

Exchange Semester Fall 2018

EDHEC Business School

Nice, France



Program of Study

I am specializing in finance at the University of Ottawa, but at EDHEC I took classes in the minor of entrepreneurship, as well as 3 courses from the common business courses. I had to take 6 courses at EDHEC in order for the credits to count as 5 university credits.

Throughout the semester, your weekly schedule will never be identical. You will need to check your timetable daily as they can change your schedule up to 24 hours before the course. It was recommended that we check it daily to make sure we don't miss class, however only a couple times did the courses alter from the initial schedule. You also have to sign in to every class with your student card, and you are only allowed 2 unexcused absences per class (for classes with 30 hours of lecture time).

The classes are very small compared to uOttawa class sizes. For the courses in the minor of entrepreneurship (numbers 4-6 below), the classes had no more than 11 people in them. The other 3 courses had more people, but were still under 40 students per course.

Below is a list of all 6 courses I took including a description of the course, deliverables, and hours of class.

1. European Business Law: Laws in the European Union, as well as comparisons in laws between France, other EU countries, and countries not apart of the EU.
 - 70% written final exam
 - 30% group assignment
 - 30 hours of class

2. Contemporary French Business and Society: You will learn about French companies and general business conduct in France. Also, you will learn more about the history of France, as well as Nice, touching on social aspects of French life.
 - 2 group presentations worth 25% each (one on a French company, one on a French article)
 - 50% written final exam
 - 30 hours of class

3. Project Management
 - Courses started in the middle of November
 - 30 hours of class
 - Final exam

4. Building and Leading the Venture Team (HRM): HR practices in companies, with a focus on SMEs.
 - 60% individual essay
 - 40% group report
 - No final exam
 - 30 hours of class

5. SME Marketing and Growth Strategies: The course explores how marketing and entrepreneurship affect and are affected by one another: the role of marketing in entrepreneurial ventures, and the role of entrepreneurship in marketing efforts of all firms.
 - 30 hours of class
 - Small presentation every class with a partner, always graded
 - Saturday morning class
 - No final exam, marked 25% for participation, 25% individual report, 50% group report (create a business idea and further it throughout the semester with a partner)

6. SME Finance – Business and Revenue Model Design: You will learn how to read and understand financial statements of a company, with a focus on small companies.
 - Participation 20%, collective work 40%, final individual exam 40%
 - Group project on analyzing the financial documents and background of an SME
 - Some Saturday morning classes

Dates to Remember

Orientation started on Wednesday August 29 and lasted until Friday the 31. The first day is a general introduction to the school. The second day is a practical fair where there are representatives from banks and the transportation system there to help you set up appointments. Here you will need to bring your OFII form (along with several other forms outlined in the orientation package you will be sent a month before you arrive) and students from EDHEC will help you fill it out. The school will send it away, but you will get it back in the mail in a few weeks. The final day is an integration game where you are put into groups with other exchange students from both the BBA program and the Masters program. They told us we might have classes during these days, but that was not the case as classes start the following week. It is also not uncommon that you might not have many classes in the first week, so don't be surprised if your schedule looks empty. Also to note, there is no reading week.

Lastly, I was told the last day for classes/exams was the 21 of December and therefore booked my ticket home for the 23rd. However, when I got here they told me the last day was the 18th of December. Make sure you confirm when the last day is, or else you might end up changing your ticket like I did which costs \$300.

Procedures to Follow Upon Arrival

Through the school, you can request to have someone meet you at the airport and bring you to your residence. I did this and it was less stressful than trying to find my own way there.

Once orientation starts, as mentioned above, you will be able to begin setting up a bank account, getting a bus pass, and starting the process to receive the housing credit (CAF). For the bank

account, you will receive an email from your advisor to set up an appointment to open the account. The whole process took me a couple weeks to have full access to my account.

To begin the process to receive the housing credit (CAF), you will have to register online. EDHEC will provide the website to sign up. You will have to put in personal information, such as address, RIB for your French bank, and your income from 2016. Keep in mind you can only receive this credit if you have a French bank account. If you don't want to receive this credit, then it might not be worth it to open an account. The CAF process will also require your landlords to fill out a form (that you will get at the orientation days), a copy of your passport with the stamp when you entered the EU, a copy of your validated visa, attestation from EDHEC that you are an exchange student, the OFII form that you will get back in the mail, and a copy of the lease. You can mail these documents, or bring them directly to the office which is located in the city centre. You will not get the credit for the first month. For example, I arrived in late August and the application starts in September. I had to have my application in before October 1st in order to qualify to receive the benefit for the month of October. I received 171 euros a month for October, November, and December.

The school will email you in the middle of September with a date that you are to have your visa validated and the location of the office. For this appointment, you need to bring your passport and 60 euros of fiscal stamps. EDHEC will tell you that you can buy them online, or from a shop near the school. However, do not buy it from the shop as the immigration office will not accept them. I did this and I had to re-buy the stamps online and am still waiting for my reimbursement for the incorrect stamps. Buy the stamps online by following the link the school gives you and you will have no issues.

