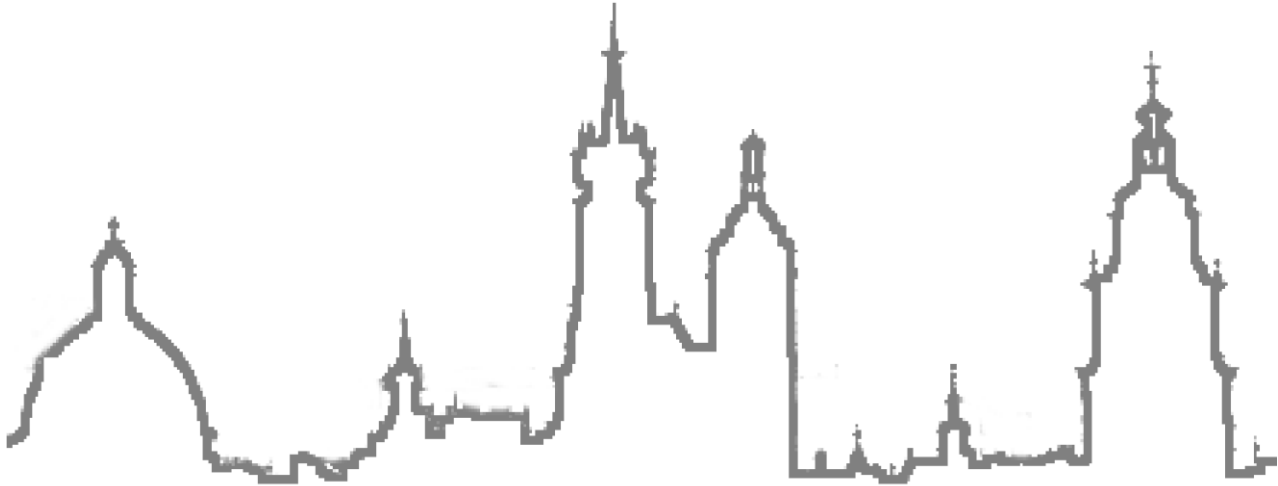


KRAKOW



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Introduction

I went to Krakow in my 5. Semester of a few different reasons. I was sure I wanted to take an abroad semester after a presentation about abroad semesters by Sophia Vejlgard in the 2. Semester. The choice landed on Krakow because of the school's reputation, that it should be a very good school, and other parameters such as, Poland isn't too far away, and it's cheap! Like really cheap 😊 I will go through some of my experiences with the classes, Erasmus program, social life, the city itself. And very important, I will write "NEED to know" before coming to Krakow, in this report.



Krakow main market square.

Experiences with the campus and the classes

Politechnika Krakowska has three campuses, two of them within walking distance from each other, and a third a bit longer away, around 30 min travel from the old city. The buildings are a bit old fashion, and free internet on the campuses is not existing. The main campus has a small library, where you can sit and study. But it's the only location for that. The classes are used most of the time and it is therefore expected that you study the place you live. Upon receiving the learning agreement, you will have to choose some courses that will sum up in 30 ects. You will have a few weeks to change the classes again, if you discover that some of the classes don't fit to you.



Politechnika Krakowska main campus building.

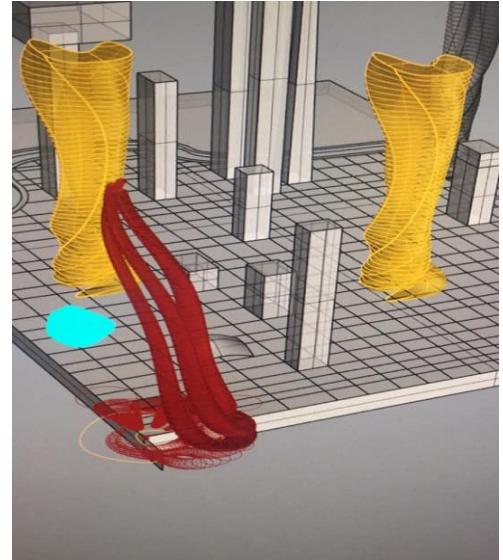
There are classes with Polish student and classes only made for students, who are on the Erasmus program. But one thing is the same for most of the classes, it's totally different from KEA. The classes that seemed more appealing were those related with design and art. But be careful that you don't choose to many of those classes. Because they are very time consuming, and the teachers don't communicate with each other, so they don't understand if you don't priorities their class over everything else 😊 I would not recommend to take any classes that seem like a huge

challenge, because one of the biggest challenges will be studying in another language, therefore I recommend to take some classes under your year of study.

