

First name : François

Institution : Concordia University

Location of work term : Brussels, Belgium

Time of the work term : Jan 13<sup>th</sup> 2011 – Aug 5<sup>th</sup> 2011

Which work term : 2 & 3

1 – My motivation of seek an international internship was based on two primordial elements. First of all, I really wanted to visit Europe and see how things work other than in North America. I wanted to live there, try out their way of life, adopt their habits and really live as European. The second reason is because of the help and support I have received. If I hadn't had all this support from my co-op supervisor, I would have given up on my goal. Frederick gave me a ton of useful tips + resources and he also was the one who found the employer here in Belgium.

2 – I have received the MELS bursary which is 1000\$ per month and also have joined the 'OQWBJ' which gave me an extra 650\$ to fund the plane tickets.

3- This internship was very well organized, and I would advise future students to take the same steps as me if they are to come to Belgium.

4 – My job search was very limited. I asked if there were any international opportunities and I was proposed 3 different jobs. They were all 3 research jobs for universities. For my first internship, I had applied to 4 jobs that were not posted by the co-op program (found on my own) also but none have replied back. I think that finding an international job in a corporation is very difficult, but as a researcher in a University, it is much easier.

5 – My bursaries were more than my living expenses. The lodging, food and transportation was paid for me, so the rest of the bursaries were for the plane tickets and my personal expenses. I will return to Canada with more money than I left.

6 – The rent was paid for me here, but you can expect around 300-450 euros for lodging only per month.

7 – There were no cultural barriers. Things are very different here in Europe, but it was just a matter of getting used to it.

8 – I was part of a research group here at the University, so the integration was done very smoothly. They were used to having Foreign students come work at the department. They are all the same age group, so once you get to know them, do activities with them, know more people etc. It was very easy in an environment like this. If I would have done an internship in a corporation, things would have been much more complicated.

9 – If you are seeking an international internship, talk to your coordinator about it. They have tons of resources that can help and they might also have contacts. They are really the key to a successful international internship

10 – My co-op coordinator, Frederick Francis, has done so much for me. I had trouble getting the MELS bursary, and if I was to not get it, I did not want to go to Belgium because It would have cost me too much. As soon as I told him that, he literally found me another possible job in Calgary in the following

seconds and jumped on the opportunity to help me get the bursary. He was truly exceptional and it would have been nearly impossible without his help. Trying to go abroad on an internship will be very difficult on your own.