

Vic OE Evaluation Form



A: Student Information

VUW degree(s)	BDI, BCA
Major(s)	Industrial Design, Management
Exchange Institution	Virginia Polytechnic and State University
VUW Tri & Year of Exchange	Trimester 1, 2013

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	\$100
Accommodation	\$3400
Return Airfare	\$2400
Local Transportation	\$0
Meals	\$2000
Visa	\$500
Health & Insurance	\$1700
Personal Spending	\$80week
Communications (phone, etc.)	\$50month
Other fees (specify)	
What unexpected costs did you encounter? What items were more or less than expected?	

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

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

Bank of America Account (strongly recommend joining a bank). ANZ Debit and Credit cards.

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

Save plenty of money, insurance and visa costs can be more than you expect.

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

\$1 (coke) \$2-3 (coffee) . Food and drink can be reasonably cheap in USA.

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?

Online process after receiving paperwork from Host University. Then must fly to Auckland to process your visa. Visa and passport and then sent to you in post. Can take 1-2weeks.

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

Leave yourself plenty of time. American Embassy is very tight. The online component can be confusing.

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 did, and they strongly recommend it. Can be very expensive but makes the whole insurance process so much easier upon arrival and if you need to use it whilst on Exchange.

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

Aetna which is the school insurance and Southern Cross travel.

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					
Materials and Processes	English	Mass Production + Digital Manufacturing	15	4	Lecture based
Human Factors	English	Design Physiology	15	3	Lecture based
Rapid Prototyping	English	Digital Form	10	3	Small studio/class
Design Visualization	English	-	10	4-5	Need Photoshop + Illustrator
Typography	English	-	5	2	-
Corporate Sponsored Studio	Englsh	Mass Production and Digital	10-15	4	-

		Manufacturing			
VUW Trimester 2/YEAR					

Course Registration/Enrolment

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

Very straightforward. Online enrollment. If classes are full you must see Heads of Programs.

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?

Some of my classes were full so I sat down with the Head who was happy to force add me.

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

Don't panic if the courses you want aren't available, international students are generally given leeway. You can all of it upon arrival.

Academic Experience

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

Definitely meet expectations. Is definitely different. Can be considered easier.

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?

Depends what you take, fairly similar workloads. Teaching is very good.

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?

Would recommend a minimum of 60 points/ 12 credits.

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

Put in the time and work necessary. Don't get lazy.

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

Outstanding.

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?

E: Accommodation

What form of accommodation did you stay in?

Halls of Residence (on campus)

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

Pros: On campus, lots of people around, facilities. Cons: Obvious on campus restrictions

What accommodation would you recommend to future students?

Either or (personal preference). Meet more people and are more connected on campus.

How early can you move into accommodation?

Had to stay in a Motel for first 3 nights. Moved in Thursday the week before classes start.

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

Food is amazing, best college dining in all of America. Kitchen is available. Very satisfied

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

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

Main Campbell third floor is where most internationals are placed, great residence to stay in.

G: Personal & Cultural Connections

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

People are very friendly so making friends is very easy. Just be outgoing and friendly.

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

Really not that shocking, little things you get used to.

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

Ignorance and thinking around Political issues. Don't expect to change any minds.

What parts of the culture did you most appreciate?

American style College life. A lot going on.

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

Everyone in Blacksburg is super friendly. Most Americans are.

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?

Fairly open community. No segregation I could tell. Lots of people from different walks of life

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

None

H: 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?

Have ability to join all clubs, can pledge for Sororities/Fraternities if you wish (wouldn't recommend). Intramural sports available.

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

Lots of really good outdoor activities (hikes) locally. Venture Out is a organization that organize outdoor trips, relatively cheap and great fun. North Carolina and Washington, short Bus/Car.

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

Just need to apply for jobs upon arrival. Plenty of jobs going at the start of the semester. Can't work more than 20hrs. Not allowed to work off campus. Depends on what Visa you have.

What volunteer or internship opportunities were there for students?

Unsure, didn't really look at Internship opportunities. Plenty seemed available for Students. Volunteer events are always available.

5 things to take to your host country or region

1	WARM clothes. Waterproof boots.
2	Laptop
3	Plenty of money
4	Camera
5	Smart phone with maps etc

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

1	Make the most of your spare time/weekends
2	Hang out with lots of American friends
3	Make sure your 21
4	Don't study to hard
5	Join intramural sports teams, clubs etc

Top 5 Things to do

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

1	Visit NYC
2	Roadtrip somewhere

3	Attend Basketball/Football/Baseball games both NCAA and NBA/NFL/MLB
4	Sample local cuisine
5	Rails at TOTS (top of the stairs), college bar.

I: Personal Experience

My time at Virginia Tech was amazing. I made lots of new friends, both American and from elsewhere across the globe. There is always so much going on and so much fun to be had, nightlife is always a good time. Campus/college life in America is awesome, make the most of the opportunity you have and go travelling as much as you can.