

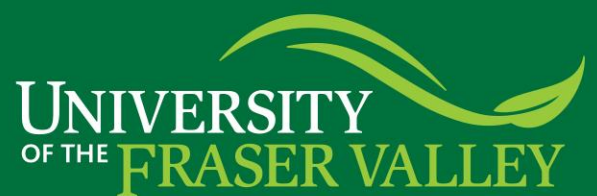
A Passage to UFV India

**A primer for Canadian
faculty interested in
teaching at UFV's
Chandigarh campus**

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The logo for the University of the Fraser Valley features a stylized green wave above the text. The word "UNIVERSITY" is in white, "OF THE" is in a smaller white font, and "FRASER VALLEY" is in a larger green font.

UNIVERSITY
OF THE **FRASER VALLEY**

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Introduction

One of the joys of being a visiting faculty member is working at UFV India, itself. This organization is a tightly-knit group of dedicated professionals who roll out the red carpet to make the experience of teaching abroad as positive as possible. The unique experience will always be a talking point of professional growth and learning for any faculty member who comes to Chandigarh. The experience is one of emotional reward and rich professional development.

This document reviews the process and experience of a teaching exchange from the very beginning of the process in Canada through to the return flight leaving India. The document primarily looks to provide information, interpretation, and opinion about the following topics:

- how to make the teaching exchange happen,
- how to prepare for the exchange from Canada,
- logistics and practical information,
- orientation to Chandigarh and India, and
- the teaching experience in an Indian classroom.

Upon reviewing this document, any UFV personnel with questions or comments about teaching in India are encouraged to contact the author at sam.schechter@ufv.ca.

As soon as this report is read by members of the UFV Canada community, the document will already be out of date. So constant is the pace of change at UFV India that policies, procedures, and reports such as these require constant updating. However, the reality is that most such documents are not regularly updated (either in Canada or India), so every part of this document should be considered as being subject to change. Additionally, as this document was written by a single author, others may have differences of opinion or interpretation.

Notwithstanding these qualifying comments, this report looks to provide a valuable resource for any UFV faculty member who may be considering going to UFV India as visiting faculty. Such an experience can be both rewarding and challenging, but a better overview of the process and experience will hopefully provide a more realistic appraisal of those challenges and how best to experience the professional and personal rewards of taking on a teaching exchange to Chandigarh.

Disclaimer: nothing in this document should be interpreted as professional legal or medical advice. The author is not a doctor or a lawyer and offers all comments about legal and medical issues as being based on first-hand experience only. Readers should consult professional advice prior to making any legal or health decisions about travelling to India or any other matter referenced in this document.

From Canada: Initiating a teaching exchange

Though a process exists for placement of UFV Canada instructors at UFV India, there is sometimes a more ad hoc process that takes over, especially for instructors outside of UFV's Business department. Part of the self-imposed mandate of this author was to create documentation that might assist in streamlining the experience for future visiting faculty, both for the ease and convenience of UFV India personnel and for the improved clarity and certainty of UFV Canada personnel.

Securing placement as visiting faculty

First contact and placement availability

UFV India has announced plans to appoint an Academic Director at some point in 2017; that person will likely take a leading role in arranging faculty teaching exchanges and will become a first contact for visiting faculty. UFV Canada's Director of UFV India, Satwinder Bains, is also a good first point of contact. Even if no placement is immediately available, keeping in touch with these directors proffers greater likelihood of being apprised when such opportunities do become available. Interested Canadian instructors should take the initiative in pursuing their interest in teaching at UFV India.

Availability is generally based upon UFV India's need for faculty for specific courses in a given semester. A vacancy at UFV India could result in an opportunity for visiting faculty from Canada to fill said vacancy on a temporary basis. Recently, UFV India has indicated interest in sending UFV India faculty to teach in Canada, which could also create direct teaching exchange opportunities in the future.

Placement process

Although the process for arranging a placement could seem to be quite slow, possibly with multiple semesters passing between making a first inquiry and a placement becoming possible, the process may suddenly move extremely quickly once the placement is available. Accordingly, UFV Canada faculty may need to commit, at least in principle, to teaching in India on relatively short notice. Although the placement may be months away, commitment may be requested within a week or two of the placement becoming available.

In terms of selection, there is no formal job interview or competitive process for the teaching exchange. By virtue of already having taught the courses offered, Canadian faculty are deemed qualified and a single conversation with a UFV India representative may be all that transpires before confirming the placement (in principle).

Permissions and perseverance

Canadian faculty should be aware that they may need to make certain commitments and agree to working conditions that are atypical of UFV Canada. As with any visiting scholar assignment, faculty must be willing to work within the context of the local university requirements and environment. For

example, the semester starts and finishes a week earlier at UFV India and the standard summer faculty vacation period is, therefore, a week shorter (as UFV India's semester starts in the last week of August for the Fall semester). UFV Canada faculty may need to accept larger class sizes (which can reach 40 students). Confirming one's interest in advance may also assist obtaining permission from a department chair or Dean, as they will need to be certain that those courses that potentially travelling Canadian faculty typically teach in Canada can be filled by another colleague or by sessional instructors.

Because there is not always a uniform process to placements, interested instructors should monitor and motivate the process, as the process will not automatically unfold. Response times from India can seem slow at times, but that is partially a reflection of the day/night time difference (12.5 hours normally and 13.5 hours during Daylight Saving Time) and also a cultural trait, which is that brief acknowledgements, partial responses, and responses lacking certainty in the information provided are not always sent. Indian personnel will often prefer to wait until they have reliable information to send. Follow-up messages may be needed to advance the process from time to time. Phone calls and video conferencing calls can be an invaluable part of establishing good communications with UFV India personnel. As of 2017, there is going to be an increased role of the Dean's office to help drive this process, so checking in with the relevant UFV Canada Dean may help to create a clearer process.

Legal Issues

Persons considering a trip to India as visiting faculty should note that homosexuality is illegal in India (though being same-sex oriented and celibate is legal). While this law appears to be widely ignored, along with prohibitions on pornography, masturbation, and oral sex, people wishing to enjoy a higher level of human rights concerning their sexual identity and orientation may wish to avoid India.

Making arrangements for teaching at UFV India

Once a placement has been arranged, the most important steps will be the following:

- confirming permission from the department and the Dean,
- confirming the semester dates for the teaching placement,
- obtaining a written letter of invitation from UFV India (see Appendix A), and
- obtaining a corresponding letter of purpose from UFV Canada (see Appendix B).

Although verbal permissions may be tempting to accept, obtaining written permissions via e-mail provide a greater level of certainty.

With the semester dates in hand from UFV India, official letters can be sent by both institutions (see Appendix A and Appendix B for examples). Both of these letters are necessary for visa applications.

More information about travel and teaching-specific arrangements can be found elsewhere in this document.

Preparations for travel

UFV India will book travel to India and within the country, but there are other expenses that UFV Canada faculty will need to take care of before arriving. Between visa applications, health insurance, vaccinations, and other expenses, Canadian faculty should be prepared to be out-of-pocket over a thousand dollars, possibly double that amount, or even triple, if bringing a spouse. However, upon arrival in India, these expenses can be reimbursed in Indian cash rupees at the best possible exchange rate, which is hugely convenient and affordable. UFV Canada will reimburse these expenses immediately in Canadian dollars if the Canadian faculty member does not wish to be out-of-pocket so long.

Although no clearly stated policy exists about what will be reimbursed in terms of travel expenses, UFV India verbally indicates that they want visiting faculty to obtain all vaccinations and insurance that they personally feel are necessary for their own safety and self-assurance. This could extend as far as pills for travellers' sickness and malaria (even though malaria is quite rare in Chandigarh itself) and for high-quality insect repellants.

Visas

Information about how to obtain a visa for work in India, and which visa to obtain for this purpose, are not well documented, either online from Indian government websites or even from Indian visa agents themselves. Hopefully, the information below resolves that problem.

With the documents mentioned earlier in hand, Canadian faculty can begin the process of applying for a visa. Visas are obtained from an issuing agency, not the Indian consulate, but some information is still usefully available from the Indian government: <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/visa/index.html>. The visa agency preferred by UFV is located in Surrey: BLS India-Canada. Their website includes this useful checklist for visa applications: <http://blsindia-canada.com/CanadaVisaCCT/BLS-CAN05Vancouver-EntryVisa-Checklist.pdf>.

Visa applicants apply for their visa online before going to the visa office and will then receive a PDF via e-mail that they need to print out. When going to the visa office, faculty should have all documents printed out (including the letters from UFV India and UFV Canada), their passports, which must be valid for at least six months after the visa issuance date, professional visa photographs, and the other items specified in the checklist. Although applications can supposedly be done by mail, this author recommends going to the visa office in person to handle all transactions. If the application is completed correctly, the applicant's passport with a visa pasted inside will be returned by courier within two weeks of submission at the passport office.

The key points to note in completing the visa application are as follows:

1. Visiting faculty should apply for a "business" visa (not a "work" visa, as they will continue to be employed by UFV Canada, not an Indian company).
2. Spouses traveling with faculty should apply for a normal tourist visa (which does not allow for employment).

