

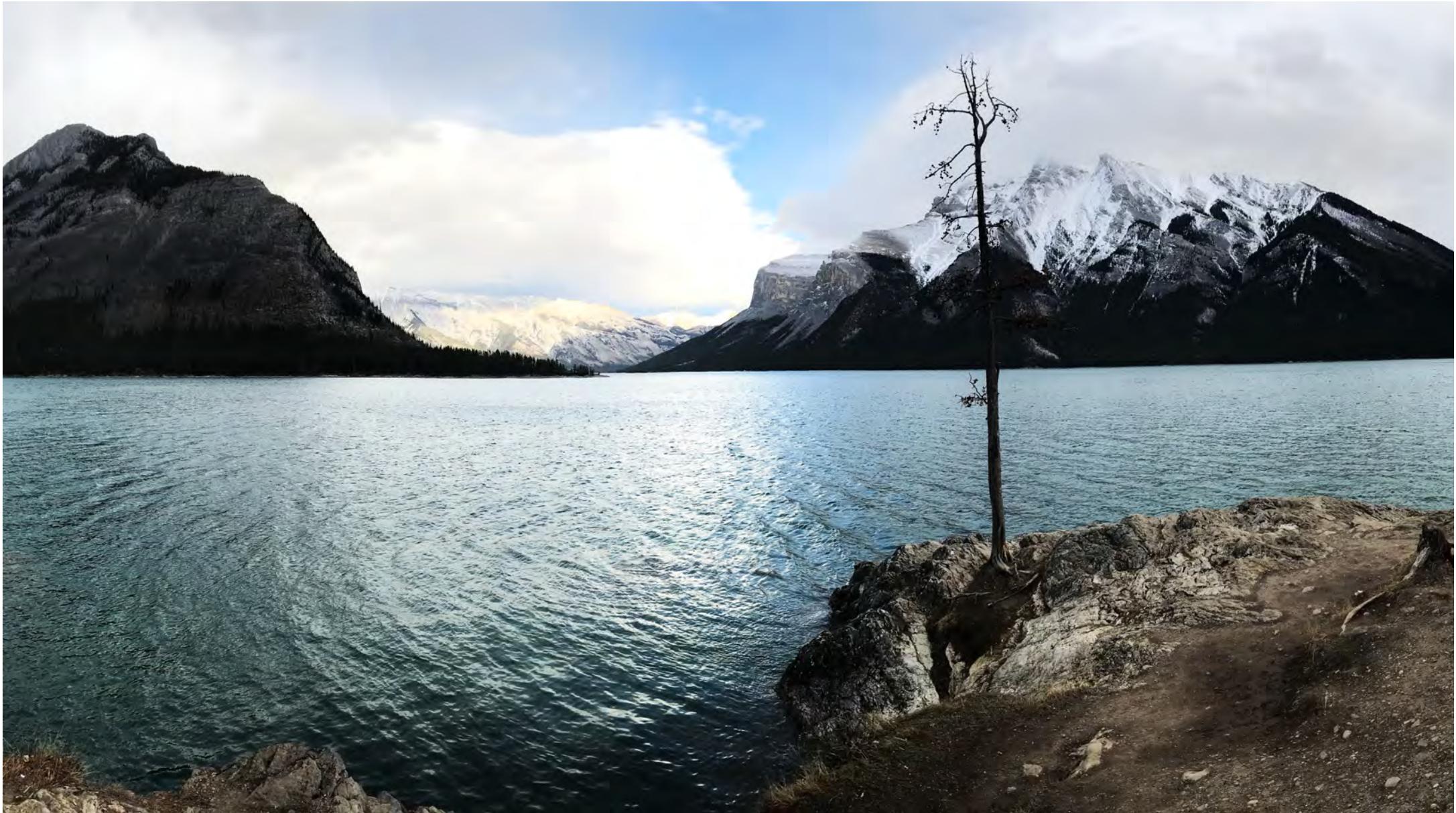
TORONTO, CANADA

Humber College
September - December 2018



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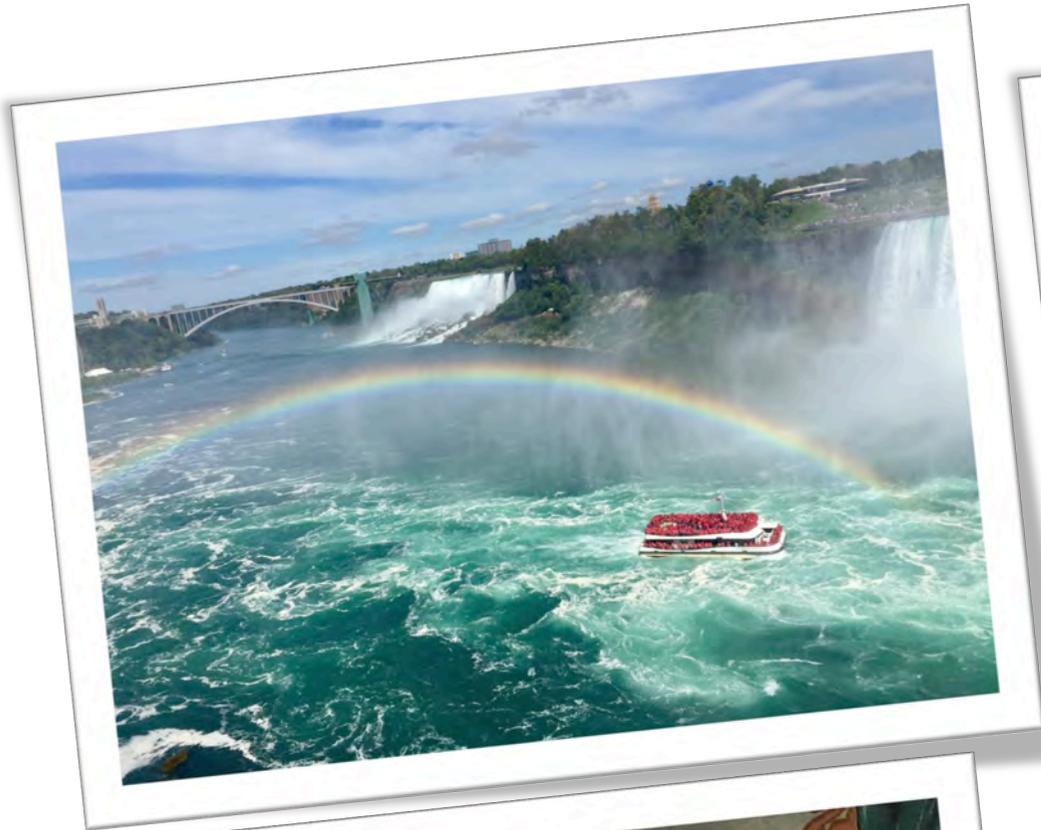
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INTRODUCTION

During my studies at the Digital Concept Development program at KEA I chose to go to Canada on exchange at Humber College on my 6th semester. I was enrolled in classes from their Digital Communications program during the fall semester and lived on Lakeshore Campus Residence to get the true college experience.

I kept my expectations low, as I had no clue what it was like to live and study in a different country but of course I expected it to be a lifetime experience. I knew it would be a way for me to personally develop and gain new skills while studying with a different focus than the Scandinavian and I thought it was important to also experience the Canadian culture and the country itself.



ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

From the beginning of the exchange journey, Humber College and their international team went above and beyond to make the transition easy and comfortable. The coordinators encouraged us to download the app Slack where they had made a group for all exchange students to chat and ask questions. The coordinators were available online daily even before we arrived to the college.

In the process of choosing classes at Humber I did have a little trouble. Some of the classes I had put on my priority list wasn't available for international students after all and the classes I chose as replacements for those weren't offered at all, so it took some effort to get the full list of priorities set. When I came to Toronto I got the list of classes I was enrolled in and found that one of them weren't my fit at all. My coordinator, Aimee, was very helpful and we found a solution together.

I had a lot of readings to do for my classes as well as written assignments and the teaching methods were very different from the Danish ones where we mostly do group projects. Exams were also mostly multiple choice quizzes or smaller written assignments where in Denmark I'm used to oral exams.

Introduction to Digital Media & Communication; DCOM 1003

This course introduces the theory and analysis of digital media. It looks at the historical development of current digital media and the forces that are shaping the future. The class explores what is "new" about new media, the different types of digital media, as well as the communication theories that are being used to study digital media.

Instructor: Gemma Richardson

1st Semester Class

What I Learned:

Even though the class was a first semester class on the host institution it required putting in a lot of effort. The class focus was more theoretical and analyzing while studying mostly the Canadian media landscape and drawing parallels to the American media landscape. The class required several written assignments and had many class discussions following up on the reading required.

