



## Tips on Studying Abroad at the University of New South Wales (Summer Program) in Australia

Want to know what it's like to study abroad? Want to know what your peers think? Your fellow Georgia Tech students who have previously gone on this exchange program gave their opinions so that future participants have the inside scoop on their host institution and host country.

### Preparation & Getting Started

- I chose this program both for its location and its course offerings. I really wanted to go to Australia, but the Pacific Program offers few classes that applied to my ME major. After looking around some on the OIE Website, I found Energy Tomorrow, which was the best of both worlds.
- Getting courses pre-approved was not very difficult, just required a meeting with my ME advisor and allowed the ME dept to review the UNSW curriculum.
- Registering for courses at host school was fairly simple, made easy by the host school organization and communication.

### Classes

- Class size was about 13 students.
- There were several different professors. They were all experts in different areas of alternative energy.
- Classes were made up of all US students, but from several schools across the country.
- Course difficulty was moderate. There was more focus on papers/presentations/discussion than a typical engineering class, which was a refreshing change.
- Since the class was small, it was conducive to small debates especially on some of the more controversial topics. Also, there were a few field trips.
- We had at least one assignment a week, two larger papers and one summary presentation at the end.

### Housing

- The housing process was all coordinated by program coordinators at UNSW through the initial application.
- The location was great, in each of the three locations (Darwin, Cairns and Sydney).
- In Darwin and Cairns I had one roommate. In Sydney, rooms are individual with shared bathrooms.
- Facilities were great, clean.

### Food

- Food costs are moderate.
- There are kitchen facilities in Darwin so you can make your own, but it is difficult to do so in the other cities.
- Buy peanut butter!
- We had breakfast and lunch on-campus everyday. Sometimes we ate dinner on-campus in Sydney. The food wasn't fabulous, but as could be expected from an on-campus cafeteria.
- On-campus food is included in trip cost.
- Recommendations: In Sydney, try the Chinese place a little ways down Anzac away from Circular Quay. It's really cheap and good. In Cairns, ask around for the hostel with buffets for \$5 AUS.



\*These comments do not reflect the views of GT's Office of International Education. They are students' individual opinions and are, therefore, not necessarily representative of all student experiences.



### Packing

- Must haves: swimming suit, a light jacket and a few things in between (at least one sweater).
- They tell you to bring a sleeping bag, but you only use it for two nights of the six weeks and it juts takes up room. They have sleeping bags for you to use if that doesn't bother you.
- You are going to be in everything from a tropical climate to a (very mild) winter so you just have to prepare for that. DON'T overpack, though.

### Communication

- Purchase phone cards there or use Skype.
- You must pay per megabyte for the internet on UNSW's campus. You must put at least \$10 AUS into an account to use the Internet.
- I used a blog, but pictures were expensive to upload (because of reasons listed above) so I didn't send all my pictures out.
- I would bring a laptop.

### Cultural Differences

- My most memorable moment of culture shock involved an experience while camping in the Outback with the Aboriginal people. This was the best experience.
- Australia is VERY laid back. "No worries" sums it up entirely.
- Also, ketchup is not a common condiment.
- Usually if we were being stereotyped as American College students, it's because we were acting in a way that perpetuated that stereotype.

### Lifestyle

- It was easy to meet other students, both within the Energy Tomorrow group and the other groups that go on the trip.
- I socialized with mostly Americans, but you can meet local students if you seek it out.
- I participated in the on-campus gym. It is reasonably priced.
- One of my favorite activities was the hike between Coogi and Bondi beach in Sydney (takes a few hours and its absolutely GORGEOUS).
- The best part of my study abroad experience was either skydiving or scuba diving and all around getting to know the Australians and their culture.



### Participant Profiles

Please see information of contributing students below. If a blog or website is listed, feel free to take a look! Also, if an e-mail address is listed, you may contact that student if you have any questions about their study abroad experience.

ME, Summer 2006

### Transportation & Travel

- Go through the UNSW recommended travel agent to buy your plane ticket.
- Buses are great in Sydney. Cairns and Darwin are so small that you can walk anywhere.
- I liked Adelaide a lot and wished I had got to the Whitsundays.
- Must-see spots: Sydney Zoo, Aussie Rules Game, Great Barrier Reef.
- I wish I would have gone to New Zealand and stayed longer in Australia either before or after my trip.

### Finances

- I spent about \$2000 after program fees. This was with skydiving/bungee jumping/scuba diving.
- I think that \$2000 is a good amount, especially if you want to do all those things. I was careful not to splurge, but I also was not tight with that amount.
- I got a scholarship: the Energy Tomorrow program offers one for \$1000 AUS so be sure to inquire about it. There are also scholarships through the OIE.
- I have Bank of America, so the best way to pay was through Wespac Bank, which is an affiliate. They did not charge any ATM withdrawal fees or foreign transactions, whereas my credit card charged a 3% foreign transaction fee. Definitely inquire with your bank before you go about things like that.