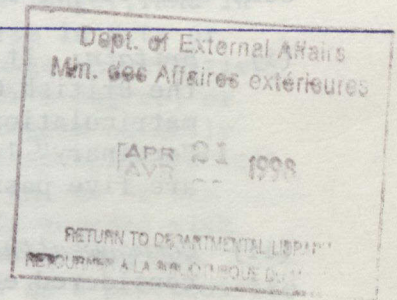


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UNIVERSITY STUDY IN CANADA

(Prepared by the International Programs Division,
Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.) (1)

I ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

(a) General Information

The admission requirements of Canadian universities vary from province to province. Most universities state their requirements for admission to first-degree courses in terms of the secondary-school leaving certificate issued by the department of education of the province in which the university is located. These certificates are junior or senior matriculation, the latter of which requires one further year of study beyond the former. French-language institutions in Quebec state their requirements in terms of the *diplôme d'études collégiales* (DEC). The admission of students from outside Canada is decided solely by individual universities. As a general rule, universities treat equivalent certificates from other countries as qualification for entrance. (2)

- (1) Les étudiants étrangers qui désirent poursuivre des études universitaires au Canada en français peuvent consulter les pages documentaires No. 117 intitulées: "Etudes universitaires au Canada" (revision de janvier 1970).
- (2) A detailed listing of requirements for admission to first-degree courses in most Canadian universities is published each year in an appendix to the *Commonwealth Universities Yearbook*. A reprint of this appendix, entitled *Admission Requirements of Canadian Universities*, is also available for 50 cents from the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 151 Slater Street, Ottawa 4, Canada. The calendars of the universities, which can be obtained from the university registrars, also contain official and detailed statements about their admission requirements.

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Some examples of foreign certificates accepted are:

- (i) *Britain*: It is the common practice for Canadian universities to treat the British General Certificate of Education as equivalent to junior matriculation when there is evidence of at least five passes at the "ordinary" level and as equivalent to senior matriculation when there are five passes of which two are at the "advanced" level.
- (ii) *Commonwealth*: Students from Commonwealth countries will usually be considered eligible for admission to a Canadian university if they have the standing prescribed for admission to a university in their own countries as outlined in the *Commonwealth Universities Yearbook*. The Cambridge Overseas School Certificate and the Cambridge Higher School Certificate, commonly obtained in countries of the Commonwealth outside Britain, are usually treated as equivalent to junior or senior matriculation respectively, provided that the selection of subjects and the level of attainment are satisfactory. Some universities, however, require the completion of an undergraduate degree from a university in the student's home country as a requirement for admission to their own first-degree programmes.
- (iii) *United States*: Graduation from a United States high school is generally equated with junior matriculation, provided that the selection of subjects and level of attainment are satisfactory. Completion of one year of college work beyond high-school graduation is frequently accepted by universities requiring senior matriculation for admission. A statement from the high-school principal recommending the student for admission to university is often required.
- (iv) *Europe*: Students who have completed requirements for admission to a European university are generally deemed eligible for admission to a Canadian university at senior matriculation level. Special written and oral tests of facility in English or French may be required.
- (v) *Middle East, Asia, South American, and non-Commonwealth African Countries*: Applicants from countries in these areas must produce evidence of having passed a widely-recognized examination such as the British GCE, the U.S. College Entrance Examination Board Tests, Bacillerato or other examinations which would admit them to university in their own country.

(b) Degree Programs and Courses (3)

In English-language institutions, courses lead, in from three to five years, to a bachelor's degree in arts, pure science, and such professional fields as engineering, business administration, agriculture and education. Degrees in law,

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- (3) Detailed information concerning course offerings, degree programs and requirements is contained in *Canadian Universities and Colleges, 1970*, available from the AUCC (\$5.00), or for consultation at Canadian diplomatic posts abroad. The *Commonwealth Universities Yearbook* can also be consulted for this information. Information about summer-schools in Canada is contained in a brochure entitled *Summer Courses in Canada*, obtainable from the Canadian Government Travel Bureau, Ottawa, Canada, or available for consultation at a Canadian post abroad.

theology, dentistry, medicine and some other fields take longer, and in many cases require the completion of a first-degree course in arts or science for admission. In the majority of English-language universities, a student may study for either a general or pass bachelor's degree, or for an honours bachelor's degree. The honours-degree program normally involves an additional year of study, is open only to those with special academic standing, and requires a greater concentration in one or two subjects. In most universities, the bachelor's degree is awarded with first-class, second-class, or pass standing. In the French-language institutions in Quebec, the diplôme d'études collégiales is a prerequisite for admission in the faculties of letters, theology, and into professional faculties.

