



HUGO SIBONY

Summer School Berkeley, USA

SUMMER 2022 EPITA : 21/06/2022 ~ 15/08/2022





HOUSING

I spent my summer 2022 at the University of California at Berkeley in order to do my internship in a "company" as part of EPITA.

Indeed, Berkeley being a partner school, it is possible to validate the internship with the eight weeks of their Summer School.

This stay lasted from June 18 to August 15, 2022.

I went through this adventure with a friend who is in another prep school, so we needed to find a place to stay. Berkeley has many housing options close to campus. Since we were international students, we had access to the "International House" where students from all over the world would gather to meet and party... and optionally sleep in as well...

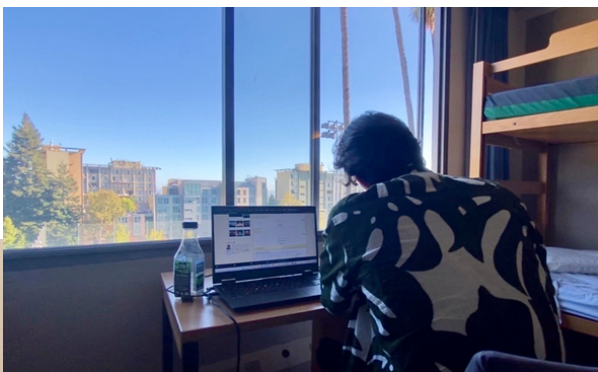
Although it was tempting, my friend and I decided to go to one of the many student residences located 5 minutes away from campus.

That's how we ended up in 3-person rooms shared with Japanese and Korean people. The communication was... a bit hazardous at the beginning, but after a few poker nights and hearing probably 10 times a day "Oui oui baguette", we understood each other perfectly.

In addition to the rooms, we had common areas where the residents of the residence would meet to rest or work together.

It was amusing to see the change in the atmosphere before and after the first midterm.

The icing on the cake was the communal kitchen where we had cooking contests and everyone's cultures met.



ACADEMICAL LIFE

I don't think I need to reiterate the reputation of Berkeley's classes, I have almost nothing to complain about, they were of high quality, with easy access to professors when needed. And I have to admit that having classes in what looks like Greek and Roman museums that tell the stories of countless great people who have passed through Berkeley adds a certain panache. I also took my computer science midterm next to a dinosaur skeleton in the Humanities building. It was an original experience.

While at Berkeley, I took math and computer science courses. I was pleasantly surprised to learn that all courses at Berkeley are available for free online: <https://cs61a.org/> is for example the course I took in computer science. We learned in the same way as at EPITA, through practical work and automatically corrected projects, we reviewed the basics of programming until we created our own Scheme compiler. All this in 2 short months. It was intense but exciting.

Whether it was Python, Scheme, or SQL, we were well-supervised and anyone with a little perseverance could do it. I learned to work in groups with international students. Even though we were in lecture halls of 400 people, labs and discussions were organized so that students could speak directly with a professor or assistant if needed, it was really reassuring to have that proximity at all times.

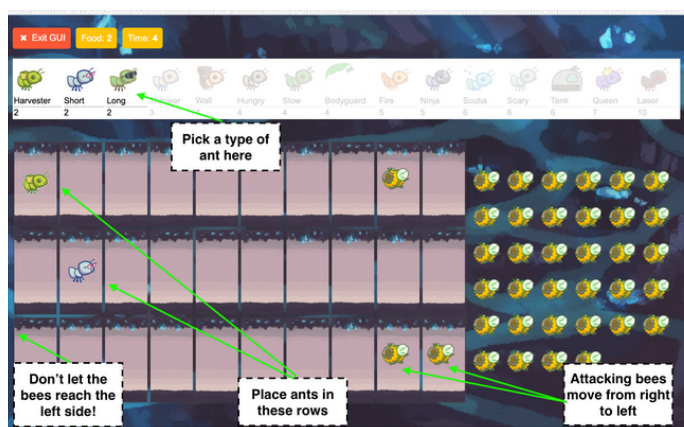
Don't do it. Never. Walk On. The. Logo. From. Berkeley... NEVER!