In addition, to get a French phone plan, I was told by several companies I needed a French bank account first in order to sign up for a plan. Knowing that the bank account wouldn't be open for several weeks, I went with the company Free Mobile which doesn't require you to have a French account. There is a Free Mobile store in the Cap3000 mall located not far from the school, or you can go to a Free Mobile kiosk that are located in convenience stores in Nice (you can look up on Free Mobile's site where the closest one to you is). The kiosks are only in French, but I was able to figure it out and get the correct plan. You pay 10 euros for the SIM card, and then 8,99 euros a month. It's an amazing deal as you get 60GB of data a month for this price! You can use your data in several (if not all) European countries, which was a lifeline when travelling. You can check on the website before you travel.

Lastly, you will need to sign up for French health insurance, even though you already have insurance. This was free to do, and I was told it was mandatory to sign up. You will get an email from the school with the link to the website to sign up.

In terms of social activities, you will be able to join a Facebook group where you will see events posted by the student office. These events are usually at a bar in the Old Town or on the beach. Therefore, you can join the events and meet other international students. There will also be events at the school where you can taste traditional French food/wine.

Budget

- Return Plane ticket from Ottawa to Nice= \$1,200 (you can get for cheaper if you watch for seat sales) + \$300 to change my flight home
- Housing: 691 euros a month (for a single room in a brand new student residence)
 - I received 171 euros a month (October-December) through CAF
- Textbooks: no textbooks were required for the courses I took
- Food: about 80 euros a month
- Phone Plan: 10 euros for SIM card, 8,99 euros a month
- Bus Pass: 22 euros a month
- Train Pass: 15 euros a year (this pass allows you to ride from the city centre to school, and gives you 50% discounts on TER train tickets elsewhere, such as trips to Monaco, Cannes, Antibes, Marseille).
- Travel costs around Europe: \$3500 (including hotels, plane tickets, train tickets, food while travelling, souvenirs)
 - I travelled to 5 countries, as well as around the south of France. When going to other countries, I always went by plane, and I usually stayed in decent hotels (a hostel once). Some countries are more expensive than the other so it depends on where you are travelling. You may also take the train instead of flying, or stay in cheaper accommodation which will change the price.

Application Procedures Before Your Arrival

Course Registration:

There are general business courses, and then courses organized into 3 minors: finance, marketing, and entrepreneurship. If you choose to take a course from a minor, you must take all 3 in that minor. I didn't find that there was much choice, as many of the courses were too similar to those I had already or will take at uOttawa, therefore the 6 courses I chose were the only 6 I could take.

Visa:

Below is a list of documents you need to bring to your visa appointment:

- Health insurance for entire exchange duration
- 2 passport photos
- Copy of back and front of uOttawa student card
- Copy of passport
- OFII form printed and top portion filled out (you can print it off the website where you make your appointment)
- Appointment confirmation
- Receipt of payment
- Letters from both uOttawa and EDHEC stating you are accepted for the exchange program

I went for my visa appointment in the middle of June, and I was leaving for exchange at the end of August. I wanted to be sure that I had it in time so I went as early as possible. I heard that it could take a long time to receive your visa, however I got mine within 2 weeks of my initial

appointment. You will have to leave your passport with the consulate and you will receive it in the mail once your visa goes through. With your visa, you will also receive the OFII form back. You need to bring this with you on exchange and on the 2nd day of orientation, someone at the university will help you fill out the rest. I had to go to Toronto for my appointment, but I believe there are other locations and I know last summer they opened an Ottawa office for a couple months. You will be able to pick the location when you are making your appointment.

Housing:

EDHEC will grant you access to a housing portal, and it is important to act quickly! A lot of the places shown are owned by a third party, therefore you have to contact them directly. You will have to fill out a sheet stating your top 3 choices of residence and send it to the school. I suggest you do it as soon as you receive the email, as the EDHEC student office takes a while to respond and housing is a time sensitive issue. If you decide to stay in accommodation run by a third party, you will then communicate directly with them. Also make sure you get housing insurance before your arrival (you may be covered under your parents)!

Other Comments/Recommendations

I found the language barrier to be a challenge when dealing with administrative matters (ex: phone plan, bank account, talking to landlords, validating visa). I know a bit of French and I was able to get by fine on a daily basis. I only ran into problems when doing the listed activities above. However, I was able to manage, but be prepared if you don't speak French that you might run into a few language challenges throughout your exchange.

Lastly, with the strict attendance policy and varying class schedules, it was hard to find someone to travel with. Some trips I went alone because the way my classes were, I had 5-day weekends several times throughout the semester. But don't let that deter you because going alone is better than not going at all!

Documents to bring with you on exchange:

- Several copies of passport and visa
- Copies of birth certificate and actual birth certificate (note that if your birth certificate isn't in french you need to have it translated; Canadian birth certificates are okay as they are in both official languages of Canada)
- Several copies of health insurance
- Copies of attestation letters from both uOttawa and EDHEC

My Overall Experience

Being in the finance specialization, exchange was not a mandatory requirement for me. I wanted to take this opportunity to do something I would never have the chance to do, and can honestly say it was the most exciting 4 months of my entire university career. I enjoyed meeting new friends from all over the world, and had an amazing time traveling around Europe!



Old Town, Nice



Garibaldi Square, Nice



Promenade des Anglais, Nice