Students who wish to study for an advanced degree must have obtained a bachelor's degree. The minimum time required for the second degree, the master's, is two years of study beyond the pass bachelor's degree, and one year beyond the honours degree. The student is required to follow lectures in a specific number of subjects and is normally required to prepare a thesis. For the doctorate, Ph.D. or equivalent degree, at least two years beyond the master's degree, or three years beyond the honours bachelor's degree, are required. Generally, however, more time is required to complete this degree. The completion of the doctorate generally requires formal class-work, a thesis, and an oral examination on the thesis.

Degrees from Canadian universities are usually recognized as equivalent to degrees obtained in universities of the Commonwealth or the United States. Students coming to Canada from other countries would be wise, before leaving their home countries, to inquire about the recognition given to Canadian degrees at home.

(c) Language Requirements

All Canadian universities require evidence of language proficiency, but not all require a test. Consequently, a student should not take a test unless invited to do so by a Canadian university which has found him otherwise qualified for admission.

The tests now in use are the following:

English:

- (i) The English proficiency test administered in many parts of the world by the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A. This can be taken at any time, and results are provided within six weeks of application.
- (ii) The test leading to the certificate of proficiency in English of the University of Cambridge. This is given only twice a year, in March and October. Information may be obtained from the local centre of the British Council, or from the Secretary (Examination in English), 47 Bateman Street, Cambridge, England.

- (iii) The test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) of the Education Testing Service of Princeton, New Jersey, U.S.A.
- (iv) For admission into an undergraduate program of studies, both foreign and Canadian students are required by most Canadian universities to take tests of the Service for Admission to College and University (SACU). These tests are designed to determine a student's scholastic aptitude and language achievement and are known respectively as the Canadian Scholastic Aptitude Test (CSAT) and the Canadian English Language Achievement Test (CFLAT), and by the French language equivalents, which are le Test d'aptitude générale aux études post-secondaires (TAGEPS) and le Test du français (Langue maternelle) (TFLM).

SACU has made arrangements to establish centres abroad for administration of these tests. Information about the tests and where these centres are located may be obtained from SACU (151 Slater Street, Ottawa 4) or from the nearest Canadian Government office.

French: Tests of facility in the French language may be required of candidates wishing to enter French-language universities.

(d) Application and Registration Procedures

Application for admission to a Canadian university should be addressed only to a university registrar, from whom information about the availability of courses, admission requirements, fees and expenditures can be obtained. Since a great deal of correspondence may be necessary before a student is accepted into a Canadian university, applications should be made well in advance of the session to be attended, preferably 12 to 18 months.

The academic year in Canada is divided into two terms and runs through the autumn and winter months from the middle of September to the following April or May, with a short vacation at Christmas.

When advised to do so by a university, a student should supply a detailed statement of his academic record, with certified copies of his secondary-school certificate and official transcripts of records of all his university or other post-secondary education, or arrange for these documents to be supplied. If copies of original documents are in neither English nor French, they should always be accompanied by certified or notarized translations. Students should also ensure that the certificates submitted contain detailed statements of courses taken and marks or grades obtained, when these are available.

Upon being admitted to a university, all students are required each year to register on the day or days of registration stipulated for that year, and to pay the prescribed fees. An additional fee is generally charged for late registration. In some institutions, there are special orientation programs for overseas students that start just before the beginning of the regular session.

II SCHOLARSHIPS, FELLOWSHIPS, ASSISTANTSHIPS,
AND OTHER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Universities in Canada seldom have funds available to assist students from other countries to come to Canada for undergraduate studies. Most awards offered by universities and the Canadian Government are restricted to postgraduate studies.⁽⁴⁾ Overseas students at the undergraduate level, however, might also be eligible in their second year, and in competition with Canadian students, for a limited number of awards offered by Canadian universities. The World University Service of Canada has discontinued offering scholarships to overseas students.

