

CANADA – TORONTO

HUMBER COLLGE – NORTH CAMPUS

Program: Architectural Technology

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Introduction

I have always wanted to study abroad, to experience a different culture and study life, and improve my English skills. I choose my 5th semester as my exchange, as it is the last semester before my internship, furthermore when you study architectural technology at KEA a big part of the semesters are in groups, and I was already in my 2nd semester in a very good group, which I wanted to stay with as long as possible. Therefore, I waited till my 5th semester to go abroad. Furthermore, I was planning on taking my internship abroad as well, which gave me one more reason to pick the 5th semester as my exchange. If you are planning on taking your 5th semester in Canada and then stay and take your internship, it's very important you start planning your exchange in good time. Canada has very specific rules regarding VISAs, but Humber are more than happy to help you with this. I didn't know this before I went, but if you are planning on taking both 5th and 6th semester you will need a different VISA, and it takes up to 3 months to apply, therefore it's better to do this before you go. If you only are planning on taking a regular semester at Humber, then you do not need a VISA as your stay is shorter than 6 months.



Figure 1 View of the city from the lake (close to Humber Lakeshore campus)

Experiences at the host university

When you study Architectural Technology & Building Construction Management (Bygningskonstruktør) at KEA you have five semesters, one internship and a last semester where you write/draw your bachelor project. The five first semesters in Denmark is pretty much decided for us, and we can only choose one course ourselves every semester. In Canada it is very different, the education is only Architectural Technology and it consists of six semesters, where some courses are mandatory on each semester, and the rest of the courses you choose yourself. When applying as an exchange student at Humber College, you will fill out a learning agreement with 8 courses, but you will only get 5 of them. In Denmark we start the education both in summer and in winter, but at Humber they only start in summer, which means, because I started my first semester in winter and my exchange was winter 2020, my 5th semester, therefore I could only apply to 4th and 6th semester courses.

I chose the following courses:

- 1) Build info model 2 (BIM) – 4th semester
- 2) Estimating – 6th semester
- 3) Material & methods 4 (Concrete) – 4th semester
- 4) Drafting & detailing 6 – 6th semester
- 5) Project Management – 6th semester

1) Build info model 2 (BIM)

This course is all about Revit, and Jason Pinhay, the teacher, was amazing. It started out very simple with a walkthrough Revit 2020 and a lot of great shortcuts. When studying Architectural Technology at Humber the first couple of semesters the student mostly learns to draw by hand and in AutoCAD. But this course takes you through a wide spectrum of Revit, and even though we use Revit from the beginning in Denmark, there are so many great things still to learn at this course. Be patient and follow along, and Jason is more than happy to help/introduce you to things there is not part of the course. I would recommend everyone to take this course or BIM 3, which runs in the fall.

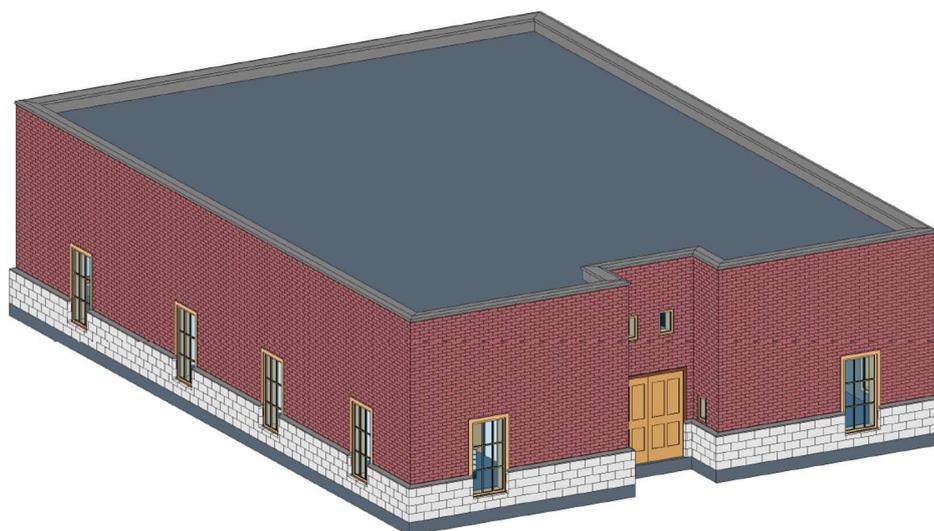


Figure 2 From one of the assignments learning about stacked walls.

