

Vic OE Evaluation Form

PLEASE TYPE THIS EVALUATION FORM & EMAIL IT TO VIC OE AS A WORD DOCUMENT

A: Student Information

VUW degree(s)	Bachelor of Arts
Major(s)	English Literature, Second Language Education
Exchange Institution	University of Montana
VUW Tri & Year of Exchange	Tri 2 2013 Tri 1 2014

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	\$400
Accommodation	\$4000
Return Airfare	\$2000
Local Transportation	\$0
Meals	\$2500
Visa	\$200
Health & Insurance	\$1000
Personal Spending	\$3000
Communications (phone, etc.)	\$200
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?

I ended up spending more than I expected due to travel within America and food costs.

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

Debit card, foreign bank account. I recommend getting a bank account in the country if it is similar to how ours operate and is easy enough to set up and cancel when you leave, just for ease.

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

Really take into account the accommodation and meal plan costs and take advantage of the meal plan if you're living on campus.

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

\$2.50

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. I had to go to Auckland to go to the American Consulate, which was a bit of hassle, but not a difficult process.

I had to apply for the visa online and then schedule an interview in Auckland, where I was asked a couple of questions about my exchange and the visa was granted. It then took a week or so for my passport to return to me with the visa in it.

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

Do it well ahead of time, just to get it out of the way.

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?

No. They do have an insurance through their own health center, but I'm not sure of the cost as I did not use it.

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

I used Travel Insurance Direct

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 2/2013					
LING480	English	ALIN202	15		
LING470	English	LING(200level)	15		
LIT391	English	ENGL200lvl	15		
LIT355	English	ENGL200lvl	15		
VUW Trimester 1/2014					
CRWR210A	English	CREW200lvl	15		
LIT301	English	ENGL300lvl	15		Very enjoyable course!

LING473	English	LING300lvl	15		
LING477	English	LING300lvl	15		

Course Registration/Enrolment

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

They held a session that people could go to if they wanted help applying, but it was easy enough to just apply online.

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 missed out on one of two, but I found good alternatives. I would register ASAP! You may be able to do so before you even get to Montana.

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

You are able to change your courses around a bit, so I would just try things out because you are able to pick up or drop them.

Academic Experience

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

I found it a lot harder as I was taking classes that were of a higher level. The way they were taught and assessed were similar to here though, which was what I expected.

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?

Very similar.

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 each semester. People tend to take up to 6, but I think that you want to have a balance of classes as well leisure time to enjoy being in a new place and meeting people.

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

If you are unsure of something, ask for help! There are so many assistance services available and people who are willing to help.

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

All good.

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?

1 semester in the dorms, 1 semester in an apartment in the student housing apartments.

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

I had a roommate in the dorms, so the lack of privacy was hard, but it was so useful to live on campus and have the meal plan. It was easy.

The freedom and independence from living in an apartment was great though! I loved that. Though cooking for yourself after having a meal plan was a bit of a struggle.

What accommodation would you recommend to future students?

The dorms are a unique experience and a really good way to meet people.

How early can you move into accommodation?

1 week before classes start.

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

If you live on campus, you are required to have a meal plan at the Food Zoo, there is also a food court, pizza hut, a couple of cafes and a convenience store. Honestly, everything you need is on campus. It was fine, reliable. The food was not great, but the ease was worth it.

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

There was a bus that ran every like 5 or 10 minutes directed to campus.

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

If living on campus, it would totally be worth getting your own room.

F: Personal & Cultural Connections

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

The majority of my friends were other international students, but I took advantage of the opportunities that we were provided with to meet people. Like the global partners programme.

I meet some people randomly and I did manage to have a few good American friends.

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

It is really similar to kiwi culture, so there wasn't that much adjusting that needed to be done.

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

What parts of the culture did you most appreciate?

People were so friendly in Montana. They were always interested in learning about other countries and cultures. They held doors open.

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

People were always interested in finding out about the accent at first, but then I was just another student.

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?

I don't think it would be a big issue there.

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

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 lot of different sports available throughout the year, and I recommend you being a part of at least one time! Clubs for all sorts of things too.

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

Travel! See the country because it's so big and diverse. I recommend seeing more of Montana, going to California when you need some sunshine.

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

So many. All of the food places, cleaning. If you want a job there is no doubt you'll get it.

What volunteer or internship opportunities were there for students?

Loads of stuff through the Foreign Student and Scholar Services programme.

5 things to take to your host country or region

1	Camera
2	Warm clothing!
3	Waterproof boots for those snowy months
4	
5	

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

1	Brush up on your American accent. It's a great party trick
2	Join the Global Partners and Missoula Friendship Programs
3	Eat out as much as possible. There are so many amazing restaurants!
4	Appreciate the snow the whole time. Try not to let the novelty wear off.
5	Talk to everyone who lives on your floor if you're in the dorms. It's a great way to make friends!

Top 5 Things to do

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

1	Go floating ASAP! It's a must do activity in Missoula
2	First Friday of every month, there's stuff on Downtown.
3	Take advantage of the Game Room and pick up your pool skills. If you go enough, they'll stop charging you
4	I recommend collecting the 50 state quarters. It's a great souvenir.
5	Travel. Anywhere! Hawaii, California, Disneyland, all fantastic!

H: Personal Experience

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

I had an absolutely incredible experience. American universities are very different to New Zealand. It has a school spirit and outdoor environment like I'd never experienced before. Football, basketball, lacrosse, it was all there and I loved it!

Being a foreigner is a really good ice breaker too, so I always had a conversation starter which was great.

Honestly, it was the best time of my life. Couldn't have asked for a better experience and I've made some lifelong friends



