

Exchange Report - South Korea

University abroad

Hanyan University ERICA

Contact person abroad

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September - December 2018



Where and when did you study abroad?

At Hanyang University ERICA Campus in Ansan, South Korea. Approximately in September 2018 until the end of December of the same year.

What KEA program did you attend at the time?

Entrepreneurship Design, during my 3rd semester, at my home university.

What classes did you take during your semester abroad? Please briefly explain what each class was about.

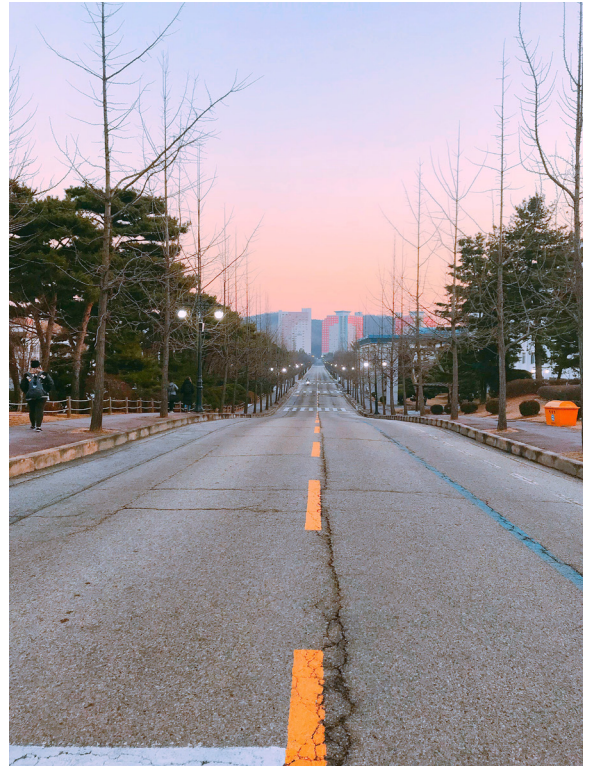
AD/PR & Society: An introduction and general knowledge of advertisements and public relations throughout history. This is a very academic subject with a lot of reading materials before class.

Entertainment Design: How to define and apply design in the modern entertainment industry, and how to create design products/services for a particular target audience.

Storytelling and Design Content: Advancing and re-polishing your design skills, using storytelling and interaction amongst others.

Web Design: A basic introduction course to web structure theories, and practices where you learn how to create and maintain a website.

Survival Korean: A Korean language course, which teaches you how to read, learn basic grammatical rules and necessary words and sentences for every-day Korean usage.



Academic Experience

How helpful was the receiving school in the process of choosing classes and settling you in?

I had quite the struggle applying for classes in the beginning. You have multiple rounds where you apply for a course, and the competition is very tough. Personally, I felt a bit of lost in the beginning and didn't really rely on the school for the help of getting me enrolled in classes. You're pretty much on your own.

They have an introduction day where they explain the process of re-applying for courses when you'll arrive however it's still a bit of a chaotic procedure.

What classes/study experiences did you find the most rewarding? Why?

I feel I've learned something from every course that I ended choosing. Some of the courses I already had done back in my home university, I mainly chose them to refresh everything I've learned up till then. With that said, I simultaneously had the pleasure of learning how to think and view certain problems because I got to work with people from all over the world which gave me a whole new perspective on how to solve some of these issues.

It's not that hard to pass the courses, and honestly, as long as your English is efficient you'll probably do better than most. However, if you want to exceed be prepared to put in some extra effort. The Korean grading system allows only a couple of students to get a certain grade, and all of that comes down to how many people are enrolled in the class.

What classes/study experiences did you find least relevant or least valuable to you? Why?

Close to none. I learned something new from every course I ended up taking. Be it something practical or academic wise, I managed to gain new knowledge either way. A course I was a bit disappointed with was my *AD/PR & Society* class. I had hoped it was more about the history of Korean advertisement and public relation, but it turned out to be exclusively about American.



What classes would you advice othe KEA students should pick at the receiving school? Which should they choose or not choose?

There was this one course which I regrettably didn't get, *Consumer Behaviour*, it was crazy competitive to apply for this particular class since it was a business course. All business courses are some of the most difficult to get enrolled in. With that said the people I know who managed to get it was very pleased with it.

My personal advice is that you pick courses from different majors. Mix and match as much as possible, that way you'll gain all around in-depth

knowledge of different courses which in the long run might help you in your future studies.

Cultural/Personal Experience

What challenges did you experience culturally while being abroad?

This was my first time living in Asia for such an extended amount of time. Pre-departure I spent a lot of time learning about Korean culture, their language, the society as a whole and its problems. But there is only so much you can learn from books and articles. One thing that really stood out to me in the first week or so is the emphasis on how to behave and act whilst being in public places.

And as in many other Asian countries being polite whilst addressing elderly, higher-ups or just upper-classmen is a huge deal. And I cannot stress this enough. I became very hyperaware of how to speak to people because of the Korean hierarchy system that they have.