3. Visas are valid from the date of application until six months or one year later; visa validity cannot be post-dated until the day before traveling. Consequently, if a faculty member is going to be in India for four months, a six-month visa application must occur no earlier than two months before the travel date, otherwise it would expire before the faculty member was set to return. To avoid waiting and any potential travel problems, a one-year visa application can be obtained at the same cost as a six-month visa. Visa agents are may not be clear when providing guidance and advice on this matter, so being assertive about needing a one-year visa is recommended, but be sure that the return dates are more than six months away from the application date if taking this option. A one-year visa application offers greater flexibility about travel dates and recreational travel following the end of the semester. Faculty considering leaving India during their stay to go to other nearby countries will need to ensure that they apply for a multiple entry visa, as a single entry visa would mean they could not return after a quick getaway to Dubai or Kathmandu, for example.

Travel arrangements

UFV India will offer to make all travel arrangements, but will look for firm assertions of the travel arrangements desired by Canadian faculty prior to making such bookings. With a day/night time difference and the response time between UFV India and their travel agent, this process can be difficult to manage, as the best deals can slip away without being booked.

However, having a clear and firmly established itinerary from the Canadian faculty member, including any recreational travel in or around India before or after the semester, can greatly ease this process. Though attaching stopovers in Europe or Asia en route to India can be tempting, the travel agents find such bookings difficult, as they want confirmations before booking and then cannot book once they have confirmation, as the best prices have once again slipped away. If truly determined, Canadian faculty may be able to persuade UFV India to allow independent travel bookings, but UFV India believes that it can obtain better prices and, after all, these bookings are being paid for by them, so the best strategy is to provide a clearly articulated itinerary and to go through the back-and-forth process, even if it does seem slow at times.

UFV Canada faculty should be explicit about maximum travel legs and maximum layover times that they will accept. As there are now direct flights between Vancouver and Delhi, faculty may wish to request that option for added convenience and comfort. UFV India will make every effort to accommodate most reasonable requests.

Visiting faculty need to be explicit about any dietary restrictions and meal preferences on flights and trains. Unless otherwise specified, a meat-based, wheat-inclusive meal will be provided on flights and trains. Even if specified, the likelihood of an airline having no vegetarian or gluten-free options is quite high. Plan accordingly.

UFV India personnel will automatically add travel insurance to flights booked, but Canadian faculty may wish to purchase insurance for other trip-related problems when booking travellers' health insurance (see below for more).

Vaccinations

In the spirit of increasing deference to patient judgment and superstitions about vaccines, visiting faculty may not be provided with clear advice about what vaccines are necessary before going to India, even from some recommended medical professionals.

Faculty will need to do much of their own research and self-advocate. However, this author is willing to share his vaccination choices with the disclaimer that this is not professional medical advice.

Months before leaving for India, this author and his wife received vaccinations against the following diseases:

- tetanus and diphtheria (Adacel)
- Japanese encephalitis
- typhoid
- hepatitis A
- cholera and travellers' sickness (Dukoral)
- influenza

In addition to these vaccines, this author already has a lifetime immunization to polio, measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B, and yellow fever. Had time permitted, this author also would have obtained a vaccine against rabies, which needs to be scheduled for three injections over a series of consecutive weeks, which was not possible due to scheduling conflicts prior to departure. Scheduling an appointment with a travel clinic for a consultation two to three months in advance of departure is prudent.

This author also recommends top quality travellers' health insurance with clauses for disrupted travel, lost luggage, or other problems. Further, joining the International Association for Medical Assistance to Travellers (www.iamat.org) can provide a level of security, as any visiting faculty member in need of medical services can be assured of the quality of those services in advance by an independent body.

Self-advocacy is one of the most important parts of protecting a visiting faculty member's health.

Mosquito protection

Although there is no yellow fever in India, and although malaria is quite rare in Chandigarh itself, dengue fever is still common in Chandigarh and visiting faculty travelling outside of the city may find themselves in areas where malaria is more common. Mosquito threats are year-round in India.

As such, a limited amount of mosquito protection is advisable in Chandigarh and more intense mosquito protection may be advisable outside the city, depending on the destinations and routes taken.

Within Chandigarh, the apartments provided by UFV India are almost entirely mosquito-free. A small number of mosquitoes do find their way into the units, either via doors left open or through the fans in the showers, but the units themselves provide excellent nighttime protection. During the day, wearing clothing that covers most of the body and staying away from still water, lakes, and rivers, is mostly effective. When visiting an area where mosquitoes may be breeding, such as near lakes and rivers, spraying on mosquito repellent is advisable.

Anecdotally, a few UFV students did contract dengue in 2016, but all recovered within a week or two. However, dengue can be fatal in some cases.

In malaria-affected regions, this author took the following steps to protect himself against malaria and dengue fever:

- sprayed permethrin on clothing prior to leaving for India
- sprayed icaridin on exposed skin prior to leaving the hotel or residence
- consumed malarone tablets, as directed by a physician

As an additional note, when applying sunscreen and mosquito repellent, the sunscreen should be applied half an hour before leaving the hotel or residence and mosquito repellent should be applied immediately before leaving. The icaridin spray used by this author advertised itself as being effective for 12 hours and was purchased from a travel doctor's clinic.

Permethrin is not available for sale in Canada, but can be bought from camping supply stores in Washington state. This author applied permethrin to a set of four-days' worth of clothing for out-of-town excursions and reapplied permethrin approximately half way through the semester.



Photo credit: REI Co-op

Money

Although India has a reputation for being inexpensive for travellers, this is only partially true. Western products and quality hotels and restaurants, while still less expensive than in North America or Europe, can still cost a bit of money. Reputable businesses will accept Canadian credit cards, but travelling faculty would be wise to come to India with at least ₹5,000 (approximately \$100 CDN) per day of travel prior to arrival in Chandigarh.

Landing in India: Arrivals, accommodations, set-up

Depending on a visiting faculty member's itinerary and wishes, they may find themselves harried from one international airport to the next or, alternately, taking a stopover in Delhi or Mumbai to adjust to the time change and to get a taste of big-city India before heading to Chandigarh.

More information about acclimatizing to India itself is found later in this document; this section primarily deals with arriving in India for work and getting settled in Chandigarh.

However, regardless of the travel itinerary, visiting faculty can expect to arrive in India exhausted from the journey and disoriented by the day/night time change. At least two or three days should be built into the schedule for rest or acclimatization upon arrival, even for experienced travellers. Some travellers arrive in Delhi, stay the night at an airport hotel, and then fly to Chandigarh the next day to acclimatize there. Arrival in Chandigarh is best set for about one week before classes begin.

Connecting with UFV India personnel

Pre-arrival

A video conference with UFV India's Director, Gurneet Anand, and other personnel who may be coordinating the airport or train station pick-up should be arranged a few days in advance. Establishing a visual connection will help to provide comfort for the visiting faculty member and it will also give both parties a chance to confirm travel details and to co-ordinate the pick-up.

Arrival

Upon arrival in Chandigarh, visiting faculty can expect to be well taken care of. A UFV India staff member and driver will be waiting to greet visiting faculty at the airport or train station. UFV India staff are very dedicated to ensuring the comfort and safety of visiting faculty and to providing quality housing and work arrangements.

However, as noted before, each arrangement is coordinated on an ad hoc basis, so UFV India staff should be reminded to provide a complete set of keys for the apartment, to bring cash rupees (if the faculty member is running low), or of any other immediate needs the faculty member may have.

Upon arrival at the apartment, visiting faculty should look around to ensure their basic and immediate needs are met (availability of laundry detergent, tissue paper, bottled water, etc.). Any stated need will be quickly provided for, but those needs do need to be stated explicitly. More information about accommodations is provided further below.

Per diem and reimbursements

Canadian faculty are provided with a ₹750 (~ \$15 CDN) per diem while in India. UFV India staff are generally willing to provide this cash well in advance of it being due. More importantly, perhaps, is the fact that UFV India will promptly reimburse pre-trip expenses that were made in Canadian dollars in cash Indian rupees. Before accepting this much money, which could be more than a year's income for many low-income Indians, make sure that the keys for the apartment, and the locked cabinets within, have been provided for safe storage of the money. Most business is done in cash in India, so this cash-in-the-mattress supply of money is very convenient.

Accommodations

The apartments

UFV India provides quite good accommodations for visiting faculty members. These apartments are in residential buildings and offer most of the basic comforts of a Canadian home.

Environmentally, the unit includes air conditioning in each bedroom and the main room, plus ceiling fans. Hot and cold water is available, though hot water for the shower is on a unique mini-tank system, so the water needs to be switched on 15 minutes prior to a warm shower. In winter, India can become colder than many Canadians would predict and only space heaters are available to warm the apartments. Bringing warm attire, both for the daytime and nighttime, should help with personal comfort. Check online for typical daytime temperature highs and nighttime temperature lows before packing to help establish clear expectations about what to bring.

Each bedroom includes its own bathroom and cabinets for clothing, within which are locked drawers for passports, cash, and other valuables.

UFV India has multiple apartments, so descriptions of the apartments provided in advance may vary from the actual conditions, depending on which apartment is ultimately provided.

The newer apartments in Mohali (Chandigarh's nearest suburb, roughly akin to being in Burnaby relative to Vancouver) are in Sector 66, which is approximately a 15-minute walk to the Sector 65 market and a 12-minute drive to campus, depending on traffic.