Visual Communication; DCOM 2001

In this course students will analyze the historical movements, trends, and theories that have shaped contemporary visual culture. By the end of the course, students will have a strong grasp on the theoretical concepts covered in the lectures and in the assigned readings. These concepts aid students in designing their own visual creations in future courses and throughout their careers. In studying imagery from a variety of mediums (photography, film, painting, sculpture, advertisements, graphic novels, political posters, and interactive media) students will broaden their understanding of the principles of visual communication in our electronic age.

Instructor: Lesley Thornton-Cronin

4th Semester Class

What I Learned:

This class also had some heavy readings and really tested my English language but the instructor went through them in class and made sure everyone had a full understanding of them. There is no production of visuals which was a bit disappointing but it still gave me a much better understanding of visual communication.

Interactive Design; DCOM 3002

Building on students' skills in visual communication and web development, this course opens a project-driven exploration of important topics in interactive design, such as storytelling and narrative, accessibility, usability, UI design, UX research, information architecture, and visualizing information. By combining theory with practical opportunities to conduct research, experiment, collaborate, and create using both code and visual media, students build their conceptual and applied skills in interactive design while laying a foundation for more advanced work in fields ranging from commercial UX design to interactive storytelling.

Instructor: Paul Minstrell

5th Semester Class

What I Learned:

I expected this to be the most challenging class of all because we had to write code for websites and make interactive products, which was brand new to me. Paul was very helpful from the beginning and it ended up being one of my best classes with the highest learning outcome. Not much theory in the class but mostly about producing.

Social & Digital Media; MSCP 1003

This course offers an introduction to social media architecture and technologies through the exploration of theory and practical applications. Students learn how social media impacts daily life and how it is applied in the fields of journalism, public relations and digital communications. Its multiple uses and applications are explored through case study analysis, in-class discussions and practical assignments. Students will also be introduced to a variety of social media environments and will gain hands-on experience with many of the leading social media applications. This course requires active participation of students and a willingness to immerse in social media practices.

Instructor: Andrea Tavchar

1st Semester Class

What I Learned:

This class introduced most social media platforms like Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram but also focussed a lot on influencer relations, blogging and SEO. Most of it wasn't new to me personally but still had some perspectives.

Digital Media & Society; DCOM 3001

This course extends the discussion from the introductory course to a deeper exploration of how digital media and society interact. The course examines how new media technologies are changing the way people communicate and connect. In addition, the course explores how new media frame our experience of our world. Students examine the ways in which new media have impacted politics, culture and interpersonal communication.

Instructor: Adam Miller

5th Semester Class

What I Learned:

Would really recommend this class as it gives some interesting point-of-views on digital media and how it is affecting our society while leading on to interesting discussions. The class has some heavy readings and mostly written assignments focussing on theorists and contemporary cases.

