

## Exchange Report

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Copenhagen Business School -- International Summer University (ISUP)

June 22, 2018 – August 4, 2018



## **Visa Process**

I am a domestic student, so the visa process for ISUP was extremely easy: there was no visa process at all. For any Canadian student staying 90 days or less in Denmark, no visa is needed at all. It is only if you are doing a full-term exchange that you need a student permit and a Danish residency number. You do need to make sure you do not exceed 90 days total in Schengen province member countries, but if you are travelling within those countries, you only need your passport.

If you do not hold a Canadian passport, then it is your responsibility to check if Denmark and the surrounding countries require a visa. CBS provided a link to a website to check these requirements in one of their welcome emails once acceptance letters were sent out.

## **Insurance**

I booked travel insurance through World Nomads, which came recommended to me from a fellow Schulich student who ran into some issues during some of his travels in previous years, and World Nomads took care of him extremely well.

Full coverage for the six weeks plus two extra weeks of travel in Ireland and England came to approximately \$175 (CAD).

## **Arrival/Airport**

Air Canada flies direct once a day from Toronto Pearson International to Copenhagen International Airport. It leaves at around 7pm and arrives in CPH at 8am the next morning. This is the flight I took, and it worked out perfectly.

ISUP offers an arrival service at the airport and they will put on their website what day it is on, so you can book your travel to get there on that day. This is what I did, and I would highly recommend it. There were CBS students at the airport to greet all arriving international students and they booked a hotel conference room

to hand out housing documents, keys and bracelets for the social program. From the airport, they paid for all students to take the metro together to the various dorms. This took all the stress out of figuring out the metro right away and struggling to find your dorm. It was also during this arrival process that I met some of the people that ended up being some of my best friends during the trip.

## **Academics**

- **Program:** I took two classes for a total of 6 Schulich credits: Psychology of Decision Making & Beyond Compliance: Business and Society. I had class M/T/W/R from 8:00-10:30am. Each class is 2.5 hours long with a 15-minute break in the middle. This felt very short compared to our three-hour long Schulich classes. There are also two extra Friday sessions in the six weeks which I thought I was prepared for but ended up feeling very heavy if you are used to only having class 4 days a week at Schulich. 8:00am is very early but I really liked this schedule because it meant that I had my full days free to get my readings done and enjoy my time in CPH. The sun also doesn't really set in the summer in Denmark, so it is easy to wake up when the sun blazes through your window at 4:30am!
- **Classroom:** As an MBA, I was taking graduate-level courses. Most graduate students at CBS are MSc in Business students and there were only a handful of international MBA students in each class. I found that the other students were engaged and generally more academically inclined than most Schulich MBAs. They all write a thesis to complete their graduate studies and are well-versed in researching and writing big papers. The majority of Danish students also hold jobs while they study so they are very busy and often were either not present or dashing from class to work. The breakdown of the room was probably 80% full-time CBS students and 20% exchange students, but many of the full-time CBS grad students are international as well. For example, my case group in one of my classes was made up of people from Canada, Sweden, Britain, Poland, and Denmark.
- **Teaching:** The ISUP faculty is very international. I had one professor from the USA and the other from Hungary. This works in the favour of exchange students because they are much less strict about CBS exam rules which work extremely differently than at Schulich (you will get information about this when you get your exam descriptions). Class attendance is the opposite

of mandatory; in fact, you will probably never see the majority of students in class. Lectures supplement the readings at CBS, not the other way around. I highly recommend going to class, however, because you get so much more information than just going through the readings and trying to decipher the lecture slides. The classes were a combination of lectures, case studies and a lot of group discussion.

- **Exams:** Your exams are worth 100% of your final grade. I chose two courses that had “Mini-Projects,” which are just final essays. They are 10-15 pages (CBS pages, again, you will receive instruction about this) long and involve a lot of theory and academic sourcing. I found this SO much better than taking courses with actual written exams, where you have to travel out to the exam site and they extend much further into August than the date of the Mini-project due date. The last week was very busy with class and writing papers and trying to enjoy the last days in CPH but if you hand in your papers a day or so early and schedule your flights for the last day you can move out of housing, it will all be fine.

### **International Services**

- **Orientation:** ISUP does an amazing job of orientation for their international students. There are about 400 international students who come to ISUP every year and they have mastered welcoming us. There are a number of orientation sessions that ISUP puts on to welcome international students and show them around CBS. Attend all of them! They are great about explaining Danish culture, CBS culture and what to expect from classes.
- **Cell Phones:** You will get a Lebara SIM card with your welcome package. It is free, and then you can set up a plan online for very cheap. It was \$15 a month for 60 GB or something crazy like that. There is also free calling between Lebara numbers, so you can easily connect with your fellow ISUP-ers.
- **Social Program:** If you do nothing else, sign up for this!! It is a special Social Program for international students that is about \$175 CAD and is a full 6 weeks of fun activities planned for you. These include bar nights, parties, comedy night, trip to the Viking Museum in Roskilde, canal tours, walking tours, games night, Danish country dancing, etc. This is the best way to meet people and make your new best friends. People who initially didn't

sign up found out they missed out and bought the program a week or two into it.

- **Tour of Denmark:** This was an optional weekend trip at the end of July that was about \$200 CAD. We left CPH early Friday morning and returned late Sunday evening. We went to Aarhus, Aalborg, Skagen, the most northern tip of Denmark, and Legoland. About 60 students went and it was a very fun experience. I especially appreciated getting to see so much of Denmark, rather than only seeing Copenhagen and traveling elsewhere every weekend.
- **Bike Rental:** There is a start-up company called Unibike that set up a rental program through CBS for ISUP students. You could rent a bike for 6 weeks for a very reasonable cost, MUCH lower than buying a second-hand one or renting through a different service. Be prepared to wait in a very long line for one of these, however!

