

# Student Exchange Questionnaire

**Name:** Raquel Lopez-Lozano

**Massey Degree:** Bachelor of Food Technology (Food Product Development)

**Host university:** Purdue University

**Semester and year of exchange:** Semester 1, August-December 2017

- **Why did you choose this particular university and/or country for exchange?**  
I researched the options that were available for me and I loved the look of the campus, student life and location.
- **Did it meet your expectations?**  
Purdue University is in the Midwest of USA in a little town called West Lafayette. I really enjoyed studying and making friends at the university. I was able to make good connections with the staff and it was awesome to study my degree in a different way.
- **What courses did you study while on exchange? Would you recommend them?**  
I took courses which were compulsory to my degree. I would recommend them all as they were well taught and all the students in my class were either in Food Science or Engineering.
- **Were there differences in the teaching methods and academic environment at your host university, compared to Massey University? If so, what kind of differences?**  
The semester was quite similar to that of Massey. The exception was that there was no two-week break in the middle of the semester and no study week. The courses were structured so that every week there would be homework to hand in, participation was counted in class and there would be a couple of midterms held throughout the semester. There were finals also to sit at the end of the semester. The labs for my classes were also optional, if you didn't need the credits, you didn't need to take it. I had nearly all my classes in the Nelson Hall of Food Science Building which was handy!
- **Did you stay on-campus or off-campus? What was the accommodation like?**  
I stayed in a rented house off-campus, about 10 minutes away from Purdue. Most of the students stay in houses on campus or in dorms.
- **How did living expenses compare to in New Zealand?**  
Food, petrol, travel and shopping in USA is cheap but electricity and water was expensive.
- **Which extra-curricular activities did you participate in at the host university?**  
While I was there, I went to a couple of sessions with the Universities judo club and went for a few runs with the running club. I also joined the Food Science Club which was a great way to make friends.
- **What's one thing you learnt about your host country or culture?**

That often Americans are portrayed in the news in a very sensationalistic and negative way, but while I was living there I found that the people are a lot more trusting, friendlier and extremely helpful even if they don't know you. College in USA is very fun and exciting, school spirit is very powerful across campus and I loved joining in!

- **What were some of the highlights of your exchange experience?**

I was able to travel quite a bit and see the sights, for example I went to NYC, Washington DC, Toronto, Chicago and many others.

- **What did you find challenging?**

I found adjusting to the weather as the Midwest has extreme heat and extreme cold. In terms of academia, students at Purdue are used to working extremely hard and they are used to the workload given in the classes.

- **What do you feel you have learnt or gained from going on exchange?**

I have learnt to work hard, adjust to the academic environment and I have gained a lot of self-confidence.

- **Do you have any tips for future students intending to travel to the same country or university?**

Be prepared to work hard! The whole semester was hard work, with no semester break in the middle, so it is important to stay organised and focussed during the entire time. If you are able to take an elective to complete the 15 credits, ask your advisor and see if you can take a class that would normally not be available to you. Purdue offers many fun classes!

- **Do you have any comments on the support provided to you by Massey University and/or by the host university before/during/after your exchange?**

Massey was able to provide me with 2 grants that were very useful in helping me survive the semester. They were also very helpful in replying to my emails and giving me advice.