



## **IT University Travel Report**

*Dear Student, this is a template – the aim is to inspire other students who may wish to follow in your footsteps. You are free to give your report the shape you want and to go beyond the questions, as long as you cover the information asked for below. You are also very welcome to include pictures and contact information – but you need not. Remember that the report will be made available on the intranet.*

**Host University:** Algoma University

**Study Programme at IT University:** GBI

**Exchange Agreement or Study Abroad:** Exchange semester

### **Courses studied abroad:**

- Introduction to Canadian Business
- Social and Ethical Issues in Business
- Anishinaabe Peoples and Our Homelands I
- Introduction to International Relations
- Human Services Organizations

**Exchange Period:** Autumn 2022

**If you wish to give advice to other students regarding your travels, please state your contact info here:** cbar@itu.dk

## **Your stay abroad**

**What was it like to study at [the university] (including choice of courses, academic level, social life at campus)?**

The university is very small, and is placed a bit outside of the downtown (approx. 10 minutes in car but 1 hour on foot). Since the university is small, most classes will also be with way fewer people than you experience at ITU. In my biggest class we were around 50 people, and in the other four we were between 15-30 people. The size of the classes, as well as the design of the classrooms makes it feel more intimate but also like high school – there is only a few rooms that feels like an actual auditorium. The teaching is also very different from ITU and what I am used to at the university life

in Denmark. Each of the courses I took differed a lot on how they were set up, organized, how you were evaluated, the final exam etc. It was also hard to find that information before selecting the courses, as the information provided in their course catalogue was very limited. However, what was in common for all the courses I took was the final grade of the course were split up in different measurements such as class participation and attendance (most courses register attendance, and you can maximum skip 20% of the lectures for each class during a semester), quizzed, midterm exams, written assignments, oral presentations etc. This makes it quite different from ITU, where most courses are only evaluated on your final exam, but it also forces you to follow along and read all material during the semester, as it is something you will be tested on. In spite of that I would say that the overall academic level is significantly lower than at ITU, so for me the 'hardest' part was the amount of readings and assignments throughout the semester (as in contrast to GBI where the hardest part is during the last weeks of the semester).

In regards to the courses I took, Introduction to Canadian Business is a very good basis business course, and it build a lot upon things learned through some of the businesses courses at GBI, however it provides the perspective of Canada and North America in general. I had 5 quizzes and 3 assignments, as well as the opportunity for extra credit assignments.

Social and Ethical Issues in Business was a very nice course that provided a good perspective on business and modern companies ethical scandals, but it also had a lot of theory and philosophy! We had 4 quizzes, a case study, and each week we had to do online lecture reflections.

Anishinaabe Peoples and Our Homelands I was a very different, but very exciting and interesting course. We got to learn about the indigenous peoples of Canada (which is a perspective most people are not taught about, especially the majority of Canadian students), colonialism and how it still affects a big group of people in Canada. The teacher had a very different approach to learning and to the lectures, which at first was a bit hard to adapt to, but I also learned a lot from it. It challenged you more on you as a person and emotionally than academically, but I would recommend everyone to take this course as it is very rewarding and useful. We had 3 reflections with group dialogues on the reflections, then one person creative assignment, and finally a group presentation (there was no exam when I had the course).

I was also very happy about the course Introduction to International Relations, the teacher was really great and had a good teaching style. The topics and perspectives were interesting as well. We only had to assignments in this course, but she was instead very aware of participation and attendance. A course that I slightly regret and which was not at all what I expected (and not at all relevant for GBI) was the course Human Services Organizations. The course description was very misleading, as it revolved around mainly social work in Canada. The way the course was set up, and the teachers effort, did not work well at all and there was a lot of issues related to it. Every week we had a question we had to answer online, there was a midterm exam, and then a video group presentation. In general, the school is very good at informing and interacting with you as an exchange student both before and during your stay, and there is a lot of initiatives for the exchange student supervisor team and from the student union. The first couple of weeks there are a lot of events and social things going

on for new students (including exchange students) and I recommend going to those (they will be sent to your Algoma school mail).

I have attached a picture of all the assignments and quizzes I had throughout the semester (not including readings) to give an idea on how big the workload is and how it is distributed. Though this might seem like a lot compared to GBI, it is not as time consuming and hard as one would think, and you will definitely have time to do a lot of social things as well.

