

Vienna University of Economics and Business

WU has a very different school schedule. Many of the classes offered only last either 1 week, 1 weekend, 4 weeks or half of the semester, giving students studying here the opportunity to travel a lot more. Only a select few classes last the whole semester. All my classes have more Austrian students than exchange students, giving me a chance to meet more local students. My 4 courses are: International Strategic Management 1 and 2, TOPSIM Simulation and Introduction to Supply Chain Management. My TOPSIM class lasted around 18 hours, split between 2 days on a weekend in March, where a virtual competition was held between teams. Evaluations consist of individual and group reports, selection of strategies during the simulation, class participation and finally a group presentation after the simulation. My International Strategic Management 1 course is a class held 5 hours a week, for 4 weeks. Evaluations consist of quizzes, class participation, group project and presentation and a final exam. This class is held in the month of March. Here is a short description of the class: introduces the basics of strategic management. Students will get an understanding of why a solid strategy is essential to survive in today's fast-paced business environment. Building on a solid understanding of the key issues of strategic management the course further explores tools and concepts of external and internal strategic analysis. My Introduction to Supply Chain Management course is held 5 hours a week, split equally between 2 classes a week, for 4 weeks. Evaluations consist of individual homeworks, class participation, group report and presentation, and a final exam. This class is held in the month of March. My last class, International Strategic Management 2, will begin at the end of May and end in the middle of June. Class is held once a week, 5 hours per class, for 4 weeks. Like International Strategic Management 1, the evaluations consist of quizzes, class participation, group project and presentation and a final exam. Here is a short description of the class: introduces the basics of strategic management and strategic analysis. The focus of the course, however, lies on strategy formulation. In this regard, the key areas of business as well as corporate strategy are covered. The course further explores the tools and concepts of diversification, vertical integration, acquisitions, alliances, networks, and global strategy. Eventually, the important area of strategy implementation is discussed.

This year, the summer semester at WU is from March 6th to July 9th, although depending on your schedule, your start and end dates can change. We have an Easter break lasting 3 weeks from April 10th to April 30th, giving exchange students the opportunity to travel during this period. In my case, I do not have class until May 23rd, giving me 6 weeks to travel in the middle of my exchange. We also have another holiday on June 4th and 5th. WU will send students going there on exchange their acceptance letter at the start of the month of November. From the moment you receive your acceptance letter, you have until November 15th to sign up for school housing. OeAD, the company responsible of school housing, is very slow reading applications and will confirm a room last minute. Registration for classes will begin on January 24th. It is extremely important to sign up for courses the second the application begins, as classes fill up within seconds. It is very difficult to obtain the courses you wished taking. WU offers 2 pre-semester programs: An Orientation and Cultural program from February 8th to March 3rd, and German Language course from February 13th to March 2nd. I did not partake in any of these programs, and I do not regret it. Many of my friends did, and they told me one of the only positives is to learn basic German words, as well as making great friends. Instead of taking part of these programs, I took the time to travel around Europe before the semester started. Students who did not take part of these programs must be in Vienna by March 1st to attend information and enrollment sessions. Exams can be anytime during the semester; most of my exams are 1 week after the end of class.

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Upon arrival, there are many little procedures you must follow. First, you must obtain a letter indicating residence in Vienna. Bringing this letter and your proof of enrolment at WU, you will obtain a letter validating your Student Visa. With this letter, you will go to the metro station to obtain your metro pass for the semester at a discount price. This might seem complicated, but it is very easy. The international office will send multiple emails to let you know how to obtain them. Also, I signed up for a buddy; the school assigned me someone studying at WU from Vienna. My buddy helped me obtain all these documents which was very much appreciated. The International Office will offer support and will answer questions. Our school holds social events such as parties on the weekend, but most of our social events are held by EBN, the Erasmus Buddy Network. They hold many trips around Europe, as well as events every Monday and Friday nights, which are great opportunities to meet the other exchange students.

