

CUSA Exchange Report **St. George College, University of Toronto (UofT)**

Name: Suk Yee Freda Lee
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Local Weather

The weather in September is hot and sunny. The temperature can reach 30 degree Celsius at noon. Yet, the temperature difference between day and night is quite large. You may need a sweater at night. Toronto starts to get cold in mid-October. From mid-October to mid-November, the weather is just like winter of Hong Kong. Normally the first snowfall occurs in November. I experience the warmest winter of Toronto over 160 years. The first snowfall is in December. Thanks to wind-chill effect, the feel-like temperature in December is around -20 degree Celsius.

<http://www.theweathernetwork.com/weather/caon0696>

Advice: Residence is equipped with heaters. Room temperature is usually set at 25 degree Celsius so wearing a tee shirt is enough to keep warm. You are recommended to bring more short-sleeved shirts.

Accommodation

All of the on-campus residence does not cater for students who stay there for a semester only. There are several off-campus residences available.

<http://www.utoronto.ca/student.exchange/incoming/index.html>

Chestnut Residence

<http://www.chestnutresidence.utoronto.ca/>

Advantages

- 5th floor is the international floor. It can accommodate at most 54 exchange students. Though I arrive in Toronto late, I can make a lot of friends from all over the world immediately. We always hang out and have fun together. It is good for social networking.
- It is compulsory for Chestnut residents to choose meal plans. Despite this, you can have unlimited access to the dining hall. Furthermore, meals are served in buffet settings. You can eat as much as you can. Meals especially desserts are delicious.
- Chestnut Residence is a hotel before. It is nicely decorated. Double beds are provided. Each room has its own bathroom. Room service is also provided every week.
- Chestnut Residence is conveniently located. It has a one-minute walk distance from Eaton Center which is the largest shopping mall in Ontario. The bus terminal which provides bus services to Montreal, Quebec City and New York are also nearby.

Disadvantages

- The residence fee is very expensive. Since I can have unlimited access to the dining hall and Chestnut provides lots of services for students, I think the fee is acceptable.
- Students are not allowed to cook. Smoke detector is installed. If you cook, you will activate the fire alarm.
- It is quite far away from UofT. This distance from Chestnut to UofT entrance (beginning of St. George Street) is 15 minutes walk. Since all of the commerce courses are taught at Woodsworth College (end of St. George Street), you need to walk 15 minutes more. Therefore, every time you go to university, you need to walk 30 minutes. During winter, it is torturing to walk outdoors for such a long time.

Tartu College

<http://www.tartucollege.ca/>

Advantage

- Tartu is on Bloor Street which is about 3-minute walk from Woodsworth College. Moreover, there are also lots of good restaurants along Bloor Street. You can also go shopping as many brand name shops can be found.
- It is the cheapest residence. St. George campus is at downtown. It is not easy to find a residence as cheap as Tartu.
- Meal plan is not provided. You need to cook by yourself. At the same time, you can save lots of money.

Disadvantage

- Online application starts in April. It gets full quickly. I know some students need to wake up at midnight (morning time in Toronto) and apply for Tartu once its application starts.
- It is notorious for its rats and poor services.

Advice: Though there are several off-campus residences available, I am familiar with Chestnut and Tartu only. Furthermore, I stayed at Chestnut and enjoyed my exchange life there. I can be fully involved in an English-speaking environment. Each floor at Chestnut has its Don. My Don is nice and always organizes floor events for us. The floor atmosphere is friendly. Therefore, I highly suggest Chestnut. I do not recommend renting an apartment alone. Though the cost is low, it is not easy for you to make friends. Exchange opportunity is valuable. I prefer to have more chances to interact with local and exchange students.

Course Registration

I enrolled in BBA exchange program so I was qualified to study commerce courses at UofT.

Commerce courses are restricted courses. If you participate at OAL program, you are not allowed to study commerce courses. Despite this, the course registration system of UofT does not favor exchange students. It lets local students register their courses first. Once it is full, you are not allowed to study. Therefore, I cannot register some courses that I plan to study there.

I made several course equivalence inquiries at CUHK. The following is the approved list. However, you are not guaranteed to transfer these courses successfully as the final decision is made by RGS and your own department.

UofT	Course Title	CU	Course Title
RSM422	Management Control	ACY3121	Strategic Management Accounting
RSM321	Advanced Financial Accounting	ACY3111	Advanced Financial Accounting
RSM392	Strategic Management	MGT4010	Business Policy and Strategy
RSM260	Organizational Behavior	MGT3010	Organizational Behavior
RSM490	International Business	MGT2510	International Business
RSM230	Financial Markets	FIN3010	Financial Markets
RSM330	Investments	FIN3080	Investments
AST101	Astronomy	UGB290	Astronomy

Advice: The course registration of exchange students is handled by the staff of International Exchange Student Office (ISXO). There are only five people. The course registration process is rather slow. You are asked to write down the courses that you have interest by ISXO. You are recommended to write as much as possible. It is because your chosen commerce courses will be approved by Rotman School of

Management. During add/drop period, staff of Rotman School of Management is very busy. They will not approve your list twice. If you cannot register courses that you want, please be patient. Once it is full, you cannot register it. What you can do is to ask Marc Arnold from ISXO keep an eye on the available vacancies.

