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INTRODUCTION

Before explaining the reasons, I picked to study as an exchange student in South Korea, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Andreea Steriu. My nationality is Romanian, and I have been living in Denmark for more than one year. My major at KEA is Multimedia Design and Communication. My interest for South Korea sparked a long time ago before moving to Denmark and, through KEA, I had the opportunity to study for a semester in my dream country.

One of the reasons, I chose an exchange program in general, was to expand my knowledge and broaden my horizons, not just professionally, but also socially. By building a network, I hope that I will be able to move to South Korea one day.

Another reason was the need to know more about the country and the education system. Before taking the decision of moving to South Korea, I was skeptical and worried if I could make it. Therefore, I wanted to test myself and see if I could last for a semester in a non-English speaking country from which you hear that it has a famously strong education system, but also a tough one.

The process of applying to the exchange program was relatively simple. I would suggest for the future exchange students to apply for the BUDDY program. The mentor, assigned to you, will help you with the Residence Registration, Tuberculosis X-ray Test, etc. The mentor will be your first Korean friend and he/she will give you a shoulder to lean on whenever you have a problem.

EXPERIENCE AT HANYANG UNIVERSITY

Thanks to the other exchange students that have been at Hanyang before me, I already knew what to expect when I arrived here. I will give a short brief of what to expect and prepare.

Firstly, the dormitory is furnished, but you won't have beddings. I would suggest taking the packages that Hanyang will suggest you in an email before arriving in Korea. It is cheaper and you will receive beddings, a sim card and more, depending how many things you need.

Secondly, it is important to get all the courses from the first round (very important), but if you did not apply for all the courses the first time, you still have a chance to attend those classes if you discuss it with the teachers. Attend only the English-speaking courses.

MAJOR AND COURSES

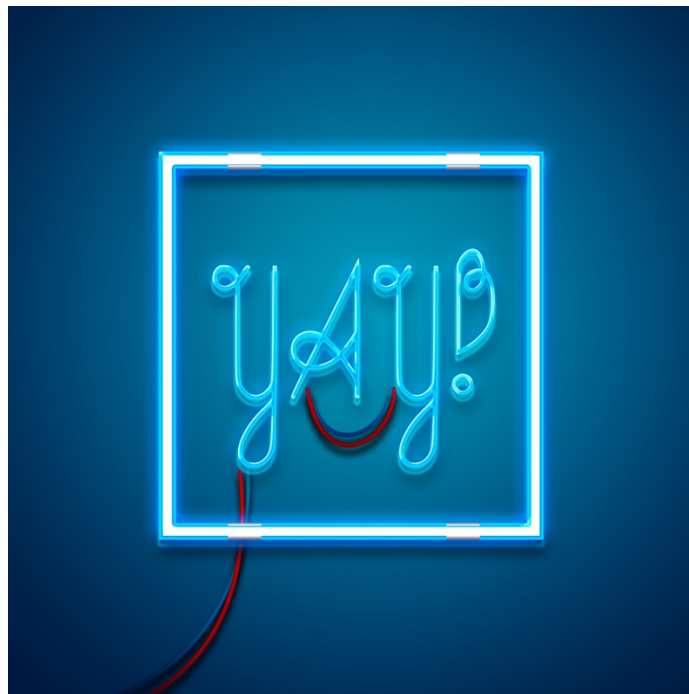
My main major at Hanyang University was Communication Design, but I also took courses from other departments since there were not enough English-speaking courses in mine.

Digital Typography 2.

For the mid-term exam project, my group had to create a short credits animation of a movie. I picked the movie "Spirit" and the programs that I used are Adobe After

Effects and Premiere Pro CC. It took me a great deal to draw and animate, but my skills improved a lot using these programs.

The final exam project was creating a font from scratch. I and my partner decided to go with a script font that has the curves and circles of the zodiac signs. We had to digitalize it and create mockups.



Web Design 1.

During the Web Design courses, I improved my UX/UI designs skills, I learnt more about Adobe XD and the plugins. I did not have mid-term exam for this class since the course was meant for creating & coding a webpage for the final exam project. Moreover, the course was a beginner level, but I learned some shortcuts that would be useful for creating prototypes and the teacher challenged me to do more. For the final exam project, I decided to create a portfolio website.

Entertainment Design Workshop.

This class was the most interesting one. I never expected to study about the entertainment branding and how they create designs and branding for idol groups/singers. For the mid-term exam project, my group (4 students) had to create a logo for



an idol group. We had to do research, come with a concept, create mood boards, mockups and “sell” our design. The group that we picked was Red Velvet. For the final exam project, we had to create a website prototype for their branding.

Storytelling & Content Design.

I think this course taught me the most. We were paired in teams and had to come with a digital solution. We had to visit the Samsung Museum and get inspired from the technologies that are used nowadays. Then, we later developed our idea, set the objectives, research and analyses, organize the structure (IA), create paper prototypes and wireframes, come with the design concept and style guide, used mood boards and

created the prototype. The teacher teamed the exchange students with the Korean ones which helped us create bonds with them. We inspired and helped each other since we come from different environments.

Survival Korean Course.

During the language course, I improved my Korean. Now I can read and order without a problem in Korea. This course is part of the Hanyang education in order to help exchange students accommodate more easily into the language and culture. It is a course for beginner level.