The Canadian Government programs for which overseas students are at present eligible are the following:

- (a) Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan: This plan is designed to provide opportunities to Commonwealth students to pursue advanced programs of study in Commonwealth countries other than their own. Candidates must be nominated by the educational authorities in the candidate's own country. Thus a candidate is advised to refer to the Commonwealth scholarship agency in the country of which he is a national.
- (b) Canadian International Development Agency Program of Technical Assistance: Technical assistance in the form of scholarships for university study and training in Canada has become an increasingly important part of Canada's aid program, and is administered by the Canadian International Development Agency. Without exception, aid is provided at the request of eligible recipient governments. Students qualifying for scholarships under the various programs of the Canadian International Development Agency must be nominated by their governments. A potential candidate should, therefore, be referred for further information to the ministry or department in his own country concerned with the field in which studies or training in Canada is desired.
- (c) As a result of agreements with Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland, the Government of Canada offers a number of scholarships and fellowships each year to nationals of these countries

(4) Detailed information about awards can be obtained from the following references:

- (i) *Study Abroad (Etudes à l'étranger* or, in Spanish, *Estudios en el Extranjero*) XVI, UNESCO, 1968-70. The section on scholarships and fellowships available in Canada is contained in Pages 176 to 197.
- (ii) *Awards for Graduate Study and Research*, DBS, 1969. (Cat. 81-541) available at Queen's Printer, Ottawa (\$4.00), or for consultation at a Canadian post abroad.

for study in Canada, as outlined in general below:

Field of Study: Unrestricted

Value: *Scholarships:* \$250 a month (\$350 for married persons), plus tuition and travel expenses for the award-holder, and two-thirds of travel expenses for his wife, if applicable, provided that she remains in Canada for at least six months.

Fellowships: \$500 a month (\$600 for married persons), plus travel expenses for the award-holder and two-thirds of travel expenses for his wife, if applicable, provided that she remains in Canada for at least six months.

Duration: *Scholarships:* One academic year, with possibility of renewal on the basis of satisfactory results, to complete an approved program of study.

Fellowships: Up to one year.

Eligibility: These scholarships and fellowships are provided to persons who intend returning to their countries after completion of study in Canada and not to persons intending to emigrate to Canada. Successful applicants must present themselves at the Canadian visa office in the appropriate country in order to obtain the necessary visa. Unless specifically authorized, holders of such visas and their spouses are not permitted to accept paid employment while in Canada. The holders of these scholarships and fellowships are exempt from the payment of Canadian income tax on their stipends.

BELGIUM: *Scholarships:* Applicants who have obtained a "licence" from a Belgian university or who have reached an equivalent level of study or training;

Fellowships: Holders of a doctorate or established artists wishing to come to Canada to teach, undertake research or do creative work;

Should apply to: The Cultural and International Relations Division, Ministry of National Education and Culture, 158 de Cortenberg Avenue, Brussels 4.

FRANCE: *Scholarships:* Applicants who have obtained a "licence" from a French university or who have reached an equivalent level of study or training;

Fellowships: Holders of a doctorate or established artists wishing to come to Canada to teach, undertake research or do creative work;

Should apply to: Office National des Universités et Ecoles françaises, 96, boulevard Raspail, Paris VIe.

GERMANY

Scholarships: Applicants who have obtained a "Diplom" or a certificate representing at least eight semesters of university studies, or persons having reached an equivalent level of training;

Fellowships: Holders of a "Doktor" title who have passed the "Staatsexamen", or are established artists wishing to come to Canada to teach, undertake research or do creative work;

Should apply to: The German Student Exchange Service, 532 Bad Godesberg, Kennedyallee 50, Germany.

ITALY

Scholarships: Applicants who have obtained a "laurea universitaria", after a four-year study program, or persons having reached an equivalent level of training;

Fellowships: Holders of a "laurea universitaria" with at least three years of experience in their chosen discipline, or established artists wishing to come to Canada to teach, undertake research or do creative work;

Should apply to: The Cultural Relations Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome.

THE NETHERLANDS

Scholarships: Applicants who have obtained the "universitaire candidatsexamen" or persons having reached an equivalent level of training;

Fellowships: Holders of a "doctor" degree or established artists wishing to come to Canada to teach, undertake research or do creative work;

Should apply to: The Ministry for Education and Sciences, International Relations Section, Nieuwe Uitleg 1, The Hague.

SWITZERLAND

Scholarships: Applicants who have obtained a "licence" from a Swiss university or who have reached an equivalent level of study or training;

Fellowships: Holders of a doctorate or established artists wishing to come to Canada to teach, undertake research or do creative work;

Should apply to: The Secretariat, Federal Department of the Interior, Berne.

