

Victoria Abroad Evaluation Form

PLEASE TYPE THIS EVALUATION FORM & EMAIL IT TO VICTORIA ABROAD AS A WORD DOCUMENT

A: Student Information

VUW degree(s)	Bachelor of Arts
Major(s)	Media Studies
Exchange Institution	Georgia Institute of Technology
VUW Tri & Year of Exchange	Tri 2 2015

B: Finances

Please detail your basic costs in New Zealand dollars. This will help future students plan their own budgets. (Enter your number rounded to the nearest dollar.)

Books	150
Accommodation	3000
Return Airfare	2000
Local Transportation	30
Meals	4000
Visa	150
Health & Insurance	400
Personal Spending	1000
Communications (phone, etc.)	120
Other fees (specify)	
What unexpected costs did you encounter? What items were more or less than expected?	Groceries were less than I expected

How did your financial expenses compare to what you originally expected to spend?

Personal spending and mobile plans ended up being greater than I anticipated.

By what means did you maintain your finances? What would you recommend? (Credit card, foreign bank account, travelers checks, etc)?

I used a prepaid VISA travel card, called Cash Passport.

What financial advice would you give students attending the same university as you?

Try to save quite a lot more than what you think you will need!

What was the average cost of a can of coke or coffee in your host country?

A dollar

C: Visas & Insurance **Please note this information is recommended by VUW students & current at the time of their exchange. For all up-to-date visa information you must check with the embassy/consulate of your host university.*

Did you have to apply for a visa? If so, was it difficult? What was the process, how long did it take and how much did it cost?

Yes, I did. It was quite difficult as I had to head up to Auckland as part of the process and communicating with them was somewhat of a struggle at times.

Do you have any advice for future students when applying for visas to your host country?

Get on to it as soon as possible.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance? Or a particular insurance they recommended? If Yes, what was it and how much did it cost?

They recommended their own insurance which cost roughly 400 NZD

What insurance company did you use and would you recommend it to future students?

Southern Cross. Definitely recommend.

D: Academics at Host University

Which courses did you take while on exchange? Please rate the difficulty of each course (1-5, 1 = Very Easy & 5 = Extremely Difficult) and leave any comments you may have.

Course Title	Language of Instruction	VUW course equivalent or elective	VUW points/credits value	Rating (1-5)	Comments
VUW Trimester 1/YEAR					
VUW Trimester 2/YEAR					
HTS 3071 Sociology of Crime	English		15	4	
LMC 2600 Intro to Performance Studies	English		15	4	

LMC 3252 Film and Television	English		15	5	
LMC 4500 Seminar in Film Studies	English		15	3	

Course Registration/Enrolment

Please describe the registration process at your host university. What kind of help was available?

I booked an appointment with a course advisor over email. He was extremely helpful and gave me valuable advice on what courses were available to me based on what I was interested in.

How successful were you in registering/enrolling for classes you wanted? What advice would you offer to next year's exchange students about registration at your host university?

I didn't get any of the classes I initially enrolled for, but was able to successfully enroll in really suitable and interesting courses in the end. My advice would be to keep an open mind to trying classes that you may not consider to be your specialty!

Do you have any advice for future students when choosing and applying for courses?

Keep an open mind!

Academic Experience

How did your academic experience differ from your time spend at Victoria? Did the academic experience meet your expectations?

The classes were relatively comparable to classes I had completed at Vic.

How did the style of teaching at your host university compare with that at VUW? How did the workload compare to what you would expect at VUW?

The style of teaching was also very similar, although classes were comparatively small to what I was used to. The workload was very similar to what I was used to.

What would you recommend as an appropriate course load for other VUW students visiting your partner university? What specific courses would you recommend to visiting VUW students? Why?

4 classes worked out really well for me and I felt that it was manageable. I would recommend trying to enroll for as many classes as you can below 300 level, to ensure that you are able to transition to classes most effectively.

What advice would you give VUW students about succeeding academically at your host university?

Try not to get carried away with socializing! It's very easy to get into the mindset that you're on holiday. Although, do try to take in as much of the culture as you can!

What was your impression of the computer facilities, library, and internet access at your host university?

They were great. Pretty comparable to Vic.

If you went to a country where English is not the native language, how did you prepare for this? Were there any intensive language courses provided by the host university?

NA

E: Accommodation

What form of accommodation did you stay in?

