



Spring semester 2016 – Politechnika Krakowska, Cracow

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Exchange report 3.
Semester

Contents

Introduction.....	2
Courses.....	2
CAD I.....	2
CAD II.....	2
Urban design.....	2
Eco-city Concept.....	3
Residential building design I – Single-family housing.....	3
Conclusion for all the courses.....	3
Social and cultural experiences.....	3
Practical experiences.....	4
Bars.....	4
Good places to eat.....	4
Where to live.....	5
Budget	5
Conclusion.....	5
Examples of projects.....	6
Urban design.....	6
Residential design, single family housing	7

Introduction.

Before I started my studies at KEA I had been traveling for some time, that is why I always knew I was going to take the offer of going abroad for a semester, other than that, I would like to see how the educational level and so on were at another school in Europe .

I had some difficulties figuring out where my dream destination was. I read many of the exchange reports and found out Cracow would be a good destination for me. They had some courses I found interesting and the price level of the country had a lot to say in my decision.

Now that I am back, it was not a decision I will ever regret.

Courses.

I chose the courses from the other reports I had read and from the website from the university in Cracow.

CAD I.

Cad I is a course exactly as it sounds. You learn the basics in different CAD programs. In the first class you get a piece of paper where you write down what CAD programs you know and which ones you would like to, either improve in and or get to know. After that, the professors make a schedule of the classes with which programs you will have to use the different days.

It is an easy class, you get 4 ect points and the professors are really nice and helpful.

CAD II.

More or less the same as the above, the difference is that in CAD II you will use BIM programs. So REVIT and ARCHICAD to name a few. This course was one of my favorite ones, you can either draw on you own project or you can choose to follow the course set up by the professor. This is nice because it was the only course where you can actually get some help with your designs. For this course, it is also 4 Ects points.

Urban design.

Urban design is a 6th semester course, but when I started the course I asked the professor, whom is really nice and helpful as well, if he could do something's to make the course a bit easier for me. That was never any problem. You choose an area and an overall subject, I Chose to do a metro station and concentrate on the infrastructure in and around Cracow. It was a good course for me, because you get to work in a different way than we do at KEA and the scale is much larger.

It took a lot of my time this course, but it was worth it all. 8 ecst points

www.a52.pl/en/dyplom/ here you can see some of the diplomas that are handed in.

Eco-city Concept.

This course is a bit weird, I thought that it would be seminars but was more a design course than anything else, the two professors I had, seemed a bit confused and no one really knew what they wanted from us. Overall, it was a fine course I thought that I would be more educational and I would receive information about sustainable materials and ways of building. 7 ects points.

Residential building design I – Single-family housing.

I cannot recommend this course! The professors are not helpful, you will attend zero classes as they are all in polish

The project is more or less the same as I did at KEA in 1. And 2. Semester, except they value the overall design much higher than the actual concept. What I mean by that is that if they do not like the design and or concept you will have to redo the whole thing.

Overall, I have no positive thing to say about this course. 8 ects points.

Conclusion for all the courses.

The way of learning and get information about the different subjects (design courses) is very different from how I am used to get it from KEA. You have to do a whole lot more yourself and use more time to get the knowledge needed to get to the end product. Different programs is needed as well, Photo shop is very helpful to do the final printouts. It is very useful to set up the boards for the final hand in.

you also need to do a whole lot of prints, as the majority of the professors do not want to help you, if they have to do so on the computer. So save up some money for the prints as well (see the budget)

Social and cultural experiences.

It is next to impossible not to get in a group of good people if you attend all the meetings that the Erasmus set up in the beginning. So try to be at all of them and you will be fine.

Most people who decide to go on Erasmus seems to be very open and friendly people, so just make sure that you get into a group in the beginning and the rest will sort itself out.

The first two weeks is as a big team building exercise, there is at least two events almost every day.

Sometimes they clash with your classes but I would say that it is more important for the whole experience, if you have many good people around you. So attend to as much as you liver and head can

take.

Before you leave, you get the opportunity to get a mentor I declined this option and regretted it later.

The students I spoke with in Cracow who had chosen to get a mentor really enjoyed it, especially in the beginning of the semester, the mentor can quite often help you with a lot of the practical things that you do not know anything about, like mobile carriers, good places to eat and drink, social activities and so on. Therefore, I would recommend accepting the offer about a mentor. Another good thing about the mentor program is it will be a lot easier to meet some polish students, when you are Erasmus you will not have many classes with poles or in any way interact with the natives. It is something you will have to do yourself either by getting a mentor or move in with a polish student.

