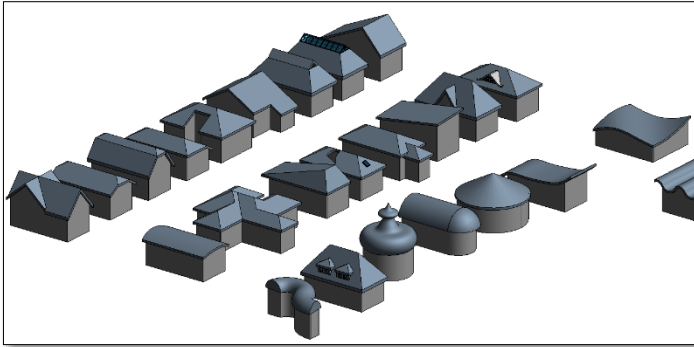
This was one of my favorite classes, mostly because I had a great teacher. Nevertheless, the title rather says it all. This class is about the different materials and the methods used to construct a building. This class is related to D&D4, and the focus is concrete for this specific semester. There are no assignments, but we often had a small test about the topic of the day at the end of the class and two big tests, the midterm and final. All the test is graded and it definitely pays off to study for the big tests.



*Model built in D&D 4*

### **Digital Communication 4 (Revit class), 4th semester**

This is strictly tutorials in Revit. At first it seemed like this class was way below our level from KEA, but I learned many cut troughs in Revit and many basic skills, that I did not have. There



*Roof assignment*

were six assignment due in total, but they were all related to the topics the professor conferred with. You even get time in class to work on the assignments. The topics I worked with in this class was the basic (how to draw a simple house in Revit), stacked walls, details, massing models, sheets (how to make you own from scratch), roofs and stairs.

My grades did not to get posted on blackboard, so I had no idea of how I

was doing throughout the semester. My grades was only posted on myHumber for my midterm and then the final. But if you hand in all of the assignments, then there is nothing to worry about, and the professor is really cool.

### **Estimating, 6th semester**

This class did not teach me anything. It was supposed to be about how to calculate the materials used in a case, and learning how to do it in Excel. In addition, even though it was a 6th semester class many of the students did not know how to use Excel. The professor teaching this class was often very confusing listening to and was not good at passing on his knowledge. Often it just ended up with the teacher passing out the answers for the assignments before it was due, so people could just copy-paste it and do well.

There were a couple of smaller assignments throughout the semester and 2 big tests, midterm and final. I had the same problem with this class as I did with Digital Communication regarding my grades.

### **Project Management, 6th semester**

This class was really difficult for me to figure out in the beginning. We were given lectures on different aspects of a Project Managers role in Canada. As a part of this class, you have to be in a group and write a Term Project, divided into 5 assignments and a Power Point presentation at the end. There are three tests throughout the semester and a final exam at the end. It definitely was my toughest class but also a class I learned a lot from especially because I had a great group, which is super important. But if you choose this class you have to be prepared to put in an effort. Almost all of the students in this class is graduating and therefore wants a good grade.

### **Leisure time at campus**

The school in itself has a student organisation called Ignite. They offer a broad variety of different clubs you can join and there is something for everyone. They are always around campus and they have a webpage as well where you can seek out information.

If you are into fitness and wellness, the campus has a great gym, with many possibilities. They have weights, machines and classes, like yoga and Zumba; you can just show up for.

## Social and cultural experiences

It was not as easy to find friends as you experience in Denmark. However, being in groups at school and joining clubs can differently help.

I would also say that the international coordinator at Humber, Rebecca, encourage you to make a Facebook group with the other exchange students, even before you arrive and that is a good idea. She also arranged for all of us to meet the first week. Therefore, the possibility of meeting at least one new friend in the first week is big.

I did not have a ton of money saved up but I like watching NHL, which is a big thing in Canada. Therefore, I found out that I could join an organisation and volunteer at the different games at the Air Canada Centre. I had to sell lottery tickets the first half of the games and then I got to watch the rest of the games, from the great seats. And not only did I get to see NHL

but also NBA, and there is also the possibility of volunteering at their Lacrosse and soccer games.

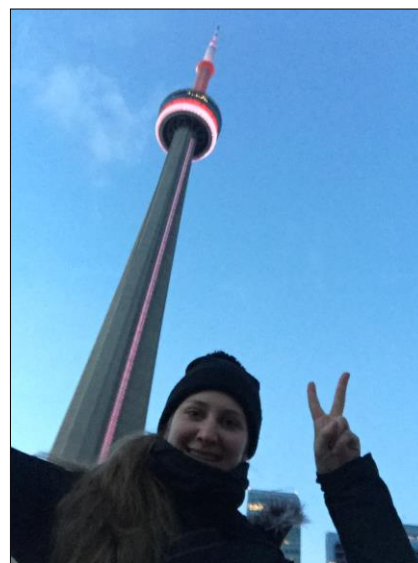


*A Raptors game  
and  
a Maple Leaf game*

If you are interested in hearing more about the volunteer organisation, feel free to contact me: [pippi.gry@gmail.com](mailto:pippi.gry@gmail.com)

Nevertheless, there is a lot to experience in the city, and depending what you like whether it is being a tourist or just seeing local places, Toronto is big and you can do it all. If you want to see a lot of the tourist attractions, I can definitely recommend the City Pass. It gives you a discount on all the big tourist traps, like CN Tower, The ZOO, the Aquarium, and The Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) etc. However, this only works for a period of 10 days. Furthermore, I experienced that Humber College offers a lot of trips to different places for all international students at good prices, which is definitely worth doing as well.

