

My Experience... so far.

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The students from University of Guanajuato that get involved in Exchange programs usually choose France or USA as destination, because these are popular fancy places. Also, they tend to choose Spain, countries of Latin America or states of Mexico because of the language barrier. I chose Canada due to certain troubles with the exchange program’s application deadlines and because, of course, it has always seemed to me a beautiful country. And I regret nothing about it: my experience so far has been excellent! Of course, I have been struggling with the language: I thought that my English level was good but it is really difficult to understand the different accents of Canadian people (there are a lot of immigrants, so they speak different compared to American English, Canadian English and British English). This was a big issue, but it was rarely present in classes, because commonly all my teachers spoke English really clear.



1 Mount Royal University on Calgary, AB, Canada.

I also have been struggling with the weather: there were a few days with a temperature of -30.0°C ! But it was a problem only when I was on the streets, inside the University's buildings the temperature is always nice.



2 Who doesn't want snow?? I initially didn't, because it was snowing during the first week of September!?!?!

Canada is such a beautiful country. And near Calgary, it is located Banff's National Park on the Rocky Mountains, such a beautiful place!! There I saw some of the most beautiful landscapes of all the world!



3 There are a lot of beautiful places like this one on the Rocky Mountains. Peyto Lake, AB, Canada.

But Canada is not only nature. So far during my exchange I have only been in Calgary and it is a small metropolis, but there are a lot of bigger cities like Vancouver, Toronto and Montréal (I visited the last two before my exchange and they are fantastic). There are a lot of interesting activities in Calgary, as ice skating (I suck at ice skating!!! Hahaha), shopping, visiting museums, practicing winter sports (in Calgary's Olympic Park!!!), bowling, golfing or playing Lasertag (similar to paintball but with lasers!!!). Also, Canadian Society is really different to ours. Generally all the people is very polite, mostly all the places are always clean.



4 Calgary is like a small metropolis, but it is really cool!!

But, of course, participating in an exchange program is not about visiting foreign and cool places. The academy experience is what matters. So far, I have discovered a lot of things that have changed my perception about Chemistry and Biology, especially on how Science's labs work. Here, on some courses, they have methods for teaching on labs that are completely different to ours. Honestly, I would like to participate again in an exchange program, it is a wonderful experience.

But, probably for the next time, I'll consider the following ideas (you can take them as suggestions, if you want to participate in an exchange program):

1. Practice a lot foreign languages or you will struggling. You will never have enough knowledge about certain foreign language so always try to improve it.
2. Do not take a lot of courses (and do not try to validate all of them with courses from your degree's curriculum), this could be overwhelming for you (and it is also a serious compromise). Do not saturate your time with courses because it will not allow you to enjoy your stay abroad: I had like 22 hours per week and I kinda regret about it, remember that it's not the same as taking courses on Spanish.
3. Enjoy your stay abroad, this is a once in a "lifetime" experience! And remember, procrastination is not a good policy, while I was writing this text, I was also trying to "save the semester" (hahaha).