

2013-2014

University Attended: Emory University

FEEDBACK 1

INDUCTION/ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

What did this involve, how long did it last, was it useful?

It was quite useful but lasted a fairly long time and was quite structured so there wasn't a whole lot of time to socialise with new people.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Style of teaching, courses, ease of access to courses, methods of assessment, teaching support

I really enjoyed the style of teaching - it was something totally different to MBS and was a lot more intimate which took some getting used to but in the end I actually think I learned a lot more from being taught in a more personal environment.

MBS INTERNATIONAL TEAM

Level of support, additional information that could have been useful

The total cost of the year abroad could have been highlighted more from the International Team. I feel like there were a lot of hidden costs which actually amounted to a massive sum which, had I not been working and my family managed to have the funds to support me, would have easily led to me having to finish the year early. *MBS comment: We do mention the need to consider financial costs to students from year 1. We also mention that although students do not pay an academic fee to the host institution, there may be administrative fees which will vary between partners. Financial certification also needs to be considered if needing a visa.*

MBS SECOND YEAR MEETINGS

Any additional information that you feel could have been provided

Costs as mentioned above. Also there is a huge difference in state schools and private schools which could maybe be highlighted slightly more.

HOST INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

Level of support, additional information that could be useful for future students

I found that Valerie helped us as little as possible, leaving us to find out a lot of things the hard way. I had a huge problem with my first room mate and Valerie never seemed interested nor bothered despite me emailing her a number of times.

INSURANCE, HEALTH COVER

Please include any information relating to the purchase of compulsory health insurance ie costs etc. or whether this was waived by having the University of Manchester Insurance Policy

Health insurance cost £408 by HCC Insurance Study abroad policy- it's really good, easily the cheapest and was also totally necessary as the UoM Policy nowhere near covered the health insurance we were required to have.

INFORMATION ON ANY ADDITIONAL COSTS AND FINANCIAL CERTIFICATION

This should be information on any extra fees that the University charged but should not include accommodation, books, transport, visa etc. Any information that you had to provide on financial certificate would be helpful.

We had to pay around \$300 in compulsory "Student activity fees" each semester. We were also charged around \$100 to be allowed to partake in certain exchange student activities, however we felt that the money was in no way worth the tickets we received - especially considering we went to 2 events that were free. The final event was also so late in the first semester that I was flying home before it and was told that it was tough luck and I would not receive any reimbursement.

ACCOMMODATION

As much information as possible on what accommodation is recommended or not recommended.

Highland Lake Apartments were really nice as far as apartments go however they were basically in the middle of nowhere in relation to Atlanta and the public transportation is avoided at all costs making it extremely difficult to get around. We had to plan trips to supermarkets and order cabs as it was too far to walk there and back with shopping bags. To get to University it was a 15 minute walk to the nearest campus where we could then catch a shuttle bus- with the whole journey taking around 30-45 mins. The other problem with Highland Lake is that because it was basically compulsory to live there, you were automatically ostracised as exchange students and it was a lot harder to make American friends. The only point of contact we had with them was during class times and it was extremely natural to cling to the other exchange students who you already knew even vaguely. Finally I would say that the leasing office at Highland Lake are pretty incompetent. There was a clear lack of communication between the office workers and they also appeared to have very little financial knowledge, relying on a computer to do the maths for them.

DESTINATION INFORMATION AND OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Transport, travel, social life, integration with local students, student activity groups

Atlanta as a whole is a nice city but unfortunately we live much too far out to fully appreciate it. However, in terms of travelling to other places within the US, Atlanta is a perfect location with access to a lot of places in under two hours (by plane) and a relatively short distance by car. Transportation around the city is really avoided at all costs both by ourselves and also most locals, so taxis or friends with cars are the only option to travel within Atlanta. There were a lot of safety issues on campus as well and we received emails weekly with students reporting sexual harrasment/ being held at gun point/ being robbed on campus as well as off.

In terms of social life I would say that Emory really couldn't get much further away from Manchester. The Greek life is a large part of Emory, however, saying that, a lot of American friends claim that the greek life here is nothing like other colleges. It is clear that Emory students tend to enjoy staying in their Emory bubble which can make socialising outside of college pretty hard. I found myself taking American friends to my favourite restaurants/ bars/ clubs in Atlanta by the end of the year as they had never

heard of the places or ventured out to them. I feel like there is a huge social disconnect between the UK and the US in that respect, however I would not say that I didn't enjoy it- It just meant I had to be quite brave to go and try new things.

I've already mentioned that there was a lack of integration with local students however, the study style largely focuses around intense group projects and provided you are brave enough to ask local students to go in a group with them, this is a great way to make new friends. I've made a few friends for life purely through working on a project with them for one semester.

Finally the gln student activity group. I wouldn't say this was amazing and a lot of the time it was left up to us to organise nights out and events, however they were helpful at times in keeping us in the know about Emory events. My buddy was in a fraternity and we got on amazingly well which really helped as it meant that myself and my friends were always guaranteed an invite to frat events - allowing us to socialise with Americans more than some of the other exchange students.

DESCRIBE IN ONE SENTENCE YOUR YEAR ABROAD

A totally unique experience that will never be forgotten