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Technical University of Madrid (UPM)

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# MADRID

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## Introduction

Why Madrid? To be honest, I just wanted to have an experience living in warm climate, as I'm as many students from the north. Of course I would like to go to Alicante first, where you can also enjoy Mediterranean sea, but since I canceled my application, and then applied for the exchange semester again after the deadline, that was the only opportunity to go. So why not? By the way thank you Sophia Vejlgard for that. Of course each frog praises its swamp. So do I. Madrid is really amazing city to be. The first two months were like in a tale. The weather is so amazing, imagine every day is a sunny day and no wind. People are friendly - always willing to help you even though they don't speak that good English. Anyway I spent all my days chilling beside the swimming

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pool, reading a book, eating a watermelon, enjoying the sun and waiting for the first days  
at school.



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## Professional experience

The school starts usually on the 2nd week of September. When the summer is officially ends. But that's only for spanish people. For me it's just began. But let's get back down on earth and speak about the business. The first days at school were a little bit embarrassing. But that's normal for everyone. Once you meet Pilar the local coordinator and her team you can feel yourself in safety hands. These people are wonderful. They will help with everything and also to choose classes to collect 30 ECTS points. Remember all classes are in Spanish. So my advice if you don't speak Spanish, better not go if you really want to learn something. You can also deal with professors about an appointment in English, what usually I did. But still you will understand only 25-30% of 100%. The education is really good level over there. Every lecture runs for 2 hours, and professor speaks usually without any pause. The worst moment about the classes over there is that it's not like in KEA, where you have classes in a row and you have 15 minutes pause between. There one class runs from 9.00-11.00 and the next class runs from 10.00-12.00. So you have to always arrange which class at this particular moment is more important. The domestic students have also classes at 18.00 in the evening having a big gap between. But I haven't met this kind of moments in my case. Maximum until 14.30.

I will try to demonstrate what you going to study if you will choose the same classes as I did.

The first what was really a big challenge for me, and what I'm the most happy about of the exchange semester is that I had classes with one of the famous architects in the



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world - Alberto Campo Baeza.





He has classes with 100 students 3 times per week. But the class is not offered in ETSEM. This class runs in another building - E.T.S. of Architecture. The is class also in Spanish. The credits you will get for the class is 9 ECTS. Very hard working. We had a project to design a bridge and a hotel up to 250m high individually.

More information is here <http://campobaezaupm.com>





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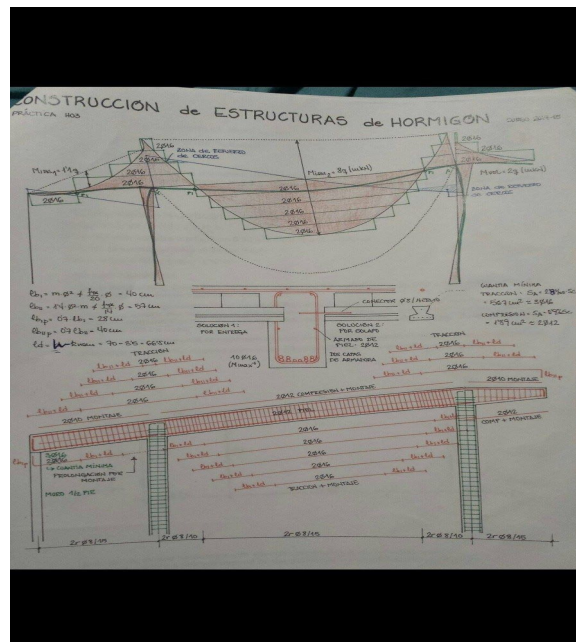
The second class I was happy to participate at is Roof and Envelopes with Julian Garcia. Great professor. The class is only about key junctions. We were drawing up to 7 key junctions per two weeks and analyzing every detail. Coming back to KEA is like coming back home from war in a very good way. 6 ECTS.