The older apartment in Chandigarh proper is in Sector 44; it is closer to shops, restaurants, and parks, but it is also smaller and not as modern. Either of these two options appears to be satisfactory to faculty who have visited UFV India.

At times, other guests or UFV India staff may also be staying in the apartments and there is a pleasant guest-house feel to the changing of residents in the apartments.

Unfortunately, Indian streets are rarely marked and most buildings are not numbered. Consequently, delivery drivers and taxis cannot always find their destinations. However, clearly stating the address, the name of the complex, the nearby streets and a major landmark can be helpful. Somehow, they usually end up finding the way, though walking out to the street corner to find them is sometimes necessary.

Amenities

The following basic amenities are provided within the units for visiting faculty:

- a washing machine and dryer/drying rack,
- a gas stovetop (which may need matches to light),
- a phone line to the security gates so that delivery drivers can come to the front door,
- wireless internet,
- a television (mostly Indian language channels, but some English stations),
- power bars that can take some Canadian electronics (those with their own power adapters built in, such as laptops),
- an iron and ironing board, and
- standard dishware, kitchenware, and furnishings.

Visiting faculty may wish to bring at least one power adapter of their own, both for use in hotels when not in Chandigarh, and also for the convenience of being able to plug Canadian devices into outlets in the unit. Canadian devices without power adapters, such as blow dryers or coffee machines, may burn out if used without a proper adapter.

Unfortunately, brief power failures are quite common in India and even minor windstorms can disrupt services, even if only for a short period of time.

Internet services, when working at peak performance, are good, but peak performance is rare and the internet briefly stops working approximately 10-15 times per day. The service is sometimes good enough for a video-to-video conference call, but often only good enough for a voice call or not even that. Important video conferencing is best done from the UFV India campus.

Services provided

Housekeeping staff of the apartments arrive on an almost-daily basis to collect garbage, sweep the floors, tidy the bathrooms, and wash dishes. About once each week, the housekeeping staff run the bed sheets through the laundry. Dirty dishes can be left in the sink for housekeeping staff six days per week (not on Sunday). Housekeeping will always ring the bell before entering the unit, but they also have keys and will usually enter shortly after ringing if there is no answer.

Basic household goods are also provided by UFV India, notably bottled water, laundry detergent, tissue paper, hand soap, dish soap, and any goods that are deemed “for the apartment,” such as a cutting knife and a soup pot in this author’s case. If needed, visiting faculty can make such purchases independently and then provide receipts for reimbursement.

When any supply of a provided product runs low, visiting faculty can alert an appropriate UFV staff member, who will arrange for the supply to be replenished.

Technology set-up

Cell phone service

Before arriving in India, visiting faculty will want to decide if they will borrow a cell phone from UFV India, bring their own cell phone after having it “unlocked” by their cell phone provider, or purchase a phone in India.

Upon arrival, UFV India staff will provide a SIM card (and cell phone if requested); generally, the phone package will include local calls, roaming calls when outside of Chandigarh, text messages inside India, data in Chandigarh, and even roaming data when used outside Chandigarh.

Cell phone apps

UFV India staff use a variety of cell phone apps and these apps seem to be the way of modern India. Of tremendous convenience, visiting faculty will want to have the following apps installed on their phones:

- WhatsApp: This instant messaging app connects all UFV India staff. It also allows users to see when their messages have been sent (✓) and when they have actually been read by the recipient (✓✓).
- OLA: This so-called “ride sharing” app actually connects faculty with licenced, insured taxi drivers (not random strangers). It simplifies the process of hailing a taxi by establishing a clear pick-up and drop-off point and setting a meter for the taxi bill (which cannot be inflated by an opportunistic driver spotting an unassuming foreigner). When booking, the user will be provided a confirmation code that the driver will ask for and then the ride should begin and end with no problems. The main downfall of this service is that the app does not include photographs of the driver, so the passenger cannot be assured that the person driving is actually the person who should be driving, though this author encountered no suspicious incidents in that regard.
- Uber: This author did not use Uber much while in India, but it should function more or less the same as OLA, described above. Uber has the advantage of providing a photograph of the driver so that the passenger can be assured that the person driving the car is, in fact, the person who should be driving.
- Zomato and Zomato Order: The first of these apps is much like Yelp in Canada. The second allows users to place food orders directly through the app. Selecting from a menu and ordering via the app saves an awkward conversation in broken English or in even worse Hindi. It should

also provide the address to the restaurant, though most restaurants nonetheless call to confirm the delivery address. When somebody calls 15 minutes after an order is placed, visiting faculty are well advised to simply repeat the address of the apartment over and over until the other caller hangs up the phone. Somehow, this system seems to work every time.

- Google Maps: Although UFV India does not specifically recommend this app, having it on the phone and downloading the complete city map of Chandigarh (or any other city where the faculty member may be going) allows the user to view and search in Google Maps, even when the phone is offline or when the internet service is spotty. GPS coordinates are quite accurate in India, so this is a city map in the user's pocket at all times.

Wireless internet

Wireless internet is available in the apartment and on campus with the same password and WiFi network. That should be set up right away on all phones and laptops, though the service does fail from time to time.

Support for IT problems is good at UFV India and e-mail support for problems with Blackboard Learn is always available from Canada.

Many shops and restaurants provide free WiFi to customers. Starbucks and Café Coffee Day (a more common Indian version of Starbucks) are always safe bets if WiFi is urgently needed for any reason.

Campus set-up

Located at Goswami Ganesh Dutta Sanatan Dharma College (simply known as "SD College"), UFV India is housed in two buildings, respectively known as "A Block" and "B Block". A Block has six classrooms and shared office space for approximately 20 personnel, plus a student lounge, while B Block has a computer lab, two classrooms and office space that can seat nine people. The grounds of SD College, their cafeteria (in the "boys hostel"), their "canteen" (snack bar), and their auditorium (when booked in advance) are all available for use by UFV. Some UFV India students live in the hostels (dormitories) on campus.

Visiting faculty will have a desk and office supplies provided, plus wireless access to an in-office printer. Larger print jobs can be given to staff to handle. Visiting faculty are wise to bring their own laptop for use both on campus and in the apartment, though a desktop computer could probably be provided in the office space upon request.

Any needs in terms of workspace should be communicated to staff, who are generally quite quick to provide such resources as may be necessary.

Orientation to Chandigarh: Acclimatizing to the city

As any visitor to Chandigarh will routinely be advised, Chandigarh is India's cleanest, most modern city. Unlike the rest of India, Chandigarh is a planned city and was built in the 20th century to become the state capital of both Punjab and Haryana. Chandigarh is also a wealthier, more functional, and more convenient city than anywhere else in India. Somewhat comically, this author was once advised that Chandigarh was "near India," because the "real" India is not much like Chandigarh. While having a grain of truth to it, that statement is an exaggeration, as Chandigarh still has much of the "real" India in it.

Much of the commentary within this section and, indeed, within this document need to be understood within India's unique context. In some regards, nowhere in India is safe to walk (not even a suburban sidewalk in broad daylight), but once the foreign pedestrian learns to navigate the broken sidewalks, the seemingly chaotic, unpredictable left-driving cars, the completely chaotic, less predictable right-driving cars, the motorcycles, the scooters, the horse-drawn carts, the bicycles, the wild, semi-wild, and semi-domesticated animals wandering freely in the streets, and all else that is unique about India's transportation environment, these comments will make more sense.

Transportation

Walking

Chandigarh is a rather safe city to walk about during the daytime (see qualifier above). It is also probably safe to walk around at night, though visitors may wish to judge that matter for themselves; the city is not well lit at night, so that can create a sense of vulnerability, which will be heightened significantly for female faculty travelling alone. More on that topic will be discussed later in this document.

While walking to a local market is generally not too difficult, walking about the city is an infeasible method of transportation, even for those desiring a leisurely walk, so vehicles are a must.

UFV drivers

UFV India has three drivers on contract who are officially available from 9:00am to 6:00pm Monday through Saturday, but who can be arranged for pick-up earlier in the morning and who seem all too happy to work a little bit later into the evening. (One should always ask in advance if this is feasible.)

Generally, these drivers can be booked through UFV staff for regular pick-ups (for going to campus each day), regular drop-offs (for returning to the apartment) and for mid-day trips. Although the drivers will sometimes agree to drive faculty at a particular time or place, bookings should be made through UFV staff, rather than directly with the drivers.

The drivers will also deliver needed supplies to the apartment and they can sometimes be dispatched on errands, such as to pick up a parcel or dry cleaning.

The drivers are generally safe and reliable (within the Indian context), though not all of their vehicles have seat belts in the back seats.

Tuktuks

The green and yellow three-wheeled mini-taxis that dash around every Indian city are known as “tuktuks.” They have no seat belts and fares are negotiated before getting into the vehicle (lest the passenger be overcharged and doubly so for foreigners). Potential passengers feeling they are being quoted an unfair price should walk away or insist on a lower price. Most tuktuk drivers will eventually come down to a fair price, though they will be all too happy to charge more. These vehicles are fast and convenient, though not at all luxurious. They are so widely available that bookings are completely unnecessary. Because rates are negotiated, guidelines are difficult to provide, but a 15-minute ride should cost approximately ₹100 (or about \$2.00 CDN). In terms of personal safety, a small number of tuktuk drivers notoriously will drive foreign passengers to other destinations and then demand extra payment to be taken to the correct destination. This can be a particularly vulnerable and frightening experience, which means that tuktuks are not ideal for women travelling alone or for anybody travelling alone at night. While such experiences are less common, most visitors to India have at least one such story.



