

Report of Exchange Semester in Stockholm, Sweden

(20th August 2017—19th January 2018)

European Master in Territorial Development



Preparation

As I had never been to a northern country in the world, my decision on abroad semester took the location as priority. The untouched nature, the cold climate and also the Viking stories, those fresh imagines about northern countries impressed me a lot, therefore Stockholm became the most attractive one among all the choices. During the 4 months mobility, I was supposed to attend courses with 30 points in total. To select the courses, it's necessary to check the university website and fill in a learning application form several months before the new semester starts. Due to the language limit, I could only choose course taught in English, which are a little bit disappointing, because there were only 4 -5 English courses.

After deciding the courses, it was time to find an accommodation. Normally the accommodation in Stockholm is quite expensive (up to 700 euro), but fortunately, the Stockholm University provides exchange student the accommodation at a much financial-friendly price (about 400euro).

The apartment I lived was in a big building, in where we could find the laundry rooms, training rooms and even a small pub. I share the apartment with a sweet girl from Italy. Although there is less private space to live with another person, we had our own bathroom, kitchen and living room, which was really great. Within 5 minutes walking distance from the apartment, there were a big supermarket, an apotheke and two bus stops. Everyday, I took 20 minutes bus to a subway station and then spent 5 more minutes on metro to university.

It worth to suggest that each student has better to apply the membership in Student Union, then you could get a student price buying the traffic ticket and even in supermarket.

About the trip to Stockholm, I took the flixbus (at least 17hours travelling) because I had a big baggage to carry. From the bus station and airport to the university, Stockholm university has provided very good guiding service. Shuttle bus has been arranged to take freshman to the campus. Therefore, no need to worry about how to get to the university, just follow the guidance booklet as well.

Studies

A Swedish semester is divided into 4 parts, each part lasts about a month. A course with 7.5 CP normally will end within one part. After one part exams are finished, then the next part starts. Some course with 15 CP will last 2 parts, in other words, two months. I was surprisingly getting along with this new study system, because it helped me focus on one course during a time, which is quite suitable for me.

The three courses I took were “Cultural geography”, “Geographic Information System 1 &2”. The whole studying period were very pleasant.

Not to mention how beautiful the campus was, I really appreciated the kindness and help from all the professors. For each course, we had several assignments and for each assignment we had one or two weeks to prepare. Professors would give the review of my assignment very soon, which was very helpful for me. During the two GIS courses, we spent almost everyday in the lab room, working with group partners, and discussed any problems we meet with the TA. I have learned a lot from my partners and the TA, and I found it great involving myself in something all day long with partners.



Leisure Time

In Stockholm, there were some excellent museums. Therefore, in weekends, I usually went out with my roommate to visit some museums or cook some food at our place to treat some friends. She is from Italy; I'm from China, we often tried to cook some traditional dishes for each other, which was also fun of our lives.

Review

Speaking to the best experience, I'd say it should be the northern light night. It was one day in December. The prediction said there would be northern light visible in Stockholm during 10pm to 1 am. That night, near the lake, hundreds of people gathered together, waiting the northern light's appearance. After several hours in cold wait, I finally saw the most unforgettable and magnificent picture I have ever seen.



Recalling the 4 months in Stockholm, every day was sparkling and shining. I'd love to admit that I'm still missing the days there, friends there, and campus there. Getting into contact with students from different cultures helped me see the world in a more open way. I feel so lucky that I got the chance of the abroad semester.