(d) National Research Council of Canada - Postdoctoral Fellowships

Field of Study: Sciences, engineering

Value: \$6,000 for both single and married fellows and \$7,200 for a married fellow (male) with a child or children. A grant will be provided towards the cost of travel between the place of residence at the time the award is made and the laboratory at which the award is to be held; a further grant of an equal amount will be paid towards the travelling expenses of a married fellow when accompanied by his wife. Similar grants are made for return travel on completion of the term of the fellowship. No grant is made toward the cost of travel of children.

Duration: One year, renewable.

Eligibility: Applicants under 36 years of age possessing a Ph.D. degree from a recognized university or expecting to obtain such a degree before taking up an award (candidates having equivalent research experience may be considered).

Should apply to: Postdoctorate Fellowships Office, National Research Council, Ottawa 7, Canada.

(Application and supporting documents should be received in Ottawa at the beginning of each calendar year.)

III IMMIGRATION REQUIREMENTS

In general, overseas students enter Canada as temporary residents (non-immigrants) and require some or all of the following documents:⁽⁵⁾

- (a) Valid Passport: Must guarantee re-entry into the student's own or another country, and is required by all students except legal permanent residents of the United States.
- (b) Visa: Required by all students except British subjects, Commonwealth, French, Irish and American citizens and certain others. Visas are obtained abroad from Canadian diplomatic, consular and immigration

(5) A pamphlet containing detailed information about immigration regulations and entitled *Admission of University Students to Canada, Immigration Requirements* is published by the Department of Manpower and Immigration. It is available for consultation at Canadian posts abroad and from the Immigration Division, Department of Manpower and Immigration, Ottawa, Canada.

officials or, in some countries where there is no Canadian diplomatic or consular office, from representatives of the British Government.

- (c) Vaccination Certificate: Must show evidence of having had the disease of smallpox or having been vaccinated within three years of arrival in Canada.
- (d) Medical Clearance: Students considering a stay in Canada of one year or more require a complete medical examination, including a chest X-ray. Visas will not be granted until proof of satisfactory medical clearance is presented.
- (e) Letter of Acceptance: Issued by a Canadian university is essential to ensure entry to Canada.
- (f) Student Entry Certificate: Issued to all students by immigration officers on entry to Canada. Must be renewed yearly and is proof of status in Canada.
- (g) Proof of Sufficient Funds and Return Passage.

IV FINANCING UNIVERSITY STUDY

Attendance at a Canadian university is expensive. No student should come to Canada without possessing or expecting to possess sufficient funds to enable him to complete his university studies and pay his passage home. Sufficient funds for one year of study must be guaranteed before arrival. The major items of expenditure for a student are tuition fees and room and board. Tuition fees range from \$450 to \$900, and room and board may cost between \$100 and \$125 a month. Travel, clothing, books and entertainment will also require a substantial outlay. When a student has selected a university, he should make up a budget of his probable expenditures. A sample budget, based on costs for 1969-70 academic terms, appears below. It should not be expected that a student's expenditures will tally with those listed. This model is included simply as a guide in compiling a personal budget. It is likely also that costs will increase from year to year.

Example of Minimum Budget for an Undergraduate

Student, 1969-70 (for 12 months)

Fees	\$450 - 900
Books and instruments	50 - 100
Room and board	1200 - 1500
Clothes, health, etc	225
Entertainment	225
Travel	100
Other expenses	150
	<hr/>
	\$2,400-3,200

A list of certain other items of expenditure is given as follows:

Clothing:

Winter overcoat (men or women)	\$50-100
Suits	\$50-up
Shoes (men or women)	\$10-up
Shirts	\$ 5-up
Socks	\$1-1.50
Stockings	\$1-1.50

Food:

Lunch	\$1.00-1.25
Sandwich with Beverage	1.00
Dinner	1.50-up
Cup of Coffee, Tea, Glass of Milk	0.15

Medical Coverage

As medical and hospital care in Canada are very expensive, it is imperative that all students take both medical and hospital insurance for themselves and, if the case arises, their dependents. Students coming to Canada under a government-sponsored program will be covered under the terms of their scholarships. Other students would be well advised to take out medical insurance under plans offered by the University Health and Accident Plan, which is specially designed for students from other countries, or under local arrangements sponsored by the university. Hospital insurance is taken out with appropriate provincial authorities. Generally, a student who has made the necessary payments will be covered by provincial hospital insurance plans after three months' residence in Canada. Immediately upon arrival, university officials should be consulted for more information and advice. It would also be wise to seek advice about taking out accident and life insurance.

