

### **Singapore Management University**

The reason I choose Singapore for an exchange, despite a very close distance between that city-state and Thailand, is because I want to practice speaking both English and Mandarin. The other reason is that it would be easier for me to keep the relationship between me and Singaporean friend because of the proximity advantage.



#### **How to survive in the first week**

Surviving the first week in a new country is an exciting experience and important step. The best way to handle your first week is to plan as many things as possible when you are in your home. Since when you take your first step out of the airplane door, the problem may immediately challenge you without making any sign. The things that you can prepare include studying the route between the airport and your accommodation. In Singapore, knowing the name of the nearest metro station to your accommodation is highly recommended. For me, having a comfortable accommodation is considered the most important element in my first week since your body would need a good rest and refreshment for the brain to function normally.

#### **How to prepare studying**

It is essential to know what you're going to learn in the module that you attain. The best way to collect all these information is to read the course description carefully since most of the necessary tips and suggestion would be provided there. Asking your buddy about the atmosphere of the class and the teaching style of the professor is also another choice. In some module, the text may be required, the best way to get textbook is buying from second hand store, website or student since most of the first hand textbook would be quite expensive. For Singapore, "Book in, book out" website is highly recommended which see high turnout for SMU student active in the website.

## **Lifestyle**

Singapore is a city-state which has an area a bit larger than Phuket Island, and with the population of just over 5 million, the country is considered extremely small. Due to this fact, every Singaporean, regardless of their age, gender, race and religion, has fallen into a very competitive atmosphere. This forces Singaporean to study and work harder than the average human. However, coin has two sides, since Singaporean also love to go hangout. For example, the most obvious characteristic of every Singaporean is eat. Yes, every Singaporean love to eat as you would see that nearly every corner of the island would have hawker center (Food center). In conclusion, I would say that Singaporean lifestyle is work hard, play hard.

## **Activities**

SMU provides ample activities for every student. Activities vary from culture to academics. Exchange students wouldn't face any problem in finding the activities that suit them. However, some exchange student may choose some certain activities in order to serve their other purpose. For example, Thai exchange student may choose to attain Muay Thai club. This is because some of Singaporean who participates in that club would already be Thailand admirer. So when these people know that you are from Thailand, they may want and willing to be friend with you. So it would be a good place to find a local friend.

## My Experience at SMU

I was dreaming of study abroad for long and once I have chance to went to Singapore as an exchange student in Singapore Management University (SMU), I want to share this good experience that could be used as guide for those who want to be exchange students in Singapore.

### How to survive in the first week

The authority of Singapore requires exchange students to go to Singapore about a week before the semester actually begins in order to process student's card. This also give an opportunity to do the EZ Link card, a universal card for paying the MRT ride, Bus ride, printing and copying in the university. And in this given period, you should be able to learn the map of Singapore at least how to travel to the university from our dormitory. Singapore is well organized city when you have a closer look of how buildings are organized and showed on the map, travelling in Singapore will be very easy.



*Singapore City Model*



*A View of Singapore from the Marina Barrage*

## How to prepare for studying

As SMU students, or to be said as students in Singapore because it is all the same for the whole country, we need to read and make preparation before the class! Why? Because professors would assume that their students already learned the basic before class and they would utilize their limited time of teaching for anything more practical such as providing the example, and giving out case study and group projects. Therefore, when you are there, make sure that you schedule your time well because you have to do many things in one day, e.g. preparing for next class, doing group projects, and of course have fun travelling!

## University life



*My Group Project Members*

Students in Singapore are friendly and well prepared. When there is an upcoming project, they would rather start doing it right away than keep it up until deadline. They are taught to be hard-working and fair which allow them to be able to organize the job into separate parts for members in the team to do and finish job in short time with very nice quality.

Singapore not only has outstanding student but also experience professors. The teacher there is able to give clear example and good advice in practical work. And the most important thing is they are very kind, if we have question we are free to ask them after class or any other arranged time. And what impress me most is that one of the professors allows me to borrow the textbook since I do not have one.

## What should you do in the classroom?

Pay attention to the class, use your laptop for more research, and raise your hand when you want to give out good opinion or answer professor questions. SMU values students by their interaction. The classes weight score for class discussion at least 20%. And that portion is too much to be ignored.

## Activities in SMU

Along with studying, SMU always arrange seminars which invited experienced speakers throughout the semester. They would let student know these opportunities by e-mail them the detail of seminar with a link of application if ones would like to attend.



## Singapore and its people

Singapore is so neat and tidy thanks to its people who follow the rule and respect others. Everyone there has strict discipline and the most basic one is negligent. No one drop the garbage down the road, cut the line while queuing for buying things, run a red light which all together make their country a lot nicer to live in.

Singapore is diverse country with many cultures. And each culture has its own way of doing thing; the most obvious thing is food. Foods in Singapore are Chinese and Indian food. The Chinese food taste is quite plain but they are healthy.



*Singaporean Dessert*

## Attraction Places in Singapore

The attractions that got my interest are zoos. Singapore has only four zoos: Singapore Zoo, River Safari, Night Safari and Jurong Bird Park. However, these zoos have diverse type of animals and this is why it worth to give a visit to all of them and I recommend to get all 4 tickets at once since there will be some discount.

