

SEP Report

1. Student Information

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Faculty/Major | FASS/Economics |
| Host University | Boston University |
| NUS Semester and Year of Exchange (eg. AY14/15 Semester 1) | AY15/16 Semester 1 |

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

Unlike the standard large lecture, smaller tutorial classes in NUS, classes at BU were all seminar- style, where each class generally had about 10-40 students.

With the exception of AC222, the flow of my classes are generally less structured, where many a times the class discussion is influenced by the students' questions and opinions. The culture and structure of the classes encourage openness of individual thoughts.

Module registration and module mapping went smoothly for me; Read the module descriptions carefully and match them with the respective NUS modules.

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 |
| AC222 | Managerial Accounting | 4 | AC2002 | Managerial Accounting | 4 |
| EC387 | Introduction to Health Economics | 4 | EC3353 | Health Economics I | 4 |
| EC367 | Economics of the Public Sector | 4 | EC3351 | Public Finance | 4 |
| EC391 | International Economics | 4 | EC3342 | International Trade | 4 |
| | BU 16 MC = NUS 20 MC | | Dummy Code | - | 4 |

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?

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On campus housing is really expensive. I found out from some friends studying at a nearby school, Northeastern University that some of them did not get their first choice in the type of dorms they got, so some of them paid even more than they were willing to in order to not give up their deposit. Also, they had to rent their own pans, woks and utensils, which added on to their total accommodation cost.

My initial plan was to rent an apartment with two other friends. However, it is really difficult to rent a place just for a semester and most leases are a year long. I went through an agency called [At Home in Boston](#) which linked me up with a couple of potential landlords given my needs for a commission fee.

To my (pleasant) surprise, my host and I became really good friends! She brought me to many different places to explore, and it was wonderful being able to share lives with someone who was so different from me in terms of age, background and culture.

A piece of advice would be to be open to various possibilities and options. There will always be pros and cons to every option; Know what you hope to get from your exchange, and consider all options carefully, depending on what best suits your personality!

One of my best takeaways from my exchange was my friendship with my host, as interacting with her on a daily, consistent basis enabled me to be fully immersed in another culture. She even brought me to her daughter's party, taught me a bit of Spanish, and cooked me many many good meals (which means a lot when you are a poor college student overseas)!

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?

I participated in several activities organized by the BU Navigators, a Christian Fellowship group. One of the trips I enjoyed most was hiking at Mt. Chocorua, White Mountains. The people there are welcoming and friendly, and it is an eye opener experiencing a day trip with the local students there. I vividly remember how after the hike, when some students had already finished the hike and were waiting for the rest, they spontaneously decided to form two lines, all hand in hand, such that those who just came back from the hike would pass through the space between the two lines, almost like passing through a bridge. Even strangers who completed their hike passed through the 'bridge' we formed too!

There are many other interesting activities in BU organized by the faculty, CCA groups and school which are worth checking out, even just to see how students over there plan and run activities. Alternatively, another part of my exchange that I really enjoyed was participating in talks and events organized by Harvard and MIT, which isn't too far off from BU by public transport. I managed to attend a talk by THE Calvin Klein, who spoke about space, how he started the company, his business strategies, and his current plans etc. Harvard also holds a lot of talks by current CEOs, which I found really cool and enlightening. I was fortunate that I met a Singaporean friend doing his masters at Harvard, and would constantly keep us updated about such events. A tip is to follow and like all the relevant Harvard Facebook pages to stay updated about such events, as most events require you to RSVP.

4. Cost of Living

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Please provide an estimation of how much money you spent during your SEP?

Please list travel expenses separately.

I spent about S\$11,000 in total, just for my exchange – round trip, visa and sevis fees, bus card, health insurance, accommodation, necessities, food etc. Food in Boston is not cheap, best way to save money is to cook.

I traveled quite a lot, especially after my exchange as I wanted to visit Atlanta for a conference, and thus had many days to travel before that. My total expenses was about S\$20,500. However, the bulk of it was spent on travel, tickets (DisneyWorld, NBA game, Cirque du Soleil etc) and shopping/souvenirs.

*I have an excel sheet which I compiled during my stay which factors in all my travel expenses as well as the detailed breakdown of my spending. Please feel free to email me at jazreelyeo@gmail.com if you would like to see it! More than happy to share if it is of help to you! 😊

5. Challenges

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

I did not face any major challenges during my stay there.

However, I did feel a little sad that I was spending so much money during my stay in Boston. To overcome it, I constantly reminded myself to maximize my time there with every opportunity I could find to learn and enrich myself, that those around my back in Singapore might benefit. Boston is a very developed and intellectual city with lots of enriching opportunities!

6. Overall SEP Experience

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

Living in a foreign country, esp in a city where the cost of living is higher than that of Singapore, for 4 months puts you in a position to maximize your resources well and count the many blessings you have. In the midst of it all, you get to enjoy the many simple pleasures in life – making new friends, talking and playing board games with your host family, going for a road trip to enjoy nature, shopping at thrift shops, taking up a baking class at an internationally acclaimed culinary school – which we usually take for granted where many things are easily accessible.

7. Suggestions for future outgoing students

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Please share any other suggestions for future outgoing students.

-Set goals before the trip, and take deliberate and intentional steps to fulfill them!
-Set a budget for yourself.

8. Report Submission

Please submit your report (including photos*) at <https://share.nus.edu.sg/goabroad/Lists/SEPReport/AllItems.aspx>. Please note that you can only upload one document. As such, please **zip your report and photos into one file** and name the file in this format 'Host University_Full Name' (eg. Waseda University_Tan Mei Ling).

*Photo submission:

- 1 image of you with host university landmarks in the background
- 2 images of you with your exchange friends or local students
- Submit the photos in JPEG format. Good quality photos between 2MB and 5MB are preferred.
- Please name all photos in this format 'Host University_Full Name_Caption' (eg. Waseda University_Tan Mei Ling_Visit to Mt Fuji with exchange friends).

Kindly note that we may share your report on the NUS/IRO website and relevant information at SEP information sessions and/or in publicity collaterals.