2) Estimating

This course gives you some good tools for calculating construction estimating in excel. If you have not got a lot of experience with working in excel this course is great for you. This was not the case for me, but then I learned some good principles for construction estimating. Furthermore, it is a great way to become more confident with converting from metric to imperial and vice versa. In Canada, all drawings and specifications for residential construction is given in imperial, where for industrial and bigger constructions it will be given in metric.

3) Material & methods 4 (concrete)

This course was a fourth semester course and goes hand in hand with "Drafting & Detailing 4" which is an office building project. I did not know this before I chose my courses, but even though I had "Drafting & Detailing 6" this was still a great course and it's not depending on "Drafting & Detailing 4". You will learn everything from the process of producing concrete to all the different ways we use concrete, as load bearing parts of a building to architectural cladding. The course is the fourth and last courses of materials and methods, and concrete is the focus, but you will also learn about excavations, footings, masonry, steel, glass and roofs.

4) Drafting & Detailing 6

This was probably my favorite course. The six semester is the last semester in Canada, and "Drafting & Detailing", also called D&D, is a big course. You can compare it a bit to our 7th semester in Denmark, some students actually start a project in their 5th semester and continues with it in their 6th semester. There are three ways you can complete this course.

- 1) Manual
- 2) Continuing your 5th semester project
- 3) Design your own hotel

1) Manual

In D&D 6 you can choose to follow a manual there takes you through all the working drawings for a hotel. The manual already consists of all the drawings, but things have been removed to make the student picture the full hotel in their head in a 3 dimension. In the lectures the teacher will go through the drawings and point out some of the mistakes there are, and there will be a talk on the class regarding how the details should be made according to the current building code. Your teacher will make a calendar for which days you have to hand in the different drawings, and it's very important that they are printed out. There is plenty of print options at the school, and there will be given an amount of prints on your student card when you start the semester. Even though I didn't do the manual I sometimes asked to follow along when a student handed in their drawings. It was a great way to learn about the Canadian building code, to sit and listen to the teacher pointing out mistakes and missing things on the drawings.

2) Continuing your 5th semester project

This is only an option if you stay in both 5th and 6th semester or join a group there is already continuing their project.

3) Design your own hotel

A Canadian guy and I made a group and designed our own hotel. When designing your own hotel, you will get a list, often taken from the manual, of size, number of rooms, special rooms etc. The first thing there is due is a concept package, which you will perform as a presentation for the class. When working on your concept you will find a great guidance from your architectural teacher who will embrace your ideas and help you forming a common thread throughout your project. My teacher Anais Deragopian was amazing, and really opened my eyes to some great artist and the architectural inspiring people. You will spend a great amount of time compressing your concept while you start designing your buildings. This part of the course is a lot more about architecture and design, but it's important still to have an eye on how you will make your details and how it can fit in the current building code.