V TRAVEL PROCEDURES

Transportation to Canada: When a student has been accepted at a Canadian university, his journey to and from Canada can be arranged through a travel agency, transportation company or student organization. It should be ensured that tickets cover transportation right through to the city where the university is located, and that the return ticket will be valid at the time of returning home. If travel is by plane, arrangements can be made with a shipping and forwarding agency to send heavy baggage by ship.

All travel arrangements should be made well in advance of the date of departure, and students should arrange to arrive at the university several days before the date specified for registration.

On arrival in Canada: A student should have with him approximately \$50 cash in Canadian currency, which will be required for immediate expenses, such as meals, lodgings, transportation and tips. Some of this currency should be in \$1 and \$5 bills, with a small amount in change -- 25-cent pieces (quarters), 10-cent pieces (dimes) and 5-cent pieces (nickels).

If a student has made an arrangement with an organization in Canada to be met on arrival, he should contact the organization if any changes have to be made in travel plans. Between August 15 and September 30, the Canadian Service for Overseas Students and Trainees (CSOST) operates a special "Overseas Students Reception Desk" at the Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver airports.

Its representatives, on duty from 9:00 a.m. to midnight, wear armbands with the words "OVERSEAS STUDENTS - RECEPTION - ETUDIANTS D'OUTRE-MER". They will welcome students on arrival, and assist them with their onward travel plans.

If you arrive at an airport and find no one there to meet you, travel into the city by airport bus, airport limousine or taxi. Make enquiries about which mode of transportation is the least expensive depending upon your final destination in the city. Ordinarily, limousine or bus service to the centre of the city costs \$1.50 - \$2.00.

It is recommended that students travelling by sea who wish to be met write to CSOST, Suite 408, 151 Slater Street, Ottawa 4, Canada, at least one month before arrival, to give the name of the ship, class of passage, port and date of arrival in Canada.

Temporary Accommodation

If temporary accommodation is required, it is useful to write in advance for reservations if the definite date of arrival is known. Single men and women can usually find temporary accommodation in a YMCA or YWCA, where rooms are less expensive than in a hotel. It is often convenient to reserve a room for a night or two on arrival, until one has time to find other accommodation. In some cases, it may be necessary to share a room. Accommodation for one night will cost about \$5.00.

Hotels: The price quoted in a Canadian hotel is for the room only, and meals are not included. A single room with bathroom costs a minimum of about \$8.00 a day. Rooms can be reserved by telephone or letter, but will not be held beyond the stipulated day of arrival. There is a specified checking-out time when rooms must be vacated. Arrangements can always be made for baggage to be looked after or "checked" until a guest is ready to depart. Failure to observe the checking-out time usually involves a charge for an additional day.

Travel in Canada

Most bus, railway and airport terminals have an information counter where timetables are given out free and information can be obtained. If you wish to insure your baggage, you should make inquiries at the information counter.

Bus: Bus travel is the least expensive but the slowest means of transportation on very long trips. On runs of 100 - 300 miles, bus travel is generally faster than train travel.

Railway: Railroads allow 150 pounds of baggage free on each ticket. Baggage may be sent in advance, in which case a numbered ticket will be issued for reclaiming it on arrival. The least expensive form of travel by train is day-coach. To buy sleeping accommodation, it is necessary to have a first-class or tourist ticket. There are various types of sleeping accommodation, the least expensive of which is an upper berth. Passengers usually tip sleeping-car porters at least 50 cents a night. Most trains have a dining-

car where hot meals are served. Many also have a coffee-shop, or "dinettes", for light meals. Charges are high on trains for full meals served in a dining-car. They are, however, included in the price of a first-class ticket.

Air: There are good plane connections to all the larger cities in the country. Usually two types of fare are available - first-class and economy; economy fares are considerably cheaper. All fares include the cost of meals served on the plane and there is no tipping involved. Passages should be booked a week or so in advance.

