

General Information			
Host Country	Basel, Switzerland		
Host School	University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland		
Program start & end dates	February 2024 to July 2024		
Program of Study	International Business Management		
Type of Study Abroad	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exchange	<input type="checkbox"/> UMAP exchange	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
General Evaluation			
In a couple of sentences, summarize and explain your general evaluation of your experience.	I took this opportunity to experience as much as I can. I learnt a lot about other cultures, made new friends that welcome me to visit their home country. It also taught a lot about being independent. I experience the Swiss life that I am able to integrate in my daily life back home.		
Arrival			
How easy or challenging was it to obtain your travel documents (visa, permits, etc.)?	Gathering the documents for my student visa took a while, which is why I started as soon as I had all the required documents as you might come across unexpected situations which could delay getting your visa.		
Describe your transportation arrangements to your host country. Would you alter any part of those arrangements?	I arrived at the host country's airport where I had a buddy from the host school pick me up and help me to my accommodation. I would not alter any part of these arrangements as I found this very convenient especially when arriving in the evening.		
How was your experience clearing customs and immigration upon arrival in your host country? Any surprises?	It was a smooth process. I was flying to Frankfurt first and went through customs and immigration and provided the proper documents. When arriving in Basel, there was no customs or immigration.		
Describe how you traveled to your host facility. How long did it take and how much did it cost?	My buddy from the host school picked me up from the airport and drove me to my accommodation. There was no cost and the drive was around 15 minutes.		
Orientation and Assistance			
How satisfied were you with the assistance available to you at your host school? Were there people and resources available for you for support?	I was very satisfied, they were very helpful and respond very quickly if you send them an email. We had a buddy if we had any questions and to assist getting settled in.		
What help did you receive from the international staff or office?	We had an orientation day where they provided us with the necessary information on how to get around Basel and what to expect for the school semester.		
How was new student orientation at the host university? What did they do?	There was an introduction orientation day at our host campus. The second day we went to the Olten campus and met the rest of the exchange students where there was a special guest teaching us about intercultural where we had many icebreakers and got to meet other exchange students. The third day, we explored Basel and went to a medicine exhibition. The fourth day, the FHNW ESN (Erasmus student		

	network) was an evening event for the exchange students to get to know everyone more.
<b>Housing &amp; Daily Life</b>	
Describe your accommodation in your host country. Were you pleased with this choice or what would you have done differently?	My accommodation was under WOVE, housing for students. I lived in an apartment-like building where I had my own room and washroom and shared-kitchen with ten other people on my floor. I was pleased with this choice as I still had some privacy as each room is treated like their own unit like an apartment.
When could you move into housing and how long were you allowed to stay?	I was allowed to stay at the 1 <sup>st</sup> of the month of contract started until the last day of the last month of my contract. It was a 6 month long contract.
What kinds of services and facilities were nearby where you lived (shop, cafe gym, parks, pharmacy, stations...)	There were grocery stores and restaurants near by. A park that is a 10 minute walk away. There is a bus stop 2 minute walk away to get to the train station. There was also a University library beside.
Describe what you did about meals and what other options were available. How satisfied were you with the food?	I went grocery shopping most of the time as eating out was expensive. I would usually make quick and easy meals. Not the most exciting food but it was enough for me as I am not a picky eater.
How close was your accommodation to where you studied?	It was a 25 minute by walk. I would also take the bus which is 7 minutes then a 5 minute walk.
<b>Academics &amp; Course Registration</b>	
Describe the registration process at your host institution. What assistance was available to you? Were you satisfied?	I was able to put a list of course I wish to take and they would register me in the class and then give me a list of courses I have been registered in and the class schedule for them. I was satisfied with the registration process because I got the classes I wanted and they were very flexible if I wanted to change a course.
What advice would you offer to another exchange student about registration at your host institution?	I would suggest to make a list of courses you would considered taking in case some are not available or have a time conflict with another course
What tips to you have for finding the courses and course syllabuses/ outlines?	I was able to find their courses and outlines on their school website. I would check those as they have course outlines from past semesters.
<b>Academics &amp; Course Registration (cont'd)</b>	
How satisfied were you with the amount of knowledge/skills you obtained from your host?	I am satisfied with the knowledge and skills I gained. I found it very valuable to learn from others with a different perspective and learning style.
How did the style of teaching, and workload compare to Canada? Was it more independent or group learning?	The style of teaching was very lecture based but still expected to participate in class discussions. Some classes require to do the readings before class. Workload, most of my grades were based on major assignments or the final exam. I found it was more independent learning other than the group projects.

