BERICHT

(Bitte spätestens 2 Monate nach Beendigung Ihres Auslandsaufenthalts vollständig übermitteln)

1. Gastuniversität (Land/Stadt/Uni) University of Toronto

2. Studienjahr ☑ Wintersemester 2014  ☑ Sommersemester 2015

Aufenthaltsdauer (Tag, Monat, Jahr) von 27.08.2014 bis 07.05.2015

3. Studienrichtung(en) BA English and American Studies
LA Englisch Italienisch
Matrikel. Nr A-1042182

☐ Bakkalaureatstudium ☐ Diplomstudium ☐ Lehramtsstudium
☐ Magister/Masterstudium

E-Mail Adresse (optional)

4. Stipendium bewilligt für 9 Monate bew. Stipendienbetrag 9 * 400 = 3600
weitere Stipendien 400
Bezugsquelle Gesamtsumme Stipendien 4000

5. Wohnmöglichkeit (beir. bitte ankreuzen): ☐ Studentenwohnheim ☑ Privat

6. Kosten Unterkunft 5200
Lebenshaltungskosten 3800
Studienkosten 280+100 (Bsp. Studiengebühr, Bibliothekagebühren, Kursmaterial)
Reisekosten 850 (An und Abreise) + 655 (Öffis)
Visakosten 57 (ESTA) + 105 (Study Permit)
Versicherungskosten 998 (privat) + 456 (Uni)
Gesamtkosten (Auslandsaufenthalt) 12500

Verfassen eines persönlichen Erfahrungsberichtes über Ihren Studienaufenthalt
Anhaltspunkte: Gastuniversität, Kurse, Prüfungen, Mitstudierende, Unterkunft etc.
(Bitte verwenden Sie ein extra Beiblatt: mind. 1 Seite; Überschrift des Berichtes: Ihre Matrikelnummer, Name der Gastuniversität und des Gastlandes, Ihre Studienrichtung sowie der Zeitraum des Aufenthaltes).

Abgabe des Leistungsnachweises der ausländischen Institution (Transcript) sowie des Anrechnungsbescheides (Formular: Antrag-Anerkennung-Studienerfolgsachweis)

Ja, ich bin damit einverstanden, dass dieses Formular zusammen mit meinem Bericht für Mitstudierende auf der Webseite zur Ansicht zur Verfügung steht (falls zutreffend, bitte ankreuzen).
My year abroad at the University of Toronto (UofT)

I pretty much stumbled upon Toronto as my destination for my studies abroad. I have always wanted to go to America. However, Canada was never really part of that dream. Mostly because I did not know anything about the country. (I thought I would not get very far without speaking at least a little French.) But also because I had heard about the country’s arctic temperatures.

Keeping an open mind during my selection I found that the University of Toronto was perfect for a student of English and Italian. Due to the fact that the Italian community in Toronto is huge, the UofT Italian department offers a vast variety of courses and is rated one of the best Italian departments outside of Italy.

The university itself comprises a number of buildings that vary not just in size but also in period and style. You can find a modern glass façade right in between a house from the Victorian era and the students’ center, which happens to be built on the model of a gothic castle. (There is a great chance you might feel like a little kid that got accepted to Hogwarts after all.)

Also the city offered everything I was looking for. Toronto is a multicultural metropolis with plenty of entertainment and nightlife as well as amazing scenery: parks, bluffs, beaches, islands, and a lake so big you almost cannot believe it is not an ocean.

Although I started looking quite early for a place to live, I still did not have a room when I got to Toronto at the end of August. The university provides you with login data to a website that helps you find a room in student dorms, co-op or private housing. However, student housing can be quite expensive, with private rooms often being cheaper than dorms, especially if they are on campus. Furthermore, keep in mind that some dorms close during longer holidays. I was very lucky and found a big room in a beautiful Victorian house in a good neighborhood not far from the downtown campus. My landlady was super nice and invited me and the other student who lived there to her traditional family thanksgiving as well as Christmas party.

A lot of time and thought went into the selection of my classes. They had to be okayed by the University of Vienna, fit into my timetable and interest me enough to actually make me go to the library every once in a while. When you have to select classes for your study plan the new timetables are not out yet. They can change until after the term starts in September. I did not get to take many of the courses I initially signed up for: all English Literature classes seemed to be crowded, some classes took place at the same time as others I had chosen, and others were not offered at all that year. Fortunately, the university allows students to drop or take on new courses even after they have already started.

