

Experience report– Semester in aboard

I am studying International Finance. An exchange semester is a mandatory semester that all students must go study aboard, therefore I have decided to study International Finance. In the 6th semester of my study, I wanted to do exchange semester in the United State of America. Unfortunately, Covid Pandemic has been hitting our world, as a result I had to postpone my plan to the next semester. Due to the restriction that could not make my wish possible I changed my mind to study at Ramkhamheang university in Thailand.

Preparation period

I have contacted the international office of my university in Germany. The homepage of the international office provides very useful information such as requirements of each country including the documents, which is necessary for the application.

The coordinator from my international office was brilliant helpful and she always supported me. She offered me both virtual and personally meeting in case I need more information.

The application was very smoothy this is because of my great coordinator. She had sent me all documents which I have not submitted, and she kept following up and updating me all the time. After I have submitted the documents a week later, I have received an e-mail from the university in Thailand, where I want to study. I had to also send all documents to the university in Thailand.

Financial Aid

There are several financial aids that you can apply to. The deadline for the financial aid is relatively early, so you need to inform yourself early on. I personally only applied for the PROMOS Stipendium because the other programs require me to be a German citizen or I missed the deadline. More detailed information can be found on your university's international office webpage or by consulting with your international office coordinator.

Arrival

Due to the Covid 19 president of the university in Thailand had decided to postpone starting date of semester from November to January 2022, therefore I booked my flight on 4th January. When I arrived, I bought the sim-card from AIS- internet provider with unlimited internet package. It costed about 30€. I recommend you buy a sim-card at the airport because you will get the unlimited speed of internet which you will never lose the internet connect because the internet is fast and stable. If you do not buy at the airport, you will not have a chance to get this package outside.

There will be an Orientation Week where the universities will have various activities and workshops to get students acquainted and a mandatory visa workshop for the international students. I recommend you apply for the Buddy-Program from the international office. You will be assigned with a student, who is studying in the university, and they can help you with a lot of questions.

Housing and food

It is the best to choose this university because it locates in the downtown of Bangkok. A number of apartment and restaurant can be reached easily. I stayed in the area of Sukhumvit directly at the sky train. The condominium "The edge Sukhumvit 22", where I stayed was a

bit far from university, but this does not impact me because I do not need to go to campus. For a one-bedroom condominium I paid monthly 450€ exclusive electricity and water. In the room, kitchen and laundry machine are provide. In the condominium, there are many facilities which you can use such as fitness studio, swimming pool, library, and sky garden. If you decide to go to Thailand, you do not have to worry about the food because there are a small food shops beside the street, which is so tasty and cheap (about 2 -3€ per dish). In Thailand we also have grocery (7-11 shop) which operate 24 hours. From there you also can get everything what you urgently need. There is one 7-11 shop locates around the corner of the condominium. I think it is very suitable for international students to stay there during exchange semester.

Classes and University

For the exchange program you need at least 5 classes to reach a full-time student status and have one semester course load. I personally took 5 classes. I recommend taking courses that are transferable or that you genuinely are interested in. I like all my classes and feel like all of the professors made the classes interesting and understandable enough that you will actually like it even though the workload is a lot. Homeworks, reading assignments and papers every week from every class is common so you have to stay on top of your deadlines. Aside from that, there are multiple exams for each class. The learning materials are easy to understand so it wasn't so hard for me to balance my university life and social life.

Unfortunately, all lectures were held virtually, and I have not met my classmates personally, but we keep contacting during the semester and until now.

Here we have block course which means you choose one subject to study and after 2 weeks you take its exam and then you allow to take another subject. The class usually starts from 9a.m. until 16a.m. and take place usually 2-3 days a week. I took 2 subjects always at the same time. I think it was hard for me to concentrate on study for 6 hours and 5 days a week, so I do not recommend you do that. All materials that you need are provided by university, and you do not have to pay for it.

Departure

At the end of the Program there is not a lot of bureaucracy that I needed to do. I just needed to get the international office of university in Thailand to fill out my confirmation of stay. There was nothing I should do at the airport before and after I land in Germany aside from filling in the arrival form that the German government made mandatory.

Conclusion

My time in Thailand was such an unforgettable experience even if I was born and raised there. I got to experience some of the best moments in my life there. Being a part of the college experience in Thailand was definitely unique and travelling to all the different cities where have not been before, was amazing. I also made some news friends from all over the world, and I got to improve my English. It also helps me grow as a person in terms of being able to manage a lot of things on my own, solving problems and just being a more independent person. I really recommend you apply for this Ramkhamheang University, Bangkok, Thailand because even though the application process is a bit complicated, it will all be worth it in the end.