

2018 MBA Exchange Report

Student Name:

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Exchange School:

China Europe International Business School



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INTRODUCTION: Include a brief paragraph introducing yourself and describing your reason(s) for deciding to go on exchange and reason for selecting the partner school.

A little bit about myself (Rainie) - I obtained my bachelor's degree at Simon Fraser University, and I started my career in wealth management sector in two reputable financial institutions, Macquarie Group and Scotiabank. The corporate world helped me to gain skills in solution-oriented communications, customer relations and management, and internal personnel. Afterwards, I had working experience in two private companies in both Canada and China in the fields of international trade and eCommerce. I have strengthened my skills in strategic business development, creative design thinking, and leadership. Along the way, I have also actively participated in community activities and focused on personal development. My interests are travelling, photography, and reading.

A little bit about myself (Ashlee) - I obtained my BBA from BCIT. I had over 5 years' work experience in hotel industry before joining the MBA program at Sauder. For the very same reasons that Rainie illustrated above, I chose CEIBS as my exchange destination. In fact, I had made up my mind before my MBA program started. In summer 2016, I visited five prospective exchange schools: Tsinghua University, Beking University, Fudan University, CEIBS, and Taiwan National University. Out of all, I found that CEIBS seemed the most welcoming and well organized.

China has witnessed profound turnaround in past couple years, and the country has emerged as the world's largest economy. With CEIBS's unique positioning, I believe the exchange experience will enhance my knowledge on China's business environment and how to handle aspects of economic, political, culture and trade when do business in and with China. I am always passionate about being a bridge to connect East to West, and I believe CEIBS is a great place for me to absorb different perspectives, build great network, and enhance ability to identify and utilize business opportunities

Considering the ranking and accreditation, CEIBS has ranked within the top 25 of the Financial Time's annual businesses school survey for 13 consecutive years. The school has solidified its reputation as a leading international business school not only in Asia but also worldwide. Secondly, the MBA program provides a rich source of international experience in professional management and practices from its respected group of scholars, and the program itself attracts global business leaders with diversified background and expertise. The class profile of MBA 2019 is made up of an outstanding group of individuals from over 20 countries in more than 12 industries. With its unique positioning of "China Depth, Global Breath", I believe that exchanging at CEIBS will provide me with a truly global and stimulating environment to develop quality conversation with intelligent, highly competent and international oriented individuals, while gaining a deep understanding of Chinese culture and business practices. I also found some interesting courses offered at CEIBS via conversations with UBCers exchanged at CEIBS prior to applications.

ORIENTATION: What happened when you arrived? Did someone meet you at the airport? Did you receive an adequate orientation? Was there a buddy-system in place to help orient you to your new environment? Were social activities included in the orientation (i.e. student-hosted socials, 'welcome' events etc.) Were you made to feel welcome?

Prior to arrival, CEIBS has a buddy-system in place that connects you with at least one 1st year MBA student. Please know that because they are also new to CEIBS as well and are also in an intense study period, the attention that you can get from them are rather limited. Nevertheless, the buddy that I got were very helpful and tried their best to help me out with my questions. The

best way to connect in China is via WeChat (aka what'app in China) and it is best that you setup your WeChat account before you arrive in China. If you are living on campus, you can arrive a few days before your actual starting date and CEIBS is quite lenient about that.

The morning of our first day was a welcome reception for all the exchange students where you would meet each other and get to know more about CEIBS. Representative from the administrative staff, faculty, and career centre each did a info talk and let us know what they can help the exchange students with. After the morning, you will go into your class straight.

Throughout the term, there will be several admin-host, professor-host, and student-host welcome events that aim to promo relationship building and networking which I strongly recommend you join.

During my exchange, I did find that the career fair and the connections that CEIBS has would be the best resources for anyone who is looking for jobs in Shanghai to leverage on. In addition, there are too many events happening outside of CEIBS' campus as well, Shanghai in general is a city that has endless opportunities waiting for you to explore.

COURSES & REGISTRATION: How long after being nominated for exchange were you sent course information by the host partner school? Were you able to enroll in the courses that you wanted? Was the registration system efficient? What advice would you offer to next year's students regarding registration? How would you compare the level and calibre of courses at your Host University with those of UBC? Are courses generally more or less difficult? Is the workload heavier? What is the academic focus of your host University? (i.e. which MBA specializations are appropriate?)