How many courses did you take during your time abroad? Are there particular courses would you recommend?	I took 5 courses. As an HR major, I recommend taking conflict management and project management as I found those really useful for my career as we don't have courses like that back home.
What was your impression of the computer facilities, library, internet access, specialized equipment and supplies available at your host facility?	There was internet access in the school and study areas as well as a cafeteria. The Basel campus did not have a library but they share one with another university close by. They have a campus in MuttENZ with a bigger cafeteria and library.
<b>Cost</b>	
Books and Supplies/per term:	\$0
Flight:	\$1600
Accommodation/per month:	650 CHF/ month
Meals/per month:	\$105-\$200/ month
Local transportation/per month:	57 CHF/month
Health insurance/per term:	Swiss care health insurance 59 CHF/month Travel Health Insurance \$450 for 6 months
Communication (internet, phone, etc.) – per term	Phone bill- \$200/ term
Travel documents (Passport, Study permit, visa, etc.)	Residence Permit processing fee 149 CHF
Vaccinations:	\$0
Personal spending (entertainment and extra travel) – per term	Extra travel – Eurail pass \$499 for 10 travel days. Train tickets (within Switzerland) \$200, Plane tickets -\$260 Entertainment (eating out, shopping etc.) - \$400
Were there unexpected costs you encounter? What items were less or more expensive than expected?	Unexpected cost was the Swiss care, which is an additional and mandatory health insurance for students. Groceries in Switzerland were more expensive than expected.
<b>Extra-Curricular &amp; Social Activities</b>	
What type of organized activities were available to you? What extra-curricular activities would you recommend to future students?	There were organized events and activities from the ESN Basel and ESN FHNW. I would recommend following their Instagram account has they host events and activities for students every month. The events vary from pub quizzes to hiking and city tours in Switzerland, it is a great way to meet other exchange students and locals as well.
Did you travel outside the host location? If so, where do you recommend?	I travelled to Prague and Italy. I recommend going to both. Prague is a short flight and is tourist friendly. Italy is close to take a train as Milan is only 4.5hrs away. I would recommend travelling with a friend if you can.
What opportunities were there to work or volunteer? Did you require special permits to do this?	A special permit was required to work but you would have to be living there for at least 6 months before you can start working.
<b>Health and Safety</b>	
Describe any health/safety concerns or issues you had during	I did not have any health or safety concerns during my experience.

your experience.	
What helped you keep safe and healthy? Did you access any health care supports and if so how was the experience?	I didn't access any health care supports.
What wellness supports did they offer at the University? Were there counselling or medical services?	I did not use any but they did mention they had some available if you just reached out.
<b>Personal and Cultural Connections</b>	
Were there any cultural differences you had to adjust to? Were there language barrier issues?	Cultural differences that I had to adjust to was getting use to their rush hour, the roads can get busy. I found that most cars will always stop for pedestrians even if they are going a bit fast they will still stop. Another thing is that everything is closed on Sundays, which is why I needed to make sure I did my shopping before the weekend. I found the language barrier minimal when it came to everyday aspects such as grocery shopping or the post office as most of them were able to speak English. Although it would be nice to know some phrases. You can get along fine with just English
What part(s) of the country and culture did you most appreciate?	I really appreciated the nature of the country. I also liked their transportation system, everything is always on time. I also appreciated the buildings and architecture of the each canton (city) I visited.
How was it traveling alone and making friends?	I felt safe travelling alone in Switzerland, everyone is friendly and it is easy to ask for help. For example, at the train station, you can ask the conductors if you have any questions and they can guide you to the right direction. I found it a bit easy to make friends who were also on exchange and we also lived in the same building so it was easy to meet all the time. I was able to make friends with other exchange students by attending events by the school or ESN.
How were you treated by local people? By university staff and faculty? By students?	Local people were kind and understanding. The university staff and faculty were nice and helpful. The students were very kind and always included me. I appreciated them always starting a conversation and getting to know me.
How accommodating are they to students with a disability? Were there any accommodations offered?	Not that I know of.
How is the situation for students who are visible minorities in your host country?	I would say that they are still treated fairly, the host country did not make the students feel uncomfortable, which I appreciated.
How welcoming are they to for those who identify as LGBTQIA+?	I would say they are very welcoming to those who identify as LGBTQIA as I never saw anyone acting negative.
<b>Overall</b>	