Photo credit: automaticvehicle.blogspot.in

OLA and Uber

As noted in the discussion of cell phone apps on pages 16 and 17, booking an insured, licenced taxi through OLA or Uber is a very reliable and affordable means of transportation. The phone app will assign a price that is fair. A taxi ride from one corner of Chandigarh to the opposite will likely cost approximately ₹200 (or about \$4.00 CDN). These taxis are safer and more reliable than tuktuks, though many will still not have seat belts in the backseats. Some drivers may attempt to negotiate above the price calculated, but passengers are well within their rights to pay only the quoted price.

Public transit

This author took one look at city buses and opted for taxi cabs, especially given the low cost and high convenience. Visitors can, of course, use public transit at their own discretion.

Coming to and going from Chandigarh

Chandigarh has a (now) international airport, a train station, and relatively good highway networks connecting the city to the rest of India. The airport has international flights to Dubai (and soon to Singapore), plus connections within India to a few major cities: Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, and others.

Commerce, cuisine, culture, and leisure

Also see “Money” under the “Travel in India” section on page 32.

Where to shop

Almost every sector in Chandigarh has a local market that will have a few restaurants and at least one or two small grocery stores. These local markets are within walking distance and are very convenient for basic day-to-day needs and produce. Most markets will have a pharmacy and, if not, another is not too far away.

Larger grocery stores are known as “hyper markets”; “Harri Hypermarket” in Sector 26 is one such market and is a good place to find most non-perishable food items and other household goods.

India’s version of Loblaw’s Great Canadian Superstore is a store called “Big Bazaar,” which can be found in the basement level of Elante Mall, a luxurious high-end mall on the north-east side of the city.

Elante Mall is the one location in Chandigarh for which visitors will never need to provide directions, as it is known to all. There is stricter security on the way into the mall, including a metal detector and wand sweep, sometimes including a pat down for weapons. The mall is pristine inside and offers western products at western prices, plus a few good restaurants (more on that below).

Before Elante Mall was built, Sector 17 was the place to go shopping. An entire sector dedicated to retail space, Sector 17 is not quite so busy as before, but is still an excellent place to go shopping. While still having some of the western goods and prices of Elante Mall, Sector 17 also offers more reasonably priced fashion options, an English book store, plus other useful shops. Negotiating skills are more relevant in Sector 17 than in Elante Mall where goods always have marked prices.

The Sector 9 market also has some higher end grocery stores with western products, notably “MG Market,” which is famous for its premade meals, and “Punjab Stores,” which features one of the better liquor stores in Chandigarh (the other reasonable liquor store is in a shop called “Empire” in Sector 17).

Personal needs

The best barbershop in town is “Headmasters” in Sector 8. Goupons and coupons are available online to bring the cost of their services down; ask UFV India staff for assistance with these and with booking appointments. Headmasters also offers spa and massage services. Their nearby competitor “Hairmasters” offers similar services.

For therapeutic massage and chiropractic services, look to “[The Healing Touch](#),” also in Sector 8.

Doctors and medical clinics are best located through the IAMAT website. Pharmacies are available in most sectors of the city (and rumours indicate that they do not all check for prescriptions).

There is a drycleaner in Sector 32 near SD College; UFV drivers can sometimes drop off or pick up dry cleaning upon request.

Day-to-day eating

While a ₹750 per diem will not go far if eating at restaurants, it will be a fortune for those who opt for the SD College hostel for lunch (which can be delivered to faculty offices upon request) and who opt for tiffin service (a boxed dinner) in the evening (which can be arranged through UFV staff). While these options may not seem romantic, they are actually excellent food options and cost approximately ₹50 each (yes, that works out to one Canadian dollar per person per meal). A standard restaurant meal, either at the restaurant or by delivery, will range from ₹300-₹750 per person per meal, depending on the restaurant choice.

Within walking distance of the Sector 66 apartment in Mohali, “Punjabi Junction” is a decent restaurant in the Sector 65 market, north-east of the Bestech complex. It is a good fall-back option when other dinner plans are inconvenient or unavailable, plus they will happily deliver. A clean, modern grocery store, “More,” is just a few doors to the east; they both take cash or credit cards.

From the apartment in Sector 44, there is an excellent market with a selection of restaurants within walking distance to the southwest.

Quality restaurants

Chandigarh is home to a number of quality restaurants and some middling restaurants.

Elante Mall houses an excellent Indian buffet called “Pashtun,” a reasonably good East Asian fusion restaurant called “Kylin,” and a very good American restaurant called “Brooklyn Central.” There are a variety of other choices at Elante Mall, which range in price and quality.

The Sector 10 market has a very high concentration of high quality restaurants, notably “Casa Bella Vista,” which is the city’s best and most expensive Italian restaurant, and “The Rustic Door,” which is still on the expensive side, but offers a good selection of culinary choices, including some truly excellent Middle Eastern options (try the falafel).

For a fun experience, visiting faculty may wish to try “Barbeque Nation” for dinner, but are advised to skip lunch that day, as the servings are ample and endless. Chandigarh also has some brew pubs that come well recommended, such as “Brew Estate.” The top-rated Indian restaurant in town is “Swagarth”; all three of these options are in Sector 26.

If leaving the city by road towards Amritsar or Delhi, be sure to book a stop for lunch or dinner at “Haveli’s,” which is a fantastic restaurant along the highway (try the eggplant dish: baingan bartha).

Nighttime activities

Despite being a city of over a million people, Chandigarh does not have a vibrant night life and faculty visiting alone may not feel comfortable going out alone at night, regardless. Because Chandigarh sits just above 30°N in terms of latitude, the sun sets earlier than in Canada, which enjoys longer evenings thanks to Daylight Saving Time. These two points, combined with safety issues, generally means that visiting faculty will have a large amount of unstructured time in the evening hours at their apartment. While marking papers will fill some of those hours, faculty should plan in advance for how they may wish to use that time, keeping in mind the limitations of in-suite entertainment options that are available.

Drinking water

The most obvious advice travellers receive before going to India is about only drinking bottled water. This advice is well heeded in all of India; however, Chandigarh may be one place where visiting faculty can be a little less cautious. Although this author and his wife always stuck to bottled water for drinking, we did use tap water for rinsing our toothbrushes and we never sent a drink back for having ice cubes in it. While this behaviour caused no problems, there was no interest in tempting fate in other cities. Visiting faculty should exercise their own judgment on the matter and heed the advice of physicians.

Cultural attractions

Perhaps Chandigarh’s most famous tourist attraction, the rock garden is a good place to spend an hour or two on a sunny day. The entrance fee is priced very modestly.

Nearby Sukhna Lake is also a lovely place to go for a walk. While the south shore of the lake has a well-used paved pathway, reminiscent of West Vancouver’s Dunderave Sea Wall, the hidden gem of the city is the forest pathway that curves around the northern side of the lake through the forest nature reserve. Most people are unaware of its existence and interested pedestrians can truly escape the sounds and smells of the city and walk along a dirt path under the forest-jungle canopy. The forest reserve is full of life, including deer, a huge number of peacocks, tropical birds, butterflies, and the like.



The Rose Garden in Sector 16 is beautiful when in bloom in summer; the parks connected to the Rose Garden, both to the north and south, are known as Leisure Valley. These parks make an excellent walk

from one end to the other and feature some interesting works of public art towards the southern end of the river valley.

The botanical garden at Panjab University is also a pleasant place to go for a walk and spot some local monkeys, but visitors will want a driver to help them get there, as the location is somewhat buried within the Panjab University campus walls.

Leisure

For reading materials, there is an English bookstore in Sector 17, as mentioned above, but there is also a British Council Library in the Elante office towers behind Elante Mall (5th floor).

Recreation centers, yoga studios, and private gyms are located throughout the city, but memberships need to be purchased; consult UFV India staff for assistance locating and buying such a membership.

A number of other recreational facilities, such as movie theatres and bowling alleys, are in Chandigarh and can be easily located online.

Holidays, cultural practices

Minor holidays are a constant throughout the year; UFV India faculty and staff are often able to help orient visitors to these practices and are happy to bring guests into the celebrations and the unique dishes associated with various holidays.

Major holidays are often linked to larger campus events. Events in India are scheduled on short notice, so having no plans for a festival is common a few days in advance. Consult UFV India staff for advice about participating in local events if not associated with the University.

Also, please note that Indians will often state that they are observing a holiday “fast” while in the middle of a meal. The term “fast” in India does not indicate a total abstinence from food, as it does in North America, but rather abstinence from certain foods. In some instances, the fast may be absolute, though.

A list of national holidays is available from the Indian government: <https://india.gov.in/calendar>.