Student Apartment Housing

What were the pros and cons of this form of accommodation?

Fully furnished, great way to meet people, maintained by Georgia Tech. One con may be that there's the possibility you may not get on with everyone you live with.

What accommodation would you recommend to future students?

Apartment Housing

How early can you move into accommodation?

As early as you get there, though if you move in before a particular date you may have to pay an additional nightly fee so make sure you check these dates!

What options were available for meal plans or cooking facilities? How satisfied were you with the food?

There were a range of options for meal plans ranging from 5 meals per week right up to unlimited. There are three dining halls you have access to so convenient for wherever you are on campus.

If you lived in off-campus housing, how easy was it to find? What should future VUW exchange students know about living off-campus?

NA

Do you have any tips of advice for future students when applying for accommodation?

Look at prospective room mates' provided Facebook profiles to try to anticipate whether they are the type of person you will get on with!

F: Personal & Cultural Connections

What was it like making friends? How successful were you at making friends with local (i.e., not international) students?

I found it pretty easy, as I was able to join a fraternity which was so much fun and such a great experience!

What was it like to adjust to the culture of your exchange country/university?

I found it pretty easy to slip into as New Zealand culture was fairly comparable.

What, if any, cultural differences did you find particularly challenging? How would you recommend students to prepare for these differences?

The average grade for incoming freshman at Georgia Tech was around 95 percent, so everyone there are extremely talented. That being said, the fact that Georgia Tech is known as an engineering school meant that I was able to keep up relatively easily, being an arts student.

What parts of the culture did you most appreciate?

The social aspect, as I love meeting new people! Fraternities and Sororities are such a great idea, it makes Uni life that much more exciting, social and supportive.

How were you treated by local people? By university staff and faculty? By students?

Americans seem to love New Zealanders, so I found that everyone was really friendly, helpful and supportive.

As far as you could tell, how easy would it be for students with disabilities to study at your partner university? For students who are visible minorities in your host country? For students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered?

Georgia Tech is very similar to Vic in this way, it seemed to be extremely accepting.

Did you face any issues regarding discrimination in your host country? What were they, and what advice would you give to future students?

No. Be yourself and be proud to be a New Zealander.

G: Extra-curricular/Social Activities

What organized activities (clubs, sports, etc.) were available to students? What extra-curricular activities would you recommend to future exchange students?

A vast range of clubs sports and extra-curricular activities. Way too many to mention. I would definitely recommend attempting to join a fraternity, as it really makes you fully understand American college life!

What do you recommend other visiting students see or do on their weekends or holidays?

Travel as much as you can. If you struggle to find friends to do this with, there will most likely be a number of international students who want to travel as well!

What opportunities were there for students to work on-campus? Off-campus?

There were a number of job opportunities on campus including working in the gym, outdoor centre or a number of other on campus facilities.

What volunteer or internship opportunities were there for students?

There were quite a lot of volunteer opportunities through fraternities and sororities.

5 things to take to your host country or region

1	NZ electricity adapters
2	An open mind to new experiences and meeting new people
3	A piece of home (A NZ flag or greenstone for example)
4	A camera!
5	Photocopies and passports and travel/insurance documents

5 pieces of useful advice you would tell a VUW student going to your host university

1	Meet as many people as you can!
2	Travel as much as you can

3	Take A LOT of photos
4	Gather as much memorabilia as possible
5	Make sure you pass your classes

Top 5 Things to do

What are your 'Top 5 Things To Do' future VUW students at your host university or city/country?

1	Join a fraternity
2	Socialise
3	Go to a home NBA game
4	Go to college football game
5	Join a fraternities

H: Personal Experience

Please write one paragraph about your exchange experience. Plus, don't forget to submit some photos to the exchange office!!

Going on exchange was such an amazing experience and I would 100 percent recommend it! I met such a large amount of interesting people who I ended up forming close friendships with and continue to stay in contact with! Leaving the country by myself never really felt too daunting for me as I love a new challenge, but I recognized what a valuable experience it was to go to the other side of the world and put myself out there so as to maintain a lifestyle which centers on my relationships with others. I loved joining a fraternity and all of the associated opportunities that came with it as it meant that I was able to fully experience American College life and see for myself what it was all about, as you see it depicted so often in media. I can honestly say that my time spent over there is now one of my greatest memories and I can't wait to head back over when I get the chance!