

Australian National University- Semester 1

Visas

Visas are super simple to sort out. Just make an account at immi.gov.au and apply for a student visa. Also make sure you have OSHC which is the compulsory Australian health insurance. If I remember correctly you need this to apply for the visa but this is also straight forward to get too, you can do it by yourself or through the Uni.

Courses

As mentioned in previous student reports about the ANU, teaching is slightly different here in Australia. There are more contact hours because each course has two lectures a week and usually a working group too. There are also differences in examinations too. At ANU there are no 100% exams, usually they are about 30-50% with the other 60% being made up of essays, short assignments and working group participation.

As for course I chose to take this semester; Commonwealth Constitutional Law, Evidence, Law and Psychology and Origins of Analytic Philosophy, as my non-law course. All of the courses were enjoyable and offered something slightly different. This is partly because in Australia they use the common law system so learning about case law and reading dissenting judges views in conjunction with the majority view was a new experience.

Evidence was the best course. It focuses on what types of evidence are used in the courts and whether the evidence is admissible. The lecturer is a retired American lawyer who is really engaging by providing lots of examples as well as playing theme songs to help remember the topics. It is worth turning up just to hear the wide selection of American 50's music and anecdotes. Also in this course you can choose to be assessed by a moot court argument which makes you feel like a real lawyer. The alternative option is to do a written court submission. There is also a final exam of 40% and tutorial participation mark.

Commonwealth Constitutional was another interesting course however, it was rather difficult. Although we have done Constitutional Law in Groningen, which fulfills the prerequisites for this course, the lecturers continually refer to cases studied in APL, the Australian equivalent. This makes it slightly difficult because we haven't studied the cases in APL. Despite this it is possible to keep up and enjoy the course. The main focus of the course is the ability of the Commonwealth to legislate because in Australia the Commonwealth, despite being the central federal power has limited competences. The topics covered range from corporation and external affairs to tax and political freedom. Assessment is a 40% midterm essay or test and a 60% final exam.

Law and Psychology was the final law course. The course takes a very psychological approach to the law. This was good because it gave a different perspective on legal decision making. The topics also covered aspects of the legal process which are not usually covered by

traditional law course. In the course we learnt about how police interview suspects to enhance reliability of answers, the mental incapacity defences and how to detect deception. Assessment in this course is 2 essays worth 40 and 50% in addition to a 10% multiple choice quiz.

Origins of Analytic philosophy was also fun. There were only 6 of us taking the course. The course covers mainly UK philosophers or the early 20th century who studied metaphysics and epistemology. The lecturer was very relaxed and set relatively simple assignments. I would recommend taking this course if you have taken some philosophy courses either in Groningen or at high school. However, this course may not run next year because the lecturer leaving the ANU. Assessed by two 45% essay and 10% tutorial mark.

Accommodation

ANU has 8 undergraduate colleges with 6 on campus, one 'virtual' college and one off campus. The prices range from 200\$ a fortnight uncatered to about 300\$ per fortnight fully catered. The most popular with internationals are B&G and Fenner (most Groningen kids have gone to B&G judging on previous reports). Instead of going to B&G, I decided to go to the off campus hall of residence; Fenner. Despite looking a bit like Korno in Groningen, it was the complete opposite. It was great. Student accommodation in Australia is different to that in Groningen. There is a proper staff and structure to the hall, with various activities and lots of free food provided by the Residents committee. Events include a free bread/coffee night every wednesday and international dinners. There are also lots of free clubs in halls too, ranging from the board games club to film club. Doubtless you'll find a club for you, but, you can also set up your own and get funding from the Hall to do so. Fenner also has a bar called the Warren which serves 2\$ beers/ wine on Thursday and Saturday (it is usually 8\$ per half litre in town). There is also a free bus which runs every 20mins to campus. The shops are about a 20min walk so it would be good to get a bike or sign up early to the Fenner bus that does a weekly thursday trip. The price ranges from 70\$ to \$300.