## **Housing Arrangements**

Housing in Copenhagen is at an all-time premium and it is extremely difficult to secure. I recommend applying for CBS housing through their international office. Danish law states that schools cannot own their own housing, so private companies build dorms (“kollegians”) and have agreements with the various schools in the area. CBS has a variety of dorms and all of them are pretty good, though I would recommend these two:

**Nimbusparken:** This is where I lived. It is about a 10-minute walk or 4-minute bike ride from CBS. It was just opened in January 2018, so the facilities are super new and nice. At Nimbus, you get your own room and bathroom, and then each section of the floor has a kitchen, dining room and living room for either 10 or 12 people. Nimbus has a great community environment because of these shared common spaces and we had a great time. As of September 2018, it will be a graduate student-only dorm.

**Porcelænshaven:** Also known as PH (because no one can pronounce the full name). PH is attached to one of the CBS buildings and is also a 10-minute walk/4-minute bike ride to main campus. It does not have common rooms! You get your own room with a bathroom and a small kitchenette in your room. This makes it

much harder to get to know people, so if you are super social, know that you will need to make more of an effort to hang out with people than if you were living in a dorm with common kitchens and living rooms (I was told this by my friends who lived in PH).

To get housing, apply as SOON as the email that the housing portal is open comes in. It will be around 6am EST sometime in May.

Some other notes about housing:

- The people that lived off-campus in Airbnb's often paid much more and felt pretty socially isolated. I had a few friends that did this, and they said their only saving grace was participating in the social program.
- Copenhagen does not have air conditioning! We had a super-hot summer (25 degrees Celsius in Denmark feels more like 30-35 degrees) and it was tough. Buying a small fan would be a good idea.
- Bring ear plugs. Living with other people during the summer can get loud, especially when attendance in class is not mandatory and the sun is up until almost midnight each night.

### **Costs/Expenses**

COPENHAGEN IS VERY EXPENSIVE. I heard this before I left and did not quite understand until I got there. The currency is Danish Kroner, and you can get an exchange rate to the Canadian dollar by dividing by 5. For example: 10 DKK = \$2 CAD.

You will want to eat in more than you eat out and if you live in a communal kitchen building, you'll want to share groceries or cooking with your friends to make it even more economical. For example, a package of 2 chicken breasts is 27 DKK, while a McChicken from McDonalds is 35 DKK. Now is the time to learn to cook, if you haven't already! Water is not free at restaurants and pop is expensive, so most of the time, beer is the way to go. Carlsberg and Tuborg flow like water, is not very expensive, and it is great beer.

In terms of coffee, do not go to Starbucks. It is horrifically expensive. CBS has great coffee and it's worth going to smaller shops and/or the chain Emmery's instead.

One of the best deals is lunch in the canteen at CBS. It is approximately 45 DKK for a big plate of food from the buffet and it is really, really good and fresh food (salads, fish, meats, pasta, potatoes, grain-based salads, bread, etc). If you go at 1:45pm, you will be able to fill a box of the leftovers from the buffet for 15 DKK.

In terms of cash, just bring enough to cover small expenses or bigger items like a day at Tivoli. I brought 4000 DKK or \$800 CAD in cash and it was fine, but I could have brought way less. Everything else you will use your credit card, and that is how most Danish people pay for everything. They are very surprised when you have cash.

All this being said, just be prepared and budget to be able to spend enough to have a good time.

### **School Culture**

The international student culture at CBS is very different from the Danish student culture. The Danes are a bit more closed and they don't tend to make new friends. They are very nice and polite but will probably not offer to hang out outside of class time (I only found one exception to this!). The professors are aware of this and try to encourage more group work and mingling during class to try and make sure international students actually get to talk to real Danish students.

Schulich is by far a more social environment than CBS, but the ISUP social program did a great job of making sure you make friends outside of class.

### **General Impressions**

I loved this program, CBS, Copenhagen, and Denmark as a whole an extraordinary amount. The six weeks I spent at CBS were transformational for me. The friends I made, the people I met in class, the professors I had, and the glorious Danish

sunshine we experienced made for a summer I will never forget. I would highly recommend this program to anyone and hope that you will have as great of a time as I did!

### **Places to Eat: My Top Recommendations**

- Emmery's Coffee
- Pizzorante L'Italiano (by Dalgas Have)
- Halifax Burger
- The Union Kitchen
- Joe & the Juice
- Glace
- Café Maude
- The Glass Market

### **Things to Do & See: My Top Recommendations**

- Tivoli Gardens
  - Go for an afternoon into the evening and pay for the unlimited rides. Lines are not long, and you will want to go on some again.
- Louisiana Museum
  - About 45 minutes north of CPH, and easily accessible by train. One of the best modern art museums I have ever been to and a great café for lunch.
- Nyhavn
  - The new harbour, the quintessential tourist spot to see the boats and colourful buildings. Also has great (but very pricy) ice cream.
- Rosenborg Castle
  - Old residence of the Danish Royal Family
- Helsingør aka Hamlet's Castle
  - About a 45-minute train ride from downtown, worth it!
- Islands Brygge
  - Swimming and sunning and the famous CPH jumping platforms
- Malmö, Sweden
  - You can take the train across the bridge to Sweden for just a few hours. Definitely worthwhile to do. Try some Swedish meatballs, go on a canal tour and try Princess Cake.