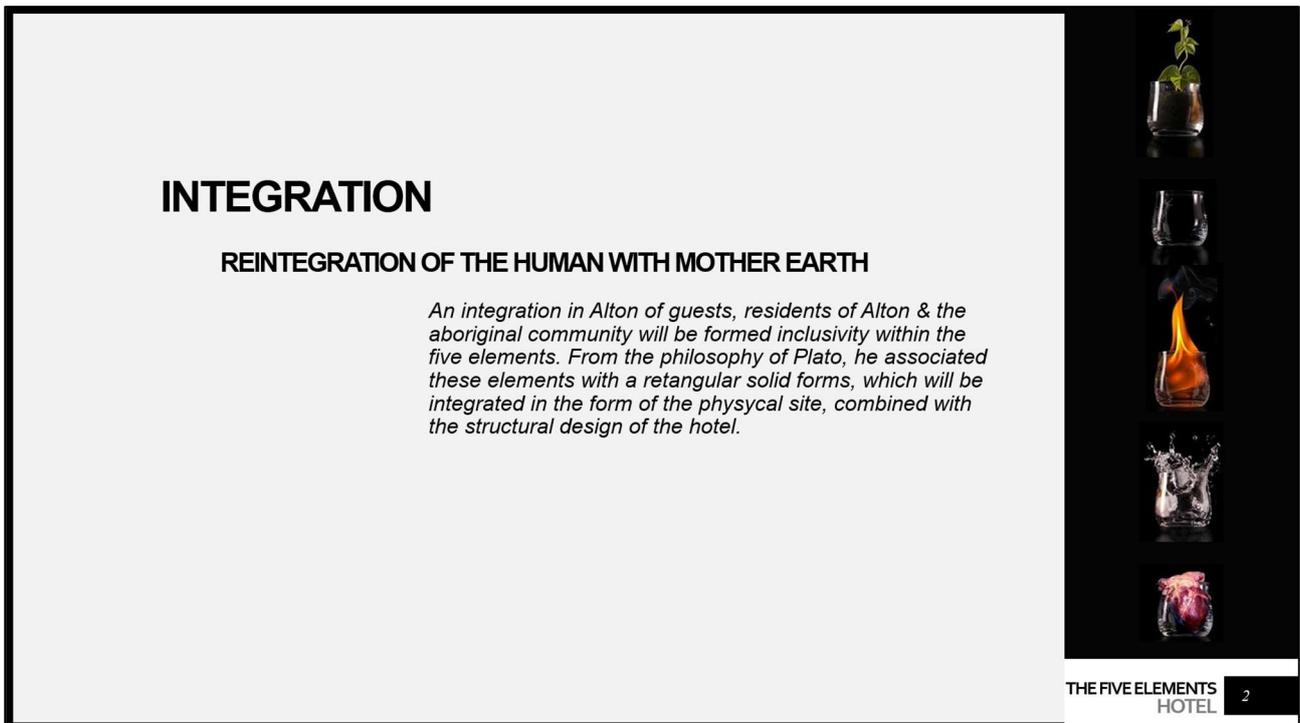


Figure 3 Our concept (from our presentation)

THE FIVE ELEMENTS

FIRE

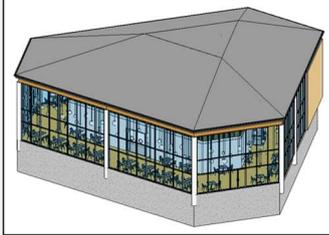


Form: Tetrahedron
 Direction: South
 Season: Summer
 Chakra: Heart (& solar plexus)
 Association: Perpetuates balance and stability
 Resort purpose: Restaurant

Article from bocadolobo.com: Parker Palm Springs hotel, CA. USA, by Jonathan Adler

In the Parker Palm Spring "Mr. Parker" restaurant, the aim was to provide warm and dark features, that included an interior fireplace to sit around. Looking back into the aboriginals dining rituals, they to dined around an open fire.

At the Five Elements Hotel, we hope to integrate both strategies to create a warm, welcoming and cultural dining experience.



Article from bmiaa.com and archdaily.com: Aldo Van Eyck, Circle terrace (Amsterdam)

Inspired by Aldo Van Eycks Circle terrace of offsetting the circle column, the Fire building in the Five Elements Hotel is associated with balance and stability, therefore a combination of the platonic form of the element and its offset exists.



