Country: Chile  Program: Pontifical Catholic University of Chile  Term & Year Abroad: Spring 2011  Gender: Female  Major/Minor: Political Science

Instructors
- **What were they like when compared to UCSB instructors?**
  They were less organized than UCSB professors and placed more emphasis on readings rather than lectures tested on exams.

- **Could you call them by their first names?**
  No, I would call them by their last names.

- **Was the student/instructor relationship more formal than at UCSB?**
  The relationship was about the same between students and professors.

- **Were they available for help during office hours?**
  It was very difficult to know if a professor had office hours and whether they would be there on a daily basis.

Courses
- **Were the courses more difficult when compared to UCSB courses?**
  Since the courses were semester long instead of quarters, I felt like the classes were harder. Everyone in the classes were students in the major so taking a GE was a bit difficult.

- **Was the grading system similar to UCSB?**
  No, in Chile they used the grading system 1 through 7, where 7 is the best score.

- **How did the course structure differ? Ex) did you have many assignments or just finals?**
  The structure was similar to UCSB with multiple midterms and paper and a final. The difference is that most classes had group projects. Since classes were semester long there were usually 2-3 midterms, a paper, a group project and a final.

- **Did you have oral and/or written exams?**
  I only had written exams throughout the semester.

- **Was the final exam schedule flexible or inflexible?**
  The final exam schedule was inflexible unless you had already purchased your plane ticket to go home. Then professors would be flexible.

- **What kind of academic support, if any, did you receive?**
  The EAP center offered a lot of support and was very useful.

- **Did you find you needed to be more independent and take more initiative abroad?**
  I was definitely very independent in selecting classes and registering. Yes I definitely feel I needed to take initiative while abroad concerning my classes because the school system is more complicated and does not cater to UC students. However, the study center is very helpful.

- **Was classroom participation expected?**
  In some classes participation was expected and normal and it seemed more like an open discussion that the professor would lead. In other classes, the professor just lectured the whole time.
How were the host university courses different than UCSB courses?
They required more readings than a regular course at UCSB. Also the courses do not require textbooks, so everything we read are from a reader.

Were classes usually on certain days/times and for how long?
Yes classes were on set days and times, but when classes were cancelled I would never get notified.

What is the class culture like? How important was it to be punctual? Could you eat/drink in class?
A lot of students are late and it is acceptable to walk in late. Most classes it was acceptable to eat and drink during class. Even professors are late at times since they run on “Chilean time”.

Language
- In which languages were the courses offered?
Spanish

- What language did you take your courses in?
Spanish

- If you took your courses in a foreign language, please provide info about your overall experience, difficulty of courses, language acquisition, placement exams, etc.
Listening to lectures and taking notes was simple. Taking exams in Spanish was difficult because I would know the information but sometimes I would blank because I didn’t know how to put my thoughts into Spanish. Also a lot of my readings were in English so I would have to translate it in Spanish in my head.

Host University
- How large is the university? Student enrollment and approx campus size (smaller than UCSB)? Is it an urban campus with many tall buildings or just a few building?
The university is very large with 4 campuses. It is an urban university in that it is spread throughout the city with several buildings.

- Do the local students live on campus, at home, or off campus?
Students live either at home or off campus.

- If not located in the city center,
  - How far or close is it to the city?
    From the center of the city it would take 30 to 40 minutes on the metro to get there.
  - What type of public transportation could you take – cost?
    Metro and it would cost around $1.50 each way
  - Could students take cabs -cost?
    No, it would be too expensive to take cabs to class
  - How long would it take to get to the city center?
    It depends on where you live in Santiago

- Are there student clubs on campus that UC students could join?
Yes, but I didn’t see that much advertising on campus

- Is there a bookstore on campus? Where did you get your books?
Chilean students do not buy textbooks. They either have to buy readers or photocopy the pages needed from the books in the library.
- Is there a computer lab on campus? Or, should students bring laptops?
Yes, there were many computer labs on campus, but some students did bring their laptops.

- What types of establishments are in the university’s neighborhood? (cafes, stores, etc)
There were cafes, cafeterias, school supply stores and printing company store.

**Housing**

- What types of accommodations are available to UC students?
Homestay with a Chilean family, residential housing, or off-campus housing.

- How close are they to campus?
It depends on what part of the city you want to live.

- How did you find your housing?
EAP study center had a bulletin with rental advertisement

- Where did you live and with whom?
I live in the center of Santiago and I live another student in the UC program

- If you lived off campus, was it difficult to find an apartment and roommate?
It was a little stressful to find an apartment because sometimes the apartments are nice, but the area isn’t or vice versa.