Teaching in India: Inside and outside the classroom

The classroom environments of UFV Canada and UFV India are quite different, despite being the same courses offered by two branches of UFV. Although Canadian instructors will have taught students from India, and even students who were first enrolled at UFV India, the experience of teaching at the Chandigarh campus is unique.

Preparing to teach in India

After having taught a given course a few times in Canada, faculty may find that course preparation becomes a rather streamlined affair, with just updates, minor changes, and the pro forma work of getting ready for the semester. Teaching in India requires considerably more preparation, even for courses that faculty may have taught several times before. Indeed, the preparation workload is substantially heavier than in Canada.

Syllabi

For starters, visiting faculty will need to request access to syllabi that have been used at UFV India in previous years, old midterms and exams, and information about the textbook that is typically used. Such information may not be provided unless specifically asked for.

UFV India uses a set syllabus template for all courses. Some deviations are allowed, but visiting faculty will need to navigate which types of deviations are allowed and where deviations from the template are unacceptable. UFV India staff may not carefully scrutinize draft syllabi, so be careful about including standard rules and language. For example, UFV India students do not have access to the Disability Resource Center and individual instructor policies concerning food and drink in the classroom should be omitted, as UFV India applies uniform campus-wide policies on such matters.

Textbooks

For a variety of reasons, mostly outside of the control of UFV India, different textbooks are sometimes used at the Chandigarh campus. As such, faculty may need to request that said textbook be shipped; that shipping can take several weeks to complete, so the request should be made as soon as possible. Naturally, a different textbook requires additional preparation work in developing the course syllabus.

Blackboard Learn

Equally, UFV Canada does not automatically generate course shells for UFV India courses, as many Indian instructors do not use Blackboard Learn in their courses. Visiting faculty should request the creation of these course shells from the ETS department in Canada well in advance of the semester to ensure that the technology is ready well before the semester begins.

Blackboard course shells are set for Pacific time, so visiting faculty will need to adjust the deadlines set in Blackboard for the time difference and students will need to have the discrepancy noted clearly. Also note that Blackboard Learn is updated on the fourth Sunday of each month from 6am to 10am Pacific time, which is a prime marking window in India (6:30pm-10:30pm on Sunday). Faculty may wish to avoid setting deadlines in this timeslot and to ensure that they have downloaded papers for marking outside of this timeslot to avoid inconveniences and frustrated e-mails from students.

Student orientation program

Canadian faculty from the ESL department are the first point of contact for many UFV India students in an orientation course that helps prepare them for the Canadian education model. This orientation includes familiarization with Blackboard Learn, reinforcement about citations and references, plagiarism, and academic honesty and integrity (more on that later), and other foundational skills development that will help Indian students succeed in their programs.

As a result of this orientation program, visiting faculty can anticipate that most UFV India students will be familiar with Blackboard Learn and the Zimbra e-mail system in advance.

Scheduling crunches

Course scheduling is done at the last minute, so the number of sections may shift and instructors may not necessarily know their day-to-day schedule until the week before teaching their classes.

In general, much of the business conducted in India has a very last-minute feel to it; this is an environmental trait that visiting faculty need to learn how to adapt to. For example, this instructor still did not have a teaching schedule five days before courses began, meaning that syllabi could not be finalized and course shells could not be set up; however, this particular experience is apparently atypical of a normal semester at UFV India. Class lists will likely only arrive a few days before the beginning of the semester, as the recruiting staff work well into the first week of the semester to fill vacant seats. Indeed, students may be added to classes two weeks into the semester. Visiting faculty are well advised to block out a considerable amount of last-minute crunch time in their schedules in the days leading up to the beginning of the semester.

Despite the rather last-minute provision of scheduling information and class lists, instructors are expected to e-mail their syllabi to all students before the semester begins. Once again, this illustrates the intense time crunch that occurs immediately before the beginning of the semester.

Use of midterms and exams

UFV India includes a heavy emphasis on testing, specifically through midterms and exams. While this may stand in contrast to Communications department courses, for example, which virtually never have midterms or exams in Canada, UFV India aims for consistency across its course offerings in Chandigarh, rather than consistency with course offerings in Canada. Students in India are quite used to this model of assessment and visiting faculty can be creative in how such midterms and exams are formatted to reflect a more applied model of learning assessment, rather than testing for rote learning.

Faculty should also note that there is an expectation at UFV India to produce a mid-semester grade for each student after the midterms have been graded. Staff will provide an Excel grading template based on the course syllabus, but use of that template is optional. Staff will also prompt faculty with grading deadlines, which are much tighter than in Canada.

Classrooms

The classrooms in India are very much like those in Canada, but they are air conditioned and have digital clocks. The computer terminals have wireless keyboards and mice, so instructors can move about the classroom with a bit more freedom. Each day, classrooms are also powered up and then later down from breaker switches to conserve power. Visiting faculty will need a brief orientation to the classrooms to become acquainted with the technology and breaker switches. Faculty will also want to check in at their classrooms half an hour early to ensure that the breaker switches are on and that the air conditioning is running. Arriving five minutes prior to class may result in an extremely hot and uncomfortable room, as UFV India staff sometimes forget to switch the air conditioning on in the morning.

The most common minor conflict within the classroom is the temperature at which the air conditioning is set. With the lecterns at the front of the room and the air conditioning units at the rear, the person most sensitive to the heat and consuming the most energy is the furthest away from the cooling system. Ensuring that the room is cool at the beginning of class and again during breaks, then setting the air conditioning for 24°C at a low fan speed appears to be a compromise that both students and faculty can live with. Despite such attempts at balance, students will often take the remote control to the air conditioning to adjust the temperature to suit those sitting in the back of the room. For faculty teaching in winter, note that the classrooms do not have heaters, so dressing warmly may be essential to ensuring personal comfort.

Curiously, geckos somehow get into the classrooms and can sometimes be seen crawling along the walls. Tropical birds will sometimes land on the bars covering the windows and will tap on the glass with their beaks. These can be an amusing distraction and they most definitely qualify as part of the cultural exchange in this author's opinion.



Professional culture at UFV India

The professional culture at UFV India is positive, open, and collegial. Many staff and faculty appear to be genuine friends and more than simply colleagues (indeed, two members of the staff married each other) and colleagues are regularly invited into each other's personal lives, notably for weddings.

Visiting faculty are immediately included in almost all events at UFV India, including meetings of staff and faculty and weddings of staff, faculty, and, in some cases, their family members. Visiting faculty may need to bring or buy some traditional Indian clothing for use at weddings and holiday banquets.

The relatively open culture at UFV India means that information is generally shared at staff meetings quite freely, including about enrollment and financial information, which could be seen as sensitive.

UFV India staff routinely express a tremendous desire to be helpful and ensure the comfort of visiting faculty. Colleagues routinely share food brought from home and dine together in their offices.

Staff are eager to help with weekend travel planning, but more at the last minute than well in advance, unless UFV India is going to pay for the travel (i.e., flights from Vancouver to Delhi/Chandigarh). With a healthy dose of research and consultation with UFV India personnel, visiting faculty may find themselves to be their own best travel agents, especially provided they are experienced travel planners.

If there is one cultural workplace sensitivity worth flagging in advance for visiting faculty, that might be concerning political sensitivities about fair treatment of personnel. Even in temporary situations, there is a need to observe a heightened sense of fair treatment and visiting faculty will become immediately aware that the rules governing working hours are applied differently to visiting faculty. UFV India faculty are required to show up for a full day's work, even on days when they have no classes. No such expectations are imposed upon Canadian faculty who can mostly come and go as they please, so long as they are present to teach their classes. Also, UFV India faculty are well aware that Canadian faculty are paid substantially more money (as that information is freely available from the Collective Agreement on UFV Canada's website). While there is no action that needs to be taken as a result of these sensitivities, visiting faculty should be mindful that they do exist.

Differences in operating procedures

Classroom practices

Attendance is taken each day in a booklet provided by a UFV India staff member; that staff member waits while attendance is taken and collects the booklet thereafter. Students arriving after attendance is taken are required to check in with the front desk prior to entering the classroom.

Students are used to a far stronger authority structure than in Canada and will often ask permission to enter the classroom, even before class has begun. Equally, they will sometimes still ask permission to use the washroom. Some instructors do not allow late arrivals to class at all. Instructors will need to navigate these cultural differences for themselves.

Before every class begins, students are required to relinquish their mobile phones at the front of the room. Instructors are discouraged from allowing them to access the phones during their breaks, as some students will skip the second half of classes if they can retrieve their phones.

Student maturity

Student maturity levels are surprisingly low amongst first-year UFV India students and are still low among second-year students. During informal discussions on the matter with faculty and staff, both in India and in Canada, this author believes that the cause of this maturity gap is five-fold.

First, even 100-level courses at UFV Canada classrooms include students who are in their second, third, or even fourth year of post-secondary education and first-year students take behavioural cues from more experienced learners. Classrooms in Canada also include mature learners. UFV India uses a cohort model, so all first-year students are straight from high school and have no senior students from whom to take behavioural cues. Also, the total number of first-year students is more than double the number of

second, third, and fourth year students, as most students transfer to UFV Canada (or another institution) after one or two years of studying at the Chandigarh campus. Peer mentorship and leadership by example are in short supply, especially within a contained classroom.

