

Richard Ivey School of Business
The University of Western Ontario

Ivey

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The Richard Ivey School of Business (Ivey for short) came to our attention when we were asking Ajarn James where the best Business schools are and which one would he recommend us to apply for. Prior to that conversation we never knew this school existed. Looking back, we're blessed to have had that conversation because it opened the door to one of the best experiences in our lives.

Digging a little deeper on the internet revealed that Ivey is one of the best business schools in the world. The Wall Street Journal's international ranking of business schools lists Ivey at no. 12 coming before popular names such as Harvard and Stanford. And in Canada, it has been the no. 1 business school year after year. After researching on the Internet and talking to previous exchange students to Ivey, we knew Ivey will give us a very fruitful, yet challenging experience.



Academics

The University of Western Ontario (UWO) is home to Ivey. UWO's campus is huge – containing multiple faculty buildings, research centers, administration building, student centers, movie theatres, dormitories, its own hospital, and a brand new gym that is the largest in Canada. As exchange students, we were able to enjoy the benefit of the gym with much pleasure. UWO is a very beautiful campus with building exterior maintaining a classic 'brick and mortar' design.

Currently Ivey is housed in two connecting buildings independent of other faculties. In May 2009 a 100 million CAD investment for the construction of a new building was approved. All of you from 2010 onward would most likely enjoy the new building if you choose to exchange at Ivey.

Classes at Ivey are taught in a very different way compared to BBA Thammasat. Our system is lecture-based classes whereas Ivey takes the case-based approach. The case method is active learning by doing. Each case provides students with an opportunity to stand in the shoes of the decision-maker, analyzing the business issue presented, making judgments and determining a course of action. A relatively small number of schools are dedicated to the case study method of learning, including Harvard Business School and Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia. We find this method to be highly beneficial as it teaches us practical business solutions and better links the academic world with the real business world.

“Work hard...”

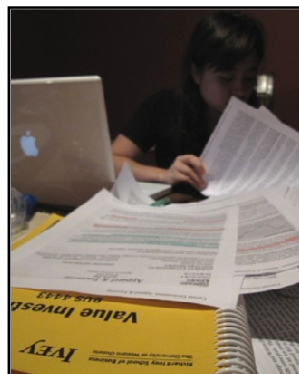
“Work hard, play hard.” we’ve heard people use this motto or say it numerous times, but we’ve never seen people who really live it until Ivey. The culture and atmosphere naturally makes you work hard, and play hard. To do well in case-based classes you will need to read the case before going to class and when in class you need to raise your hand to contribute to class discussion. All of the classes at Ivey will have a grading component called ‘class participation.’ For some classes such as Value Investing, class participation takes up 100% of the grade and other classes it will account for at least 30%. Preparing for this kind of classes is very different from TU classes where you need to read and prepare for class every day rather than cramming everything in the week before exam. However, with the case method, classes are always exciting and fun to attend because you are not sitting there listening to someone giving a lecture.

The professors at Ivey are all very seasoned in their respective fields. Most of them are still practicing what

they are teaching, allowing them to share relevant knowledge with the students. What we appreciated the most was that occasionally the professors were able to bring in the management from the case study companies. The students that you will meet at Ivey come from a wide range of backgrounds. You will meet people



from all over the world, literally all over the world. For example, we had a classmate who was an Israeli citizen and another one who was from Peru. All students at Ivey are very bright too. That is because Ivey’s undergraduate program is a two years honors business administration (HBA) program that is equivalent to our third and fourth years. What it means is that the students enrolled at Ivey have undergone one more screening process when they transfer as a second year student from their respective four year programs elsewhere to Ivey. Therefore, your classmates at Ivey are of top-notch quality.



At UWO and Ivey, one study week consists of only four days, Monday to Thursday. Although classes could only be on four days, each and every class is extremely intense. We like this system because it gave us one extra day to party and relax on top of preparing for projects and other work on weekends. Not only are the weeks short, the school terms are shorter than TU as well. For us, classes started on January 5th and our last exam was on April 18th. Moreover, in the middle we had a three week spring break!

“... Play hard”

The short and intensive curriculum makes plenty of time available to live up to the “play hard” part of the motto.

London has many places that will indulge your night-life needs. We are sure your friends at Ivey will make sure you are

invited to plenty of actions! Parties are where you get to know your classmates better and establish a social network. A typical night out starts from the pre-parties hosted in friend's houses, the actual party at the pub, and then the post-parties. Other than partying, playing hard also means traveling. If you locate London on a map (in the state of Ontario, Canada), you will see that you can easily travel to other cities such as Toronto, Chicago, New York City, and Boston. For those of you who have never tried winter sports, exchanging at Ivey will give you the perfect opportunity to do it.



Moreover, travel agencies there offer plenty of spring break packages to places such as Europe or the Caribbean at a bargain price! One full week at a five star all-inclusive resort plus plane tickets to the Caribbean will cost you anywhere between 35,000 to 45,000 THB only! It is very easy to live a 'work hard, play harder' life!

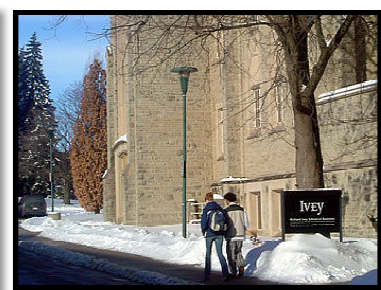
The City – London

That is right – London, Canada. Prior to our time at Ivey, whenever we told people that the university that we are going to is located in London, Canada, people always gave us a funny look.

London is a small city with a population of approximately 450,000 people. The people there are extremely friendly and they all speak English, unlike other Canadian cities up north. It is a city that is relatively safe compared to other cities in Canada or the USA as well.

Living in London is relatively nice and easy going. Most exchange students attending Ivey rents a room from the local residents and share common space in the house with other tenants and/or the landlord. Traveling within the city will predominately be by bus because walking in -20 degree Celsius is not fun

and taxis are very expensive. The city of London is known to have the most expensive taxi fares throughout the whole North America. Therefore, the London Transit (bus operator) will be your best friend.



Looking Back

As our life-changing experience headed from an exciting beginning to such a beautiful finish, we have come to realize that this would not have been made possible without a very much appreciated support by many. First, we would like to express our gratitude for our beloved BBA program for your effort in creating and maintaining such a strong international reputation. This has allowed our dream to study in one of the world's best schools come to reality. Thank you the faculty for instilling in us strong academic and life fundamentals that helps us in representing the "Thammasat" name well abroad. Also we want to thank the BBA staff for their restless support especially P'Pam, for being the main driver behind the successful completion of our exchange period. Lastly, we would like to thank our very own Ajarn James for recommending Ivey. This experience so far has greatly exceeded our expectations. Without you, it wouldn't even come to our awareness that this remarkable school exists!

Where else in the world would intense case-cracking night in and night out have become a daily routine and partying hard is always an available option? For any of you out there looking to take your life to the whole new level and challenge yourself to the new height, Ivey is your ultimate choice.