- Were the rooms nicer or not than I.V./UCSB dorms?
The apartments were definitely nicer than IV apartments. And the apartments came furnished.

- Was it more expensive than living in I.V.? How much was a typical rent cost in US dollars?
It was less expensive than living in I.V. My rent was 400 including utilities and I had my own room and it was furnished.

- How/who did you pay for housing?
I would pay cash every month to the landlord.

**Food**

- What was the food like?
The food was a little plain to me since I really like spicy food. The food included a lot of veggies.

- Where did you eat most of your meals? Cafeterias, restaurants, street vendors, etc?
I would buy groceries and cook most of my meals. I also ate at a lot of restaurants.

- How much was an average meal?
An average meal was about 10-15 dollars

- What time of day did people eat lunch/dinner?
People ate lunch around 12 and that was the biggest meal of the day. Dinner is eaten at 6 or 7 and it usually is a small meal consisting of tea and bread with cheese and ham.

- Would it be difficult for vegetarians to find meals?
No, Chileans eat a lot of vegetables in meals, so I think it would be easy.
Travel/Safety
- If not discussed above, describe the public transportation system around your host university/city?
The most common form of transportation is the metro (subway) and the buses. The metros are extremely packed during peak hours, but the metros are very frequent. The buses run all night and are usually less crowded. There are a lot of bus stops and metro stops and you can combine in order to get to your destination.

- Did you feel safe in your host city? Are there tips you would offer future students?
I did feel safe in my city especially walking by myself around the city. I would advise students to pay close attention to your bags because petty theft is fairly common especially on public transportation.

- Describe the public transportation in your host country?
It is very clean and convenient. It is also the cheapest form of transportation and almost everyone in the city uses it as their primary form of transportation. The metro and buses come very often and go to all parts of Santiago.

- Was it difficult/easy to travel to neighboring countries?
It was fairly simple to travel to neighboring countries through plane or bus. The buses are not that expensive, but take a lot time while plane are a bit more expensive and you save a lot of time. Some countries require visas like Brazil.

Host City/Country
- What was the weather like?
When I arrived in January it was really hot like 90-100 F and then it cooled down. When I was leaving it was winter so it was extremely cold. It rains a little and snows in the mountains nearby.

- Describe your host city…which California/US city is it similar to (if any)?
Santiago is a big city similar to San Francisco without the bay. Santiago had good and bad areas and it is a large city with different provinces.

- What were some interesting/fun things that you did in the host city?
Hiking to Cerro San Cristobal is a fun activity to do especially because you get an amazing view of the city. Also there are many museums that are free on Sundays that are pretty fun. Also Chile has a big social night life full of clubs and bars.

- How international was your host city in terms of tourism, cultural diversity, and international businesses?
Chile was very international with many routes to neighboring countries and different cities throughout Chile. Chile does not have that many cultural things that are international like other countries but they do have a lot of national pride.

Culture
- Describe the cultural differences that you observed/encountered.
  - Time & punctuality
    Chileans operate on their own time and are always late. They are usually 20-30 minutes late if it’s informal meeting and about 10-15 min for formal meeting
Eye contact & staring
Many Chileans stare if they hear you speaking English.

Relationships
Couples in relationships display a lot of public affection in public transportation or public areas.

More formal dress in general, for women, for school, etc?
Women dress fairly trendy going to school, and sweats are not accepted at the university level.

Alcohol consumption
Chileans drink a lot. Alcohol is part of the social aspect of the culture and wine is also very popular at dinners. Pisco is the national liquor and almost everyone drinks it.

What culture shock did you go through?
The biggest culture shock I had in Chile was that Chileans speak a different Spanish with many modismos, so it was difficult to adjust.

Other?
Also you can definitely see the affects of the Pinochet regime on the Chilean population, and it is still a huge part of the culture of the country.

Banking

Are credit cards widely accepted?
Yes, credit cards were accepted but depending on your bank determined if you were charged an international fee.

Did you open a local bank account? Was it easy?
No, you can only open a banking account in Chile if you are a Chilean resident and have credit in Chile.

If you did not open a local bank account, was it easy to withdraw money from the ATM? Which banks were popular & had low ATM fees?
Yes, it was easy to withdraw from ATM’s and the most popular banks were Salander, Banco de Chile, BBVA. Most ATMs charged $5 per withdrawal.

Were there ATMs on campus?
Yes there were ATMs on campus.