Date	Course	Type of assignment
21/9	Canadian Business	Quiz 1
25/9	Anishinaabe People	Reflective assignment 1
29/9	Anishinaabe People	Group discussion 1
2/10	Canadian Business	Assignment 1
5/10	Canadian Business	Quiz 2
5/10	Human service org.	Midterm exam (multiple choice)
6/10	Business Ethics	Quiz 1
7/10	Anishinaabe People	Personal creative assignment
8/10-16/10	Study week	
21/10	Business Ethics	Quiz 2
23/10	Anishinaabe People	Reflective assignment 2
25/10	International Relations	Autobiographical reflexivity
25/10	Anishinaabe People	Group discussion 2
30/10	Canadian Business	Assignment 2
2/11	Canadian Business	Quiz 3
4/11	Business Ethics	Quiz 3
11/11	Business Ethics	Quiz 4
16/11	Canadian Business	Quiz 4
17/11	Anishinaabe People	Reflective assignment 3
17/11	Anishinaabe People	Group discussion 3
18/11	Business Ethics	Case study
22/11 eller 24/11	Anishinaabe People	Group presentation
21/11	Canadian Business	Assignment 3
29/11	International Relations	Comp. IR theory + practice essay
30/11	Canadian Business	Quiz 5
30/11	Human service org.	Video group presentation
9/12-11/12	International Relations	Exam paper
13/12, 19.00	Human service org.	Final exam (multiple choice)
7/12	Business Ethics	Final paper
16/12, 14.00	Canadian Business	Final Exam

*Introduction to Canadian Business = IT-enabled Supply Chain Management*

*Anishinaabe Peoples and Our Homelands I, Introduction to International Relations, Human Services Organizations = IT, Globalization & Culture*

*Social and Ethical Issues in Business = Elective*

**What was your initial motivation for going abroad and did your stay meet your expectations?**

I have always known that I wanted to study abroad a semester, and I think Canada was a great and exciting opportunity. It is a very beautiful country that offers a lot, and it helped improve my English by talking with native speakers for so many months. The stay met my expectations and I had a wonderful time there, and I made some friends for life.

**Please describe what you got out of your stay, both personally and academically, and how do you expect it to contribute to your further studies?**

I got a lot out of my stay, and I am very happy and grateful that I went even though the planning and work you have to put into the planning is a lot. Personally, I learned a lot by travelling alone as an exchange student – I got to drive around some of the provinces in Canada by myself, which was a great experience, but I also got out of my comfort zone and learned a lot about myself, then I also met some amazing people and now have some international friends for life.

Academically, I have learned a lot by being thrown into a new academic study environment and learning how to adapt to a different way of studying both from a 'Canadian academic' point of view and methods, but also in relation to my Anishinaabe class, that provided an anti-colonialism teaching environment and challenged our pre-defined ideas of academics, learning and knowledge. I am

confident that it can contribute to my further studies, and provide me a broader approach and tools when I go back to ITU.

## **Arranging your stay**

**Please give a short description of the process of arranging your stay:**

**What resources did you find helpful in planning your stay and which people did you use (if any)?**

What was most helpful was both the supervisors assigned from ITU and Algoma University, I could ask any questions and people were really helpful.

And just in general spending time on researching online about Canada but also being an exchange student.

**How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?**

I stayed in one of the schools three accommodation options: the townhouses, which is something you can apply to through the emails sent to you by the school. If you emphasize being an exchange student, I have the feeling that they will prioritize that. Even though it might be more expensive than other solutions, I was very happy with my decision. I ended up living in a house with 5 other girls: 2 from Canada, 2 exchange students from France, and one international student from Nigeria. It really helped connecting fast with other people at school, and it made a greater bond than if it was “just” people I had met in class. Even though 6 people in a house sound like a lot, our different schedules meant that the house was not always full, but neither empty, which was very nice.

It was also nice to live on campus, as the public transportation from the city is not great, but also because of the schedule, where there were a lot of back-to-back classes, or days with only 2-hour classes, so it was really nice and convenient to live close to the school. If you choose one of the accommodation options at campus, please note that the things they have listed on their packing lists are not complete and updated! I did know that a lot of things wouldn't be provided such as cutlery, linen, towels etc. But no kitchen supplies were provided, bathroom supplies, vacuum cleaner, cleaning equipment, top-madras, duvet, and pillow, and just in general all the small things you initially don't think about but is essential. Basically, there were only the “big” furniture available in the house, and everything else you were supposed to buy yourself. That was quite surprising for me (and the two other exchange students), considering we were traveling from overseas with suitcases and could not bring those stuff. Therefore, we were again lucky to live with the two Canadian girls that had *everything* you could think of. It is basically to move in to your first apartment, and you need to buy everything from scratch. The Canadian girls were really helpful and inclusive, and their help made it much easier being an exchange student.

