

Destination: National Taiwan University
Exchange period: VT 2016

Choice of the destination and courses:

I found the destination to be very good. I wanted to go to an Asian country which also was modernised. There were lots of available courses both in English and Chinese. These were easy to find but it was a very hard system that was used for applying.

Describe shortly the preparation process before the departure:

Multiple entry visa was applied for at the embassy in Stockholm and it took 4 days to get it. It was an easy process if you got all of the material that's needed.

Contact with receiving institution:

It was pretty hard to understand the website in the beginning since the website is not really up to Western standards. However, the school provided a buddy for me who helped me a lot in the process.

Support from Umea University:

The contact person from umeå wanted to help out but because of lack of knowledge she couldn't. It was her first year in this position and I think the information delivery will be better next year.

Arrival information:

Yea

Accommodation arrangements:

I lived in an apartment outside campus.

Transportation:

Walk to school. Metro to go around. One trip is about 5 sek.

Budget:

It's very cheap. Divide the swedish price with 4 for almost everything and you got the Taiwanese price.

Social activities:

There are lots of things to do in Taiwan. The geography differs a lot depending on where you are which makes it incredible to go around the island.

There are parties for exchange students every week.

Get used to eating out, night markets are very common, food is cheap and nobody cooks by themselves here.

Recommendation :

Very much so!

Practical things to think about:

If you hate rain, don't come. It rains a lot (but very good weather some of the time).

General information about academia:

The big differences are:

- 1 - you have to attend most of the classes
- 2 - courses are conducted over the whole semester
- 3 - the grade is based on your attendance, midterm result, final result, projects and homework which means that you have to keep up with assignments all the time.
- 4 - the English speaking skill of many is bad

Courses attended*Course 1:*

General Chinese (3 credits) - best course of the semester. It's really helpful for the general survival in Taiwan. I took the course 2 nights a week and the workload outside class is massive. It is not a hard course to pass but it takes very very much of your free time.

Course 2:

Archeology: introduction to modern history in South-East Asia (3 credits) - the professor speaks very bad English which makes it impossible to understand the content. However, you will only be graded on a 2 page report which makes this course a really easy course to pass

Course 3:

Economic History (3 credits) - Really happy with the professor and the content of the course. You get a basic understanding of the Asian economic history but the workload is pretty high since you every week has to read articles and write about them in group projects.

Course 4:

Market and Economic Development of Taiwan (2 credits) - Same professor as the course in Economic History. The course gives pretty thorough information about the development of Taiwan. The professor is really good and knows what he is talking about. The workload is OK, you write group projects every second week

Course 5:

Exploring Taiwan: natural resources (2 credits) - Easy course to pass and is not time consuming at all. You will go to 3 field trips over the course and every week there will come an invited expert to talk about a specific subject that's important to Taiwan

Additional Courses:

Badminton basic (1 credit) - very fun course even though it was conducted in Chinese and I don't speak good enough. Many students are willing to translate which is nice and it's very easy to pass

Enhanced Chinese (1 credit) - Extra course that helped with keeping up the Chinese which in hindsight is really good. However, this course is also conducted 2 times a week and the workload is almost as much as the General Chinese course but it only accounts for 1 credit.

Did the university provide language courses? Could you receive ECTS points for them? What was your experience of such course?

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Possibility of future contact: Yes