Sports

Fenner has many sports teams to join and they are all free. You can play for fun or in the inter hall competition. Despite sounding extremely competitive, Fenner takes a relaxed attitude to the competition and anyone is welcome to play regardless of experience (they let me play in the Aussie Rules Football team (AFL), despite never having played before). In terms 3-4 the sports include AFL, Football (called soccer out here. Also rugby and AFL are referred to as football in Australia), Netball, Cricket, Touch Rugby, Tennis, Athletics and Frisbee. There are also more and if your sports is missing it is possible to set up a club for sports too.

Canberra is also home to two rugby teams, the Brumbies in the Super XV's and the Raiders in the NRL. Student tickets are really cheap (20\$) and the games are well worth a watch. Just plan early for the Brumbies because it will be near the end of their season in July. Canberra

also hosts some of the GWS Giants AFL team games. Again tickets are cheap and Fenner usually takes a bus load down to watch. AFL is an interesting game of kicking, punching and bouncing a rugby ball (for a preview look up 'AFL community' on Youtube because they have awesome tutorial videos). If you get hooked on AFL, like me, it is also well worth going down to the MCG (home of Australian cricket and AFL) in Melbourne to watch the preliminary finals in the 2 week mid semester break. There are also plenty of other sports in Canberra for those who like other sports.

Weather and Wildlife

Australia does have a reputation for being super hot and full of deadly creatures. Despite this Canberra was a little chilly in July. However, this doesn't last so bring your summer clothes because it gets warm very quickly. The weather in Canberra is the complete opposite to Groningen. Instead of having days of back to back rain and one day of sun, in Canberra it is constantly sunny. So make sure to bring a hat and get some sun cream. Still bring a rain coat for when it does rain, for that one day, it rains really heavily.

Canberra is known as the bush (countryside) capital and that description is very true. Behind Fenner is Mt. Ainslie which, is only about a 30min walk to the top. From here there are awesome views of Canberra and there are wild kangaroos along the path. As for snakes and other deadly critters I haven't seen one in the wild, yet, despite doing various treks around Canberra and in the Blue Mountains (definitely visit the Blue Mountains they are so beautiful, especially Wentworth Falls). The only things to watch for are Drop Bears and the swooping Magpies.

Things to do in Australia

People will tell you that there is nothing to do in Canberra, but, there are lots of things. Firstly, law related there is the ACT Supreme court and High Court of Australia. These are especially interesting if you do Evidence and Commonwealth Constitutional Law. There is also the Commonwealth Parliament, the Burley Griffin Lake (good for a BBQ), the Telstra Tower and many more. Coffee is also popular in Australia and there are nice cafes along Lonsdale street and on campus. Also try Mandalay, which is a big yellow bus that serves delicious asian food. It is a firm favourite with Fennerites. 500 is also a popular card game here, so it would be worth learning. Given its popularity here you'll be able to find someone in Fenner to teach you.

In the Semester it is also possible to go to Sydney, which is two hours away, and Melbourne (8hrs by bus). Melbourne is a super city. If you enjoy coffee, films and sport Melbourne offers all of these plus the famous beer Victoria Brown (it is more famous than Fosters). Getting to Melbourne the cheapest way is Vline coaches at 30\$ each way. Sydney is also good for the traditional touristy stuff and the A-League football. Another interesting place in NSW apart from Sydney, to visit are the beaches between Batemans Bay and Tomakin. The beaches are golden and the sea is so clear and blue. It is also possible to go surfing here with

fewer sharks. Apparently the other side of the country, in Western Australia, is the best place for seeing sharks.

There are also other places to go. Some of the other exchange students went to Ayers rock and Cairns during the mid term break. Tasmania and Brisbane are apparently also good but I haven't managed to get to them yet, that is for the summer break before the new semester starts. If you enjoy the first semester it is possible to extend your exchange and stay for an extra semester at ANU. All the best with the application and have a super time in Canberra.