You can always refer to previous course offering at CEIBS to gain some understandings if no updated course information released from CEIBS yet (usually most of the offerings will not change) For my exchange, it took around 3.5 months for CEIBS to email the course information after I got my exchange placement letter from UBC Sauder. There are two rounds of bidding for courses offered in P6 and P7 (Term 6A and Term 6B in CEIBS). The first bidding happened around middle of May, and the second bidding happened around end of May. Each exchange student is given 260 bidding points in total to bid for electives of P6 and P7. Each credit for a course can carry 1 to 23 bidding points. Two rounds will run in each stage of bidding. In round 1, students will bid for courses by allocating bidding points; at the end of round 1 bidding, if the student fail to win courses that he/she wants, he/she can select courses with available seats in round 2 by priority of the time of submittal. The whole bidding process will be conducted online, and no change is allowed after the deadline of each round. I was able to register all the courses I want as I did thoroughly research about each course before hand. I have talked to second year students about feedback on courses they took at CEIBS, and I also asked Darren for course recommendations. I think it is very important to do your course research before round 1, and make sure allocate enough points to the courses seem competitive or you really want to take. In terms of course difficulty level, it really depends when compare the two schools. CEIBS do offer many block courses – visiting professors from those top-notch schools around the world to teach only 4 to 5 days. Based on my experience, I really enjoyed those block courses and the quality was very good; however, the pre-readings and strict timelines for projects for those courses should also be considered. Based on my experience at CEIBS, I think the overall workload is very reasonable, and as you are good at managing your time, you will find more time to do things other than school, such as company events and social activities. Similar as UBC, CEIBS also has its tracks for students to choose and focus, which are project management, finance, entrepreneurship, and digitalization.

TEACHING: Is the style of teaching very different from UBC? Is the material covered at a similar pace, depth or volume compared to UBC? What did you think about the quality of teaching? What style of teaching is used most often (seminars, lecture, case study, projects)? How much class participation, homework is involved?

In terms of course setup, they are all lectures and no seminar. CEIBS used all cases basis so you will have to read a lot of cases prior to the class. The good news is that you will not need to buy any cases while exchanging at CEIBS. Class participation is a big deal at CEIBS because the school wants to motivate students to speak up in class. At CEIBS, every class has a seated chart that every student must follow, and professor will mark you based on the seated chart that they have in hand. Please also know that each class has assigned TA to mark your attendances at the first 10 minutes and last 10 minutes of each session. Each time when you miss one class, you will receive a warning from the system and if you are late for more than 10 minutes, you will also be marked as absent for the lecture.

There are two types of courses at CEIBS. One is regular class taught by CEIBS professor which usually lasts for two months and one to two classes each week. The other one is intense class taught by visiting professor which usually lasts for one week. One common mistake that students make were to think that because it is one week, so professor is more lenient towards workload. Please be advised that professor will not reduce the workload. I remembered one intense course that our team would need to do one case presentation per day for 3 days in a row.

In CEIBS, there are two types of professors: English professor and Chinese professor. They are both well respected and are very knowledgeable. However, if you are someone who has never been exposed to the teaching style that Chinese professor, you might not be able to adapt to his/her styles too well. For those English professors, I found the quality of teaching is similar to Sauder. The visiting professors were the professors that I learned the most from. I think mostly because I was more comfortable with the style of teaching and there were no language barrier or culture differences. I also had a few Chinese professors in my class and I found that because they are most knowledge in Chinese business environment, you will learn a lot about doing business in China which is super helpful if you choose to work in China in the future.

LANGUAGE COURSES (WHERE RELEVANT): Were there language courses available? If so, what were the costs? Were the courses beneficial? When did the course start? Would you recommend any other strategies for visiting exchange students to learn more of the language before starting their exchange?

CEIBS provides free basic language courses to exchange students. For all exchange students, you are entitled for a set schedule of 5 mandarin classes at the beginning of the semester. Two classes per week and it lasts for about 3 weeks. According to my classmates who had participated in the class, they said the classes were for people who had never spoken Chinese in their life, such as how to count from 1 to 10 in Chinese but for anyone who understands a little bit of Chinese will excel that course very fast. CEIBS outsourced this service to OliveTree, a professional language teaching company. Another option that exchange students have is to buy private class at the rate of \$130 to \$150 per hour from OliveTree whose facility is within walking distance from CEIBS. One strategy that is highly recommended by the exchange students is to make an effort to make friends with the Chinese students. No matter how much Chinese you already know prior to arriving in China, being in China is the best opportunity to improve your Chinese. Because CEIBS's MBA program is taught in English, you will have no problem communicating to the local students at CEIBS.