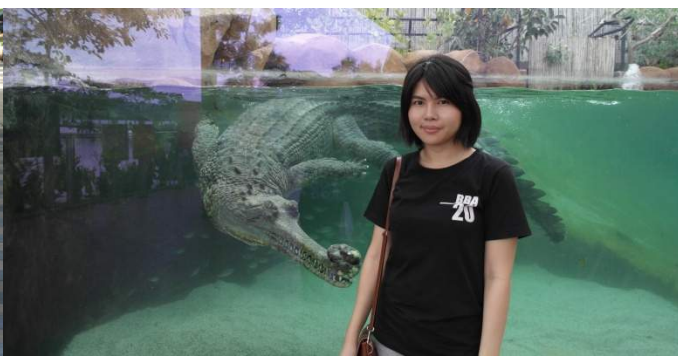
Not only zoos that are nice, but Singapore also has many department stores and other shopping place, the most famous one is called Orchard road which is high-end brand shops located along the road, and Marina bay sand, the department store which located along the beach. Furthermore, there is an artificial island that mainly built for touring purpose which is called Sentosa. In Sentosa there is Universal, an amusement park, and other interesting attractions.

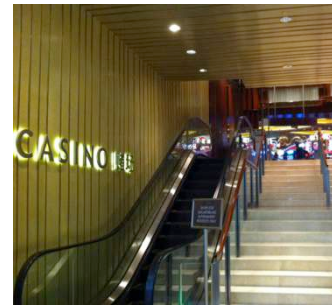


*Merlion*

I have such a wonderful time in Singapore and this exchange trip will be my unforgettable memory.

*Kultida Bhumina (BaiMint) BBA#20*





After landing at one of the best airports in the world, Changi Airport, my life as an exchange student started in Singapore, a small island not far from my home country, Thailand.

How to survive in the first week?

The first week was not as rough as I had anticipated. My roommate, Miss Kultida and I had prepared the basic groundwork in terms of accommodations and student pass (permission by the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority of Singapore [ICA]) before we came to Singapore. This made our start smoother. We arrived by cab from the airport and were welcomed by the owner of our accommodation, Mr. Andy Chang.

Even though our new home was very far from the school, I was relieved that the rental fee was not as high as those in downtown and he also allowed us to use WIFI, do light cooking and laundry without additional charge. After we settled down, we explored our surroundings and bought an EZ link card then took the subway to Singapore Management University (SMU).

On Friday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, I attended the orientation held by SMU and learnt more about SMU and Singapore, as well as, receiving many tips of the do's and don'ts to survive while living in a land of fines.



Our class began on the first Monday of January. During the first 2 weeks, SMU students could register for more modules (courses) or withdraw any registered ones via a bidding system called BOSS, by using a given amount of e\$ to bid. I was confused by the system at first, but my buddy helped me understand it. This bidding competition was a completely new experience for me.



In the first week of class, I met my host from the SMU host program. He had just graduated from SMU in the previous year, and he gave me a lot of good advice about modules and good places to relax. In my opinion, the host program was a good opportunity for me to become friends with more people from many corners of the world.

The next day, I enjoyed the half-day city tour arranged by SMU, which finished with a great welcome lunch at an Indian cuisine restaurant. Due to the adequate preparations I had made and help from my Thai and Singaporean friends, my first week in my new surroundings went very satisfactorily and with no trauma.



## How to prepare for studying?

Before every class, there were reading assignments of articles uploaded online, and from textbooks. Reading before classes would make lectures easier to follow and also allow for better participation in class. The latter was important as it accounted for a significant portion of our overall grade. Students also needed to revise often because there were scheduled and also pop quizzes from time to time.

Teaching assistants (TAs) were also available if students had difficulties in any lessons and professors were unavailable. These were called TA sessions, and involved scheduled time for consultation.



I usually attended TA session to do with Analysis of derivative securities module. Miss Lisa Goh Li Wei, TA, was very understanding, patient and always willing to help me throughout the semester. I truly appreciated her constant devotion and concerns.

## Lifestyles of Singaporeans

What makes Singapore the best place for education? My opinion is that their education system is competitive in a constructive and positive way. During classes I observed an enthusiastic sense of competition for points in class, creative discussion and an openness to share one's idea. This competitive spirit was mainly found in the field of work and study. Beyond the school or workplace, I found Singaporeans to be energetic, efficient, kind, helpful, orderly and friendly to tourists and the exchange students.





## Activities

What I loved to do when I had time off from school in Singapore was searching for good and yummy foods. I bet most Singaporeans loved it too! I enjoyed tasting new dishes that I have never tasted in my life. Sometimes, I went out for a drink with friends. On Wednesdays, I joined the SMU Archery Club. When holidays came, it was a time for parks, gardens, zoos, aquariums, beaches and museums.



One special holiday for me happened when my high school friends came from Thailand to visit me. We spent a day in Sentosa Island and had great fun in Universal Studio Singapore. It was such a memorable time and a real novelty to have my close Thai friends visit me and share new experiences in a different environment from home.

Besides travelling in Singapore, my roommate and I also visited Johor Bahru and Kuala Lumpur (in Malaysia) during the semester before we returned back to our hometown.



So, I could say that the exchange semester I have spent was a big momentous in my life. Though it has ended, the memories and experiences will stay with me for a long time.

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