

# The University Of Minnesota- Twin Cities



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# University of Minnesota Overview

The University of Minnesota stands out as the top institution in the state of MN, offering a wide array of excellent programs and a diverse selection of classes. Its expansive campus spans two bustling cities, Minneapolis and Saint Paul, attracting a large and diverse student population from around the world. This diversity enriches the campus experience, providing opportunities to connect with people from various backgrounds. The university fosters a welcoming environment, with most individuals exuding kindness and warmth. Additionally, the U is renowned for its outstanding sports teams, offering thrilling games in sports like hockey and basketball. Attending these games was among the highlights of my time there. Moreover, the university provides numerous opportunities for engagement, with events happening regularly to cater to diverse interests. Honestly, I thoroughly enjoyed the school spirit there, and studying at the University of Minnesota was one of the most incredible experiences of my life!



# Courses Taken

## **Introduction to Human Physiology PHSL 2061 (Dr. Dalay Olson)**

This is an introductory course on human physiology tailored for biomedical engineering students, and it is the best course I have taken at UMN. It was both fun and manageable. We had the chance to examine various real human body parts from donors, including both healthy organs and those affected by diseases. This hands-on experience made the course incredibly interesting, and I highly recommend it to anyone. The course structure includes a pre-quiz before each class, a homework assignment every weekend, a midterm, a final exam, and a final group project.

## **Elementary Linear Algebra MATH 2142 (Dr. Lili Yan)**

I really enjoyed this course and feel confident in my understanding of the material. The course is divided into a lecture and a discussion section. In the lectures, the professor explains the lessons, and the next day, in the discussion section led by a TA, we review the material. The TA provides worksheets to solve, which helps test our understanding, and answers any questions we have. This format was extremely beneficial and helped me achieve a good grade. The course includes a weekly quiz and homework, two midterms, and one final exam. Overall, I highly recommend this course.

# Courses Taken

## **Introduction to Probability and Statistics STAT 3021 (Dr. Sungmin Park)**

This was a good class, though not as easy as some others. The workload includes two midterms, one final exam, and homework every two weeks. The professor is nice and always willing to help. Additionally, at the end of the semester, he implemented a generous grade curve, which was very helpful. While the class is challenging, it is manageable with effort.

## **Exploring the Universe AST 1001**

Despite my interest in space and astronomy, I regret taking this course. The topics were not as interesting as I had expected, and the lectures were not engaging. However, the workload is light, with only three exams and a weekly lab, which I found more interesting than the lectures. It is hard to get an A because the exams are difficult. Overall, I wouldn't recommend this course and believe there are better options available.

# **Student Guide: Housing and Phone Plans**

## **Housing**

The university offers a variety of unique housing options, including dormitories and on-campus apartments, which, in my opinion, are the best choice. I resided in Radius Apartments with three other roommates. The apartment layout consists of three rooms—two singles and one shared—along with two bathrooms, a kitchen, and a living room. Its close proximity to various restaurants, grocery stores, and even Target made it incredibly convenient for daily living. I highly recommend this housing option, particularly with roommates, as it facilitates meeting new people and provides a support network in a new environment. While its location is excellent, it's important to note that it's a bit of a distance from campus, requiring a daily 15-minute walk to reach classes.

## **US Phone Number**

I highly recommend getting a US phone number, as it will be incredibly beneficial during your time there. There are numerous options available, but the top two choices are T-Mobile and AT&T. Personally, I opted for an e-SIM from AT&T with the unlimited plan, and it proved to be the best option for me. At around \$50 per month, it offers excellent quality at a reasonable price.

# Exploring Minnesota: Things To Do

During my time at the University of Minnesota, I made it a priority to explore the city of Minneapolis and its surrounding areas. Some must-visit tourist spots in Minneapolis include the Sculpture Garden, Minnehaha Falls, kayaking on one of the many lakes, the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, and the Mall of America, the largest mall in the United States. Also, with Minnesota being known as the "Land of 10,000 Lakes," a visit to these lakes is a must.

However, compared to other cities in the state, Minneapolis may seem relatively limited in terms of activities. Therefore, if you're staying for a full semester, I recommend taking a trip to Chicago, Illinois, which is only an hour and a half away by plane. Chicago offers a plethora of attractions to explore. I visited Chicago during Eid weekend and spent three days there, which was sufficient to experience many of the city's highlights.

# Cultural Difference

Experiencing the culture of the US, which is entirely different from ours, was a unique opportunity that I embraced. One striking difference between the two cultures is communication. In Minnesota, informal communication is the norm, whereas in the UAE, there's a strong emphasis on respecting hierarchy and authority.

Another notable difference is meal timing. In Minnesota, dinner is served as early as 5 pm, even before sunset, a practice unfamiliar to us. Additionally, most shops and establishments close by 7 pm or even earlier, so it's important to plan ahead and do shopping in the morning.

Moreover, I encountered the "Minnesota nice" phenomenon firsthand. People in Minnesota are incredibly nice, helpful, and friendly, which greatly enhanced my experience there.

In summary, my time in Minnesota has been invaluable in expanding my understanding of cultural diversity. It has taught me to navigate and appreciate different cultural norms, fostering personal growth and a deeper understanding of myself and the world around me.

# Personal Impact

Studying at the University of Minnesota has been the best decision I've ever made. This journey has profoundly influenced both my academic and personal growth in ways I never expected. I've learned to embrace independence and consistently push myself out of my comfort zone. Immersed in a culture vastly different from my own, I gained invaluable insights into American culture. Moreover, the classes I've taken have provided me with a wealth of knowledge, and I feel confident in my understanding of the various subjects I've been exposed to during my studies. Beyond the classroom, the vibrant campus life at the University of Minnesota has provided countless opportunities for personal development and forging lifelong connections with peers from around the world. From exploring the scenic beauty of the Twin Cities to engaging in meaningful discussions with professors and classmates, every moment has left an indelible mark on my journey. Studying Abroad has not only equipped me with invaluable knowledge and skills but has also instilled in me a deeper sense of resilience, adaptability, and cultural empathy that will undoubtedly shape my future endeavors.