CAMPUS FACILITIES: What are the differences between UBC's campus and the Host University's campus? Where are the best places to study? Did you have access to computers? Should students bring their own computers? Safety issues: Did you feel safe on campus? Were you made aware of available student services?

Compare to UBC campus, CEIBS's campus architectural style combines western architecture with the subtlety of Chinese beauty and grace. The campus is connected with an arcade walkway that encloses the main garden, often referred to as the bamboo forest. The landmark of the campus from my perspective is the central pavilion (if anyone get lost on campus, that's the place to find). This breath-taking building is a single-layer steel structure with pyramid-shaped glass pinnacle covers a square glass box. You will also find three-storey academic centre, faculty buildings, student residences, library, conference centre, and gym on campus. Some best places on campus to study are library and student lounge. Student lounge is also a good place to play cards, social and relax, and meet new friends. The coffee offered at student lounge is pretty good. High-speed Wi-Fi is available on the campus, and you can access desktop computers in library too. It is common for students to bring computers to lectures, and it depends on instructors and course requirements whether students should use laptop or not during classes. I live in dormitory on campus, and I feel very safe on campus. There are security guards standing at school entrance every day, and the entrance gate close at 11pm daily. The MBA office is also very easy to reach in terms of available student services.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: Is there an international office devoted to helping international and exchange students? If someone was particularly helpful, please note their name. What types of programs are organized for international students? What programs or activities did you find the most rewarding?

Basically, MBA office is the office that you should send all your questions to. I found the MBA administrative staffs are professional and attentive at answering your all questions with a prompt manner. Claire Yuan is the main organiser who I often turn in for help. I also found that the TA of each course is very helpful as well who will often go out of their way to help you should you have any questions. Your buddy and your exchange program new friends are usually the best to ask as well. In addition to the language class that I mentioned previously, there were also a few interesting events, such as professor home networking event, one-day Suzhou trip, student committed organized boat cruise night, etc. There were plenty of events to attend if you have time.

HOUSING FACILITIES: Was housing organized by your Host School? Was the housing provided adequate? If you had to locate your own accommodation, how did you do this? How do the housing facilities compare? Are telephones, laundry facilities, cooking facilities provided? Are rooms quiet? Which are the best residences to apply to? What is the distance between the housing accommodation and the university campus? When was housing available? Did you stay in housing over holidays? Is there a meal plan at the housing facility? What is the quality of the cafeteria food? Is food expensive? Is "eating-out" expensive? How close are the grocery shopping areas?

We (Ashlee and Rainie) both live on the campus and yes, the housing was organized by CEIBS. Located within a few minutes of walking distance from classrooms and the library, CEIBS's four 5-story dormitory buildings can accommodate MBA students. Student residents can either live in single rooms or share a dormitory room with one other student. Each air-conditioned room is about 10 square meters and has its own washroom. Rooms are included with basic furniture such as a bunk bed, chairs and desks, bookcases, a wardrobe, bedside lamps, and a bedside cupboard etc. CEIBS will email you details information regarding on-campus housing

application, and a fee table is attached as below. Telephones and shower rooms with 24-hour hot water supply are provided. Laundry facility is provided in residence building 2. No cooking facilities provided inside of each residence building; however, a refrigerator and a microwave are provided on each floor. The dorm application will be started earlier July and the result should be released in the next week or so. If you are interested, you just need to fill in an application form and send the document to dormitory office. You will obtain your dorm card and full payment once you arrive on the campus. Please be aware of the earliest check-in date and arrange your arrival schedule properly. You can stay in housing over holidays, and there is a cafeteria on campus close to dormitory. The cafeteria food carries a variety of selection, but I would say 80% is Chinese style food and 20% is western style food, and the price range is reasonable. You will use the public transport card as a card for dorm key, cafeteria e-wallet (you can put money in), and public transit. This is an all-in-one card. There are some good restaurants close to school, such as Blue Frog, Element Fresh, and big bamboo. Carrefour and Family Mart are in the area for grocery shopping. There are quite a few restaurants close to Carrefour as well. If you go to CEIBS website, you will find a list of residential areas that are located very near to CEIBS with small but adequate apartments for rent. If you can find classmates to rent out together before head, please do so; otherwise it might be a good idea to apply for on-campus single room housing as it is convenient and price reasonable. One main drawback of living on campus is that the campus located in suburb area, and it is far away from the central (public transit at least 1 hour to Lujiazui district)