I ended up taking the following courses:

- **LIN201H1** Canadian English
  A study of English spoken in Canada. Topics include: vocabulary items, usage surveys, non-standard dialect enclaves, regional variation and historical development.

- **ITA301H1** History of Italian Literature: Baroque to Contemporary
  This course provides a chronological, comprehensive view of Italian literature and its major authors and trends, in their socio-historical contexts from the Baroque period to the present day.

- **ITA330H1** Alessandro Manzoni and the 19th Century
  Italy’s foremost author’s conscious attempt to write the great representative (“epic”) work of the Risorgimento. This course explores Manzoni’s continuing struggle to find the appropriate language, style, and genre to express his vision of history.

- **ITA340H1** Italian Neorealist Cinema
  The focus of this course is the films of Italian Neorealism, one of the most influential, artistic, and intellectual movements in the history of world cinema. While emphasis will be placed primarily on the work of Roberto Rossellini, Vittorio De Sica, and Luchino Visconti, the course will also offer a detailed discussion of the historical context and of the sociopolitical issues of postwar Italy.
• **ITA363H1**  **Italian Sociolinguistics**  
Starting with a survey of the sociolinguistic situation in Italy before Unification, this course deals with the complex relationship between regional languages and dialects on the one hand and Common Italian on the other. The recent rise of regional variants of Italian and its impact on the dialects are also discussed.

• **ITA380H1**  **The Prose of the World: The Modern Italian Novel and the Realist Tradition**  
This course examines the development of modern Italian novel by taking as its focus the question of the relationship between narrative and the world. The course analyzes some of the major figures of Nineteenth-Century realist tradition such as Manzoni and Verga, as well as the resurgence of realist narrative in the post-World War II period with authors such as Pavese and Calvino.

• **SPA100Y1**  **Spanish for Beginners**  
Introduction to the Spanish language for beginning students; overview of basic grammatical structures, development of vocabulary and oral and written expression.

Being an exchange student is a lot of work. It is not the same as travelling or living in a place. If you want to enjoy the city, experience the culture, make friends, do well in your classes and get some sleep, I suggest you take on a much lower course load than you are used to. Try and make the most out of the little time you have in this foreign country. Do not spend too much time in the library (even though they might be open 24/7 or have beautiful reading rooms with comfortable armchairs next to gorgeous fire places). You have plenty to learn even outside the classroom. (Raccoons, for example, are not cute. They do not like to be petted. Also, they make horrible house guests. I had to learn that the hard way.)

Travelling in Canada completely changes your sense of dimension. A 6 hour drive to Montreal is suddenly a “short distance”, 12 hours to New York are “not too bad”. It takes a while to understand such distances, but after reading that it takes more than 3 and a half days to reach Vancouver by bus you start to realize how big Canada really is. Why take the bus for such distances you ask? Because flying is super expensive.

One thing everyone wanting to do a year abroad in Canada should consider is that it gets cold during winter. Really cold. About a third of the money I had saved up for travelling I spent on thermal clothing, a second pair of boots, and a new coat. During January and February temperatures were often around -20°C Celsius. The humidex made it feel even colder, and the wind made going outside pretty much unbearable, unless you spent about 20 minutes putting on layers and layers of clothing to hide every last bit of skin. (-24°C, feels like -35°C, was not a rarity.) After 44 days of nonstop below zero a day that reaches -3 degrees classifies as “really warm” or “gorgeous”. Also, I cannot recommend using a bike after November until almost April (no kidding, we had snow on April 27). Therefore, if you do not live right next to the university, you have to save up for super expensive (but totally worth it) monthly metro passes.

Staying for 2 semesters can be great; however, it also has one big drawback: Around Christmas all the people who are only staying for 1 semester are leaving. The city will not be the same without them and they are not easily replaceable by the “new guys”. It is a lot more difficult to make new friends once you have been living there for quite a while and have seen most of the not exactly inexpensive sights already. Also, the freezing weather prevents you from doing anything outside.

Finally, living in Toronto and travelling both Canada and the USA during my year abroad drastically improved my knowledge of Anglophone cultures and societies. Even though this was not a class offered by the university, it should definitely be considered part of my studies.

To sum up, my time in Canada was all I hoped for and more. It was an amazing experience during which I met many amazing people. It helped me grow both personally and academically, and I would not want to have missed for the world.