

# SEP Report

## 1. Student Information

Faculty/Major	Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences / Sociology
Host University	University of Melbourne
NUS Semester and Year of Exchange (eg. AY14/15 Semester 1)	AY15/16 Semester 2

## 2. Study at Host University

Please provide information on the academics at your host university:

- Studying or learning culture at your host university. How were classes conducted?
- What did you like most or dislike most about the academics at your host University?
- Advice on module registration and module mapping

The structure of learning in the University of Melbourne (UoM) is quite similar to NUS, in that they have lectures and tutorials for the social science modules and workshops for the design modules. The lecturers provided a list of compulsory and recommended readings at the start of the semester, which was helpful in indicating the readings that were necessary for the week's topic and additional sources for students who wanted to pursue certain topics further. The recommended readings also served as great sources for our essays later on. Tutorials are conducted every week and the tutors mainly ask questions and leave the class to discuss. Most of the students participate actively by answering the tutor's questions and debating with other tutorial mates. Compared to tutorials at NUS, those at UoM are significantly more engaging and friendly.

In relation, one thing I realized and like about academics at UoM is that the students are relatively more passionate about their modules and major. They display greater interest, and in turn, wider knowledge within the field of study. These students were able to offer arguments and evidences that went beyond the tutor's sphere of knowledge. I found their drive in academics really impressive and inspiring. Having said that, there are also instances when I felt that some of the content generated lacks depth as students are more open to simply throwing out whatever comes to their mind.

Another aspect which I appreciated a lot was that the assessments for the social science modules I took were take home essays and assignments, rather than in-class examinations. While this format does away with the need to study and know the content well, the assignments allow me to spend more time researching on a specific issue and making well-constructed arguments. I felt this process was more beneficial for learning.

In terms of module registration and mapping, the faculty staff provided clear instructions and was quick to approve the modules I chose, even with some changes at the start of the semester. I was extremely glad that I took a few modules that are not available at NUS (Indigenous People and Social Control, Printing, Collage and Social Engagement), allowing me to explore other areas of study. From there, I discovered that I really enjoyed doing design and social engagement work, uncovering a potential work option.

# SEP Report

Please list the courses that you took during SEP. (Please take note that the list of modules available to exchange students at the host university are subject to change. This table merely serves as reference.)

Host University			NUS Equivalent		
Module code	Course title	ECTS Credit	Module code	Course title	Modular credit
MULT30017	Indigenous People and Social Control	12.5	SCXXXX	Dummy Code	5
ANTH30004	Anthropology of Kinship and Family	12.5	SCXXXX	Dummy Code	5
SOCI30010	Social Differences and Inequalities	12.5	SCXXXX	Dummy Code	5
EDUC20077	Printing, Collage and Social Engagement	12.5	NM2XXX	Dummy Code	5

## 2. Accommodation

**What kind of accommodation did you stay in during your exchange (eg. on campus / off campus)?**

**Would you recommend this accommodation to future outgoing students?**

**Do you have any other suggestions?**

I stayed off campus during my exchange, in a rented apartment in Melbourne CBD. I was fortunate enough to rent the fully furnished room from a friend at a cheaper rate compared to other apartments around Melbourne CBD.

It is generally less costly to rent a shared apartment in Melbourne, but I advise students to inspect the apartment carefully before confirming the place and putting the deposit and bond. The first apartment I rented was infested with cockroaches, resulting in a need to move out and causing much unnecessary problems.

In terms of location, the northern part of the CBD is extremely convenient because it has all the convenience of a city, yet it is only 15mins walk from the University of Melbourne. For student accommodation off campus, I know Unilodge @ College Square is pretty new and is right opposite the University.

# SEP Report

## 3. Activities during SEP

**Were there any activities organized by school/student group/external organizations at your host university which you would like to recommend to other students?**

UoM organized a welcome day and an orientation week for all incoming exchange students. They were useful for attaining information on the university and living in Melbourne. Knowing that students are interested in travelling and experiencing the culture, the staff also shared some upcoming events and places to go around Melbourne.

UoM also has a Student Exchange Society (MUSEX) that holds events for students to come together. I find the MUSEX Facebook page extremely helpful for knowing the upcoming events and forming friendships. They also have a MUSEX housing and trading facebook group which is good for finding accommodation or housemates.

## 4. Cost of Living

**Please provide an estimation of how much money you spent during your SEP?  
Please list travel expenses separately.**

Health & Travel Insurance: \$500  
Return Air Ticket: \$400  
Student Visa: \$600  
Medical Check-Up: \$100  
Accommodation: \$700/month  
Utilities + Internet: \$80/month  
Food: \$600/month  
Transport: \$60/month  
Entertainment: \$140/month  
Travel + Trips: \$3500 for going around Victoria, Tasmania, Sydney, Brisbane, Gold Coast

## 5. Challenges

**Did you face any challenging issues during your SEP stint? How did you overcome it/them?**

The first two weeks were quite stressful, having to settle accommodation, many administrative matters and adapting to the life there. The worst was having to deal with an apartment that was infested with cockroaches. The student service centre at Melbourne University was helpful in providing advice on some tenancy regulations in Melbourne when I wanted to move out of the apartment. More importantly, participating in a local community (the church) helped me to know some friends and they were able to find me alternative accommodation.

# SEP Report

## 6. Overall SEP Experience

**Please write one paragraph about your exchange experience and attach some photos that represent your exchange experience.**

My SEP experience was extremely fruitful and eye-opening. Apart from the opportunity to travel around Australia, I am thankful for being able to experience the culture and bring home some life lessons. As the pace of life in Australia presents a stark contrast to that of Singapore, I have come to appreciate the work-life balance more, and the value of investing in one's passion. Going to a foreign land for an extended period of time also provides me with fresh eyes, as I embrace an open mind to adapt and learn to live like the locals. Returning back to Singapore, I have learnt to retain such humility and to see people and things with an open mind. I believe this shift in perspective has enriched my person as a whole. Overall, the Student Exchange Program has given me a taste of what it is like to live out of my comfort zone, experiencing a different culture, and enabling myself to be moulded into a more holistic person.

## 7. Suggestions for future outgoing students

**Please share any other suggestions for future outgoing students.**

As much as it is important to be open to meeting new people and the stories they may bring, it is as essential to share your own stories too. Such interactions make it easier to engage in a local community, which will greatly enrich and support your exchange journey!