

My experience of National University of Singapore, 2017

National University of Singapore is a truly amazing environment to be in. I wanted to go to Singapore because the university has a great reputation and the country seemed to be worth exploring. Singapore and NUS met and exceeded my expectations and I am very pleased with my choice!

The official language of Singapore is English and it is noticeable in many ways that Singapore is part of the Commonwealth since it is very influenced by Great Britain and the western world. The country is very well structured; it is clean everywhere, people are really polite and you feel safe and taken care of at all times, on and off campus. The infrastructure is amazing and another great advantage of the country is that it is so small that you have the time to experience it. Everything is very close so it is never a big deal to go to the city. Singapore is also a great hub from which to reach other countries in South East Asia.

I am a major in finance, so it is very convenient that NUS offers the equivalence to the FACO courses; I could transfer Corporate Finance and Financial Accounting as approved courses by SBS to substitute Corporate Finance and Financial Reporting which SBS offers. The semester at NUS is about four months long and starts early compared to Sweden. The examination mainly consists of one mid-term period of exams and one period of final exams. The schedule at NUS has a different structure than the schedule at SU; you take several parallel courses and have classes every day with compulsory attendance, which is often part of the grade. The school puts a whole lot more emphasis on group projects and the assignments take more time than they would at SU. I have listed and reviewed the courses I chose below.

Financial Accounting

This course was a moderately basic accounting course, I had to put in an effort but the course was not too difficult. It was a fun course to take and the lectures were given in lecture halls (like in Sweden) and were combined with tutorials in a much smaller setting. The pace was quite good and the workload moderate. There were two major tests, one presentation assignment and one group assignment to submit.

Corporate Finance

This course was my most challenging one because of the advanced level and the workload. Group projects in this course were the heaviest; during the semester, my group turned in one (large) case, two critiques and three tutorials. Besides this there were two major tests and two small ones. It was a rewarding course looking back at it, but more effort was required compared to the other courses.

Financial Markets

This course was very much appreciated by the students, including me. It had a macro perspective and topics were bank management, different types of financial markets and financial crises. The workload was not too heavy, there were two quizzes, one big exam and an extensive group assignment to be presented and turned in.

Investment Analysis and Portfolio Management

This course builds a lot on knowledge you would have obtained from Finance I and Finance II at SBS. It focuses a lot on models made to analyze investments and evaluate portfolios. It required more self-practice and responsibility than the other courses. It was quite math-heavy and interesting to anyone who is into finance. The workload was moderate; there were two major tests, one big case assignment and you ought to do practice questions regularly to be presented in class occasionally.

Technological Innovation

This course was very interactive and the lessons mostly constituted of discussions about problems or situations in the management of technological innovation within companies. There was a big group project during the semester in which we came up with a business idea, or innovation, and made a report, business plan and pitch on it. Hence, this course had some elements of entrepreneurship but at the same time it was quite theoretical. A mix of management and marketing. It was quite easy to follow and there were, besides the group assignments, two individual homework assignments and one final exam.

Accommodation

I stayed at one of the residential colleges, Residential College 4, which I was very pleased with. When you stay at RC4 you must choose a meal plan which will give you coupons for the college's dining hall which is shared with another residential college. The dining hall offers breakfast and dinner on weekdays. All the rooms at RC4 have air conditioning which I was very grateful for in the humid climate. I would recommend applying for this college if you get the chance. It is located in Utown, which is great because it is close to everything. The UTown residence is also very popular among exchange students.

Activities

There are so many things to do in Singapore, on and off campus; you will never get bored. I joined my residential college's soccer team and played with them for half of the semester. We participated in the Intercollege games; a tournament with the other residential colleges, which was rewarding because I got to know so many local students. If you are into a sport or want to try a new one I would encourage you to do so in Singapore! There is a team for every sport at NUS.

There are many spectacular tourist attractions to see. The nature is very well preserved and there are many gardens, rainforests and tropical environments to experience. With regards to the nightlife, the bars and clubs are great, I would recommend the rooftop bars or any bar that has a view! Cuisine-wise Singapore has food from lots of different cultures and there are two very affordable restaurants with Michelin stars which are worth to experience. In the food courts, there are spots that offer Korean, Chinese, Western, Indian and Japanese food. The food in Singapore was truly a fun part of the culture to take part of!

I would strongly recommend NUS for your exchange semester and I wish you all the best with your application and your studies!

Best regards
Madeleine