Flights from Ottawa to Vienna are more expensive than flights to and from neighbouring cities such as Munich and Montreal. My direct return flight cost 850\$ from Montreal to Munich, and it only took me 4 hours to get from Munich to Vienna by bus. Depending on which residence you decide to live in, it can cost you around 650\$ to 800\$ per month. I only got my residence for 4 months from March to June. If you were to partake in the pre-semester programs, then you would need to factor in 1 more month of rent. Meals prices are comparable to meals in Ottawa, but travelling is much cheaper. You can get a flight across Europe for 100\$, or a 5 hours bus for 20\$. I did not have to buy school books since I rented them at the library or found an electronic version online. Like mentioned earlier, a metro pass will be obtained at the price of 75 euros for the whole exchange semester. This saves students a lot of money since a one-way ticket is 2.2 euros. To travel to far away cities, I highly recommend taking a 4-euro bus to Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, since flights are much cheaper than Vienna.

Before arrival in Vienna, you must first sign up as a student at WU. To do so, the International Exchange Office at uOttawa will send you the necessary information to login and create your profile. There is no deadline to apply for your visa, but it should be done well in advance your flight to Europe. My visa only took 3 days to obtain, but it can take up to 2 weeks. To obtain the student visa (D), you will need a valid passport (issued within the last 10 years and valid for 3 months after leaving the Schengen area with at least 2 empty pages), a valid permanent resident card (if applicable), the application form, one passport size picture, a copy of the passport's data page, a copy of your Canadian visa or resident card (if applicable), proof of flight reservation (not necessary), proof of travel health insurance, proof of housing in Vienna (it will be provided in your contract from your residence), the acceptance letter from WU, proof of enrolment from the University of Ottawa, your birth certificate, a criminal record check, proof of sufficient funds to cover the costs of the trip, a prepaid Xpresspost envelope (you can instead go back to embassy in Ottawa to pick up the visa) and 160\$ for the visa application fee (varies from year to year). As mentioned earlier, the registration for course is on January 24th (may vary from year to year) and it is highly recommended to sign up for the courses as soon as the online registration opens. The International Office at WU will send you many reminders and information regarding courses available at WU. If you decide to stay in the OeAD residence, you will need to send a deposit of around 1000 euros, which will be returned to you upon termination of your contract and stay in Vienna. There aren't many other options and I do not recommend renting out an apartment or

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staying in a hostel as almost all students decide to stay with OeAD, the easiest way to meet other students.

There are over 5 residences to choose from in Vienna; the 2 best ones are Molkereistrasse and Gassgasse. Molkereistrasse is the residence near the WU campus, and most students stay at this residence. Gassgasse is the residence on the west side of the city, further away from campus but easily reachable by metro. Also, most bars and clubs are closer to Gassgasse. If I were to choose over again a residence to stay in, I would choose Gassgasse instead of Molkereistrasse. My address in Vienna is Molkereistrasse 1, 1010, Wien, Austria. My residence has 6 floors consisted of exchange students. I have 4 roommates which we all share a kitchen and washroom. One can also choose to decide to live with no roommates, or with 2 roommates. My room is fully furnished and I also received my own cooking equipment. The residence only has 2 stove tops and a microwave to prepare the food. Our residence also has a laundry room which you can use for 2.5 euros, as well as a large party room. Every student has a mail box, where you can receive letters from your family back home. The residence is very safe, always requiring a key or the passcode to enter the building. A cleaning lady comes every Monday to clean the washroom, and every second Monday to quickly vacuum your room.

I've only been in Vienna for a month now, but this experience has been one of a kind. Vienna is a very nice and safe city to live in, and everyone is so friendly. In total, we are 400 exchange students at WU and I have made some great friendships with people from different backgrounds. Every weekend is a new adventure to a different country, with different people. One of the downsides of studying at WU is the fact that we have so many breaks from school and such different schedules. Many people are taking this time off to travel around Europe instead of embracing the Viennese culture and taking the time to meet other exchange students. But overall, I highly recommend thinking about going on exchange at WU in Vienna.