



The orientation session, which consists of a two week French primer course, started the week after I arrived. I would recommend doing this even if you think your level of French is sufficient as it is a great way to meet people. The BDI, the international students group, sends out an email around this time as well with several orientation events, which range from tourist trips to nearby sightseeing locations to dinners out. For the first event, all the international students met at a pub for a casual meet-and-greet. This was really cool because we met people from all over Europe, and some from outside Europe as well. The next big event we did was a day trip to a nearby castle and a small village known for its wine. These events were a lot of fun and a perfect way to meet more international students. After the two weeks were up, we had a final meeting for all international students where we received the course list, information about exams, and various other administrative

students who tried to find a way to get into the courses, as the conferences are

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students. The lectures are not interactive in the slightest; you go to class, you listen to the professor speak, you take notes, and you leave. The course is generally evaluated with an oral exam worth 100% of your final grade at the end. Keep in mind that if you are only staying for the fall term, you can get the

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always much better than my notes.

As a city, Strasbourg is medium-sized. It is not extremely busy, but it isn't quiet either. There are

see all the cultural differences and being able to experience those famous cities was one of the highlights of my exchange. We had plenty of holidays to enjoy travelling too. In the fall, there is a week off for Toussaint holidays, and at the end of December there are two weeks off for Christmas and New Year's. With all the breaks, you should have no problems getting to go to the places you want.

In conclusion, my exchange was a great learning experience. University there is much more impersonal than at SFU and it made me incredibly grateful for our schooling system. That being said, the courses were much more intense than any course I had taken at SFU up until that point. The last two weeks before exams I studied harder than I have ever studied in my life. It was also hard being away from home and everything familiar in Vancouver. It's easy to take the familiarity for granted when you have lived here your entire life, and you have to get used to not knowing your way around at all. Getting through all that, however, was a huge boost to my self-confidence. I now understand how capable I am of taking care of myself and how I really can get through tough times as long as I put my mind to it. That, even more than the amazing pla







