

EU Canada Mobility Program

Personal Experience Report

by Ádám Kótai

When I first took the Project Laboratory course at BUTE, I assigned for developing hockey and soccer robot teams for Dr. István Harmati. Shortly after he became my supervisor I got informed about this exchange program, the possibility to go and spend a semester in Canada. I got really excited at the very first time. I have decided to apply and applied for the program and I did not regret it. During this spring semester I had one of the most memorable time of my life and I will never forget it.



Preparing for the big journey I successfully bought the tickets, and applied for accommodation at SFU Residence and Housing. Shortly the R&H Office answered that they have accepted my application so everything was given to spend a semester in Vancouver at SFU.

When I finally arrived to Vancouver a friend was waiting for me, whom I got to know in the previous semester at BUTE in the same program. He was really helpful and he helped me finding my residence at SFU. It was not easy because I arrived in the evening and the R&H Office was closed, but with his aid I could finally get my room which became my accommodation during my stay.





On the next day I got the opportunity to meet the three students from SHUT, Bernát Gábor, Dániel Lázár, Attila Novák. They arrived about two weeks earlier and they showed me around and helped me to find the offices I had to visit to do all the administrative things to start the semester at SFU. During the semester we went together

almost everywhere, we shared a lot of memories and they became friends for a life. On the first week I entered the European Social Club (ESC) and the Residence Hall Association (RHA) and they organized us different events during our stay. I also got to know Sarah Inglis over the SFU International Mentorship Program and she showed us around in Vancouver, organized us several events and aided us in everything we needed.



In the first month we explored the campus and downtown Vancouver. With the

ESC we went to pubs and clubs and we could meet the students, the youth of Canada. We made friends on these events and they could help us explore Vancouver and its surrounding. They took us for trips to downtown and Stanley Park.



Shortly the time of the Olympic Games with the two week long Olympic break has come. During the break we could visit countless free events and concerts and we could watch the Winter



Olympic Games live on large screens all over the city. During the games the city was full of people from all over the world; the city was decorated and full of life. On the second week of the Olympic Games we visited the Hungarian Cultural Society where we could meet the Hungarian Olympic athletes and the Hungarian people of Vancouver. Right after the Olympics the whole city looked dead, the people from all over the world travelled back to home.

Shortly after the Olympic Games my aunt and her friend came and visited me from Stratford (Canada). They stayed in Vancouver for a week and during that time they rented a



car so we could easily look around in Vancouver. During their stay we visited downtown Vancouver, Stanley park, Victoria, Whistler and the Lynn Canyon Suspension Bridge.

After they left my friends and I continued to explore Vancouver and its surrounding. At the beginning of the semester everybody who is

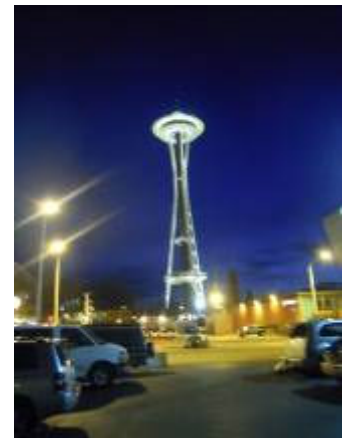
accommodated by SFU had to pay 10\$ to the RHA and for that money they organized us



many free events. With the RHA we went curling, skating, bowling, eating sushi, pizza, watching plays, movies, etc.; and it was also a great possibility get to know more people.



During this time we went clubbing with ESC several times. We also organized small trips around Vancouver for ourselves like visiting the Vancouver Aquarium, Capillano Suspension Bridge and Park, University of British Columbia campus and several smaller park inside Vancouver. At the end of my stay I also had the possibility to visit Seattle in the USA for a weekend. I had a friend there and he showed me around.