Cad Techniques I and II - BIM and Modeling

Cad 1: This class was an intro course of creating parametric designs and in my case an intro course in Rhinoceros and Grasshopper. In the first class they asked the students which programs they would like to learn more about and in which course you would like to attend. There are more courses in different times, so you can plan your own schedule.

Here is a pic of the project in progress.



CAD 1: parametric design.

Cad 2: This class was about BIM modeling and an intro course of Sketchup, ArchiCAD, and Revit. As in CAD 1 we started with writing down which programs we were interested in. and then we went through an intro course in the mentioned 3 programs.

The teacher in this class was very engaged and wanted to teach as much as possible, which made it much better.



CAD 2: Lumion render

Both CAD classes were with weekly homework, and it was through the homework the teacher gave you a grade in the end of the semester. No exam.

Resident building design II.

This class was my main design project. The assignment was to design a 4-floor residential building with public use of the ground floor, a parking basement under the building, plus designing the garden surrounding of the building.

There is no teaching in this class but only consultation 2 times a week, but it is not a demand to attend every consultation hour. The class is with polish students, and the assignment given to you is on 70 pages in polish. But they will explain you the most important in English.

My finished project contained: Site plan, 1 section, floorplans, detail drawings, renders, and a perspective hand drawing on a B2 paper. And it all needed to be printed out on B2 posters for the final submission.



B2 posters. Renders and details

Architecture in the countryside

In this class you get the options to work alone or in a group of 2-3 people. There are 3 assignments in this class, if you work in groups, and if you choose to work alone, then you only need to make 2 of the assignments. The 1.st and then either the 2. or the 3.

1. Assignment is to analyze a village of your choice close to Krakow, colors, architypes, and so on.
2. Assignment is to design a city center in the chosen village.
3. Assignment is to design a public area, could be a wine farm, or educational farm. And a family house for the people working there.

I worked alone and choose to do assignment 1 and 2. The class is only for Erasmus students, and the teacher is the Erasmus coordinator. The class is a really easy class, because they show you the results in the beginning of the semester, and then they want you to do exactly the same. I even experienced that when I did something different from their examples, then they guided me to do as their examples, which resulted in that most people called the class the “copy/past” class. Photoshop is really good to know in this class. The final submission had to be handed in on B2 posters.



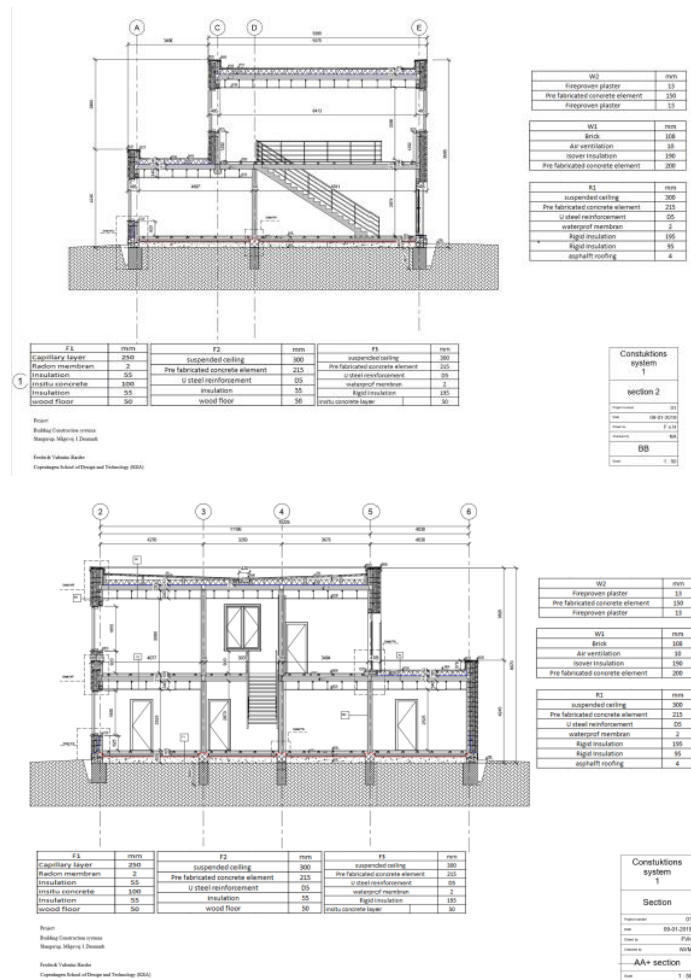
B2 Posters.