What are 5-10 important things other students should know before going to your host country/region?	
1. Prepare a budget plan and stick to it, as Switzerland can be expensive	
2. It is expensive to eat out, I recommend cooking your meals to save	
3. Consider location when finding accommodation, (safety, convenience, is it near everything you need)	
4. Expect some culture shock, there may be things that are different compared to Canada	
5. Engage in school organized events, it's a great way to make new friends.	
6. Apply for the proper study visa well in advance as it can take a long time to process.	
7. Arrange your arrival and getting to your accommodation, know where you're going when you arrive	
8. Familiarize yourself with their transportation, do some research beforehand	
9. Grocery shopping in Switzerland can get expensive, there's a tram that goes to Germany and it is cheaper to grocery shop there.	
10. Pack light, it can be hard to get around with many luggage, especially on your own.	
What was the most rewarding part of your study abroad experience?	I would say is that I was able to make new genuine friendships with friends from different countries, I learnt about their cultures as well.
What was the greatest challenge you faced during your experience abroad?	The greatest challenge was trying to hold myself accountable as someone living independently, trying to stay on track with school and the chores in home balancing both can sometimes be a challenge when school gets busy.
How has your perspective changed as a result of your study abroad experience?	My perspective has change along with my mindset. I've become more understanding of others and really listen to where they're coming from. I learnt to not stress or worry about the things that are out of my control and focus on the things I can control.
What else do you want to add about your study abroad?	This second study abroad brought out a different version of me, I was able to discover more about myself I didn't think I could.

**Below is a space to share any photos:  
 Photos are posted on the next page**

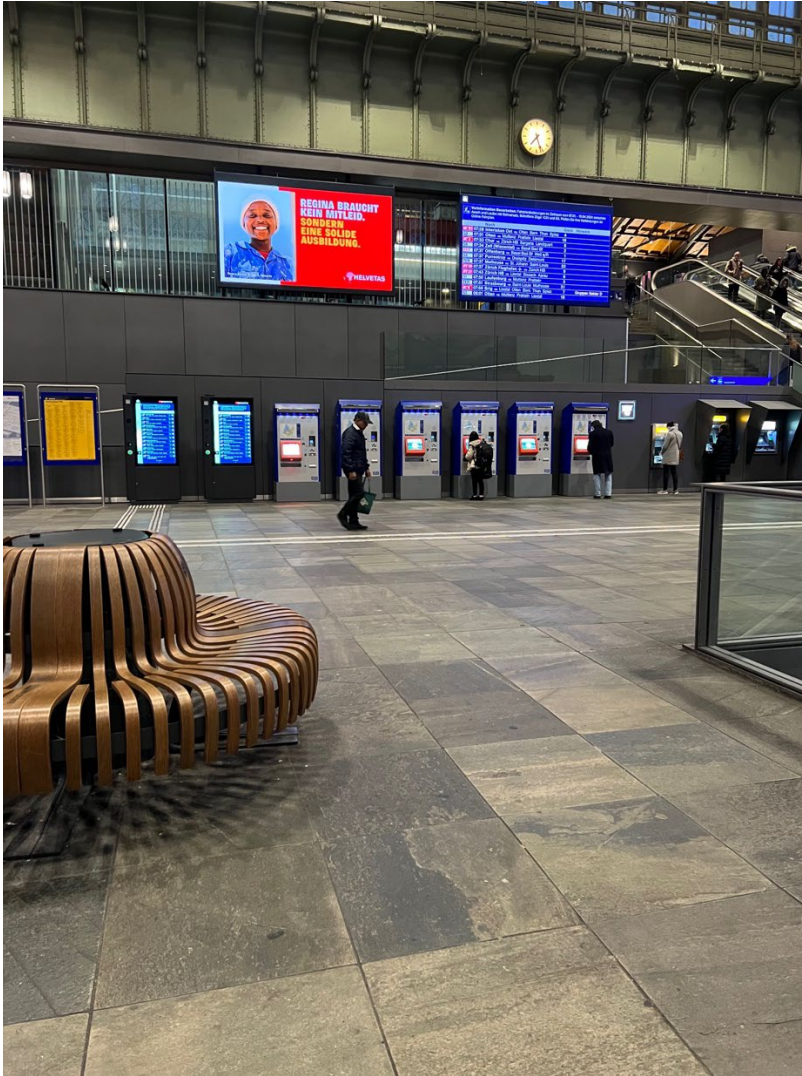
Street in Basel





View point of Mittlere Brücke







Mittlere brücke



FHNW Muttenz campus



Mittlere brücke





Basel Municipality



Street in Basel





View from Wettsteinrücke



Spalentor