There is a superstition that anyone who dares to step on the school's logo will fail their exams.

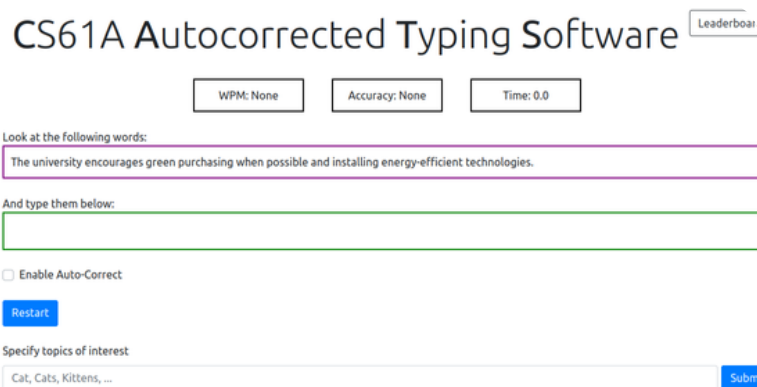
This is one of the many things that make this university unique.



projects



Video game made in
Python (Ants)



TypeRacer made in Python
(Cats)

BERKELEY LIFE

How to talk about life in Berkeley without talking about the food... Asian of course. It's well known that American food doesn't necessarily have the best reputation, but Berkeley is a student city, and the number of affordable and good (by California standards) restaurants is impressive. In particular, not far from campus, you MUST try Kimchi Garden, a very good Korean restaurant, especially after a long day of classes.

However... around San Francisco... be prepared to put your hand to the wallet. American life is very expensive, there are of course aids and discounts as a Berkeley student (university restaurant for 10\$, free transportation etc...) but the standard of living there is much higher than what I was used to in Paris.

As for the famous American fraternity parties, I had been warned that the French had a good reputation in the U.S., but I really didn't expect this much. My friend and I were constantly bombarded with questions and people complimented us on our style (suit and tie of course) as soon as they heard we were from France.

There were also parties at the international house that had a different theme each week, related to a country in the world, where they would feature music and food from that country. It took two weeks after our arrival for the French theme to be chosen because the students wanted to see real French people cooking. We would like to thank Michel Sardou who hosted the whole party.

It was also great to have access to the various Berkeley gyms to blow off steam after class, and many facilities have been set up by Berkeley to enhance student life.





TRAVELS & TOURISM

Southern California has a special feature that makes it absolutely great for everything related to travel and going out. It's always sunny, not too hot, not too cold, perfect weather. This allowed me to go to downtown San Francisco often, which is only 20 minutes away from campus thanks to the subway, which, for the record, is paid for even by students. Chinatown was impressive at the time.

With the friends I made in Berkeley, we visited the Berkeley Botanical Garden and the sumptuous Yosemite National Park.

Finally, with my French friend, we allowed ourselves two little treats :

- We both bought Air Jordans to have maximum style and automatically gain the respect of our American colleagues.
- We went to Silicon Valley and created a startup... just because we could.

So I am honored to announce that I am the CTO of Prometech, a French-American IT startup :)



CONCLUSION

HOUSING

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FOOD

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Course

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Cost of life

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Opportunities

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This summer in the U.S. was a real-life lesson: I was able to learn to live without my family, in a totally new environment. The mix of cultures was a real shock, I didn't expect to be so overwhelmed by the passion and support of the Berkeley student community. It was an experience that really made me grow and gain perspective on myself. It's just priceless. Yet... it comes at a price and I am deeply grateful to my family for financially allowing me to participate in this incredible adventure.

The international experience has opened my eyes to the importance of exchanging culture and passion, if there is one thing I will take away from this trip it is: Taking advantage of every opportunity you come across while you still can, meeting the locals with their exciting stories as well as the students is what I will take away from this trip the most.

I sincerely hope to go back to Berkeley for my studies or work to see all the wonderful people I met there.



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