Instructors
- **What were they like when compared to UCSB instructors?**
  Instructors in large classes were more distant than those at UCSB. They didn’t hold office hours
  if you needed to talk to them, but when we arrived we were told to introduce ourselves to the
  professor so that they knew foreign students were in their classes. Instructors for sections were
  more approachable, though it did depend on the class.

- **Could you call them by their first names?**
  No, instructors were called by their title and last names.

- **Was the student/instructor relationship more formal than at UCSB?**
  It was certainly more formal than at UCSB.

- **Were they available for help during office hours?**
  Not for regular students, but for foreign students the instructors were more likely to help. There
  were no office hours, but you could email the instructor with a question and they would try and
  help you.

Courses
- **Were the courses more difficult when compared to UCSB courses?**
  Some of the courses were more difficult because there was a lot of information to understand
  and little time to copy notes. If you had trouble, though, you could ask another student for their
  notes.

- **Was the grading system similar to UCSB?**
  The grading system was much different. Everything was on a scale of 1 to 20 but the points are
  more curved than in the United States. In France, a 10 out of 20 is still ok where here it would
  be an F.

- **How did the course structure differ? Ex) did you have many assignments or just finals?**
  In some classes I had some small written assignments, but most of the courses had papers or
  exams only.

- **Did you have oral and/or written exams?**
  In one class I had an oral exam with the lecture professor, but otherwise I had written exams for
  all of my classes.

- **Was the final exam schedule flexible or inflexible?**
  Fall Semester Only: The instructors in my classes made finals exams to fit our schedule since
  the EAP term ended before the semester did.

- **What kind of academic support, if any, did you receive?**
  If I had any questions, the instructor would answer them as best they could and they seemed to
  be more helpful towards the foreign students than the actual French students.

- **Did you find you needed to be more independent and take more initiative abroad?**
Yes, there was definitely a need to be more independent in your classes. A paper topic was usually broader and we had to answer the question to the best of our ability.

- **Was classroom participation expected?**
  Not usually for foreign students, but it was a plus for you if you participated in class.

- **How were the host university courses different than UCSB courses?**
  Host university courses were fairly similar, except there were 3 levels of courses.

- **Were classes usually on certain days/times and for how long?**
  Classes were usually only held once a week, though there were some classes that met twice a week.

- **What is the class culture like? How important was it to be punctual? Could you eat/drink in class?**
  People would show up to class and take notes, though there were a lot of people who talked in class since the lectures were so large. This made it difficult sometimes for me to hear what the professor was saying, especially since the class was in French.

**Language**

- **In which languages were the courses offered?**
  Most classes were in French, though there were language classes offered.

- **What language did you take your courses in?**
  I took all of my courses in French.

- **If you took your courses in a foreign language, please provide info about your overall experience, difficulty of courses, language acquisition, placement exams, etc.**
  The professors were a lot more helpful for foreign students, but it was sometimes difficult to completely grasp what professors were saying. As long as you asked for help, though, the class became manageable and it didn’t seem as scary.

**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 entire University of Bordeaux is quite large since it includes many campuses, and the University of Bordeaux III had quite a lot of students. It was difficult to fully understand how many there were, but the trams were packed in between classes. The campus itself isn’t anything fantastic, there are a lot of buildings but most of them are only four or five stories tall.

- **Do the local students live on campus, at home, or off campus?**
  Local students usually lived downtown where there was a lot to do and then commuted to campus, though those without a lot of money lived in dorms off campus.

- **If not located in the city center,**
  o **How far or close is it to the city?**
    The university is about 30 minutes away from downtown by tram.

  o **What type of public transportation could you take – cost?**
There were buses or the tram and an all day ticket costs about 4 euro, though there were monthly or year passes a person could buy. The trams and buses don’t run very late, though, even on the weekends.

- **Could students take cabs?**
  - There were cabs, but most students didn’t take them because there was no need and it was easy to walk most places.

- **How long would it take to get to the city center?**
  - Since I lived downtown, I was already in the city center but most people travelled 5 or 10 minutes from where they lived to get downtown. There were some people who took longer, though.

- **Are there student clubs on campus that UC students could join?**
  - There are clubs on campus, but I don’t know of anyone who joined one while abroad.

- **Is there a bookstore on campus? Where did you get your books?**
  - There are bookstores downtown, or one somewhat close to campus, where everyone gets their books for class. It looked like the instructors tell the bookstores what books they need so they can order enough.

- **Is there a computer lab on campus? Or, should students bring laptops?**
  - There was a computer lab on campus and that was the best way to access the internet while on campus because wifi was not available everywhere, only at the cafeterias. Once living off campus, though, I would recommend having a laptop.

- **What types of establishments are in the university’s neighborhood? (cafés, stores, etc)**
  - There are some cafés nearby, as well as university owned cafeterias to get food, but other than that there is not much around the university.