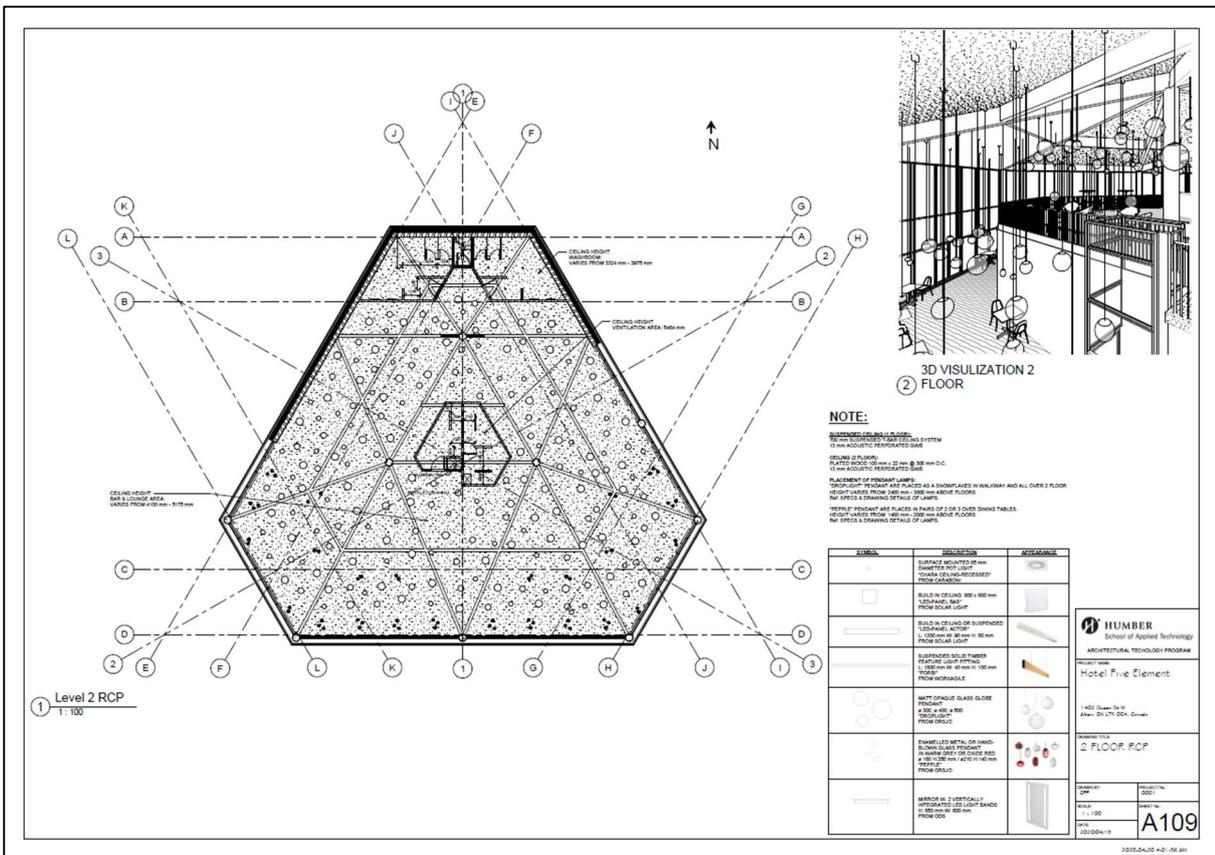
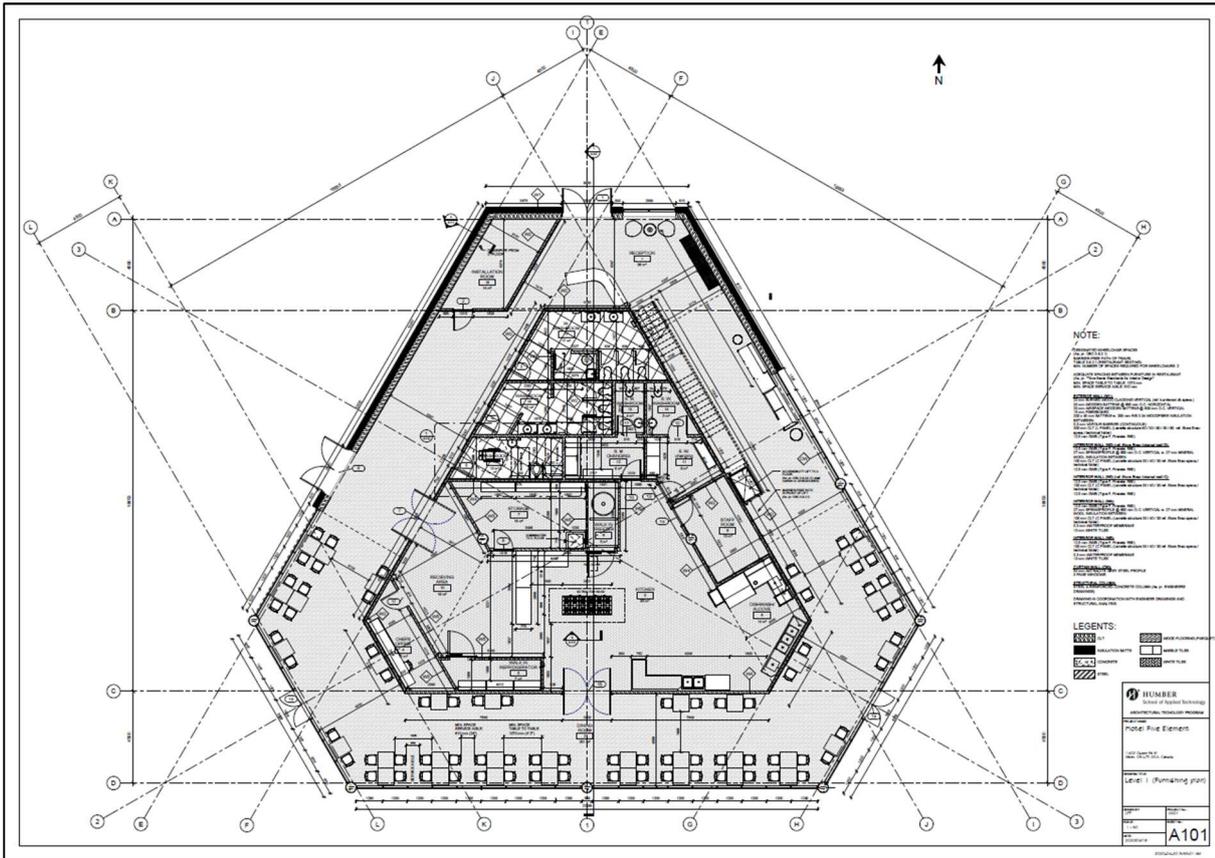


