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Period of study: September 2020- January 2021

I decided to go on exchange in 5th semester of Architectural Technology and Construction Management. To be honest, I chose that semester because the idea of exchange came to me quite late, but I am sure I would not like to miss the 3rd or 4th semester. Of course, it is hard to say what I missed in 5th because, well...I was not there. I chose Barcelona because I heard that the school is very design focused (we were the first students from KEA to go to la Salle) and I wanted a warm destination for winter.

Courses

I studied 6 different courses:

Project II

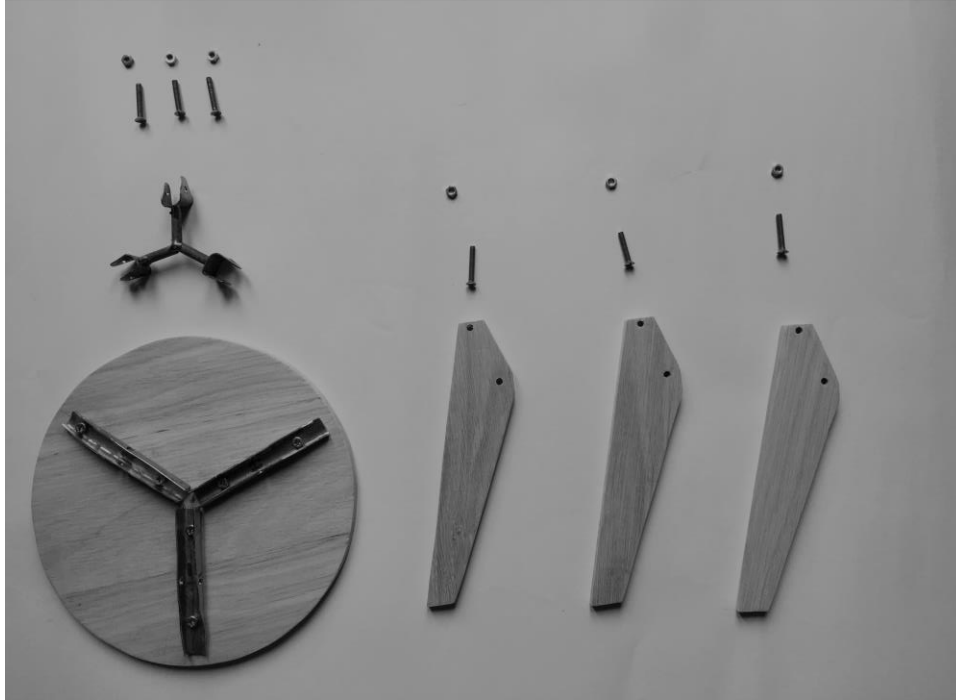
Project course of 4th year. It was very challenging for us, construction students because of course our classmates have a lot of experience with conceptual design, analysis, etc., which is the biggest focus of the course. With a lot of work and long project work nights, I am very happy with the final outcome. However, you have to be interested in design to take this course.

In general, I would recommend this school only to people who are really into general architecture. Otherwise, you will suffer. The course is unit based, meaning you have a choice of 4 different units which you have to choose in the beginning of the semester, so listen carefully when they're being presented in the first introduction class.



Construction Workshop III

I begged the coordinator (Jaume, very helpful person) to allow me to take this course and it was worth it. As a technologist, you won't find it difficult. However, local students consider it one of the most difficult subjects. I had the chance to make a model of a furniture and do a competition project for festival of light. I understand why this course is not advised for exchange students. It was the only course that was almost entirely in Spanish. Great way to learn but can be frustrating sometimes.



Town Planning

Very interesting course form 5th year. I learned a lot about urban design through a project of new development in Jafre town. It was a real project, and our teacher wants to present our works to the major of the town so that is exciting. However, the location of the project changes every year, so it is hard to say how the course will look like in the future. The teacher, Victor, is one of the best teachers I have ever had. He is moving to Senegal in few weeks, but he might organize project for la Salle there. So, even more exciting!

Composition

Theoretical subject, the only one where we work in groups. Gives you an insight on analysis of existing architecture, photography, texts. Not a very useful subject in my opinion.

Integrated Installations

Subject similar to Services at KEA, but from more of an architectural perspective. I would say it is easy-going and interesting. I learned a lot about light design, acoustics, ways of increasing energy efficiency of a building. Also, it gives you many ECTS points for the level of difficulty.

Warning! There are two courses called Integrated Installations. If you are interested in the one that I am talking about, it is the one from earlier year (I do not remember what one). The other one was not recommended by local students.

