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## A Treasurable Exchange Life in Carnegie Mellon University

CHENG Cong

BENG3-INFE, Yr2

Studying abroad is one of the most unforgettable memories in my university life. To lead a life in a foreign country is both fun and challenging, but in the end all will become your treasures that you can take advantage of in the future.

### My Pre-departure Checklist

You can easily locate lots of useful information on websites both from MEAO and your host university. Go through those documents and you will find yourself well equipped to get started.

Just one point to note, try to connect with alumni/returned students/exchange students in CityU from your host university. Their experience and advice would help you a lot.

### Just Arrived

I stayed at a friend's place for the first couple of days since on-campus residence had not been ready yet. I started to explore the neighborhood which was a nice and livable community and soon knew my way around. The only issue was delay of my luggage which haunted me for quite a while before I worked a way out to solve it. Just be optimistic and face it up.

### Orientation

The orientation of CMU was a one-week long "festival", called Tartan Tale. It is among the top 5 best memories I had in America.



We were split into different teams according to residential houses and engaged in all kinds of group games/competitions/show watching/workshops/briefings.

This was the last night of Orientation in the play fair. I was somewhere in the "M". The whole 2012 cohort assembled into "CMU", and the atmosphere came to the climax of the night.

### My Place

I lived on campus in a boy dorm for freshmen with single room assigned. I found it awkward at the beginning but interesting later on when I got to know more people. The residential area is extremely safe with police car patrolling the campus 24 hours a day without stop in a week.

### My First Class

American classes tend to be more casual and students are encouraged to be as active as possible. Courses are taught at a much faster pace and many professors still prefer chalk and board to PowerPoint. Students are therefore required much note-taking. Also hands-on experience is highly valued. Instead of only delivering theories, many classes involve labs/ projects/case study.



### People I Met

I was lucky to be in an extremely international campus. During the first week I met a dozen of Swiss students! (the first time I made acquaintance with Swiss).

The Americans are very open-minded and fun-loving, as long as you are willing to step out your comfort zone, you can make new friends every day.

### Out of Classroom

CMU offers students with a wide range of clubs and interest groups. There is even an online system which can map you to some groups according to your information. Also at the beginning of every semester, there is an activity fair where clubs set up their booths and try to recruit new members.



One thing you cannot experience outside America is the Greek life, which comprises fraternity and sorority. They are social organizations (which are of academic/philanthropic nature too) which have wide networks covering America with countless prominent alumni. Every one of them is unique and exclusive. I wish I could join one but due to my short period of stay it had not been realized.

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## Money

As mentioned, the luggage delay incurred extra cost for arranging new clothing/bedding/stationaries. Fortunately, I managed to get some compensation from the airline. Furthermore, having an international credit card for emergency is always advised.

For the sake of saving money, I have cooked a lot in the dorm. Indeed, you can enjoy free supply of pizza, burgers, drinks, etc. every day from on-campus events if you want.

## Goodbye

Saying goodbye has always been difficult for me. Many dinners have been arranged with friends before leaving and we promised to visit one another someday. Everyone got sentimental as expected.



## Home Sweet Home

After my return, I decided to take more credits in the following semester as I believed I could manage a heavier workload after an enriching semester. I realized I could have a better control over my own life instead of being manipulated by various tasks which might be of lower priorities. I value my relationships with family and friends much more than before.

Looking back, going to US for exchange is a decision that I would never regret. I got the chance to study in a top-notch university with a group of very talented young minds, know people coming from all over the world, and experience the life in USA.

## Sharing

Think thoroughly what you want from the exchange study at least a semester/year before you set off for the adventure. Be more goal-oriented.

## Overall Rating

My rating: 8 ! (where 5 is the highest rating)

## Building Up My Life Attitude through Exchange in Georg-Simon-Ohm Hochschule Nuremberg

*CHOW Wai Hei*

*BEngECE, Yr3*

### Just Arrived

When I arrived in Nuremberg, my buddy picked me up from the airport to my hostel. My buddy gave me a Nuremberg map and I went to Mexico for a trip. I started to explore this city by myself.

I checked the map, and walked along the streets to the city center. My first impression of Nuremberg was really fresh and comfortable. And the people were really nice. They were willing to guide me the way to the city center, even I could not understand German. During a walk in the city center, I bought a lot of food and drinks in supermarket. In Germany, there is no shop opened on Sunday, including all supermarkets and restaurants!

### Orientation

It has been my first time to enroll in exchange study and met up so many other exchange students from all over the world. During the orientation day, the staff from International Office guided us to fill in some forms, such as arranging the health insurance in Germany. The following schedule of a wide variety of activities as informed to us excited me!!

After the orientation day, I met some foreign students and had lunch together in McDonald's. It was the first picture I took with my friends.

### My Place

I love my residence very much! There are a lot of facilities, fitness room, music room, laundry, printing room, table tennis room, etc. One of the most important facilities in St.Peter is the Spacepub – a pub for every student to drink and gather. It is open on every Thursday night. I never felt lonely in St.Peter, as most of the exchange students were living there. I lived