Local transportation: Buses, street cars and subways are the ordinary means of transportation in the main cities. There is generally a standard charge for travel anywhere in the city, and the individual fare will sometimes be cheaper if a number of tickets are purchased at one time. In some cities, it is possible to transfer from one bus-route to another to reach your destination, in which case the bus-operator should be asked for a transfer ticket at the time the fare is paid. Taxis in larger cities are quite expensive. The taxi-fare is registered on a meter and fares are generally charged at a fixed rate according to the distance travelled, with additional charges for heavy pieces of luggage, such as trunks, and sometimes for extra passengers.

VI LIFE AT A CANADIAN UNIVERSITY

(a) Accommodation

Overseas students should keep the local immigration officer and the university registrar informed of their addresses at all times. If they wish, students may ask the university registrar, dean, chaplain, or foreign-student adviser to allow mail from home to be addressed in their care until lodgings have been found. Students might also find it useful to have money sent in their care, or that of the university business officer, until they have opened bank accounts.

Residence: In Canada, university buildings and residence halls are generally grouped in one area, called the "campus". In addition to bedrooms, residences usually have dining-rooms and living-rooms for study and relaxation. Students from outside Canada would be wise to seek accommodation in a university residence, since this will give them an opportunity to get to know their fellow students. Students in residence, however, are subject to certain regulations imposed by the university administration. Reservations for places in residence should be made several months in advance of arrival, and requests should be addressed to the university housing-officer.

Campus Co-operative Residences: At some universities, campus co-operatives are becoming popular, since housing is provided for men and women at lower rates than in university residences. Most rooms are double or triple, and meals are taken in common dining-rooms. Occasionally, a few flats are available for married couples. Non-resident members may arrange to take their meals in the co-operative.

Rooming-houses: Since at most universities there are not sufficient residences to accommodate all students, many live in rooming-houses away from

the campus. Most universities maintain a housing-service that provides students with a list of places where rooms may be rented. In some cases, both room and board are provided at a weekly or monthly rate (about \$25 a week). In others, room only is provided (about \$10-\$15 a week) and the student may have cooking facilities to prepare his own meals or he may eat at restaurants or in university cafeterias. If a student pays rent by the week, one week's notice only will be required in he wishes to move. Otherwise, a month's notice is generally required.

Apartments: If a student is bringing his wife or family with him to Canada, he may wish to rent an apartment with one or two bedrooms. Apartments are normally supplied with a refrigerator and stove. Rent generally includes the cost of heating and, in some cases, electricity. It is often necessary to sign a lease for a year or more when renting an apartment, and landlords require one month's rent in advance or a deposit against damage and other liabilities, which will usually be returned when the tenant leaves the apartment. A lease should be read carefully before it is signed, and, if necessary, advice should be sought from the foreign-student adviser or student personnel officer at the university. Flats are more economical, since they usually have a shared bathroom.

Students may encounter some difficulty, on occasion, in obtaining accommodation. In every country there can be found individuals who practice discrimination based on religion, race, language, money or education. If an overseas student has the misfortune to encounter any form of discrimination in Canada, it should be reported to the university authorities.

(b) Social Life

At most Canadian universities, students elect a council which is their administrative government or student union at university, and which is in charge of a wide range of social and recreational activities. All students are members of the student union, to which a fee is paid at the time of registration. Numerous social, intellectual, political, religious and literary clubs are found on the campus. Sports generally include football (North American style), soccer, ice-hockey, skiing, swimming and basketball.

At many universities there are clubs for students from particular countries and general foreign-student organizations or International Houses. These provide an excellent opportunity for students to meet their fellow-countrymen, other overseas students and Canadian students. Canadian students are not always ready to take the initiative in getting to know students from other countries. You should not, therefore, have any reservations about making the first move in getting to know your fellow-students. Many overseas students meet Canadians through fellow-students and faculty members. Very often, special programs of activities are held with the purpose of bringing together overseas students and Canadians. Overseas students are advised, if possible, to bring a few items from home that will be of interest to Canadian friends, such as maps, pictures, musical instruments, recordings, handicrafts and national costumes.

VII LIFE IN CANADA

(a) Geographic Location and Climate

Canada occupies nearly half the North American continent with the exception of Alaska, and is territorially the second-largest country in the world. Its area is over 3.8 million square miles. It stretches over 3,200 miles from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific, and almost 3,000 miles from the Northern tip of Ellesmere Island to the United States border. It has a population of over 21 million inhabitants.