Spanish

Must do!

The combination of these 6 courses required a huge amount of time and effort. The culture of studying at university here is different. Students do not have part time jobs, etc., simply because the studies are very time-consuming.

I feel like I have learned a lot and most of the lecturers were very helpful, however as said before, I would only recommend this school for architectural course if you are interested in conceptual architecture, and not for instance process and management.

The university building is close to Barcelona mountains and Tibidabo. Very nice area. The campus has design studio on the last floor and a big canteen in a different building. It is the typical life on campus type of school.

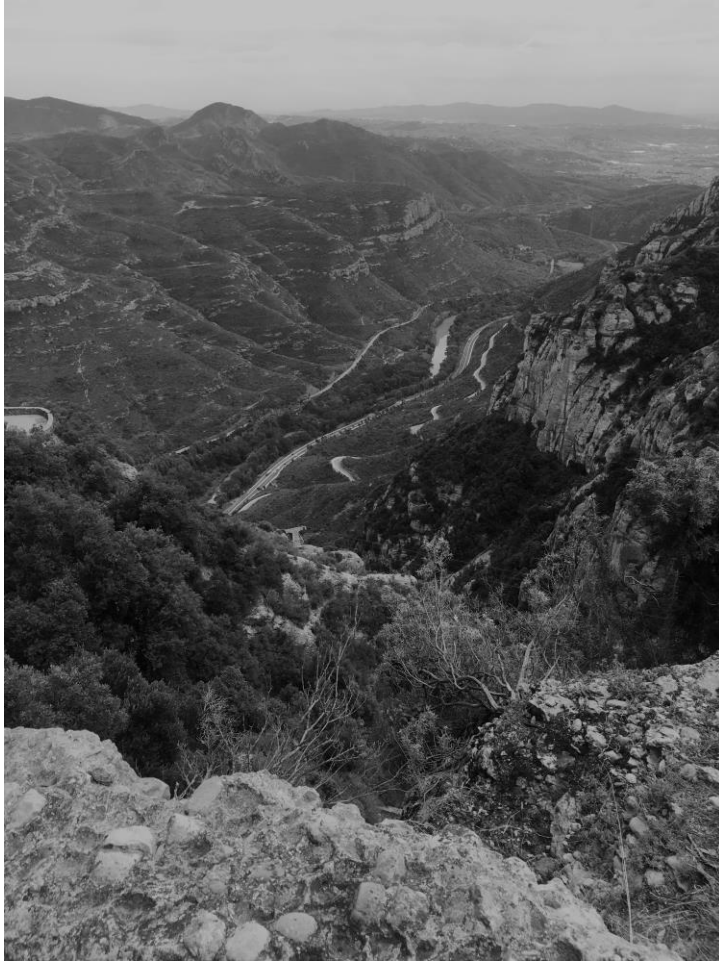


La Salle Campus

Social and Cultural Experiences

As you might know we got here during the semi-lockdown situation, so of course we experienced Barcelona at a very specific time. Even with venues being closed most of our stay, I enjoyed the Barcelona experience. There is a strong community of international students and many sites to see even during these times. The local people are very kind and helpful. You can find many Erasmus students groups through Facebook and WhatsApp. There are many organized meetings such as bar hangouts or volleyball at the beach.

Also, if you skate, BMX or roller-skate, Barcelona is the place to be!



Hike to Montserrat



Barcelona Pavilion



Sunsets at the rooftop



Park Güell

Practical experiences

I came to Barcelona together with my friend Matylda. Going with a friend is a great idea, if you are not sure whether the classes will be online/if there is going to be lockdown. We got here by plane. I recommend getting a Aeorobus that takes you directly to Placa Catalunya from the airport and do not taking city bus and metro like we did!

We rented an apartment in el Gotic (the oldest neighborhood of Barcelona) through Airbnb and stayed in it throughout the stay. The only reason we could do that was the specific situation of 2020, as normally all rental apartments would be occupied by tourists.

There are plenty of good restaurants around the area but of course Barcelona is an expensive city (comparable to Copenhagen) so cooking at home is the way to go with occasional hangouts.

One good grocery shopping visit - 20-30 euros.

Meal at a bar/restaurant- 10-15 euros.

Vermut- 2-4 euros

10 metro trips- 11 euros



The fact that I decided to stay in Barcelona another 5 months to do my internship here should be a good prove that life here is pretty good, even during a lockdown. If you have any questions/doubts/want to have a contact here because you are going to Barcelona for the spring semester 2021, do not hesitate to contact me via e-mail.

Gracias!