

## UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (UBC)

Dear prospective TRANSFOR-M students

My congratulations if you are accepted for the TRANSFOR-M program. You can expect an exciting year abroad and great field trips to Canada and Europe covering both forestry and culture. The University of British Columbia is superlative in many respects and Vancouver is a multifaceted place—less than 50 percent of the cities' residents speak English at home and have their origin around the globe.

In what follows I am writing some information you may consider to be valuable for your stay:

1. Preparation: you will need quite a bit of time for the application process and study visas (at least two months): before I arrived in Vancouver, I paid about CAD \$5.000 for application, fees, flight, field course, English translations and certificates.
2. Academics: studying at UBC is much more intense and time consuming than you might be used to at home—depending on the course you take. As TRANSFOR-M student, you are allowed to apply for courses offered from all faculties on campus. This is a really good opportunity to enhance your academics. It is your responsibility to organize all academics and you may run into difficulties, if you don't. However, all people you talk to—professors and staff—are very pleased to help you in any respect. It is recommended to take 5 courses per term to equally distribute your workload.
3. Support/help: UBC and the Faculty of Forestry are perfectly organized and have facilities for all kinds of matters—academics, private, career. The staff in the Faculty is open to any questions you may have. In addition to your courses, I would recommend the *Academic English Support Program*. You can discuss with qualified English teachers how to improve your language proficiencies and go through your written assignments. Moreover, AES is frequently organizing social events on and off campus.
4. Leisure: the location is superlative in terms of campus, the city, and nature due to the ocean and mountains. Furthermore, UBC has numerous recreational facilities and offers any form of sports on campus. I joined running events, went swimming, and played soccer. As a student at UBC you get a Translink bus pass that takes you to all places in and around Vancouver in a 1.5h drive away from campus.
5. Expenses: the costs in Canada are higher than in Europe, which is true for housing, nourishment, and leisure: a single room on campus (25m<sup>2</sup>) is about

CAD \$1,000 per month and is likely a 5-minute-walk away from the ocean. However, you can find far cheaper options in town. There are also opportunities to work on campus to earn some bucks in addition. If you hesitate to apply for the TRANSFOR-M program because of the expected costs: bear in mind that education in Canada is expensive for average students: non-domestic students pay CAD \$100,000 to UBC for a bachelor's degree—housing and living not included. As a TRANSFOR-M student, you get the fees waived.

There is no doubt that I would apply for this great program again: I profited immensely—personally and academically. It has been the most dense and intense time of my life! You can look forward to an “awesome” year. Don't hesitate to get in touch with me if you had any questions. I am happy to provide you with some extra information.

All the best

Christoph



Photo: UBC 2014