

## **Changing Moment: My Journey as an Exchange Student at UConn**

### **Ahyeong Jeong is an exchange student at UConn**

**Ahyeong:** Hello. Welcome to the Changing Moment. My name is Ahyoung Jeong, who is the host of the Changing Moment. My major is Political Science and Journalism and I'm junior in UConn. But this is my first semester in UConn. How is this possible? It is because I'm an Exchange student in UConn.

#### **Music**

**Ahyeong:** Last year, I had a big concern that was should I go to exchange student or not? I'm just a normal student in South Korea. I've been travelled many countries including France, Germany, Singapore, etc. But I've never lived abroad. I want to experience more diverse culture and people. Also, I had a big desire to speak English well. When I communicated with foreign friends or when I had to use English in my class, I didn't want to lose confidence when I was thinking about it. My parents had suggested to apply an exchange student program in United States. And they said to me that they can provide me a financial support. So I decided to go to exchange student to United States For exchange program, I have prepared my visa, gpa, Toefl, which is English Language score, and a lot of things which needed to go to us. Finally, I'm in Uconn and I'm living my life in here. Even though it is just one semester, my life is still changing. In today's changing moment, I would like to hear about the experience of exchange students like me, what their UConn life is like. Moreover, through a conversation with Kimberly, the UConn incoming exchange coordinator, I will find out what exchange student program is in UConn and how it is operating. So don't miss it and follow me.

#### **Music**

### **Ahyeong Jeong and Jennifer share some honest stories about exchange student life**

**Ahyeong:** First of all, I invited a special guest to share some honest stories about the exchange student life. This is Jennifer, who is living as an exchange student at UConn like me. Hello, Jennifer.

**Jennifer:** Hi.

**Ahyeong:** Can you introduce yourself?

**Jennifer:** Hi everyone. my name is Jennifer and I'm from Hong Kong. My home university is the University of Hong Kong. I'm doing landscape architecture major. I'm a final year student and I'm 22 years old.

**Ahyeong:** So are you a senior or junior?

**Jennifer:** I'm, a senior.

**Ahyeong:** Senior. Okay, thanks. And I can introduce myself because that is our exchange student life. So my name is Ahyeong Jeong and I'm, the host of this podcast. And my age is 21 years old. And my home university is Sogang University. And my home country is just South Korea. Seoul.

### **Why did you decide to go to an exchange student?**

**Ahyeong:** Next question. Why did you decide to go to an exchange student?

**Jennifer:** I decided to like going for an exchange program because I want to step out of my comfort zone because it's like a very rare experience. You can study abroad in a foreign country. You can ah, improve your language skills and you can meet people from like all around the world. Like how we met each other and that's so cool. Yeah.

**Ahyeong:** Yeah. So also in my case I just want to travel and feel the culture of us. So if I do that I was sure that I can naturally communicate with English. Well so. And I also heard that you had some internship in New York, so.

**Jennifer:** Yeah.

**Ahyeong:** That influence do you decide to this exchange program?

**Jennifer:** Yeah, that's true.

**Ahyeong:** So after that internship you want to live in here?

**Jennifer:** I spent one and a half months in New York City and because I have to go to work on weekdays, so I don't really have time to explore the country here. So when I saw there's an exchange program in Uconn I just like I want to join it

**Ahyeong:** Just because you can hanging out with friends and travel more. So okay, that makes sense. And why did you choose Uconn out of many universities?

**Jennifer:** Actually there's a list my home university provide us for us to choose amount different schools. But like not every schools they have the landscape architecture program. If I'm not doing like classes of landscape architecture I have to defer my studies. Like I have to graduate later. So I want to stick to my plan, like my life plan. So I want to choose a school has landscape architecture program. And also another thing is the landscape architecture program here in Uconn It is a science major. Oh yeah. Well the one in my home university is an art major. Like I'm bachelor.

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**Ahyeong:** That is a difference.

**Jennifer:** Yeah. So I just want to like explore this field from another perspective.

**Ahyeong:** Oh yeah, that's a good point. Cool. And in my opinion I just want to experience the east coast, you know like because it's where the states that the United States first started and I want to travel the big city around the east coast like New York and Boston. So I considered Eastern university in the United States as a priority. And honestly the big reason why I choose Uconn is that I saw some review of the Uconn which is Uconn has a U-pass and it makes students travel freely. So that was a big reason though.

**Jennifer:** That makes sense.

**Ahyeong:** And what was the most difficult thing to live in Uconn?

**Jennifer:** Well, I have to say the most difficult thing is the travel, like the transportation. Because I don't have a driver license here. I don't know how to drive.

**Ahyeong:** Yeah. Me either

**Jennifer:** In Hong Kong or most of the Asian city, we have very convenient transport TC system. Like you can go anywhere by the metro.

