

# Student Exchange Questionnaire

**Name:** Remy Morgan

**Massey Degree:** Bachelor of Business Studies (Accounting and Finance Major)

**Host University:** Chapman University

**Semester and year of exchange:** Semester 1 2014

The United States had always been a place that interested me and was somewhere I desperately wanted to visit. When I found out that Massey University offers student exchange programs in the USA I instantly jumped at the chance; not only could I fulfil my dream of travelling to the USA but I could also continue studying towards my degree and experience American College for myself.



When I first arrived I felt like I had stepped into a movie; my host campus, Chapman University, was absolutely beautiful and the facilities certainly exceeded my expectations. As part of my program I stayed on campus in the dorms. My dorm had its own bathroom which I shared with my roommate. I have never lived away from home before nor shared a room but I found that I got along extremely well with my roommate and we ended up being great friends.

One perk of living on campus had to be the resident's dining hall which had multiple food stations offering a wide range of food including a dessert bar; it is safe to say I never went hungry. Another perk was having a resident swimming pool close by which was a great place for students to wind down and relax in the sun.



While I was studying at Chapman (which is a private university), I found the academic environment and teaching methods were very different compared to that at Massey. Firstly, all of my classes were very small (a maximum of 30 students per class) and the teaching was more one-on-one which I found a refreshing change. Each class was personalised and the curriculum was decided by the professor themselves.

Each course had many different components throughout the semester such as quizzes, tests, group projects and presentations with the final exams being only worth around 30% of the final grade for the courses. This was an interesting difference and was a little difficult to adapt to at first as I had to be sure to keep on top of the little things that quickly added up.

The grading system was also different to that of Massey. Overall found the American college environment very competitive but this certainly kept me motivated and working to the best of my efforts

Whilst on exchange I took 2 papers to credit towards my major, 1 core BBS paper, 1 Massey Accounting paper via distance (as you cannot take accounting papers overseas for Massey credit) as well as an additional paper of my choice at Chapman to make up for full time credit. I chose entrepreneurship, something that interested me. I found all of my papers challenging and interesting.

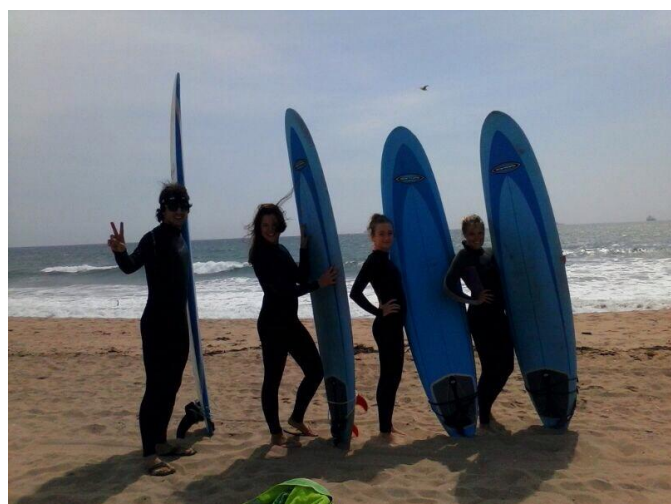
I would recommend for a student to take papers/courses that they will enjoy (and that fit with their degree) on their exchange to further enhance their experience. I

thoroughly enjoyed my classes at Chapman and feel that I have greatly benefitted from a personalised learning environment and an international perspective on the subjects.

As well as being able to enjoy the academics that Chapman had to offer, I was also able to enjoy other activities and events outside of my studies. I was able to participate in various events such as Chapman's Carnival day, a sorority's formal, bowling night and spa night as well as themed events hosted by Chapman's fraternities. Most students were involved in Greek life and I found participating in their hosted events was a great way to meet new people, make great friends and truly get a feel for the American College experience.

During my time in the USA I was also fortunate enough to be able to enjoy many tourist experiences such as Disneyland, hiking on Catalina Island, surfing at Huntington beach as well as visiting San Diego, Malibu, Santa Monica Pier, Hollywood, Laguna Beach and the famous Rodeo Drive.

Before travelling to California, I was unaware of the Spanish/Mexican influence on the southern part of the state. Frequently when I was out and about I would hear the Spanish language and I found many of the products I brought were also labelled in Spanish too. The food was also heavily influenced by the Mexican culture; I found burritos for breakfast, lunch AND dinner are quite a hit over there! I also learnt many other interesting facts about the culture and the USA as a country including politics, geography and the general college culture.



As well as learning about the USA, its culture and enhancing my academic studies, I also learnt a lot on a more personal level. The exchange challenged my perspectives and helped me to grow as a person; I have learnt to be more independent and responsible and have learnt invaluable life skills. Along my journey I have also made some fantastic new friends who I feel have had a very positive influence on my life. While it was very challenging being away from family and close ones for so long, I am extremely glad that I took advantage of this amazing opportunity.



For any student who has even the slightest interest in going on a student exchange my advice is 'just go for it!'. For those who do follow through, make the absolute most of your time overseas and experience everything you possibly can. Be sure to ask questions, talk to people and in turn learn things you never would have imagined.

Massey University will provide you all the support you need before going on exchange. Any time I had even a minor query my

exchange co-ordinator would be more than happy to help me. The host university were also very welcoming and organised a meeting for all the exchange students to help them find their feet; they even organised a shopping trip for us all to buy the things we needed for our dorm rooms when we arrived!

Studying abroad in the USA for a semester was the experience of a lifetime and one I can treasure forever. Not only have I fulfilled my dream of travelling to the USA, I have also made amazing new friends and challenged myself on a personal level all while getting credit towards my degree!