Dormitory Fees (single room, including charges for water, electricity, air conditioning and wifi)

Renting Period(months)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Price Per Months(RMB)	5,000	4,900	4,800	4,700	4,600	4,500
Total Payment(RMB)	5,000	9,800	14,400	18,800	23,000	27,000

COSTS/ EXPENSES(Ashlee): Please give cost estimates that are as accurate as possible. You are the very best resource for future students in this area. Did you encounter any unexpected costs? Remember to include how much you spent over what period of time; e.g. rent/month or for the term.

- **Accommodation:**

The way the CEIBS calculate your rent is based on the length of your stay. The minimum length of stay duration is one month. Once you past one month, the monthly rental fee will be reduced by \$100 per month but at the beginning you will need to pay the full amount based on discounted rate. For instance, I prepared to stay for three months, CEIBS charged 4,800RMB per month after the discount. Therefore, I paid 14,400RMB when I moved in. During the last month, I moved out and CEIBS refunded me with the remaining prepaid rental fee counting by days. Below is a screenshot of the rental fee structure. Please be advised that the CEIBS might change the fee during your term.

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- **Textbooks**

Textbooks were provided by CEIBS including all cases. All textbooks would be delivered to your personal mailbox (no lock) in student dorm building 1. Please locate your mailbox and collect your course materials before class starts.

- **Local Transportation (Buses, Trains)**

Shanghai has a metro card that works just like the compass. When you first arrived, CEIBS will provide you with a metro card which can be used for your room entrance, buses, trains, and canteen food. However, soon, you will discover the Shanghai Metro App that allows you to travel with your phone by scanning the instant generated QR code on your phone. Thanks to the mobile internet system, you can live in China with no cash if you have Alipay and WeChat pay. As long as you link your bank account with each one of this payment systems, you can go anywhere with no cash but make sure you have enough phone battery at all time.

- **Food/Groceries (Is this more or less \$ than Vancouver?)**

If you choose to eat at the school canteen, you will be pay less than 25RMB per meal (\$CAD5). If you choose to eat out, the restaurants around CEIBS are relative expensive compared to rest of the city as a lot of foreigners live around that area. For example, you could pay 100RMB per meal (\$CAD20) for a good burger and a fries combo or 75RMB (\$CAD15) for lunch bento box. CEIBS has a small kitchen facility that you can use if you wish to cook. There is a grocery shopping mall within walking distance to CEIBS called the City Shop. Bread, milks, and cereals are at equal quality and prices as Canada. Since I was taking a full course load, I often ate the school canteen as it is convenient, cheap, and fast.

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES: Is there a health care unit on campus? Did you have to pay anything to use the hospital or student health clinic, if you used these facilities?

There is no health care on campus. There is a children and woman hospital next door. If you have anything emergency, I supposed you can always call 110. During the orientation, you will have an opportunity to sign up for an insurance plan which covers your medical bill should you have any in China. It costs about 200RMB per month. Please know that you cannot sign up after and you must make up your mind before the orientation whether to buy the plan or not. I personally have never used the hospital facility during my exchange time at CEIBS.

SOCIAL EVENTS: What activities were planned? What clubs or groups are good to join? Where are the best places to eat or the best places to go for the weekend? Was it easy to meet new friends? Did you associate mostly with other exchange students or Host school students?

Once you arrive in China, make sure you download the social app WeChat – people and CEIBS students use WeChat to organize events and gather feedback. There are a variety of social events organized by CEIBS office and student committee. For example, some exchange students went to the one-day Suzhou tour to visit the Humble Administrator's Garden and Suzhou Museum. We also got invited to Juan Antonio Fernandez's house, who is the associate dean and director of MBA program at CEIBS. There are lot of school clubs such as finance, entrepreneurship, and sports and leisure clubs free for joining as an exchange student. As UBC exchange students, we also have full access to CEIBS career service portal to check jobs and company campus talks. It is easy to make friends and there are lot of social activities in town on a regular basis. Make sure you join those WeChat groups that you are interested, and once you are in the group, people will share interesting posts and events with everyone in the circle. Also, we strongly recommend you to not only social with other exchange students but also host school students, so you can expand your network and dive deeper into the Chinese culture and

dynamics in economy, social, and business world. This is the link for all school clubs:
<http://www.ceibs.edu/mba/student-clubs>

CAREER SERVICES: Did you have access to Career Services at your Host School? If so, were you given the same level of access to the Career Services as the host school's MBA students? Did you find that these Career Services were valuable? Were you invited to company recruiting events?