THE FIVE ELEMENTS HOTEL 7

Figure 4 First presentation of one of the buildings I designed

After presenting your final concept it's all about making your building come true and finishing your final working drawings. There is a lot of drawings to be made, but Anais gives some good question lessons, 3.5 hours every week, where there is plenty of time to come and show her your work.

As the Covid-19 pandemic came in March I had to move back to Denmark and continue my studies online. This especially effected my D&D class. Anais and my partner had a great number of meetings online, but it's just not the same as sitting together going over your drawings. Anais did a great job and maintained some good guiding. She would go over all my drawings and make comments and afterword's we would sometimes have a video chat and talk over it as well. We often also got talking about the Canadian building code vs the Danish and how different they are in some parts and in others very much the same. Unfortunately, the building code is not online like bygningsreglementet.dk, in Canada they update a very long pdf and it varies from state to state. On the next page you can see some of my final drawings of the restaurant.



5) Project Management

This was a very interesting course, but I personally was really struggling in the beginning. My struggle was to actually find out the importance of the course and where to put my energy. There is a hole book you will be tested in throughout the hole course and in the beginning I was a bit scared I wouldn't pass any of these test. The teacher kept telling us how it was our own responsibility to learn something and pass, which I though would be commen sence. But after just a few lectures I got his point, a lot of students don't care about this course, but as it's mandatory they have to take it. You will be told to create a group and this is probably the most important thing, choose some student who will make an effort, otherwise it's going to be a lot of really hard work on your own. I was in a pretty lazy group and we definitely didn't have the same idea of how much work to put into it and actually learn something. Some from my group didn't even care if they pass the course, which gave me some problems. So choose wise when you pick a group or ask the teacher, because you will be doing a lot of work together and you will all get the same mark. There are a lot of small presentations, a big report and a final presentation.