**Ahyeong:** Yeah. By subway or bus.

**Jennifer:** But the situation here is totally different. We have to drive all the time.

**Ahyeong:** Or take an Uber and it is really expensive.

**Jennifer:** and the cost is. Yeah, yeah. So I think the transportation is like the most difficult

**Ahyeong:** In my case, I think the language was really difficult for me because that is my first time to come to US So before I came here I did some test about to check my English speaking level or. Yeah. Writing level and yeah. Reading level. But you know, in speaking in the real life it's totally different. So when I have to speak to my professor or friends, I cannot pop up in my mind like words or grammar. So it was really hard.

**Jennifer:** That's so true.

**Ahyeong:** Let's talk about the best thing that we experienced in Uconn Like global learning program or campus event.

**Jennifer:** I quite enjoy the campus event here. Like we went to the Haunted Hip last week.

**Ahyeong:** Oh, that was really fun.

**Jennifer:** I think that's my favorite activities here. And first of all, it's a free event. You don't have to pay anything for that. And then they really paid a lot of effort into preparing the whole event.

**Jennifer:** It's a one mile trial. And there are many scared stations and their acting

**Ahyeong:** Many concepts Yeah.

**Jennifer:** Their costumes and they even have the sound effect. And even sound and light effect. I think that's really appreciated.

**Ahyeong:** Cool. Also like, I think it was a really good experience to watch the UConn's basketball, soccer, football game, honestly. But I didn't enjoy the football game because I didn't know the rule of football. But basketball and soccer was really fun. And also I love that Halloween haunted event. So as you know, in my country there is not big Halloween event in university because Halloween is just totally us thing. So. Yeah. In Asia there is not that big Halloween event. So I love that because that was my first experience to enjoy Halloween for real. Yeah. So it was really fun.

### **Jennifer recommends Uconn to prospective exchange students**

**Ahyeong:** And so lastly, do you want to recommend to your friends that they come here as an exchange student?

**Jennifer:** Yeah, Definitely.

**Ahyeong:** Oh, to UConn. Oh, cool.

**Jennifer:** To those junior students in my program of my home school. So like the professor here of the landscape, architecture department, they're really, really nice. So my professor, she provides me. She offers me a job opportunity of designing a car park. Yeah. So they are very kind and friendly. They just, they speak to you like asking you how's your life here? So any questions or any difficulties, they are always welcome you to approach them. Yeah.

**Ahyeong:** that is cool. The professor is so nice. Yeah. And I think, I will definitely recommend to my friends to come to exchange program. But, I have to consider a little bit just about UConn, because in my home university there is many another choice to go to the east coast or west coast. So if someone want to go to the exchange program to the east coast,

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**Ahyeong:** I think Uconn is the best choice because it is easy to travel another city. And also the campus is really big and exchange program is so nice. So yeah, I think I can recommend. Yeah. And also the class is good. I think in, my home university when I majoring my journalism class, there is many theoretical class, not the practical class. So like this podcasting class, Uconn has many activated class. So I love that point. Yeah. This is our tips and our lives in Uconn.

**Jennifer:** So it's very sincere, sincere advice for all the students who are planning to go for like study abroad. So thank you.

**Ahyeong:** Thank you for interviewing Jennifer

**Jennifer:** thank you.

### **Kimberly Sadowski is the UConn exchange coordinator**

**Ahyeong:** Also, to find out how the Uconn exchange student program is working, I met the, Kimberly, who is the income and exchange coordinator in Uconn.

**Ahyeong:** Hi, Kimberly. Can you introduce yourself?

**Kimberly:** Yes. Hi, I'm Kimberly Sadowski. I am the EGL's custom program coordinator and incoming exchange coordinator.

**Ahyeong:** Thank you. What is the special point about UConn exchange program?

**Kimberly:** Yeah, so the UConn exchange program allows us to work with partner universities around the world to provide an opportunity for students to come here and to get an American university experience, as well as our students to go abroad.

**Ahyeong:** That's cool. And what does UConn prepare and support for exchange students?

**Kimberly:** Absolutely. So to prepare for students, we hold webinars throughout the semester before their arrival. We do all their immigration paperwork to allow for that to be an easier process. We also like to prepare them on what living at UConn is going to be like and what needs they need before they get here.

**Ahyeong:** I remember that the webinar was really useful for me. And how do you think the exchange student experience affects students Leaves?

**Kimberly:** I think that one of the big things I've noticed is a lot of students will extend their program. They will stay here for another semester, or they'll do an internship, or. Recently we've had a student apply to come back and teach here in the US because of their experience. And so I think it gives them some freedom, a little bit of independence, but also like this new perspective that there's so much more they can do with their degrees, here and abroad.

**Ahyeong:** Thank you for interviewing Kimberly.

**Kimberly:** Thank you.

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**Ahyeong:** When there is a big change in our leaves, we grew a. If there are any students who are worried about exchange students, I recommend you not to hesitate to go on a new adventure. That's it for today's changing moment. This has been host Ahyeong Jeong. I will be back with a new episode next time. Bye.

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