As UBC exchange student, we have full access to career services at CEIBS due to the agreement between UBC and CEIBS. This means we can participate all company campus talks and company events, and we can also apply for jobs that we are interested via career service platform. We both made career appointment with career coaches at CEIBS. It is valuable to get career opinions and advice from those people, especially if you are interested in finding a job in China.

SPORTS/ RECREATION: What sports/recreation facilities exist at the campus or nearby? What are the costs of using these facilities? Are they accessible? What sports equipment should UBC students take with them on exchange?

As mentioned before, you can join multiple sports clubs, such as basketball, badminton, and fitness classes. There is a gymnasium offers an appealing two-level, air-conditioned facilities. The gym offers a broad range of fitness equipment. Table tennis and basketball courts are also available at the gym. You can bring your own sports equipment like badminton rackets since you cannot rent equipment at the gym on campus. There are no costs of using these facilities on campus, and there are few yoga studios and fitness centres close by off the campus.

STUDY TOURS/ FIELD TRIPS: Costs? Mandatory? How many? How long?

CEIBS has about 8 to 10 field trip modules that count between 1 to 1.5 credit. Each module is designed by CEIBS Executive alumni network and a few CEIBS professors. Each field trip has one location either inside China or outside of China and it lasts for 2 to 5 days depending on the number of companies visits and projects. Please know that the domestic field trip only allows international students to join and no local students (Chinese passport holder) are allowed. I joint the Nanjing module this year and visited four major tech Chinese companies in three days. For each company, we learned the company's history and business strategy. We had an opportunity to connect with the CEO of the company who is also an executive alumnus of CEIBS. The field trip was eye-opening for me as this is as close as I can get to understand some of the best Chinese corporations. If you wish to work in China after, this is the best way for you to build your network. The Nanjing trip costed me 2500RMB for three days including accommodations, food, transportations, and teaching. Costs varies for each module.

WHAT TO BRING: List the most important things to take with you!

A working phone that allows you to use a Chinese SIM card.

Setup your WeChat and Alipay before you come (VERY IMPORTANT!!).

Everything in China is relatively cheap to get so it is better to buy here rather to bring.

If you hold a Canadian passport and is looking for to land a job in China before your MBA graduation (May next year), please bring your previous employment letters and your bachelor certificate with you because you will need them for your work visa should you wish to start early. Chinese government will check everything thoroughly and please prepare to provide physical copy.

Bring a travel adapter with you as the power plugs and sockets, as well as the voltage and

frequency in China is different from Canada.

GENERAL IMPRESSIONS: Please write as much as you want about your exchange experience.

Remember all experiences are useful for prospective students to read about.

What was the most rewarding aspect of your exchange experience?

What were the biggest disappointments and why?

What steps would you take, in light of your experience, to have better prepared yourself for your exchange program?

I landed my dream job while I am in my exchange so what better can I say about my experience. I was lucky because I was connected with a UBC MBA alumnus who has already working in Shanghai and that led to a job offer. One thing that I have to understand well is when you are working in China, not being able to communicate in Chinese is a disadvantage that would out-shadow your advantage of knowing English. This applies to Foreign invested companies. There are many foreign companies in Shanghai, but they always expect you to at least know how to do simply communication in Chinese because most of their clients are in Chinese. This will apply to top consulting firms like MBB. I know Chinese Canadian who were struggled to find jobs due to Chinese barrier and foreigners who found amazing jobs because they spent time and effort in learning the languages and building their networks. Like Rainie mentioned at the beginning, China represents great opportunities and challenges. You will need to adapt to the culture and be accommodating should you wish to find your dreams here. Good luck to you all!

There are lot of things going on in one day in China. Make sure to allocate your time wisely and try to go to those company or social events that are attractive to you as many as possible. Personally, I have attended some courses from eLab at CEIBS, which is a program teaches students who's interested in entrepreneurship and tactics to run business in China. During the program, you will learn more about how to run start-up in the Chinese market, and you will meet people who share the same value and mindset. Since you are already in Shanghai, try to connect with UBC alumni working in shanghai or attend alumni events to expand network and gain more insights from the local professionals. Most importantly, be flexible, adapt to the new culture, and have some fun!