Second, roughly 2-3% of first-year students have ever had paid employment (outside of their own family business). The remaining 97-98% have never experienced any sort of professional accountability. The skills being taught in school are still conceptual; students have not had an opportunity to actually apply any of the skills in the workplace or to realize just how necessary those skills will be later in life. This is especially important in terms of recognizing a disconnect regarding concepts of professional accountability.

Third, the entire cost of tuition for almost all of these students is being borne by their parents. Students who are paying for their own education or taking out student loans in their own name are likely to take their schooling far more seriously than those who have given up nothing of their own to be in school.

Fourth, the high school system in India provides numerous opportunities to “make up” low scoring assignments and to “retake” low scoring exams. When students are reported for plagiarism, they seem genuinely surprised that the consequences stated in the course syllabus are being enforced and that there is no second chance to submit the assignment for credit. Students are widely surprised that extra assignments cannot be undertaken to artificially boost their grades. As with reasons two and three above, this fourth explanation points to a weak sense of accountability and responsibility.

Finally, dating among students in high school is quite rare and often heavily discouraged. Some students will be attending co-ed classes for the first time. Consequently, certain social skills that are developed earlier in the life of a Canadian student are still developing among Indian students at university. Faculty may notice a certain amount of emotional excitement or nervousness that is more commonly found at the high school level in Canada, as Indian students are starting to explore romantic experiences, potentially for the first time.

As a result of this lower maturity level, visiting faculty will need to adjust their tactics accordingly. In addition to greater personal patience, faculty need to cultivate strategies, both for individual students who are disruptive to the learning environment, and to the class as a whole. Classroom management practices that are successful in Canada may not work in India and may need to be set aside in favour of new methods.

By far, this dramatic gap in student maturity was this author’s most challenging experience as a visiting faculty member; learning how to adapt to this unique educational environment takes time. Many Canadian faculty have returned several times to UFV India and could be good people to consult for advice.

Parental involvement

Parental involvement is much, much higher at UFV India than at UFV Canada.

When a student is absent from class, their parents receive a phone call (which is why late students must check in prior to entering late: to avoid an unnecessary phone call home). If a student is caught cheating or plagiarizing, their parents will likely receive a phone call. When mid-semester grades are issued, parents of failing students will receive a phone call.

From time to time, parents will request meetings with faculty, akin to parent-teacher interviews. UFV India staff request that faculty agree to those meetings with parents. Each student has signed an agreement waiving confidentiality so that parents can speak directly to faculty regarding student grades or performance.

Naturally, this may be uncomfortable, unusual, and ethically problematic for visiting faculty, but this practice is common and expected. Individual faculty members will need to make their own choices about whether to agree to such meetings and whether to have the student present for them.

Compensating for technology problems

Although this document already mentions problematic internet connections in India, these and other technology woes can actually influence how instructors proceed to teach, both inside and outside the classroom.

There are constant challenges with using Blackboard Learn:

- students are often not provided access immediately,
- the course shell is not automatically opened at the start of the semester,
- the slow internet connection results in uploading/downloading problems,
- scheduled maintenance occurs during prime hours in India, and
- the times displayed in Blackboard are accurate for Abbotsford, not India (and vary with changes to Daylight Saving Time, which is not practiced in India).

Therefore, instructors may wish to make content available to students in Blackboard, but not host graded quizzes or tests through Blackboard, as the likelihood of irregular delivery and/or disrupted delivery of such student assessments is very high.

Such problems extend to the classroom, as well. Rather than relying on the internet to access files or videos during a lecture, instructors may wish to download those same files and videos and open/play them from the computer itself, rather than via the internet.

Teaching style

The teaching style of Canadian faculty is quite different than that of traditional Indian faculty.

The vast majority of Indian education is still grounded in the old-fashioned British system of rote education (perhaps even taken to an extreme). Many instructors in India use the publisher-made PowerPoint slides that are free for use with a given textbook, essentially duplicating the readings in class, or provide a lecture that very closely mirrors the textbook readings. Students are expected to sit

through such lectures and then memorize the textbook and their lecture notes for later regurgitation at midterms and exams.

While applied learning is an important part of UFV's educational delivery model, some of the old rote learning model still permeates both UFV India and UFV Canada. Despite this slice of rote learning that persists, when students experience the classroom environment provided by engaging instructors, focused on applied learning, experiential learning, student-centric education, increased student talking time, and even student-led learning, the students are often unprepared or uncertain of how to engage in that vastly different learning environment, as the transition between the two systems is so dramatic.

As every instructor has a different teaching style, each will need to independently decide how to ease students into this new learning model.

Unique challenges

Class sizes

While class sizes between UFV Canada's School of Business may be the same as for classes taught at UFV India, at 36 students per section, this number is much higher in the case of Communications courses, which are typically capped at 25 students for both pedagogical and faculty workload reasons. Even a class size of 36 is not necessarily a maximum class size, as UFV India will add more students if enrollment swells close to the beginning of the semester. (Class sizes cannot exceed 40, however, as the classrooms could not physically accommodate any more students than that.)

Regardless of the class sizes in Canada, the teaching workload is substantially higher in India because the student body is entirely comprised of students who are speaking English as an acquired language. In a writing-intensive course, such as CMNS 125, this added workload factor must be recognized. The marking workload for CMNS 125 instructors in India is approximately double that of a CMNS 125 instructor in Canada.

Grade averages and failing students in the cohort model

With a cohort model of education, every effort must be made to intervene early and effectively if a student is identified as falling behind. Failing a course can delay that student's progress through their program, as they can only take the course once per year and cannot take later pre-requisites on schedule.

As such, failing students becomes a very serious issue; even a "D" grade is problematic, as students cannot use a course with a "D" grade as a pre-requisite for later courses.

Consequent to these considerations, there is more pressure on faculty and staff to ensure that struggling students catch up. Faculty need to monitor class grade levels constantly and to consider whether struggling students are ready to advance to the next level of study when assessing final grades.

Because of a variety of challenges, be they of student maturity, academic dishonesty, weak English language skills, or just underperformance, faculty and staff need to work hard to ensure that struggling students pull their grades up, lest an excessive number of students finish the course with “D” or “F” grades, causing a problematic level of disruption in the movement of the cohort through its program.

Plagiarism and academic dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is rampant in India. Visiting faculty need to be extremely vigilant to monitor student submissions for plagiarism. This vigilance includes checking each student submission against each other student’s submissions through on-computer search functions, checking submissions against online content through online search engines, and being familiar enough with examples provided in class or in the textbook to notice copying of said content. To illustrate the magnitude of the issue, in one semester at UFV India, this author detected more instances of academic misconduct than he had in five years of teaching at UFV Canada.

These instances came despite students being taught and warned about plagiarism and academic dishonesty in the pre-semester orientation program and in each of the first three weeks of CMNS 125 and CMNS 251, as well as in writing in both syllabi.

Following the unsettling number of academic misconduct reports filed, faculty and staff from both UFV India and UFV Canada have begun developing new strategies and approaches to preventing this problem in the future. While these new efforts will surely help with the problem, visiting faculty will need to continue to communicate frequently with their students about the issue and to be highly vigilant for potential instances of academic misconduct.

In terms of the process at UFV India, cases of academic dishonesty are reported to UFV India administrative staff, not UFV Canada.

Policies on academic dishonesty are difficult to follow to the letter, as too many students would automatically fail their courses if strictly applied. However, enforcement is essential to pushing offending students towards academic honesty.

Only through the ongoing commitment of UFV faculty, both in Canada and in India, will students, especially those in their first year of study, consistently align their academic behaviours with UFV’s policy #70 concerning academic honesty and integrity.

Additional professional opportunities

As a visiting faculty member at UFV India, additional professional opportunities beyond the classroom may present themselves. While there is no added pay and certainly no requirement to embark on these additional tasks, the staff at UFV India are grateful for the meaningful contributions of Canadian faculty. For more information about the possibility of participating in such activities, as are described below, visiting faculty should consult UFV India staff.

Student recruitment

Because visiting faculty have a certain international cachet, opportunities to assist in student recruitment may be offered when classes of high school students come to the Chandigarh campus. Additionally, when UFV India sends its staff to high schools in Chandigarh or outside the city, visiting faculty may be able to join those trips and make presentations to high school classes away from campus.

Qbiz

UFV India runs an in-house subsidiary entity known as “Qbiz,” which sees UFV India staff travel to high schools all over northern India to deliver what is now one of the country’s largest business quizzes. This quiz competition is an opportunity for students to challenge themselves and learn about the business world, both in India and globally.

As an added benefit, this quiz competition raises the exposure of UFV India to high school students, school counsellors and principals across northern India. The first contact with these students and educators makes further dialogue possible and helps to build the recruitment program of UFV India.

Student clubs and co-curricular activities

Just as at UFV Canada, UFV India has a number of student clubs and co-curricular activities available to students. However, unlike Canada, UFV India’s student turnover rate is well over 50% per year, meaning that such clubs have little continuity and, in some cases, need to be restarted each year. Faculty involvement can markedly increase student participation in these clubs and, with some guidance, improve the student experience in these clubs, as well.

Written reports

Much as with this current document, there are sometimes opportunities for visiting faculty to consider challenges or opportunities facing UFV India; the research and reflections of visiting faculty can be invaluable to charting a path to solve problems or capitalize on opportunities.

