

Ryerson University

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January - April 2019

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Introduction

1. Where and when did you study abroad?

I studied at Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada for a semester from the beginning of January until the end of April 2019.

2. What KEA program did you attend at the time?

I attended the PBA in Fashion Management at KEA.

3. What classes did you take during your semester abroad?

FSN 203 - 011 History of Design

This course introduces students to the study of design history in its cultural context. It will provide an interdisciplinary appraisal of design history and offer an exploration of the supporting social and cultural infrastructure of design. The course will encourage an analysis of design and thereby help to create an understanding of past, present, and future design progression. Students will be encouraged to use Design History as a means of understanding current cultural design contexts and as a means of understanding the global implications of contemporary design production.

FSN 223 - 011 Fashion Concepts and Theory

This lecture course introduces students to the study of fashion within an interdisciplinary context. It will examine issues such as diversity, identity, aesthetics, consumption, authorship and new media and place these within a sociological, cultural, historical and business context. Fashion will be examined in relation to media and marketing, health and well-being, globalization and culture, and the arts.

FSN 400 - 041 Fashion in International Markets

This course will focus on the background of trade in textiles, the complexities of international marketing in the fashion and apparel sector. Economic, political, historical, cultural and business trends will be explored to determine the issues facing a fashion marketer in today's global business environment. A framework for analysis of identification of opportunities will be the focus of this course with the development of an appropriate export business plan.

FSN 706 - 011 Fashion Event Planning

Event Planning is a study in the theory and practical application of event planning, including the selection of a suitable location, budget planning, promotion and public relations. The course will also include developing working schedule, and working within assigned time frames.

Academic Experience

1. How helpful was the receiving school in the process of choosing classes and settling you in?

There is very good communication from Ryerson University before the semester starts and they inform you about the different classes you can choose from. I received great help from the international coordinator Jeanine Webster regarding my schedule and she was very helpful in the process of changing classes because one of the classes we were assigned at first didn't have anything to do with Fashion Management at all.

2. What classes/study experiences did you find the most rewarding? Why?

I definitely feel that the Fashion in International Markets class was the most rewarding because it was very relevant to the Fashion Management education and because I can use all the things I learned in the class on a daily basis for my own clothing company so we can expand to other

countries in the future. The topics in this class were right up my alley right from marketing to how the supply chain works in fashion companies.



3. What classes/study experiences did you find least relevant or least valuable to you? Why?

I have to admit that the class about Fashion Concepts and Theory wasn't relevant to me or my Fashion Management education at all and that was really a shame and once I figured this out it was unfortunately too late to change to another class. The class is really more about trends, body types of models, the diversity of races in fashion and the gender mix in fashion and it really didn't caught my interest unfortunately. I know that the Fashion Management education is a very narrow field so maybe a class about Fashion event planning isn't so

relevant but I actually learned a lot that I can use in the future and in the History of Design class some of the topics weren't relevant for me because the teacher choose to focus on design of for example buildings and the design of tattoos for native people from Greenland.

4. What classes would you advice other KEA students going to the receiving school to choose or not to choose?

I have to mention that none of the classes I had were bad but it really depends on which education you study at KEA. So if I have to recommend to another Fashion Management student I would definitely recommend them to choose Fashion in International Markets because this class gives

great insight in different markets and how to approach them. They really shouldn't choose the Fashion in Concepts and Theory class because it's not relevant at although the teacher is really entertaining and he really has a different style of teaching compared to Denmark.

Cultural/Personal Experience

1. What challenges did you experience culturally while Being abroad?

I must admit that being abroad has been my goal since I started as a professional football player when I was 16 years old so this has always been a dream of mine. Therefore I didn't really experience any challenges culturally because I was really determined to meet new people and learn about a different culture. The Canadian people are very polite and open so it's easy to start a conversation with people across the city. The only challenge might be that you get bored in your room during the snowstorms and cold days because you're limited to stay in the apartment if you visit during the winter.

a. How helpful was the receiving school in this process?

Since I didn't really experience these issues I can't say but I know the sent out a lot of e-mails about social events and stuff to do on campus.

2. What was the best cultural/personal experience during your studies abroad?

I really learned a lot about myself because you are forced to handle stuff on your own without any family or friends around you so it can be tough at times but you learn how to manage and create a daily routine to keep you busy on days when you aren't at school. This leads me to all the great things that the city has to offer. I had never been to Toronto before so the first few days there was a lot of new impressions and research about things to do. I really like to walk around big cities because it's the best way to see all of the different parts of the town instead of sitting in the metro

so I would walk around town for hours visiting fashion stores and going to museums. I'm also very curious about music concerts and sports so I would plan to go as much as I could. The best cultural experience about the city is definitely all the different nationalities in one place which is so great to see that they can live in peace and harmony together. The diversity of people means that there are so many restaurants to choose from and you can literally try any food from the world in different parts of the town. I was really surprised about how cool the city of Toronto is even though it was winter and I will for sure go back someday but probably in the summertime.