The climate in Canada varies greatly from region to region, but is generally one of extremes. In British Columbia, summers (June to September) are long and warm, while winters (November to March) are mild and wet in the coastal regions and cold in the interior. In the Prairie Provinces, the climate is dry and temperatures in summer and winter are extreme owing to the fact that these provinces are shielded from the Pacific Ocean and are in the interior of a large land-mass. The large water-surfaces of Eastern Canada produce a considerable modification in the climate of Ontario and Quebec. While summers are hot and humid, and winters cold, in southwestern Ontario winters are relatively mild and summers benefit from the cooling effect of the Great Lakes. Climate in the Atlantic Provinces is similar to that of Ontario and Quebec, though the Atlantic Ocean has considerable effect on the immediate coastal area, where temperatures are modified and conditions made more humid when the winds blow inland from the ocean.

When making arrangements to study at a Canadian university, overseas students ought to make enquiries about the climate of the particular area or city in which they will be studying and living. In winter, buildings are heated and in summer they are often air-conditioned.

(b) People

Canada is a country of two official languages, English and French. Bank-notes, stamps, government documents and packages containing common household goods are printed in both languages. In addition to Canadians of British and French ancestry, many other nationalities, mainly European, are represented among the Canadian people.

There is a great diversity of religions in Canada, but the majority of the population is Christian. Many non-Christian faiths are represented, and places of worship for those of other faiths can be found in some Canadian cities.

(c) Banking and Commerce

It is not wise to carry more than about \$20 in currency, or to leave large sums of money in one's room. It is easy to open a bank-account in Canada, which is the safest way to keep money. Cheques are generally used for major payments and money required for day-to-day expenditures can easily be withdrawn from a bank account. Bank assistants will be ready to provide advice and help in opening an account. When travelling, use travellers' cheques, which can be cashed in banks, hotels, trust company offices, and most stores. Some Canadians buy goods by hire purchase or deferred payments. Do not sign any agreement or pay any deposit until you have had advice from a university official on these matters.

(d) Food

Outside the university, there are restaurants, coffee-shops, cafeterias and lunch-counters where meals can be obtained. Cafeterias are cheaper than restaurants. Lunch-counters, where snacks, sandwiches, ice-cream and beverages are served, can be found in drug-stores (chemists' shops) and sometimes in department stores and small shops. Restaurants provide a variety of meals. Prices vary and tips of 10-15 per cent of the bill are expected.

If you wish to prepare your own meals, food can be bought most conveniently in "supermarkets", where you select your purchases from the display shelves and pay for them at the cashier's desk.

Certain types of Canadian food may cause you some confusion. For example, a "hamburger" is made of ground beef, not ham; and a "hot dog" contains a sausage which may be made of pork or beef. If you do not recognize the name of a type of food, ask what it contains.

Mealtimes: Breakfast: usually 7 - 8 a.m. Lunch: between 12 noon and 2 p.m. Dinner: between 5:30 and 7 p.m. The evening meal is often called supper.

(e) Clothes

You should inquire about the climate of the area where you will be living before you decide what clothes to bring with you. Students coming to Canada from warmer climates would be well-advised to wait until their arrival to buy winter clothing. In Canada, students can often purchase clothing at a reduced price or during sales.

In general, casual clothes are worn at universities and colleges for lectures. During winter and autumn months, women students wear woollen dresses, suits or skirts with blouses or sweaters. In spring and summer, cotton dresses and skirts with blouses are generally worn. Low-heeled shoes are suitable most of the time, with high heels for more formal wear, depending on fashion. Wool hats, scarves, gloves, overshoes and heavy overcoats are worn during cold weather. Most Asian women wear their national dress every day, with a coat in cold weather. Men normally wear slacks and sports shirts or regular shirts and ties with sweaters or jackets. Neckties and jackets should always be worn to church, parties, and when visiting Canadian homes. A suit is appropriate for parties and dances. Men wear their national dress only on special occasions.

(f) Laundries

Laundries and dry-cleaners can be located through the classified telephone directory. The charge for dry-cleaning a woollen dress or suit, for example, is \$1.75. Many laundries and dry-cleaners will collect and deliver clothes, though it may sometimes be less expensive to take them into the shop yourself. The laundry cleaning-list will show the charge for each article. In some universities, there are laundry facilities on the campus. Washing-machines are often available in university residence.