## **Expenses and Financing**

### **Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad**

Compared to some of the other places you can go as an exchange student Canada is a quite expensive country to live in. Perhaps drinks and fast-food/takeaway is a bit cheaper but traveling around in Canada is very expensive: hotels, hostels, domestic flights etc.! You will have to count in 'extra' money if you want to do different road trips or see other cities in Canada during your exchange semester. For example, my roomies and I went on a trip to Chicago, Illinois by driving through the states surrounding around Lake Michigan. Sault Ste Marie borders Michigan so it is very easy to drive to the States from there.

Another thing, there will be some different fees you will have to pay to Algoma University that I personally was not aware of before applying. Since I was living in the townhouses, I paid C\$ 2.755/14.000 DKK for the residence for four months, but then there were different fees, deposits, insurances that ended up in approx. C\$ 1.726/8.886 DKK. I only bought a single ticket to Canada, which by that time was quite cheap, because I was not sure when the exam period would be and I did not want to take that risk. However, when you live in residence at school you will have to move out at latest the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December (2022, perhaps it changes year to year), and the exam period was from start December to December 21<sup>st</sup> of 22<sup>nd</sup>. So, I would definitely recommend buying a return ticket, as it is much cheaper in the end.

### **Did you apply for scholarships and would you recommend any ones in particular?**

I did apply for scholarships, and I highly recommend putting the time and work into applying for as many as possible – it is competitive around scholarships, so it will take a lot of time and effort, but worth in the end. I applied for the Lemvigh Mueller Foundation through ITU (<https://itustudent.itu.dk/study-administration/study-abroad/lemvigh-mueller-foundation>), and then I used websites as legatbogen.dk to filter through which foundations I could apply for. I also recommend applying as soon as possible as many foundations' deadlines often do not match with the ones of ITU...

## **Recommendations for other students:**

Transportation:

- Public transportation is not great in Canada, and almost non-existing, especially when compared to Copenhagen! And it only got worse in Sault Ste. Marie
- Distances in Canada is a different concept than what I was used to in Denmark. The nearest supermarket was 25-minute walk away, and the second nearest was a 40-minute walk away. Walking takes a long time in this city, and even though it was nice during the summer/fall months, it takes up a long time and can be quite inconvenient.
- There is a public bus from the school to downtown, but our experiences were that they were quite unreliable. The busses would be there 10 minutes early or late, and you couldn't do much about it – they were also very long. The price for a one-way ticket (no matter how many stops)

was C\$ 3.00 and it had to be paid in the exact amount inside the bus.

- Most things are not in a walking distance (downtown, groceries, parks, stadiums, hiking trails) so I would recommend making some friends who have cars... One of my Canadian roomies had a car, and she was a life saver!!

Weather:

- Though it probably depends on year to year, the weather in late August to late October was really great and relatively warm! We did hikes in t-shirts until late October.
- The snow came quite late (late November/start December), which apparently was quite unusual, but mostly the heavy snow and cold weather starts in January to April, so if the exchange semester is in the fall semester it is not necessary to pack as much winter clothes as one would think when going to Canada. I did at least not even use half of my winter clothes... That is not to say that you wouldn't need warm winter clothes, because there will definitely be days that are very rough!

Other:

- Get some Canadian loonies (1 dollar coins) for the washer and dryers on school – the machines only take coins, and one washer and one dryer costs \$2 each.
- The fitness is 'free' (paid through the mandatory fees), and is located above the GLC center
- There is a local cinema in the Station Mall in downtown, and I have heard there is cheap tickets on Tuesdays
- Tim Hortons is Canada's version of Starbucks, and they have super cheap coffee – you would be shocked compared to Copenhagen-coffee
- It might be a cliché and a stereotype, but most Canadians that I met was very nice, open and helpful. Almost all people will greet you (even though you don't know each other), and they were all very helpful and considerate
- There were also a different party/drinking culture than in Denmark, and the school bar (the speakeasy) was not the place people went to, and the only held a few events/parties there. The few bars in town closes relatively 'early', most at 1 or 2 am.
- The University has many international students (people who are taking their whole bachelor degree there), which made it really diverse and interesting to meet people from all over the world.
- Nothing much goes on in the city, but it is surrounded by a lot of nature, which you can experience in different ways both during the last part of summer, fall and winter.
- The St. Mary's River separates the Canadian and US part of Sault Ste Marie, on which you can do a lot of water activities in the summer/early fall, there are a lot of hiking and mountain biking opportunities, most of the Great Lakes are 'close by', and during the winter there are different winter sport activities (skiing, ice skating, snowshoeing). Though, be aware most things are in driving-distances.