Courses

The minimum course you can study at UofT is three while the maximum is five. For me, I study three courses only.

RSM422 Management Control by Joel Amernic

Course Assessment:

10% Class participation

10% Assignment 1

15% Assignment 2

25% One-hour class presentation

40% Final exam

Workload of this course is not great. However, the teaching style is different from most of the accounting courses at CUHK. It uses case-study approaches. Students are required to read several cases before class. During class, Prof. Amernic leads students to think and analyze. If you work hard, your analytical skills must be improved. Moreover, there are very few calculations. You are required to write essays for assignments and the final exam. Prof. Amernic writes many research papers. He is a top ranking accounting professor in Canada.

RSM260 Organizational Behavior by Katy Decelles

Course Assessment:

10% Self-assessments

15% Team paper (Interview with an organization)

9% Individual paper (Interview with an organization)

3% 5-minute presentation (Pass/fail)

20% Mid-term

30% Final exam

10% Participation

3% Research credit

Though workload of this course seems great, I enjoy it very much. I have lots of chances to interact and co-operate with local students. Prof. Decelles is a new professor. She is very patient. She likes using games to involve students so as to understand business concepts.

AST101 Astronomy by Dr. M. Reid & Dr. S.Mochnacki

Course Assessment:

5% Clicker quizzes in lecture

5% Clicker quizzes in tutorials

20% Mastering Astronomy assignments

25%/15% Mid-term

45%/55% Final

This is an introductory course which caters for students without science background. The class size is large. 1250 students study it. It is my first time to study science courses. I find it quite hard as I have to remember many technical terms. Furthermore, students have to submit Mastering Astronomy assignments weekly. The workload is quite great. Despite this, Dr. Reid teaches very well. He can successfully arouse students' interest in the universe.

Events in Toronto

1. Canadian International Air Show
2. Nuit Blanche
3. Toronto Zombie Walk
4. Santa Clause Parade
5. Cavalcade of Lights

Tourist spots in Toronto

1. Wonderland

This amusement park is ranked as tenth all over the world.

It operates till mid-October and closes in winter.

2. Niagara Falls

Maid of the Mist closes in winter

3. Mono Cliff

It is a good site for seeing maple leaves during autumn. The Chinese University of Hong Kong Alumni Association-Ontario (CUAAO) organizes a hiking trip to Mono Cliff every year.

4. Algonquin Provincial Park

It is far away. People usually drive to the provincial park during autumn. You can see many amazing natural sceneries.

5. Queens Park

6. St. Lawrence Market

7. Kensington Market

You can buy lots of Halloween customs there.

8. CN Tower

9. Casa Loma

10. Royal Ontario Museum (ROM)

11. Toronto Zoo

12. Ontario Science Center

Toronto City Pass allows admission to these tourist spots within 9 days by CAD\$59. I bought the city pass. Personally I feel disappointed with some of the tourist spots. If you have limited time, I suggest going to other tourist spots first. You should grab the good weather in autumn and go sightseeing!

Useful websites

<http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/acy2/exchange.htm>

Course equivalence form and summary of successful transfer of credits from overseas exchange program

<http://www.artsandscience.utoronto.ca/ofr/calendar/crsindex.htm>

UofT course description

<http://www.rosi.utoronto.ca/>

UofT account for checking personal timetable and amount owing

<https://weblogin.utoronto.ca/>

UofT account for access to webmail and portal

<http://rrs.osm.utoronto.ca/map/f?p=110:1:6318534154791843988>

UofT campus map

<http://www.expedia.ca>

Reservation of hotels and air tickets

<http://www.priceline.com/>

Reservation of air tickets (cheaper for US air tickets)

<http://www.hostels.com/>

<http://www.hostelworld.com/>

<http://www.hihostels.ca/>

Reservation of hostels

<http://www.megabus.com/us/index.php>

Bus to New York

<http://www.greyhound.ca/home/>

Bus to Montreal and Quebec City

<http://www.quickcoach.com/>

Bus from Vancouver to Seattle

<http://www.torontoairportexpress.com/>

Airport Express connecting from airport to hotels in downtown. If you stay at Chestnut, you can choose Metropolitan Hotel which is opposite to Chestnut. One-way ticket costs CAD\$16.15.

<http://www.tripadvisor.com/>

Travelling advice

<http://www.thestar.com/>

Toronto local newspaper