More information here : <http://facadesandroofs.blogspot.com>

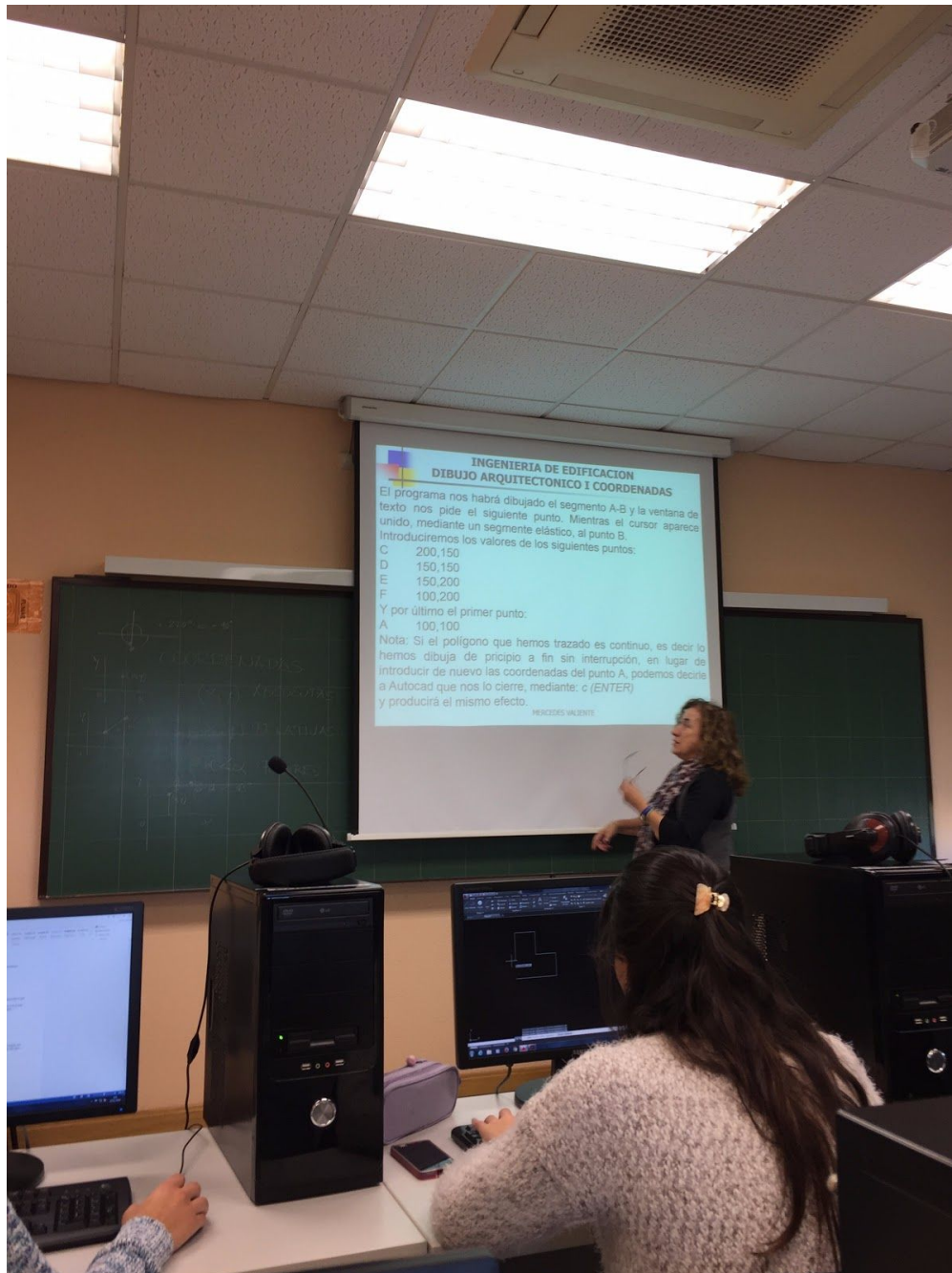




The fourth class is Concrete Structure with Sonsoles Gonzalez. Very nice professor. She will always find time for you if you are having difficulties with the exercises even though if she has no time. The class is about calculation a bending moment in beams and slabs, and find out which Ø of the reinforcement you will need to use and how to place it properly. This subject is very difficult for many students. It's more about physics. So if you feel like physics never accepted your request to add you as a friend, think about it. 6 ECTS.



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Actually I have chosen the most hardest and at the same time interesting subjects to study. There are more easier subjects you can choose to collect 30 ECTS. Like for example Spanish classes (3 ECTS), Revit beginner classes (3 ECTS) and free hand sketching with Mercedes (6 ECTS), and Legislation - city tours on Saturdays with Pilar. Where you will hear a good story of Madrid (3 ECTS).

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## Practical experience

Accommodation comparing Madrid and Copenhagen, it is easier to find it in Madrid. Of course is like everywhere the further away from city center - it's cheaper. My advice is to pay a little bit more and feel the Madrid's life. One of the best options is <http://www.atmospherelivingsl.com/> . You will live with other 5-12 Erasmus students in a big shared apartment. The time you will spend there is unforgettable.

Food and drinks. If you are a low-budget student and you want to taste Spanish cuisine, don't go to the restaurant. Try to go to the canteen of Architectural campus ( next to the Building Engineering campus ). Here how looks the menu for 5.45 €.



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If you cooking at home the best supermarket I advice you is Lidl. Very cheap. Good quality. Big choise. 1L of fresh squeezed juice is 1€ and a bottle of sweet wine Verdejo Rueda 1.99€ huh?

P.S Latte in the canteen is fantastic!

**Transportation** card for students costs around 25€/m. You can travel all around the Madrid using all kind of transports. The metro is awful in the mornings.

The time spent being as an Erasmus student is like to be only one time young in your life. So if you are in doubt, don't think, just go for it. Time melts. Of course the reason what usually stops us is a financial moment. To survive in Madrid I had to figure out what to do. I was really afraid to loose SU, like every foreign student does going on exchange program. So what I did? I dealt with my chief at work. And every month I was flying from Madrid back to Copenhagen for 4-6 days to collect this minimum amount of hours and flew back in order not to loose SU. You will say crazy russian. I will say c'est la vie.



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If you ask me so how was in Madrid ? I can tell you that my heart still skips a bit every time I look at the picture standing in the backyard of the school vanishing in the songs of Cicada.

