

## **Toronto Exchange Report**

Ryerson University

Toronto, Canada

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## Introduction

In the following report I will let you in on my experience as an exchange student in Toronto at Ryerson University. My journey however is not over yet, as I have been offered an internship in a communication agency here in Toronto.

I have been studying at Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada from January 11th - April 12th 2019. I chose to study abroad this semester, as I went abroad in 2017 to Australia, when I was studying E-Design AP and it was the best experience.

Travelling abroad is a professional and personal development experience and I would recommend everybody doing it. You are forced to change your perspective, when meeting new cultures and people from all over the world. The experience will broaden your network and your academic understanding of the creative industry.

I was expecting a good semester at Ryerson, as I had heard so many positive things about the university. The reality was way better, than what I initially expected. Ryerson is a school that focuses on opening up boundaries and seeing opportunities in everything and that in itself is something that will teach you a lot in any industry.

In my semester at Ryerson University, I studied 4 courses; Your Creative Self, Professional Communication, Appreciating Creativity in Practice and Entrepreneurship in Creative Industries. All of them were kind of building of each other in terms of what I want to work with in the future. My favorite courses however was Entrepreneurship in Creative Industries.

## Experiences at the host university

Underneath I have described in detail what each of the subjects i studied were about. CRI560 - Your Creative Self was about self-driven creativity - making media, making inspirations, and making a difference. Everything begins with creative individuals. This course will mix theory and practice, looking at philosophical and psychological approaches to creativity, as well as a more hands-on engagement with digital creativity, tools for makers, and how to get things out there.

CMN279 - Professional Communication was an interactive course that introduces students to contemporary strategies of successful communication in professional contexts. Students learn how to analyze audience, situation, and medium to create messages that respond to practical challenges and build productive relationships. Students develop sensitivity to language and tone, learn to organize and convey ideas and information, and select the best means to accomplish their intended purposes.

CRI450 - Appreciating Creativity in Practice was about, what makes for a great work of art? Why do we respond profoundly to some creators? work? In this course students explore in depth the body of work of an iconic artist, production company or artistic movement in light of its historical, cultural, commercial, technological and/or ideological context. Depending on the year offered, the focus could be on an influential musician, television showrunner, film director, choreographer, visual artist, publisher or video game creator.

CRI400 - Entrepreneurship in Creative Industries applies entrepreneurship theory and principles to the practice of entrepreneurship in Creative Industries. Entrepreneurs in Creative Industries drive the creation of new cultural products, firms, and markets, generating new wealth and new cultural value. They are visionary change agents who leverage cultural knowledge and talent to produce commercially viable, sustainable and socially desirable cultural products and services. This course will nurture the skills and attitudes of nascent entrepreneurs in the Creative Industries to allow them to successfully plan, launch, and manage small firms in the Creative Industries. It will critically review the key characteristics of successful enterprises, entrepreneurs and leaders within the cultural and more commercially focused Creative Industries, it will look at the range of business models that exist, review how best to build a financially sustainable firm, and provide models of entrepreneurial/business support relevant and useful for entrepreneurs in Creative Industries.

I can definitely recommend Lorena Escandon as a teacher. She was teaching CRI400 and i fairly enjoyed her lectures.

## Social and cultural experiences

So as I said in the introduction I went to Australia studying at Deakin University in 2017 and that experience was amazing, but I was very much involved with the international students back then. So when I came here to Toronto, I was seeking a different experience, and wanted to indulge myself in the local community. It's probably THE country I have been to where it has been the easiest to connect with locals. I went to concerts, school events, coffee shops and connected with beautiful people everywhere. The Torontonians culture is somehow what you are used to in a big city like Copenhagen, but Toronto is way more diverse and ahead of gender culture and sexuality than back home. This means that walking on the street you are surrounded by different people everywhere and it just boosts your whole experience being in an environment that is so multicultural. I love it.

It is the place to network with different cultures and people from all over the world. Just go out and explore and I promise you will get talking with strangers. It is a very friendly culture that exists here. When at school you get in groups and get together with fellow students and here is an obvious opportunity to make friends.

I have been quite lucky with meeting some really cool people, that I can now call my friends. Friends from school and from random places around the city that I connected with. I have actually also fallen completely in love with someone here. So we will see if I ever get home ;)

## Practical experiences

I travelled to Toronto with the airline WOW, which was pretty cheap around 2500DKK, but also a really stripped down service. I found out the company is in debt like 20 million, so you have to pay for everything extra on the airplane, so remember if you travel with them to eat before and bring a good book. I can recommend Chuck Klosterman, he is a smart and funny fella talking about the media industry and celebrities and the industry within. Give it a read and reach out to me if you ever get to read it :)

So the prices in Toronto are pretty much similar to back home in Copenhagen. You will find coffee way cheaper, some foods as well but most likely streetfood. Alcohol is more

expensive than Denmark. Otherwise it is pretty much the same prices as you are used to.

I used FB groups to find housing and found one before coming. I lived in an apartment with a now dear friend Diego and I paid around 4500DKK a month.

There are so many great places to eat in Toronto. You have to eat at CN tower, cause that is the most famous building here. It is the Empire State Building of Toronto. The top of the building is a restaurant and it is moving while you are eating, so you get a full 360 degree view of Toronto and it's beautiful.

Kensington market was something I personally really enjoyed, it is kind of like Istedgade meeting Christiania, rough and little dirty but cool and hype. You have cheaper food options here and lots of thrift shops and people are so cool here. Freedom. I like just walking around. I can seriously walk all day and if anything speaks to me i'll go there. That experience is the best one for me, as you meet people, get to know the city and tries different things. Try it :)

Studying abroad is expensive and the sum up of my expenses was around 10.000DKK.

## Conclusion

My expectations towards this experience was met and even more to it. It is just a completely different experience when you get here and take it all in. I came with an open heart and willingness and that gave me so much. Ryerson University is an amazing school that provides good education and learning experiences. I really felt like apart of the school, if that makes sense. I feel so much richer in my professional as well as my personal life.

I can only recommend coming here. Toronto is waiting for you.