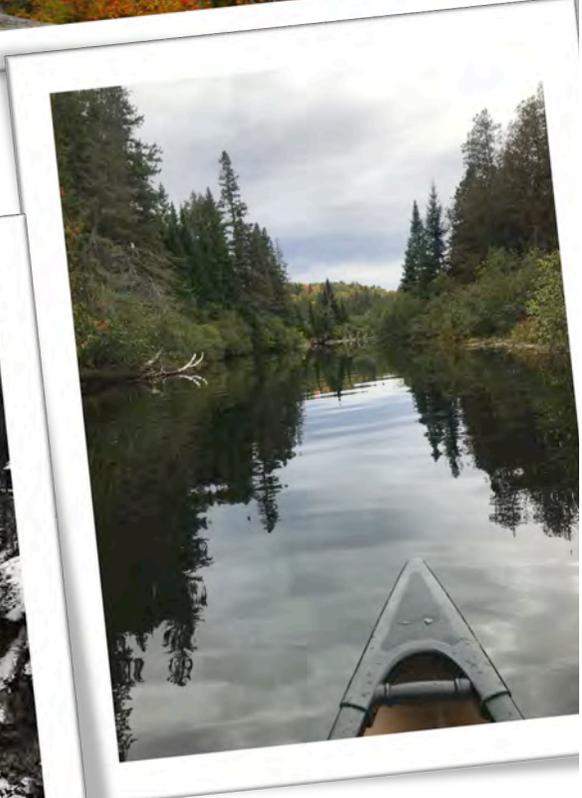
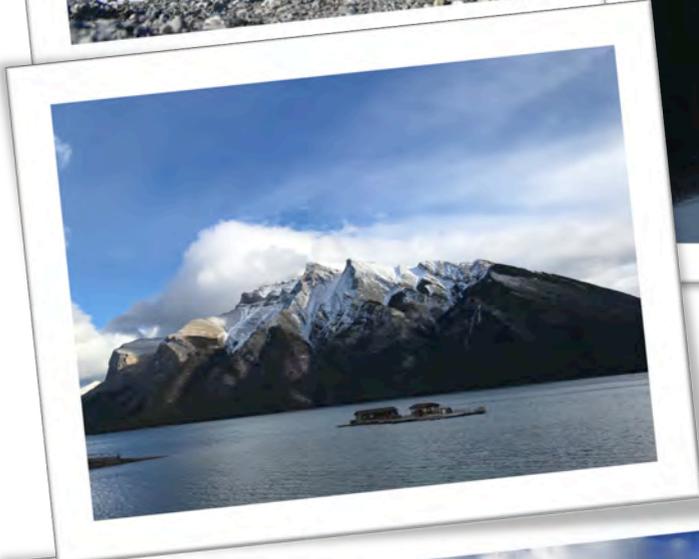
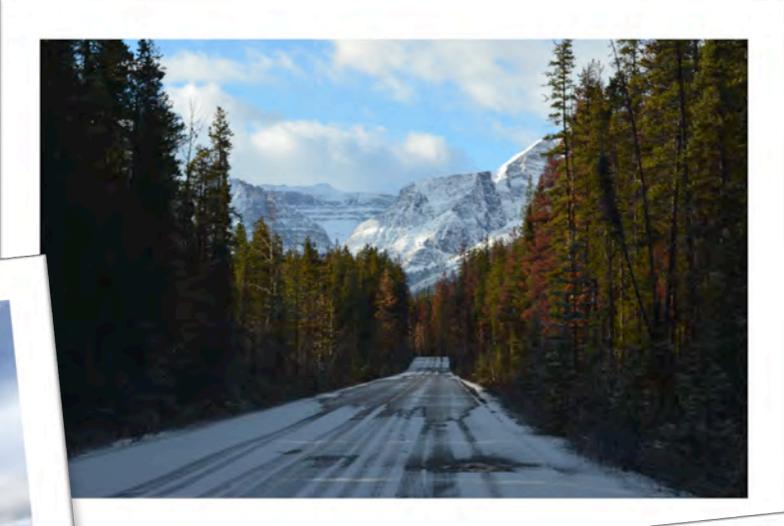


CULTURAL/PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

From the day we were added to the groups on the App Slack we were able to network and communicate with other students. This made it very easy to meet up with new people and have friends when first arriving. Also by living on residence there were always opportunities to go to events etc. but the students living there is younger (18-19 years old).

I decided before I went to Canada that I wanted to go visit their National Parks and experience the nature. Meeting other people who had the same interests I was able to do several weekend trips; one to Algonquin National Park arranged by Humber, one to Banff and Jasper National Park with some friends and a trip to Montreal and New York. I will have to say that it takes some organising and structure, as the studies are very intense but it is possible to get these extraordinary experiences and it is totally worth it.

In Toronto there is also thousands of opportunities to do whatever you feel like; Festivals, markets, tourist attractions, visiting the Toronto Island, ice-skating during the winter, clubs and bars etc.



PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

In the application process I received help from my Danish Coordinator and after that I was mostly in contact with the international coordinators at Humber College. They helped with everything from accommodation to choosing classes and answered all questions that I had. I know that they also helped students find accommodation off residence.

My first day in Toronto was a bit chaotic as the employee at the front desk wasn't very helpful with guiding me in public transport as I needed to go to IKEA, which was very unfortunate and not a common thing for Canadians at all. A big surprise was the fact that there is absolutely nothing in the residence rooms on arrival so you will need to get a blanket/duvet, toilet paper, cutlery and plates etc. yourself. If you want to use the kitchen you will also need to buy pans and pots, as the school doesn't have anything like that.

When living on residence it is acquired that you buy a dining plan and it makes the residence life a bit easier when you don't have the necessary stuff to cook yourself. The cafeterias have many offers but of course it gets boring in the longer run. My trip got a bit more expensive as to what I had planned due to the trips I went on. Accommodation and dining plan is a bit expensive (circa 24.000kr.) but living on residence is probably the cheapest option. Dining in Toronto is mostly the same prices as in Denmark. At last, I booked my flights with Icelandair and only paid 6300kr including two suitcases for a return ticket. I would also recommend buying a mobile plan from home, as it is very expensive in Canada (Yousee just got a deal with North America). I used Freedom Mobile and got a Canadian number though.

