

My year at UNB in Fredericton

By Silke Christina Plass (chrissipl@aol.com)

I was offered the chance to study in my favorite country Canada through the Albert Ludwigs-University in Freiburg. I finished my Bachelor degree in Geography in Mainz (June 2013) and started my one-year journey to Canada already one month later. My host-university was the University of New Brunswick in the charming, little city of Fredericton where I studied "Environmental Management".

UNB offered many courses which I found very interesting. I learned a lot about Canada and was able to compare practices (forest services, management, planning) to my home country. Classes were exhausting, yes, but I learned so much and I actually wanted to learn and revise everything as it was simply exciting and new to me. Group work, projects and presentations made it easy to get connected to other students. One thing I immediately realized and appreciated: The openness and niceness of fellow Canadians. They welcomed you with such heartiness and you became part of the group easily. It was just amazing and I felt very comfortable and happy around most of the students. What I also appreciated a lot was the more personal relationship the students have with their professors. You do not see that very often in Germany in my eyes and the personal note is what I enjoyed a lot at UNB. Professors were glad to help and support the students if questions arose or individuals struggled. Even with a very strict syllabus and timeline your class felt a little bit like a family.

One of my favorite parts during my time in Canada was the internship. I was allowed to work with The Nature Trust of New Brunswick in Downtown Fredericton. I worked with amazing people in a wonderful organization where we went onto small field-trips, worked with locals, prepared events and so much more. I was able to bring in my background and it was just so much fun to support them for the couple of weeks. I would love to go back there one day.

If you love winter and snow I can definitely recommend New Brunswick. We had an insane winter last year with up to 100cm of snow, but hearing from my fellow Canadian friends – it is a pretty winter wonderland again this year. Last year it snowed from around October and the snow did not completely melt until Mid-May. I absolutely loved it! I mean, come on, the snow makes the world even more beautiful! (Okay, the only exception was when I got stuck at Toronto Airport for two days because of a snow storm. I was traveling back from Germany to Fredericton after Christmas – well I was trying.) Still this was the best winter I have experienced so far.

Yes, the syllabus of the classes at UNB was strict but I still took the chance to travel as much as possible. And there is so much to see! Canada is simply breathtaking. During my year in Fredericton I got the chance to travel to Toronto, Boston, New York, the Hopewell Rocks and many more amazing places. If you get the chance to go somewhere – just do it!

Fredericton is a small city and yes, you may think at first - why not Vancouver? Trust me, I thought that as well. But I learned to love this city. Now that I am back in Germany, back studying at home, I have to say - I would go back to Fredericton in a heartbeat. This little town in the beautiful province of New Brunswick has stolen my heart!!! I will always remember this wonderful experience, I really hope I can return to my Freddy soon and yes I miss friends and UNB, a lot 😊

If you have any questions or remarks please do not hesitate to contact me! Seriously, Fredericton is as good as Vancouver. Just because we do not have the Canucks it does not mean we suck – Go UNB Varsity Reds by the way ;-) In all seriousness now – Fredericton and New Brunswick overall are amazing and you will have a heck of a time there!

