

My life at University of Wisconsin - La Crosse

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Touch down

Who would ever imagine oneself be an exchange student who travels alone on the 23-hour flight to the unknown place (which in the future could be called 'home') far away from him/her beloved people, local food, familiar place and common culture. I can guarantee that not many would ever get this chance. I decided to be an exchange student and selected University of Wisconsin - La Crosse (UWL) as my destination. At first, even though I was an high school exchange student before, but this another journey still made me nervous. As the time goes by, I thought that I have made the right decision and gain a lot. I could talk about this 24-7, since there were tons of story and thing happened when i was there. This opportunity granted me such a wonderful experience, yet teaches me for good. In this essay, I will go through topics that I have selected, for which I think the information from what I have had experienced would be useful for the next year students.

Friendships

This topic frequently be brought up and would concerns mostly Thai kids, which normally like to stay with friends. At UWL, you would never be alone! Since your first date! On the first day, you will get to meet with all new students both exchange student and international student(transferred). That is the time to get to know at least the international kids (In which are easier to approach). The school are fairly open up for international student while providing the relevant staff and program for both in- and out- bound students. There are many international students from everywhere in the world. I get to make friend with multinational friend, such as England, France,

Denmark, Germany, Japan, Korea, China, Kenya, Saudi Arabia. The diversity here are highly promoted.

Since people there mostly went to the same high school and has already been known one another for quite sometimes, so they generally stick with their existing friends, but that does not mean that they are hostile toward you. They may look mean, but that also mean that they do not want to make friend. Maybe that are their appearances and personality, not their heart. They just do not know you unless you introduce yourself to them first. They could be tired of workloads, so be positive and optimistic. Me and my friends would still be a stranger, if I were not to smile and talk. However, the majority of the student are white, some locals are unfamiliar with the minorities, for instance Asian, Latino and middle east. Overall, people are nice, but there are some people that are super duper nice as well!! So the matter are about time to find one, however I believe you WILL find these people.

Academics

UWL is a top tier regional college in academic. The professors are highly understandable and directed to valuable knowledges to student not only theoretically but also practically. They more than willing to answer student question and allowed participation in the most complete way that I ever experience.

I registered for 6 courses. All courses are major junior or senior courses. Each course has at least 2 midterms and at most of 4 midterms with 1 final each. In total, I have around 18 midterms and 6 finals, which give me 24 exams in a 1 single semester. I mean TWENTY-FOUR! Not to mention the projects (both individual and group), homeworks, other assignments. UW education system is not easy like the general American education in Thai kid's perspective, instead totally opposite and unexpected. This is a caution, but not a

threat. If one want there free time without studying all the time, be careful with the course you decide to apply for.

The university provided coherant set of supports for education and convenience to students, for instance free personal microsoft office, and free textbook rental. These 2 kit are super essential for my life, since the textbooks are very expensive and the IT program is vital to everyday assignments and projects. The IT systems WINGS and D2L, these two website are use for checking the grade, communication between professor and student, give and turn in assignments, and so on. These two are far better than Reg.tu for EVERY aspects which I felt like I dont want to lock on to Be.Moodle or Reg.tu again. However, I do realize that I still have year and a half to go so that would not be possible.

Party scene

Let me give you a background of party scene in Thailand first. Thailand as one of the most famous destination for party. The clubs or bars in Thailand in the big cities, Bangkok, Phuket, and Pattaya, are worldclass with many range of prices, class, and music, except for some notorious ones. The bars at a small town in Wisconsin would be incompetible in many aspects, namely weather(Too cold), convenience(How to get to and back?), music(Not so good) except for the Thristy Thursday (Alcohol Buffet for \$10). Other than that wait to party at Home is worthwhile.

Campus and dorm life

UWL located in a small town called 'La Crosse' and YES. This is a college town. The town is full of college student during the year and sadly almost empty during the break. The college offers many extra curriculum facilities, such as In-door sport center (Fitness, tracks, gym), standard size swimming pool, tracks, and football field. The

campus are not that large so all area are accessible by walk. I bought a skateboard and longboard for fun and transportation. These two works prettey well! The dorm(Reuter hall) is clean both hallway and bedroom. My roomates are super cool and nice. We are such a good friends.

Took off

During one memorable semester at Wisconsin, I have had both good times and bad times. Left In tear several times. Life without taste is lame. If I get another chance to decide whether to take major economic and core finance courses, to take 6 courses at once, to go to UWL, to do only 1 semester instead of 1 year, or to be an exchange student. My answer remains the same as before, that glimpse of sweet and sour will be there. Always.