**Housing**

- **What types of accommodations are available to UC students?**
  - EAP students can either stay in an apartment or in a homestay.

- **How close are they to campus?**
  - It really varies, but some are 10 minutes away, others 45 minutes to an hour.

- **How did you find your housing?**
  - The UC center at the University gave us a list of apartments and we had to phone landlords in order to find one we liked.

- **Where did you live and with whom?**
  - I lived in downtown Bordeaux with another UC student.

- **If you lived off campus, was it difficult to find an apartment and roommate?**
  - It wasn’t difficult since they gave us a list and both of us were looking for a place to live.
- Were the rooms nicer or not than I.V./UCSB dorms?
  It depended, but my apartment was a lot nicer than most places in IV.

- Was it more expensive than living in I.V.? How much was a typical rent cost in US dollars?
  For where I stayed, it was less expensive than living in IV per month because my rent, about $750, included internet, water, garbage, electricity and a washer.

- How/who did you pay for housing?
  We paid the owner of the apartment every month in cash.

Food
- What was the food like?
  The food was usually very good, especially some of the sandwiches that I had from different sandwich shops.

- Where did you eat most of your meals? Cafeterias, restaurants, street vendors, etc?
  I ate most of my meals in my apartment since it was usually less expensive that way.

- How much was an average meal?
  Depending on what a person bought, it could be about 5 to 10 euro.

- What time of day did people eat lunch/dinner?
  People ate lunch around 12 or 12:30 but did not eat dinner until 9 or 10pm.

- Would it be difficult for vegetarians to find meals?
  It was fairly difficult for vegetarians to find meals -- they usually were limited to salad or eating at home.

Travel/Safety
- If not discussed above, describe the public transportation system around your host university/city?

- Did you feel safe in your host city? Are there tips you would offer future students?
  I felt safe in my home city, though there was a lot of pickpocketing. If you paid attention, there was little to worry about.

- Describe the public transportation in your host country?
  The TGV (fast train) and other trains were a great way to get around France because most trips took 2 or 3 hours and then you had plenty of time to spend a weekend away. There are also many airports in France, though flights can be expensive.

- Was it difficult/easy to travel to neighboring countries?
  It was pretty easy since travelling within the European Union meant you didn’t need to get your passport stamped every time you landed in a new country. Out of Bordeaux, flying is the best and easiest way to get to other countries.

Host City/Country
- **What was the weather like?**
  When I first arrived in Bordeaux it was late August and it was really hot, but by winter it gets really cold and even starts to snow.

- **Describe your host city...which California/US city is it similar to (if any)?**
  I can’t think of a specific city, but it certainly seems like a smaller, urban city.

- **What were some interesting/fun things that you did in the host city?**
  Wine tasting was a big thing to do in Bordeaux and every so often there were little festivals held that you could go to. Also, the Rue St. Catherine has lots of shopping, so that’s what most people do after work or on Saturday. There are also operas, musicals and ballets that are performed in the Grand Theatre that are great to see and students receive a discount, which is great. There are also museums and a soccer team to watch.

- **How international was your host city in terms of tourism, cultural diversity, and international businesses?**
  There were a lot of people in the city who were from other countries, many of whom were students. There are also some immigrants in the city and they are located in certain areas of the city. It was somewhat international but it wasn’t extreme.

**Culture**

- **Describe the cultural differences that you observed/encountered.**
  
  o **Time & punctuality**
  Public transportation had a tendency to be late, which seems to be common in France. There are times where a bus will arrive early and leave early, but that seemed to be rare.
  
  o **Eye contact & staring**
  There was some staring, but this wasn’t a big deal. I didn’t notice a large difference.
  
  o **Relationships**
  All types of relationships seem to be common in Bordeaux, but French men are more forward with what they want than American men.
  
  o **More formal dress in general, for women, for school, etc?**
  The French certainly dress more formally than Americans, especially the women.
  
  o **Alcohol consumption**
  People drink for the social aspect of it, not to get drunk.
  
  o **What culture shock did you go through?**
  It was really interesting being around French language all the time, it took some getting used to, as well as the fact that almost nothing was open on Sunday.
  
  o **Other?**
  The French seem to strike a lot, but most of the strikes are usually planned and there will be notices ahead of time if there is going to be something preventing public transportation. Also, most of the culture seems to be more formal in general.

**Banking**

- **Were credit cards widely accepted?**
  Credit cards were widely accepted, but European credit cards have a chip in them as well as a magnetic strip so there is a chance that certain restaurants or stores can’t accept your card. Always have some cash on hand.

- **Did you open a local bank account? Was it easy?**
  I didn’t bother opening an account because I was only there for a semester.
- 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?
  It was really easy to withdraw money from an ATM. BNP Paribas is a sister bank with Bank of America, so there are no ATM fees when you withdraw. I found that they didn’t have high fees in general, but most seemed to be comparable.

- Were there ATMs on campus?
  I cannot remember any ATMs on campus.