
2013-14 Postcards

Postcards from Abroad

3-17-2014

One Month In

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One Month In 03/17/2014



The kangaroos are so friendly! This is at the Cairns Tropical Zoo, where we also held a koala.

Time flies here! It has already been more than a month since I've arrived in this gorgeous, humid, and friendly country. During this month, I've been exploring the city of Cairns, attending my lectures and tutorials, and basking in the sun. It is easy to identify the foreign students-they are the ones tanning in the Australian sun. The Australians are smart enough to realize that the UV rays here are exceptionally strong, and it only takes a small amount of time to get burned. I've found that out the hard way a couple of times now!

Classes: It is definitely difficult to adjust to "Uni" life. The referencing styles vary, lectures are much larger in comparison to Linfield courses, and going to class one time a week means doing mass amounts of work in your off time. However, I haven't found the course load to be overwhelming. I suppose this depends on what courses you choose to take while you are here! The courses I am enrolled in include: Linking Indigenusness (regarding Aboriginals), Effective Speaking, Digital Photography, and Australian Sociology. So far, I've been enjoying the materials and what's being taught!

Creatures: Gradually, I've been seeing more critters around me. This must come with a heightened sense of awareness of the environment. As I walked to the library just now, a pitch black snake slithered swiftly away from me. Being barefoot, I did a little jig of intense fear. I stared into the path of escape it had taken until I was confident it wasn't going to turn around and nibble my toes off. This definitely got my heart racing. In addition, we've been finding beetles and geckos in our "cluster" (like an apartment, but with no kitchen). I've just been trying to accept their existence and realize they won't hurt me.

Climate: BOY OH BOY. Sometimes I feel like I am in Oregon again here in Cairns. About a week ago, we were having threats of a cyclone, and the weather was pretty nasty. It rained quite often, and when I say "rained", I mean it POURED. However, the past three days have been a dream. It is absolutely gorgeous outside. The heat is a killer, however. For students considering studying abroad in Cairns, make sure you reflect on your tolerance for heat. I've heard Australians say that Melbourne is much cooler, which wouldn't be a terrible thing. Sometimes the 10-minute trek to class leaves you drenched in your own sweat! I can't complain about the weather when I'm lying on the white sand overlooking the teal ocean, though. :)

Until next time,
Sara Schurter