



## Student reflection:

### Brett Reardon

From Butler University  
International Exchange in Semester 2, 2009

*"I find the language much easier to understand, and even use Australian slang myself, although I still don't always use it correctly."*

I have always wanted to visit Australia, and was fortunate enough to have that opportunity thanks to the University of Tasmania (UTas). I am a student at Butler University in Indianapolis, Indiana, USA named by Princeton Review as one of the "Best Midwest Universities" in the country. I came to UTas thanks to a partnership between the education programs at Butler and UTas. This partnership is a direct exchange program, where Butler students can study teacher training in Tasmania and UTas students have the opportunity to go the United States to attend Butler.

Studying education in Tasmania has given me the opportunity to go into the schools and teach individuals that I would not typically have the chance to teach. In addition to working with students directly, I am able to see the difference of how schools are run between the United States and Australia. This will be a useful tool when entering the educational world, especially with my future career plans.

I am a secondary education major, with a focus in social studies. Although I am an education major, teaching is not the profession I am looking at directly entering. My goal is to work at a university as an admissions counselor. Although I do not plan on entering the high school system directly, my experiences here at UTas will enable me, as an admission counselor, the ability to work with internal students, and have the knowledge of what their studies may be in their home country.

I arrived in Launceston, Tasmania on July 4, 2009. My initial thoughts of Tasmania were about the sights. It is very hilly, something that I don't see a lot of back home since Indianapolis is very flat. Another aspect that was different is the culture. Although both the U.S. and Australia speak English and were originally English settlements, the two countries are still very different. One part that I found hard was the language barrier. Yes, Australians speak English, but the dialect from certain individuals was very hard for me to understand, and took some time to get a grasp of their accent and slang. After being here a month and a half, I find the language much easier to understand, and even use Australian slang myself, although I still don't always use it correctly.

I have taken full advantage of what is here. In just less than two months I have around Launceston, Hobart, and Sydney. During our semester break I plan to go to New Zealand. Although the big cities like Sydney are available, I highly recommend traveling around the state of Tasmania, you will be hard pressed to find more natural sights that are cheap and easy to get to, and they're all in your back yard

here in Launceston.

For those interested in international exchange with Butler University, you will attend the Liberal Arts Institute. Our education department is one of the best in the Midwest, if not the country. On campus, Butler has over 100 organizations for our students to stay involved in. We also have a variety of sponsored activities which include recently released movies on the weekends, which are free for all students to attend. We have our sporting events for people to support as well, which includes our American Football in the fall and our Associated Press ranked Basketball team in the winter and early spring. You also have the opportunity to meet people, who stay on campus all weekend, so there will always be people around to hang out with.

Butler is next to Indianapolis, which is the 13<sup>th</sup> largest city in the country where there is plenty to do. Just 5 minutes away from Butler's campus, we have the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and Museum, home of the Indy 500. We also have the professional/semi-profession sports in American Football, Basketball, Baseball, and Hockey. We have museums that include the State Museum, Eteljorge a museum on the history of American Native Indians, as well as the Art Museum which is walking distance of Butler, and is free for students to view. Students would also be able to find students that are travelling to Brown County, which has the hills of Indiana, or even find students who live in other states. They can even catch a ride with students to Chicago and view all the things that Chicago has to offer.

The opportunities are endless for both Butler students and UTAS students to study abroad. I highly recommend taking full advantage of the exchange that you have at hand. Studying abroad gives you a larger picture of the world, and experiences that will last you a lifetime.

Brett Reardon.