Daily life at Humber

I have never seen a school that big before, daily there will be around 30.000 students in and out of the campus from Humber College, University of Guelph-Humber and Guelph university. Before classes start there is an introduction day, which I would recommend, it's a great way to hear about all the things the campus provides. You will also get a link to an app, Humber maps, a great way to find your way around, especially when classes start and you might have classes in two different ends of the school. I had some classes with only 5 min. between, so it was really great to be guided from A to B in the beginning. Besides studying at Humber, there is plenty of other things at Campus. There is a great gym with some great classes, and it's for free. There is also a wellness spot, a dentist and a doctors office. If you are living in residence you will get a meal plan to the food cord in residence, but you can also use the card at Campus. The food is very American, you can get all from subway, pizza hut to thai, but it wasn't my favorite, too expensive and unhealthy.

Living at residence

I decided to live at residence even though I was warned before, by former students. Most who live at residence are very young, around 19 and then of course a lot of exchange students. The rooms are pretty small, but it was fine for me, I didn't need a lot of space and the things I needed was there. You share bathrooms in the hallway, they could have been a lot more clean, but I guess because this is the first time for most of the students that they live on their own they still need to learn how you leave a room. On each hallway there are two common rooms with a TV area and a small sink and microwave. I rented a fridge, and bough most of my food in the supermarket, and got pretty good at cooking in a microwave. It is also possible to sign up for the kitchen downstairs, but you need to bring all you own stuff, pots, pans etc. and I didn't want to invest in all that for half a year. I was happy with living at residence, as it was super easy for me to walk home in a break and prepare some lunch or just go home and study before a meeting with my study group. A lot of my friends rented rooms/apartments closer to the city center, but they easily spent 2-3 hours on transport everyday. Behind residence there is a lovely green area, a garden/ forest with a river running through. I went for many walks there and when the snow was gone, I did my runs there.



Figure 5 My room

Social and cultural experiences

Toronto is a really great city, and I could have stayed a lot longer, even though I'm not a city person. The city is very diverse and beautiful, I could spend hours of just walking around and getting inspired by all the beautiful buildings. Remember to visit the AGO, the art gallery of Ontario, a fantastic construction there encircles spectacular artwork. Furthermore, I would recommend you buying a citypass and visit the RUM (royal Ontario Museum), Ripley's Aquarium of Canada, Casa Loma, the CN tower, and the Ontario science center. Another great experience is watching a hockey game, just be aware the tickets are expensive, but it is really entertaining and something to remember. Sport is a big thing in Canada, also at campus, I would very much recommend joining the basketball and volleyball game nights. There is always something happening in Toronto and each area of the city has its own personality. There are plenty of great bars, restaurants, and shops, it is all about exploring. The public transport is very easy, and it takes around 45 min from residence to downtown.