Construction building systems

This class is the most similar to what we work with at KEA. You have to choose a project you want to re-new or design a new project from the beginning of. The class is for 2 ects. points, but if you want more ects. points then you can make more work all the way up to 8 points.

I made a new design and went for 6 ects. points. There is only one teacher in this class and maybe around 30 people, of that reason you shouldn't expect that the teacher will have time for you every time, and when he has time for you don't expect him to have more than 2-5 min. The teacher seemed stressed out because of the number of students and was often extremely harsh in the feedback. Often leaving you with more questions than answers. The guidelines for the class are only for 2 ects. points. And I didn't get any feedback of how much work I needed to do to get my 6 ects. points before I told the teacher that I wanted to submit my project.

The class is only for Erasmus students, and you have to print out A3 papers for the submission.



A3 sections.

Erasmus, Social and Cultural experience

Krakow is a beautiful city, with allot to offer. The city itself is very compact so everything is in walking distance. Krakow has a rich nightlife, and the city is full of students of all kind. It's the biggest student city in Poland. The prices in Krakow are way cheaper than in Denmark, and if you know where to go, then you fast experience how far you can come with as little as 100 kr. Krakow is full of old fashion architecture. It was one of the only cities' that wasn't bombed in the WW2, and for that reason all the beautiful architecture of Krakow survived.

The ESN organization for the Erasmus students makes an amazing job, there are events for almost every taste throughout the whole semester, so there are great opportunities for being social, no matter if you live in the dorms or have your own flat.

There will be good possibilities to go out and see the country. Some of the biggest attractions close to Krakow are: The salt mine, Auschwitz, and the mountain village Zakopane.

Practical experiences

Accommodation

Getting your own flat or live at the dormitory? The dormitory is located 20 min outside the city center with public transport. You will most likely live with another person in the same room. There is good facilities, but also disadvangedes by living at the dorms, such as you can't have visitors, to book a laundry time and you have to get up early in the morning to get a time. But it's the most social place to live, although you don't have much privacy. Living in the dorm is the cheapest solution you will find in Krakow.

I lived in a shared flat close to the city center. Walking distance to everything. You have to be careful with the apartment ads, because they will sell the apartment at all cause, also if it includes lying. My appartment wasn't heated very well, the train railway was 3 meters from my window, and there was konstruktion work aswell the whole semester, and the appartment was described as a very quiet neighborhood. So look up things before booking. There are still some very nice appartments around the city for a payable price 😊 I paid 2400 kr. monthly.

I recommend getting your own apartment, and search in good time before your arrival. It is worth it to pay around 3000 kr. for a nice single apartment in the city center.

Landlord to avoid is "The local nest", because they cheat you if they can (They still owe me 700 kr. and they don't care).

Food and goods

The food in Poland is much cheaper than in Denmark. If you cook yourself then you can live really cheap, like 50 kr. a day. But even if you want to go out and eat often, then you get a good meal at a restaurant for around 30-50 kr.

The alcohol is also very cheap, a normal beer is 4-8 zloty = 7-14 kr. And that's in restaurants, clubs and bars. So, you can imagine how cheap a private party at home will be.

There are many small markets and some bigger shopping centers close to the city center, so it won't be a problem to find what you need. You will be able to find most of your normal needs in Krakow.

Transportation

Krakow has got allot of possibilities of transportation, there are tramps, busses, trains, Uber, and taxies.

The prices follow the rest for Poland, so its basically free to use, except Uber and taxies 😊.

But the city is so compact that I don't think you will have much use of these services unless you live at the dorm.

If you are here in a winter semester then I recommend that you just walk where you need to go.

If you are here in a summer semester then I recommend that you buy a bike for 500-1500 zloty and sell it again in the end of the semester.

Need to know

- Download Photoshop and learn the basic (will help you allot), and other programs that you might use in classes.
- You need to print out all homework/projects for each class.
- The focus is heavily on architecture, and not much about details or other stuff as in KEA.

Conclusion

Krakow was a semester full of great experiences. I met allot of good people, and some of them will be good friends for years to come. The city is a must-see place, it's beautiful, full of life, and there are endless opportunities of social events. The university was disappointing, all the teachers were late for class, there was not much teaching but only consultation where the teachers didn't have much time for each student. And they want you to print out big papers to every class, and they refuse to look at your homework/projects from a laptop screen. I can only recommend the school for people who want to be an architect in the future. I will recommend the ESN organization, the social experience of going abroad, and the city of Krakow itself. But I cannot recommend Politechnika Krakowska, if you have expectation on learning as much as you would at KEA.