There are also "laundromats", or coin laundries, in most cities. These are used by customers who bring their own laundry, put the clothes in a washing-machine, where they are washed, rinsed and partially dried, and then put into a drier, which completes the process. The clothes will still require ironing. The normal charge is 25 cents for washing eight or nine pounds of clothes, and 10 cents for drying.

(g) Barbers and Beauty Parlours

Barbers have a separate price for each item of service, indicated on a schedule posted in the shop. A haircut usually costs about \$2.50. Beauty parlours vary in price for services, including shampoos, permanents and manicures. A shampoo and set costs \$2.50 to \$3.50. Tips of 10-15 per cent (minimum 25 cents) are expected. Some barbers have had no experience in cutting the hair of customers from countries in Africa, Asia and the West Indies, and may refuse to cut your hair for this reason. If you have difficulty, ask other students to recommend a barber who can cut your hair.

(h) Postal Facilities and Communications

Letters: The regular rate for letters within Canada is 6 cents, and such letters are sent airmail when appropriate. For information about rates for letters to other countries, you should inquire at a post-office. Special airmail letter forms (aerograms) may be purchased for 10 cents and sent to any country. Every city has a main post-office downtown and a number of district post-offices. Stamps may be purchased in many drug-stores and cigar-stores. When changing your address, ask at the post-office for a change-of-address card, which will ensure that your mail will be re-routed to your new address. These cards are free and can also be sent to your family and friends to notify them of a change of address.

Telephone: Directions on how to make a call are given in the front of the telephone directory. Public telephones are to be found in booths on the street, and in some drug-stores, cigar-stores, hotels and restaurants. There is no charge for local calls made from private telephones, or any limit to the length of the call. The charge for long-distance calls is based on a three-minute call and is lower after 6 p.m.. Special reduced rates after 8 p.m. are in operation in Ontario and Quebec, and throughout the country after midnight. Calls can be made either person-to-person or station-to-station. For the latter, which is less expensive, you agree to speak with anyone who answers; in the former case, you specify the person with whom you wish to talk and you pay nothing if the operator fails to reach that person. It is very expensive to call persons in other countries and you should make certain what expenses will be involved before placing a call.

Telegrams: Within Canada, telegrams are sent over Canadian National and Canadian Pacific lines and can be handed in at railway stations, bus and airport terminals and hotels. If you telephone your message, you will be billed for it at a later date. The basic rate for a telegram in Canada is based on a 10-word message. Charges for night-letters and day-letters, which are cheaper, are based on a 50-word message. Charges for cables sent outside Canada are based on a fixed cost a word, including the address.

(i) Some Social Customs

Learning the customs of a people takes time, and most of these will have to be learned through association with Canadians. However, the following points may be useful for you to know at the start of your stay in Canada.

Most people in Canada attach much importance to punctuality. It is customary for invitations to be answered promptly, and for appointments to be kept. If you have promised to go to a home or to meet someone, you should do so at the time agreed on unless you send word that you cannot keep your appointment.

After receiving hospitality, it will be appreciated if you phone or send a "thank-you" note to your host or hostess. The Eastern custom of taking a gift when visiting a home for the first time is very gracious, but it is not necessary and could become expensive. It is quite proper to accept an invitation from someone you have never met if this has been arranged by a mutual acquaintance. Although the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays have no significance for many overseas students, you should not feel that you are invading a family circle when invited to spend the holiday with friends. Guests in Canadian homes often offer to help with the dishes and overnight guests make their own beds.

In minor things, it is good to conform to the customs of the people among whom you are living, but it is important to keep your own standard of values. For instance, if religious beliefs or personal preferences prevent you from eating certain foods or from drinking alcoholic beverages, you should not be embarrassed to explain this to your hostess.

In Canada, relations between the sexes are quite informal. This freedom may sometimes be misinterpreted. For instance, if a man and woman share a seat on a train or bus, they may talk to each other but this should not be taken to indicate that either wishes to continue the chance acquaintance. Similarly, on campus, when men and women invite each other to join in various social activities, it need not imply sustained interest.

Most Canadians believe in equality between the sexes, but forms of courtesy in this country have traditionally given women preference. A woman goes through a door before the man who is escorting her. When a man and woman walk together, the man walks on the side nearest the street. A man usually rises when a woman enters a room, and takes off his hat when greeting women.

Further information about life in Canada and at a Canadian university can be obtained from individual universities and campus organizations.

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