So cultural experiences is limited to football games, drinking and just meeting them in the streets.

Practical experiences.

There is a ton of good places to eat, sit and have a coffee or beers in Cracow. The price level is very agreeable, about 15kr for a beer in some places. The area we spend the most time in is Kazimierz (Jewish quarter) here you will find some of the nicest places I have ever been to.

Bars.

Alchemia, some say it is the oldest bar in Cracow also called Narnia bar, super nice place.

Eszeweria, The decoration reminds me of being in my grandma's house, good vibe.

Singer, This bar is one of the places I had the most fun, they are open all night long and it has a super relaxed vibe, dancing on the tables is very much allowed here.

Mleczarnia, Good place to sit but it is mainly the outside area that we used cheap beer and good food.

Spokój, Decorated as a 70s bar, small place but a good place to start, placed near old town.

Klub Ré, also near old town, have an out- and an inside area. Good in the afternoon.

Forum, situated down by the river, good place to sit all day and have some cool events quite often.

Good places to eat.

Ribs on fire, places in Kazimierz cheap and place my friends and I frequently visited.

Alchemia, both a good bar and a very nice place to get some lunch.

Forum, have some of the best pizzas in Cracow, fair priced.

Moa burger, one of the best burgers I have ever had, simple as that.

Bull pub, watch a football game and get a good burger, spend many Sundays here with premier league and a heavy head.

These are just a handful of the places in Cracow there is something for everyone.

Truly one of the nicest cities I have ever visited.

Where to live.

I got a place with a friend of mine from KEA a bit outside old town, near Rondo Mogilska. Nice place but a bit far from everything if that is even possible in Cracow. We paid approximately 3000kr each with everything, internet heating and so on. The best place to live in town would be in Kazimierz, it seems like everyone knew that this was place to live. You will get a bit less for the money in this area but you are going to end up being in this end of the city 4-5 days of the week.

Facebook, Gumtree and Rentsellers is some of the most common ways to find a roommate or an apartment to stay in.

Budget

Apartment: 3000kr monthly.

Grocery shopping: 500/1000kr monthly.

Phone: 50kr monthly.

Prints: 200kr monthly, between 500 and 1000kr for my final prints.

Conclusion

I had fears that Poland and Cracow would be this boring cold and grey country I was very surprised when I finally got there, the city is so clean has some of the nicest city centers I have seen and a big variety of places to see around the city, small hidden gardens and some beautiful buildings. In many ways, it reminded me of Copenhagen. I will definitely come back to the city and the country in general. About the university, not sure I think it lives up to the standard I have to my education. I learned to be a lot more independent about my studies, you will not receive a lot of new knowledge from the professors but I learned a lot from my fellow students.

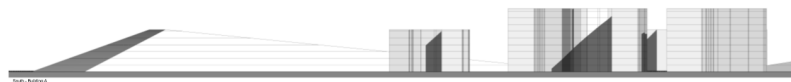
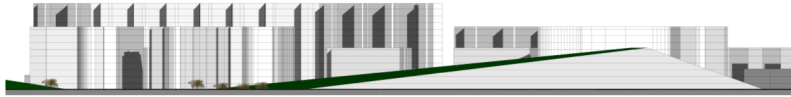
Nonetheless can I definitely recommend doing a semester abroad.

Maybe you will not be a better student but you will be a better person.

Examples of projects.

Urban design.

Urban-architectural concept
Building A - service building 1:500

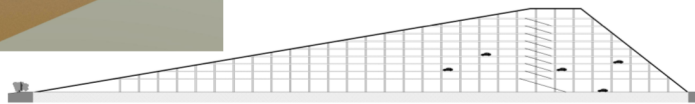
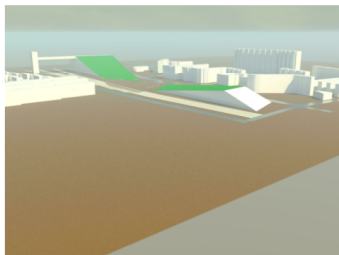


Facade construction, Metal crosshatch grid over glassed windows



URBAN DESIGN
Coordinator: D. Sc. Phd eng. Architect Boguslaw Podhalański
Student: Jacob Kristensen URBAN DESIGN - Year 3. Semester 6

Technical board + Renderings
Section of building A and B 1:500



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Residential design, single family housing