Travel in India: Advice specific to visiting faculty

This author often differentiates between “travel” and “vacations”; India is most definitely in the more arduous “travel” category, requiring more planning, vigilance, and perseverance than beach vacations to resort destinations in Mexico or relaxing trips to Europe. Visiting faculty have the benefit of drawing on UFV India staff for guidance, assistance, and support, however, which makes the country far less challenging to explore. UFV Canada faculty are well advised to take advantage of this excellent support throughout every step of their journey as visiting faculty in India.

General travel advice for India

Money

Indian rupees are worth approximately \$0.02 CDN (one Canadian dollar is usually quite close to ₹50) and all purchases are rounded to the nearest rupee. Bills are available in denominations of ₹2,000, ₹500, ₹100, ₹50, ₹20, and ₹10. Coins are available in denominations of ₹10, ₹5, ₹2, and ₹1.

Larger bills, especially the ₹2,000 note, are treated somewhat like \$100 bills in Canada and merchants are unable or unwilling to change them on smaller transactions. As such, travellers are wise to break large bills when possible and to always keep smaller bills on hand to facilitate small transactions, such as with taxis or at restaurants. Many merchants carry very little or no change. Some merchants routinely shortchange customers by a few rupees or will provide excess change rather than ask for or provide small coins. In some cases, if change cannot be made, the merchant will provide an additional product at a favourable price to compensate for the difference.

Credit cards are widely accepted at reputable businesses, though online cell phone apps are not always able to process Canadian cards.

Language

Although attempting to learn Hindi in advance of a journey to India could seem logical, English is a very convenient language, as well. A few basic words in Hindi (e.g., yes/han, thank you/dhanyavad, okay/tika) go a long way to showing a courteous respect for the domestic population. Keep in mind that there are dozens of official languages in India and many people speak neither Hindi nor English, so hand signals and pointing end up as the best options. Numbers are always displayed in western characters and most signage is in Carolinian lettering, even if it is a transliteration of Hindi or another Indian language.

In terms of body language, Indians nod their heads in three distinct ways to communicate different meanings. The first and most common is a quick, lateral flick of the chin, which indicates acceptance or acceptability. The second and most internationally celebrated is something of a head bobble, whose meaning is ambiguous and ranges somewhere between “yes,” “no,” “maybe,” or “unknown.” The third head nod is a direct up and down head nod, which is readily understood as an obedient “yes,” and is most easily recognized for westerners.

Support for visiting faculty

Once visiting faculty have arrived in Chandigarh, UFV India staff are often quite excited to provide travel advice and to help with logistics. For some trips, UFV India may even offer a driver (provided at cost) and/or staff member to travel alongside the visiting faculty. This is provided as a service, as a convenience, and as a safety precaution in some instances. Consult UFV India’s Director about travel interests and plans in advance for advice, recommendations, and possibly arrangements.

Best travel opportunities from Chandigarh

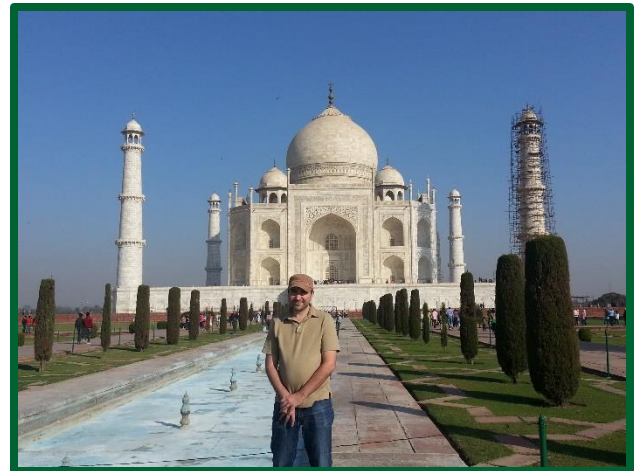
Chandigarh is located in northern India and has the conveniences of a modern airport, a train station, and a good roadway network to the surrounding region.

That being said, most highway speeds top out at approximately 80km/h, meaning that a trip of 400km, which might take just four hours in Canada, including a stop for lunch, will take six hours in India with breaks. Highways are smaller, narrower, slower, and more dangerous, so visiting faculty should seek advice about train and flight options when looking to get away for a long weekend.

Easy weekend trips

With very little notice or planning, visiting faculty can go to Amritsar, home of the Golden Temple, or Shimla, the former summer capital of India, where the University has excellent connections through its staff and faculty. If there was no time to visit Delhi on the way to Chandigarh, a weekend trip is an excellent idea, as three days in Delhi is enough to get a good taste for the city (though it is ultimately inexhaustible due to its immense size, rich history, and bustling urban environment).

Seeing the Taj Mahal is a must-do in India, but flight connections to Agra do not exist from Delhi and train schedules are inconvenient, so a lengthy drive from Chandigarh may be the best way to go. Ideally, visitors may wish to combine a visit to Agra with trip from Delhi if there is a slightly longer window in which to combine the two destinations.



Better by plane

Looking at a map, one can easily forget how enormous India really is. Coming from Canada, which is known for being vast, travellers can erroneously assume that all distances will be relatively smaller and that, once in India, the country will be relatively accessible through its vast rail network. Unfortunately, such is not the case. The distance from Delhi to Bangalore, for example, is about the same as from Abbotsford to Winnipeg. Visitors who have two full days to take the train can do so to see India's beautiful countryside, but visitors who have three or four days on a weekend trip will need to fly to make these trips possible.

Several interesting travel opportunities present themselves in Rajasthan, such as Jaipur, Udaipur, and Jodhpur, each of which would require a flight from Chandigarh via Delhi. Mumbai, cities in Odisha and West Bengal, and southern India, such as Bangalore and Hyderabad, are best accessed by plane.

Although Kashmir is legendary for its beauty, regional tensions are very real and can boil over into violence on short notice. While there are direct flights from Chandigarh to Srinagar, such journeys are contrary to Canadian government travel advisories. Consult UFV India staff if contemplating such a trip.

Further afield

With direct flights from Chandigarh to Dubai (and soon to Singapore), some of the most convenient weekend adventures may not even be in India. A return trip to Dubai is now faster than a return trip to Jaipur, just because of the flight connections. Be aware that to do such trips, visitors will need a “multi-entry” visa. Anybody with a single-entry visa would invalidate their Indian visa by leaving the country, which would cause an enormous headache and possibly result in being prohibited from boarding a return flight.

For those willing to spend a considerable amount of time on planes or a considerable amount of money on flights (or both), exciting options such as Bangkok, Hong Kong, and Kuala Lumpur may be feasible choices for a four-day weekend. However, visiting faculty need to be realistic about jetlag and their energy level, as both the Indian climate and the Indian classroom are exhausting unto themselves.

Adding on to the visit before or after the semester

Inside India

More exotic locations, such as Darjeeling in the far east and Kerala in the far south will require more than just a weekend to enjoy. Darjeeling is a minimum two-day journey from Chandigarh and Kerala deserves a week to explore, so such destinations should be attached to the beginning or end of any given trip.

“Near” India

Once again, foreign travellers can think of India as a convenient place for jumping off to any number of nearby destinations in Asia. However, in reality, Chandigarh is about as convenient a jumping off point to Sri Lanka for Canadian visitors in India as Abbotsford is a convenient jumping off point to Cabo San Lucas for Indian visitors in Canada. Distances and travel connections need to be considered realistically.

That being said, there are a huge number of destinations that one could consider when looking at adding a week or two to the beginning or end of the journey, such as Maldives, Thailand, Nepal, Bhutan, Eastern China, Taiwan, or even Europe. The key to such grand adventures is to be realistic about the time needed to enjoy a given destination, the exhaustion caused by jet lag and crossing so many time zones, and the cost to do such travelling.

Personal experiences: Loving and hating India

Traveling in India is a joy and a trial. Many travel writers have noted their love-hate relationship with the country and this author is no different.

Hating India

Abject poverty

The most heartbreaking part of India is seeing so many people living in such brutal poverty. Although the number of people living in poverty has been decreasing in recent decades, according to the [Reserve Bank of India](#), there are still close to 300 million people living below the poverty line in India.

Regrettably, a steely disposition needs to be cultivated towards beggars, as visiting faculty are no substitute for a proper social safety net. According to the [World Travel & Tourism Council](#), about eight million tourists arrive in India each year, generating almost 40 million jobs for the country. Naturally, tourists are a target for beggars, as tourists are, even among backpackers, far wealthier than most Indians. However, even if all eight million tourists gave money for a meal to one beggar each day for two weeks, this would not amount to one meal per year for every person living in poverty in India. The far more effective use of tourist dollars is to continue pushing it into the legitimate economy where it can employ millions of workers. Also, unfortunately, research by [Siddhartha Sarkar](#) and others indicates that monies raised from begging are frequently funnelled into organized crime; child beggars are often forced to do so as proxies for adults. Visitors who are sympathetic to the myriads of people living in abject poverty in India can achieve more by supporting registered charities, of which there are many that do excellent work to elevate both children and adults out of poverty.

