

## **Exchange Report – San Diego State University**

I have always dreamed about studying in the United States and I am really happy that I choose and got accepted to San Diego State University, SDSU. The main reason for studying aboard was to improve my English and experience the school system in a different country. I have always loved US, and the sun, so studying in San Diego was perfect for me.

Before going, I experienced the administrative part to be a bit tricky. Everything from applying for a visa, choosing classes to apply for living. When applying for a visa you need a bunch of formal documents, e.g. a financial statement that states that you are going to be able pay for living costs etc. while you are in the US. I found it really difficult to apply for a visa. There is so much information and processes you need to do before going to the embassy for the final interview (where you basically just hand over your documents and sit in a waiting room).

The coordinator at SDSU was very helpful and really quick to respond to my e-mails. They could answer all my questions or send me to another person that could help me. I choose to apply for living on campus because I wanted the “full collage experience”. I lived in an apartment with two bedrooms and shared a room with an American girl. Living with other people makes it really easy to get new friends. The apartment complex had a pool and some sunbeds. Why study in the library when you can study by the pool? The apartment was okay, but a bit out of date. The air conditioning was a little box sitting on the window and the heater went on gas (which made it smell like the apartment was on fire). The rent was pretty high, around 1 000 dollars a month, but included access to the gym. Looking back, I would have made the same choice. Also, there is an option of having a meal plan, which I choose to not have. Even though there is a lot of different restaurants at campus, and some healthy options, all the restaurants are not always opened (only hamburgers during weekends) and I believe it would be boring in the long run.

I took 5 classes; Intermediate Finance, Financial Accounting, Labor Economics, Introduction to Social Problems and Family Development. Intermediate Finance (FIN-325) and Financial Accounting (ACCGT-326) corresponded to FACO (financial reporting and corporate finance). These are also the classes that were most time consuming and I would not recommend them for a person that do not need them to complete their degree. The accounting class was almost only about the accounting system used in the US and the finance class was theoretical and different to understand the larger picture. In general, at SDSU, it is common that you have many group projects and that attendance is a part of the grade. However, that was not the case for me. I did not have a single group project and some of the professors did not take attendance.

The biggest difference from the SBS is that you read all courses at the same time, have more (smaller) tests and have finals that might include the material that you already have been tested on. The classes are smaller and it is easier to get help from your teacher. All teachers have so called “office hours” where you can go and ask them if you have trouble with anything covered in the book or during the classes. Because of this, I would say that the quality of learning is better at SDSU then SBS. The whole school also uses the same web system (similar to fastreg and mondo), one for the official grades and applying for classes and one for material and instructions provided by the teachers. All this seemed a bit confusing in the beginning, but as soon I understood how it worked it was very simple and logical.

The public transportation is pretty okay in San Diego, there is a trolley station at the school that can take you to downtown, IKEA, Walmart and a bunch of other places. I would not recommend to take it alone or during the night because it did not feel that safe. Uber works perfect and is much cheaper than in Stockholm, so my recommendation is that your first priority is to find a US SIM card so you can get around easy from the start.

There is a lot of fun stuff to do in Californian; Death Valley, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Yosemite are only a few examples. And do not forget to visit Vegas. Being over 21 makes it a lot more fun while studying in San Diego. Another good thing to know is that if you are under 25 and want to rent a car, there is almost always a additional fee, approximately \$20/per day.

Don't hesitate to apply! It is the best thing I ever done!