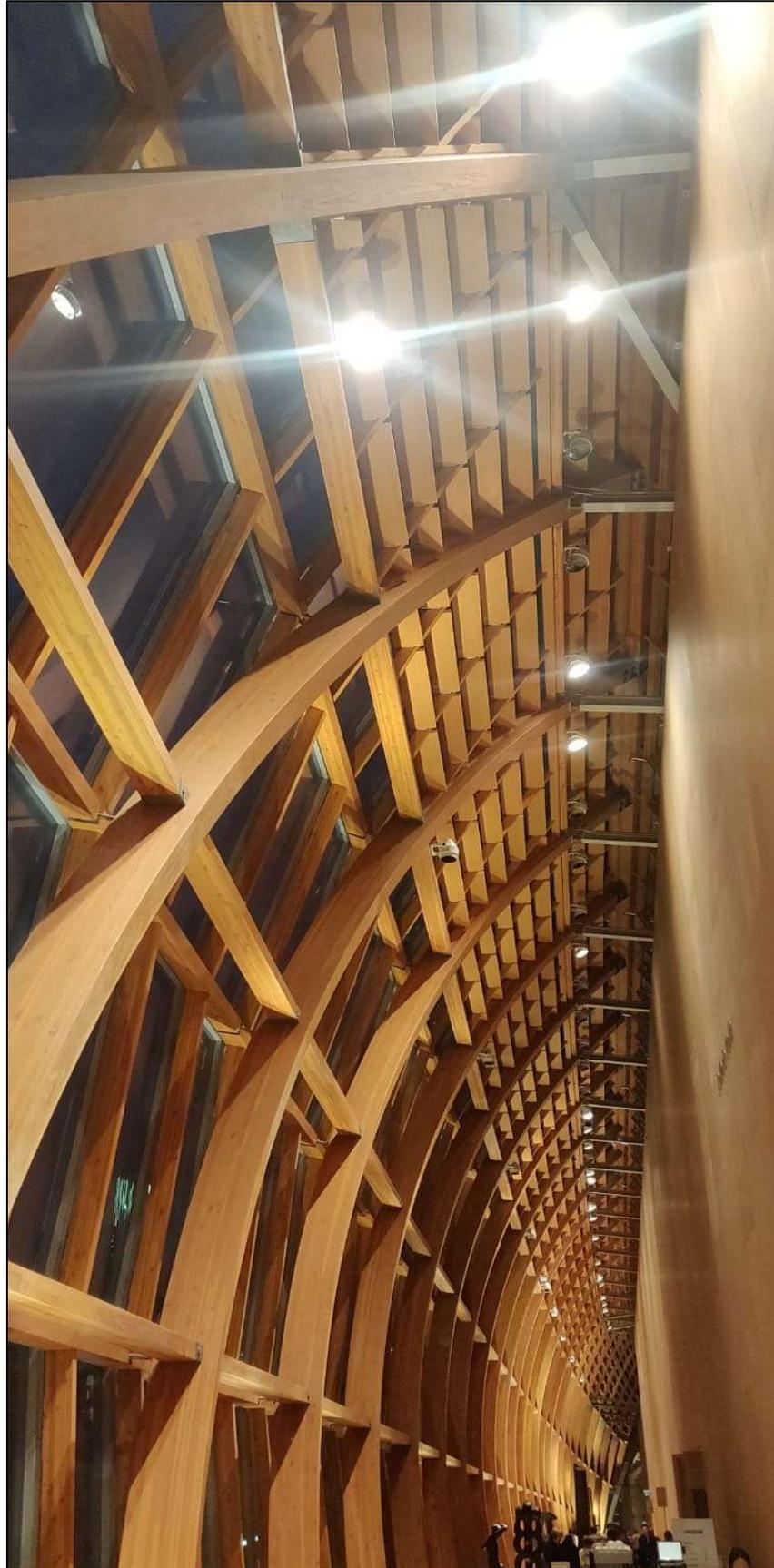


Figure 6 The AGO



Figure 7 Maple leaf hockey game

Practical experiences

Before I left Denmark, I received an email from Humber regarding pick up at the airport, I made a booking and I think it was a really sweet gesture to get. If you decide to live in residence, an important note is that the room ONLY consist of a bed, a chair a table and a build in closet. Therefor a visit at IKEA is a great thing to do just after arriving. I brought my own “summer” duvet, pillow and sheets from Denmark, vacuum your stuff if you don’t have a big suitcase.

Conclusion

Even though Covid-19 sent me home a lot earlier than planned I had the most amazing time. I made some great friends and now there is even more places to visit in the world. It was amazing experience the Canadian study life, so different from how it is in Denmark. The size of the campus and all the opportunities they give you. Learning a different construction system and learning a lot more than I expected, that was just amazing. I would recommend everyone who has just a tiny curiosity on studying abroad – just do it, you will not regret. And it will be an experience for life.