I would also recommend going to Kensington Market; they have a variety of small different shops and cafes. The areas Little Portugal and Little Italy offers really good food and do not always judge the small restaurants by their fronts;-)



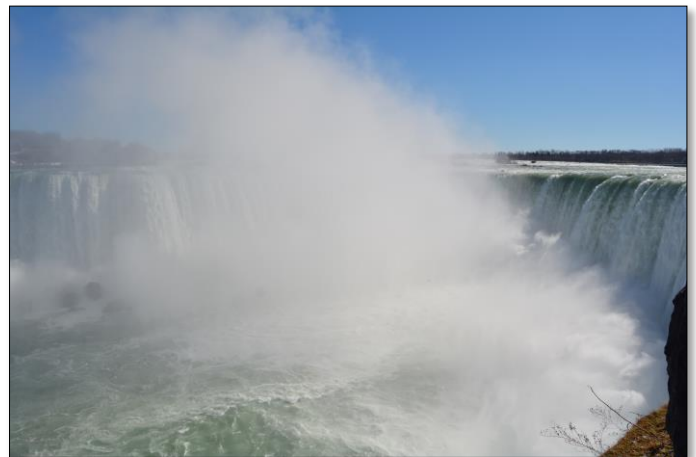
*CN Tower*



*Snake & Latte*

If you are into board games, then Snakes & Lattes is definitely worth a visit. You can even eat and drink there, and the food is not bad. It has an entry fee of \$5 and then you can stay all day playing different board games. They can also teach you new games and recommend other games. If you want to go there in the weekends, come early and expect waiting time. I simply loved it and I'm not a nerd;-)

To get one of the best views of Toronto, I definitely recommend Toronto Islands (see my front page picture). You can take the ferry to from Harbour in Downtown and it takes around 20 minutes. There is a lot of small islands connected by bridges and you can walk or bike around. There is beach areas, a small amusement park and more remote areas where you can picnic.

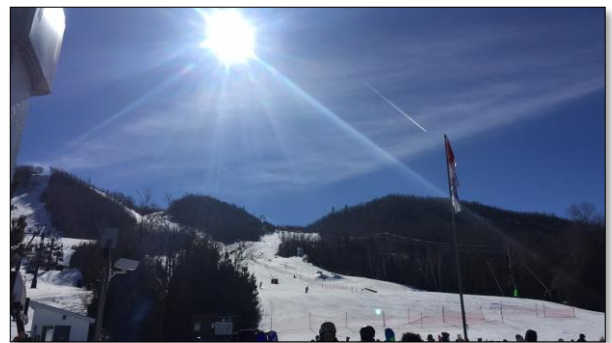


*Niagara Falls*

But there is also a lot to see outside of the city and you can go either by bus (megabus etc.), train, rental car or some places is cheaper to fly to.

Niagara Falls is only 1 hour drive and is beautiful not only in summer time, but in winter time it completely freezes over.

If you like to ski/snowboard in wintertime, there is also the possibility of this. Blue Mountain is a 2 hour drive away, but it is nothing like the Alps in Europe. Nevertheless, it is possible and Humber offers trips to Snow Valley (mostly for beginners) during the winter semester.



*Blue mountains*

## **Practical Experiences**

**Travel:** the longer you wait the more expensive tickets. And do NOT choose WOW AIR. Not a good experience!!

Remember to get your eTa, which you apply for online, the same as ESTA for USA. And you do not need a student visa, because your semester is only 4 month.

**Living:** I stayed at the Residence, where you get a small room and have to share bathroom, shower and lounge with everyone else at your floor. It is mostly REALLY young people living there (18-19 years old) and they do party, not only on the weekend but also during the week. The residence is definitely the easy solution, and not necessary the best or the cheapest. It is possible to find a room in a house in the area, and it can be much cheaper to do this. There are websites like kijiji, you can use to find rooms.



*North Residence*

**Food:** There is a big cafe on campus (and a smaller one at residence) where you can buy all kinds of food. The prices are like fast-food places. There is a big grocery shop nearby, Fotinos, but it is not cheap. There are a Walmart and a No-frills a couple of km away and they are cheaper. Some of the cheap grocery shops do not take credit, so if you want to shop cheap, you need to have cash. There are a lot of good restaurants and pubs in downtown and a helpful webpage to find some are **blogTO** (which not only recommends food but also bars, tattoo shops etc.)



*Food Court at North Campus*

**Alcohol:** It is illegal to drink in public and you have to be 19 years old to buy alcohol. You cannot buy it at the normal grocery shops. You need to go to a "Beer shop", "wine shop" or a "LCBO".

When you want to go out in Toronto, it's often house parties your fellow student invite you to. If you want to go clubbing downtown you have to hit the clubs earlier than you are used to. Almost all bars and clubs closes at 2am

## **Conclusion**

It was definitely harder to be away from my loved ones to begin with. But when you start making friends, volunteering and experience the city, it helps.

I would say that the expectation of improving my English, especially expanding my professional vocabulary, was met 😊

My expectations towards the actual classes in school, was not high, and I was pleasantly surprised. Of course, it is how big of an effort you choose to put into it, because there is a lot of homework but it also really gives you a lot. Some of the professors are really caring and very helpful.

So overall a great experience 😊