I already mentioned that we got to know Sarah Inglis over the SFU International Mentorship Program. During our stay she really did everything to make our stay colourful, and to give us great memories. She was the one who helped us to find the best stores in the beginning and showed us around in Vancouver at the very first time. She organized us many evening programs and she was the one who found a

Hungarian restaurant for us to cure our homesickness. During the Easter holidays Sarah invited us to spend the Easter family dinner with her and her family. We spent that whole day with her and her family and she also prepared with several games to entertain us and to make our holiday warmer. She also organized us a wonderful weekend to Bowen Island where we went kayaking.



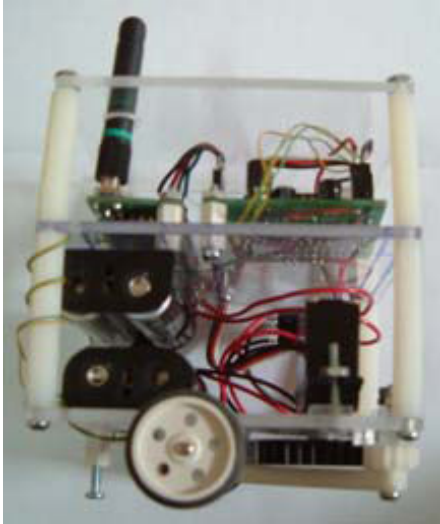
The university offered us great recreational possibilities too. With Attila Novák we often went swimming. With Bernát Gábor and Daniel Lazar we attended to a regular sport event on every Tuesday night. On this event we played different sports on every Tuesday. Among the sports we could find sports which we were familiar with like soccer, basketball, handball, football, dodgeball and we could find sports of what we have never heard about like ultimate.

Travelling back to Hungary I stopped in Stratford for ten days to visit my aunt; the one who visited me in Vancouver. With her I got to know a lot of friendly Canadian people and



we also visited Lake Huron, Ottawa and Toronto.

This semester was also really useful to improve my language and professional skills. I took three courses, Special Project Laboratory, Social History of Canada and Control Systems. At the Special Project Laboratory course Dr. Shahram Payandeh was my supervisor.



We met on every Thursday when I told what I did the past week and I get my tasks for the next week. At this project I was responsible for repairing and improving the hardware and the communication between the computer and the robots. The hardware was not the same like ours; at SFU they improved it. When I arrived the communication was not working between the computer and the robots. At first I had to find out what is the problem. After fixing the communication I took care about testing the hardware. During the test I noted things

which are need to be improved but we could not remanufacture the robots with the modifications so the problems remained only noted but I redesigned the circuit of the transmitter. After these I took care about the communication. In the rest of the time I was



testing and improving the communication. In the lab everybody was really kind and helpful. The Thursday meetings with Dr. Shahram Payandeh and the rest of the team were really friendly. Thanks to these things it was a great pleasure to work together with them during the semester. Working in the lab was not only a professional experience but experiencing the kindness and helpfulness of the Canadian people and it gives me great memories.

With Control Systems I could also improve professionally and I could experience a different teaching of technological sciences. The professor of



Control Systems Mahdi Alavi held great lectures. I have studied this course before at BUTE but at SFU Mahdi Alavi thought me control systems in really small details and with mathematical exactness.



At Social History of Canada I could study about not only the social but the overall history of Canada. Professor Alan Seager thought me things about the history and culture of Canada I have never heard before. In the beginning I had to realize that I use English mostly in technological topics and my historical English skills are needed to be improved. It was really great to learn about the history of a different culture among them, and also to see improving my historical language skills too.

At all three courses I have met great and surprisingly kind people. During this semester I met a lot of people originating from all over the world and I gained memories and friends for a life. It was really great to live in a multicultural society and to see how friendly and helpfully they can live together, how acceptable they are with foreign people. I would like to express my really honest and deep gratitude to Dr. István Harmati and Dr. Shahram Payandeh for letting and supporting me participating in this exchange program. I hope that this program will not be terminated by this semester and many other students can experience what I did in these months.