Don't let this spook you completely out though, you just have to be aware and mindful of this.

As of the Korean people in general, I felt that many were really shy at first. Many Koreans are a bit afraid of speaking English because they fear that their pronunciation is bad, and this alone can become a problem especially whilst doing group work in school. And another thing to keep in mind is that the older generation might not be able to speak English. Luckily I was very persistent in my Korean studies and ended up learning how to converse, although very basic, in Korean. This was a huge help throughout my whole stay there. So learn your Hangul beforehand if you can. It'll save you a lot of time and trouble.

How helpful was the receiving school in this process?

Overall the school itself was helpful and inclusive of exchange students. They have a particular staff of students who organise trips and get-togethers for exchange students specifically. And if there were any type of events coming up in the area the school was very quick to contact us and try to engage us in after school life.



What was the best cultural/personal experience during your studies abroad?

Just being there whilst studying has become such a dear memory for me. You learn the culture and the people in a whole other way when going on exchange in contrast to if you're just travelling there. I got to meet so many amazing people, not only Koreans but from all over the world whom I still talk with on a regular basis. And almost all of my Professors were so passionate and creative and just out there, which made the experience so much better. Korean people really love their country, and it's very apparent. They love to teach you about its history, the cuisine, the societal issues and the language itself. If you're open to them about learning all of this, you'll gain so much in return.

What advice would you give other KEA students going to study abroad at the receiving school?

Learn some basic Korean before travelling there. If you manage to memorise the letters in Hangul you'll already be far ahead of everything. A lot of the Korean words are loanwords from English, so if you know your basics chances are you can already read and understand. That's a little protip.

Also, if any type of trip is coming up, sign up for it. The school provides a lot of travelling options all around South Korea. In addition to that give yourself a bit of freedom to really travel around and don't let the language scare you off. You'll quickly get a hang of it if you just put in a little bit of effort. Also, be persistent about enrolling in the courses you want to take. If you didn't manage to get all of your classes in the online registration process, you'll have more chances afterwards.



What help did you receive from your school abroad?

I lost some things on campus and they were very helpful to try to retrieve them. Also, I had to make an Alien Registration Card which was a bit of a hassle, and the school was nice and helpful with that.

Did you have any practical difficulties settling down in at your destination?

Not at all. I had some amazing friends who helped me whenever there was a misunderstanding or something I needed help with. I was also extremely lucky to not only get an amazing roommate but a mentor who basically became one of my best friends. So if ever a problem arose I had people basically everywhere to help and guide me.

Practical Experience

How was the application process?

It was very extensive. Be it applying for the university, the visa, the courses or simply the dorm room. It'll take its time, so have everything documented and signed for if ever you'll need it.

What did KEA help you with?

Basically everything.

I had an amazing exchange coordinator who helped and guided me throughout this whole process. If ever I had a question or something I was unsure about, she was always there to help. Also in terms of scholarships, KEA offers some orientation meetings about this, so be sure to know when they are held and go participate. There is also a pre-departure meeting, be sure to take part in this also.



Where did you live?

I lived on the university campus grounds.

Was it difficult to find accommodation?

No, it wasn't. The school will recommend you to live in the dorms from the get-go. If you're not into that it's possible to find relatively cheap accommodations just outside of the campus grounds. There are some Airbnb places you can rent for the whole semester, you just have to do your research.

Was it expensive?

I wouldn't say so. I know for a fact that the prices for the dorm rooms are cheaper for the average Korean student however, you're not obliged to pay for school tuition as they are. And compared to Denmark this was definitely in the price range of a Danish students' budget.



Did you spend more or less money than you budgeted with?

I ended up spending more because I travelled a lot more than I originally planned. I got by fine with only my SU, but I recommend everyone, who doesn't receive the ERASMUS scholarship, to try and apply for other. Just remember to apply early on in the process.



Other useful tips?

- Kilroy offers very cheap flight tickets for students.
- The transportation by bus and subway is insanely cheap if compared to Denmark.
- If you want to travel around the country, I personally recommend that you visit Jeju, Yeosu, Gangwondo, and Busan.
- Try going to a jimjilbang, which is a public bathhouse. You can eat and sleep there afterwards, and it's just an experience one must try at least once in their life.
- The price of food is very cheap.
- Korean weather is very extreme. The air can get very polluted suddenly, due to yellow dust. Consult your doctor about possible allergies.
- There are a lot of hidden spots on campus. One of them is the small flower garden, behind the outdoor theatre.
- You honestly don't need a SIM-card for your phone. They have free internet connection pretty much everywhere. I would recommend getting a pocket Wi-Fi instead.



- Try to wire the exact amount of money if you're staying at the dorms. If not and you transfer too much, you'll have to open up a bank account in South Korea, to get the rest of your money back.
- Don't bother getting an ISIC-card it isn't that useful. I didn't use mine even once whilst staying there.
- Everyone gets assigned a mentor or two, even if you didn't sign up for it. Bring some small gifts from home, such as snacks and confectionery, or some smaller Danish design products. They'll definitely love that.