3. What advice would you give other KEA students going to study abroad at the receiving school?



I would recommend them to find accommodation nearby the school so you don't have to use a lot of time on commuting back and forth from the school. Then quickly find out if you feel the classes are relevant so you can change in time. Be open to meeting your new classmates you will be surprised about how nice and open the Canadian people are. If you have a positive mindset and you're open to learn even though they might be teaching and doing test in another way than you're used to then you will have a great time at the school. The last thing is you have to learn how to use

their my.ryerson.ca website to see your schedule, assignments and grades and I wish they would have given us a better tutorial of this because it unfortunately caused some issues in one of the classes.

Practical Experience

1. How was the application process?

I actually feel like the application process was pretty straight forward even though you have to gather a lot of practical information and sometimes the waiting time for a reply from the school abroad can be annoying because then you are in doubt if you are accepted.

a. What did KEA help you with?

I think that the International coordinator Hanne Vang helped a lot with the whole application process and she was good to mention when there was deadlines or things I needed to document for the school abroad. She has also been very helpful during my stay if I had any academic issues or just to hear how things were going.

b. What help did you receive from your school abroad?

My fellow classmate from KEA and I basically only got help two times which was a bit disappointing. We had one short meeting with Jeanine Webster the school coordinator and she helped us with our schedule. Then we had one day with all the other students on exchange where we received so much information in a short period of time and we were both jetlagged so you miss out on some information that they really don't say again at any other time of the semester and this was kind of weird. So most of the times we had to ask our classmates about tips for the my.ryerson website and how to pay the Uhip (health insurance) and how to get a student card. You don't really get a tour around campus so at first it was really hard to find the classrooms.

2. Did you have any practical difficulties settling down at your destination?

No not really it was fortunately really easy to get from the airport to the apartment building with Uber and the people from Harrington Housing were quick to respond our text about the arrival so we got the key pretty quick and got to our rooms. With Wi-Fi at the apartment it was easy to use Google maps so you could get to the campus on the first days and then you get familiar with the surroundings each day. We were disappointed that there wasn't any living room as we expected something else due to the images we had seen online. Some of the people in charge of Harrington Housing weren't the most service minded so if we had any questions they would get back many days later.

a. How helpful was the receiving school in this process?

The receiving school didn't have anything to do with this process and I was never asked about my accommodation situation at any point by the school.

3. Where did you live?



I lived at Harrington Housing which is an apartment building with a concierge, laundry room and a gym inside the building. The apartment was on the 15th floor with a great view of downtown and only a 25 minute walk to the Ryerson campus so I actually never used the metro/subway even though the winter was very cold. Although the building is located close to the underground trains and it's also walking

distance to one of my favorite areas called Yorkville.

a. Was it difficult to find accommodation?

Yes I actually think it was pretty difficult to find accommodation because there is so many students from all around the world studying in Toronto so all of the apartments hosted by the school were booked in no time and I was trying to find a place with my fellow student friend and we already started contacting the different housing options we got recommend from the school 3-4 months before our departure. Even though you don't have the final acceptance letter I would recommend to research about 6 months ahead of your stay to be sure.

b. Was it expensive?

Yes the accommodation through Harrington Housing is very expensive compared to other student buildings but on the other hand there is some great advantages with the laundry room, gym, free Wi-Fi/Netflix and a supermarket right next to the building. But if I could change it today I would probably have found something cheaper and in a place where you only have one roommate instead of 2 because you don't have a living room at Harrington Housing and it can get a little boring just to be in your own room all the time.

4. What kind of expenses did you have in general?

Well of course you need to do grocery shopping, then you have to do your laundry were I had to fill up a card with credit. I also had to pay a deposit and then rent every month. Then there's a health insurance at Ryerson of about 200 CAD if I remember correctly that you have to buy or else you can't attend classes and get your transcript. Other than that if you want to go sightseeing, go out for a drink, watch a basketball game or visit Niagara Falls then there will be extra expenses and I can only recommend to do so because then you meet new people and get to know the city.

a. Did you spend more or less money than you

budgeted with?



I definitely spent more money than I budgeted with because I like to be social and when winter is so brutally cold I had to keep myself active by going to concerts, NBA games and enjoy the nightlife. In the reading week where the school was closed I also took a trip to visit my uncle in Dallas but I have to say that the memories are all worth it. Just try to save up a lot of money before the trip so you don't have to think about saving and staying home alone without getting to know new people or classmates.

Conclusion

When I sit back and think about all the new friendship I got, all the great memories that was made and the academic things I learned I have to say that this exchange student semester has given me all that I could have asked for. And I would most definitely recommend anyone to go abroad for a semester to experience another culture and another way to learn new things. It has been great period of my life and I will always remember that time when I took a chance and moved to a city I had never visited before.