High pollution levels

In addition to the nearly two hundred million motor vehicles, many of which are far below regulated emissions standards, the country's air quality is impacted by widespread burning of agricultural scrap and urban waste. A thick, polluted haze often lingers over cities or in the countryside and smells in urban areas can be most unpleasant, especially when garbage is being burned nearby.

Rivers are frequently used for illegal dumping and are piled high with garbage. Although recycling services supposedly exist, plastic waste is strewn along roadways and railroad tracks all about the country.

Traffic

As discussed in the "Transportation" section beginning on page 17, there are a certain number of anxiety-producing realities of Indian roadways.

As a first realization, visitors need to accept that Indian traffic is more negotiated than rule-based. Naturally, this slows the flow of traffic down considerably and makes for less predictable driving behaviour. On the other hand, this also means that Indian drivers are hyper-aware of their surroundings, as anything less could result in a collision.

While the incessant horn honking in Indian cities can seem irritating, this means of communication actually compensates for the relative absence of driving-law obedience. When one driver is moving into the space where another driver ought to signal and shoulder check before moving into, honking a horn is a prudent choice, knowing that signalling and shoulder checking are rare. Honking before turning can alert oncoming traffic that the driver does not intend to stop or make clearance for oncoming vehicles.

While perhaps bewildering and even harrowing at first, pedestrians can learn to negotiate traffic by walking at a confident pace and without hesitation through a plausible window of opportunity. Crosswalks are rare, which means that most pedestrian crossing is done wherever feasible. Running across a street or pausing unexpectedly is quite dangerous, as drivers time their movements based on a constant pedestrian speed. Visitors should learn to walk at that steady pace and to not stop unexpectedly while crossing the street.

Foreign drivers are well advised to hire taxis rather than to attempt driving while in India. Transportation via trains, planes, tuktuks and taxi cabs is generally easy, affordable, and mostly safe.

The sign on your back

Anybody who is visibly a foreigner (i.e., not of Indian complexion) is assumed to have quite a bit of money, which means that beggars, tuktuk drivers, and dubious street merchants will want to harass that foreigner until they open their wallet.

Another bother is the existence of the so-called “tout,” which is a driver who takes passengers not to their destination, but to a hotel, restaurant, market, or other business that provides the driver a kick-back. Some touts will take passengers well away from their destination and demand more money to get to the desired destination. At times like this, visitors to India should stubbornly insist upon being taken to the desired destination at the pre-negotiated price. City maps can be downloaded to a mobile phone from Google to give reasonable estimations of the durations and distances of intra-city travel. If in a remote area, do not leave the tuktuk or taxi. Do not pay the driver until arrival; this was no accident.

Women’s safety

While this author’s wife did travel with him, she was rarely alone and never at night. As such, this advice is based on second-hand accounts and observations.

Although the government in India is making a concerted effort to improve safety conditions for women, dangers still exist and can be frightening. The “touts” noted above are a concern and can leave female passengers quite vulnerable. Using verified drivers through the Uber app, avoiding tuktuks, and being accompanied when going out at night are all sensible security precautions. Harassment and deliberate

deception can occur at any time of day; being aware of one's surroundings and being strongly assertive are important skills to exercise when in public.

The Canadian government produces an excellent travel guide for female travellers that is worth consulting prior to travel: [Her Own Way](#).

Female faculty planning on going to India alone should consult other women who have travelled to India alone for advice.

Despite these cautionary notes, going to India can be an enjoyable and rewarding experience for all.

Accessibility

Providing wheelchair accessibility or services to people with disabilities has evidently been a low priority for governments and institutions in India. Without assistance, most of the country, including the UFV India campus, will not be wheelchair accessible. Accompaniment will be virtually essential for anybody who requires increased mobility or sight support.

Climate and journey

Even experienced and avid travellers will find the journey to India exhausting. Depending on the month, visitors may experience temperatures of 50°C with high humidity in the peak of summer. Adjusting to the time change and the climate, as well as being constantly vigilant in urban areas, can be truly exhausting. India can take well over a week to get used to and the temperatures can still be over 30°C into November, resulting in changes of habit, such as changes to sleep schedules and eating patterns.

Loving India

Although many travellers to India speak of the "magic" of the country and though there is much literature and poetry to speak to such experiences, this author's enjoyment of India omitted any supernatural, paranormal, or otherwise magical experiences. However, there was much to love and enjoy about the country.

Wilderness and wildlife

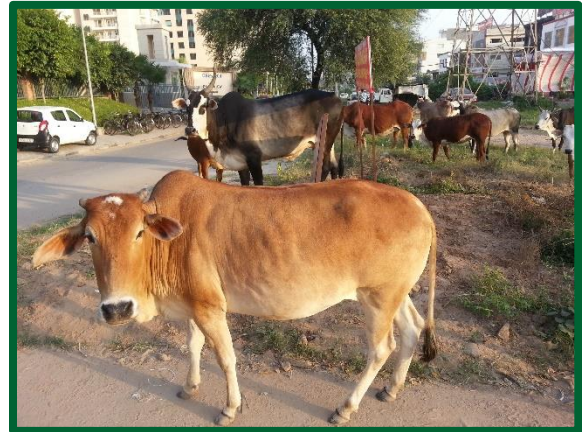
Far from the dusty images of deserts in Rajasthan presented in movies, most of India is a fertile, lush, overgrowing land of agriculture, jungles, and forests. As the seventh largest country by geographic area, India has a wide range of diverse biomes, from the snowy Himalayan mountains in the north to the tropical backwaters of the south. Despite having well over a billion people living in the country, much of it remains pristine wilderness. Such areas are often remote, but well worth exploring.

For birdwatching enthusiasts, India must be a paradise, as the parks, cities, and natural areas are filled with a wide variety of birds. Other wildlife, even if not rare, can be fun for visiting faculty, such as the odd gecko that makes its way onto a classroom wall.

Urban agriculture has a more tangible presence in India, as herds of cows will comfortably roam the streets of city neighbourhoods. These calm and friendly animals will allow people to get quite close to them without a problem, but visitors should keep a bit of distance from the young calves.

Exciting urban environment

With more than ten million people in greater Delhi, the city is an exciting megalopolis. Despite being smaller, other Indian cities have a similar vibrancy of activity and life to them. Market places are generally open and the smells of cooking are in the air. Shops are overflowing with goods for sale and vendors are all too happy to call out to passers-by about their wares.



Cultural history

As a tourist destination, India boasts innumerable temples, forts, ruins, and other attractions. Traveling about the country offers a fascinating glimpse into one of the world's longest established cultures. Major galleries and museums are also available to help tell the story and recount the artistry of thousands of years of history. Cultural artifacts such as the Taj Mahal and Golden Temple are breathtaking and major museums and galleries can be trip highlights.

Appendix A: Letter of invitation



Canada's University of the Fraser Valley delivers its Academic Program
in partnership with Goswami Ganesh Dutta Sanatan Dharma College, Chandigarh (SDCC)



April 16, 2016

Sam Schechter
Instructor
Department of Communications
University of the Fraser Valley
33844 King Rd
Abbotsford BC Canada
V2S 7M8

RE: LETTER OF INVITATION

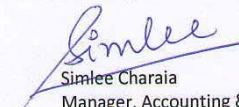
Dear Mr. Schechter,

As you are aware, the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) and GGSD College are now entering the eleventh year of their collaboration in offering UFV India's programs.

I write this letter to invite you as a visiting instructor to SD College in Chandigarh from August to December 2016. During your time with us, you will give seminars and lectures to students in UFV India programs and engage in exploring other possible academic associations between the two institutes.

We look forward to seeing you in August 2016.

Sincerely,


Simlee Charaia
Manager, Accounting & Finance
UFV India Global Education
GGSD College, Sector 32 C,
Chandigarh, INDIA 160030



University of the Fraser Valley
(British Columbia, CANADA)

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UFV INDIA

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UFV India, Sanatan Dharma College Chandigarh (SDCC), Sector 32C, Chandigarh, UT, INDIA 160030, Tel: +91 (0)172-499-2400 • www.ufv.ca/chandigarh

Appendix B: Letter of confirmation



Office of the Associate Dean of Faculty
College of Arts
University of the Fraser Valley
May 5 2016

Ms. Simlee Charaia
Manager Accounting and Finance
UFV India Global Education
CGDSD College, Sector 32C
Chandigarh, India 160030

Dear Simlee

I am thrilled to recommend Sam Schechter to you as a visiting instructor of Communications for three sections of CMNS 125 at Chandigarh this coming Fall 2016 semester. Sam is one of UFV's most highly valued instructors, with a strong record of high quality teaching in his department, and just this past semester was the lead instructor of a six faculty member multi-disciplinary course – one of UFV's first such courses - on youth electoral politics.

Sam's placement in Chandigarh this coming semester will not only support his own professional development cross-cultural pedagogical competencies, but serve to further strengthen the links between, and promote the scholarship of teaching and learning at, UFV and SD College in Chandigarh. Thank you for making this opportunity available for Sam. We look forward to a very productive relationship.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ken Brealey".

Ken Brealey, PhD
Associate Dean of Faculty
College of Arts

cc: Samantha Pattridge
Department Head Communications
Faculty of Humanities

cc: Deborah Greenfield
Manager Administrative Services
College of Arts