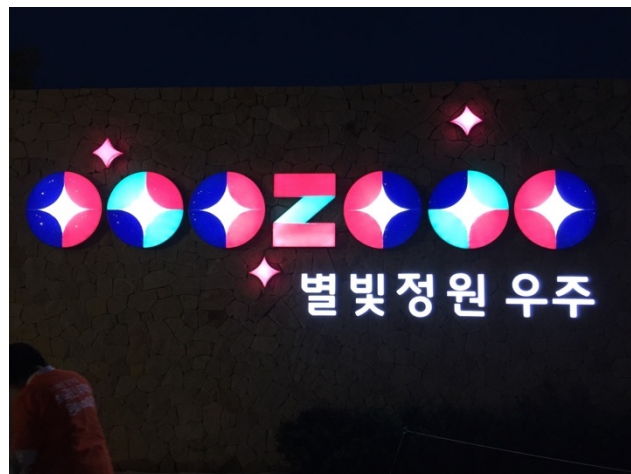
All in all, the undergraduate system in South Korea will challenge the students a lot since the teacher will only be a guide that helps you along the way the process. The classes are well organized and the courses that I took were in English and, sometimes, some teachers might translate in English and Korean.

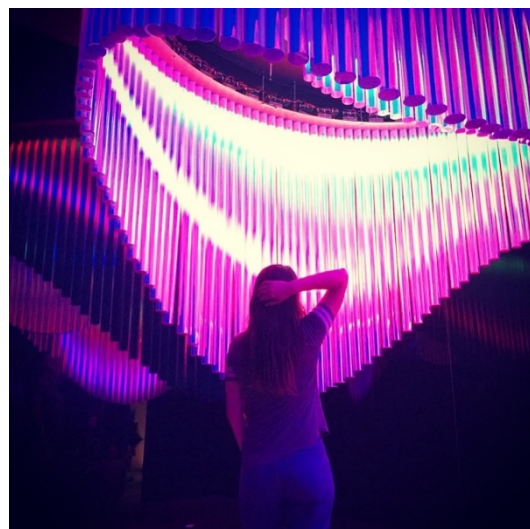
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

In the beginning, I tried socializing as much as possible. I tried joining the extra-curricular clubs: basketball, dancing, taekwondo and CrossFit club. I was accepted by two of them (dancing and taekwondo club). I would recommend only taking one club (taekwondo club was the best one) since it would take a lot of your free time. The clubs

mostly speak Korean, but they will try to keep you involved. It will be a tough time, but you will also have fun.

One of the most interesting cultural experiences was the introduction trip for 3 days 2 nights. Me and some other exchange students teamed up and we were between the winners of a free trip. At first, I could not believe that the trip was for free: food, accommodation, transport, entry tickets, etc. I would say that Korea knows how to treat exchange students and show them the beauty of the country. In the first day, they prepared for us, traditional games as an introduction. My team won the first place and a lot of free coupons to use in different shopping stores. Then, we visited Samsung Museum and a Light Garden.





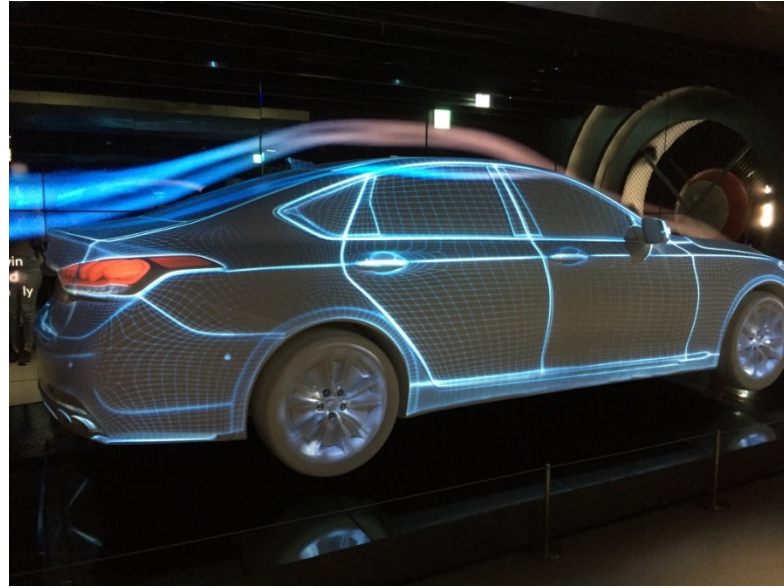
The second day, my team chose to visit the forest garden around Suwon. It is the most beautiful garden I have ever seen. It takes hours to visit it completely and, sadly, the rain started pouring at some point (but I still got some nice pictures).



Afterwards, we enjoyed a traditional Korean dancing show and a K-pop concert organized only for us, the exchange students. Since I have been interested in South Korea for a long time, I was looking forward to the concert, especially. I sat in the first row and saw one of my favorite groups.



In the last day, we had to come back to the campus, but before taking us back, we visited the last attraction the DMZ Zone and the Hyunday Museum. If you are a fan of cars, this place is perfect for visiting.



In the DMZ area, we were not allowed to take pictures since it is the border between South and North Korea. One advice is not to expect anything at the end of the tunnel through which North Korea used to spy on the South. There is nothing.

During autumn, there is one festival hosted by the university every year and it ends with a concert. A lot of students meet up and at the main fountain and play different drinking games as part of their culture.

There are not that many things to do in the Ansan region, beside visiting Jungang, a main city in this region, but there are so many things to do in Seoul, Busan, Jeju Island, Nami Island (if you want to see wild bunnies) etc. For instance, try the fish market, do a temple stay in Gangnam, try a K-pop concert, try clubbing in Hongdae,

Itaewon and Gangnam, visit the palaces, the war museum, try sleeping at a sauna, visit the famous streets, visit Lotte World and Namsan Tower, try a cat/ dog/ sheep/ meerkat/ racoon cafés, shop in Myeongdong area, try the traditional dressing while visiting the palaces., go to Trick Eye Museum, etc. Those are only some places I have tried. In order to get an insight of all these places, I would watch youtubers that live in South Korea. They are the gurus of travelling within South Korea.





PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES

Because I have never been abroad in other countries, beside Denmark, I am still afraid of travelling for long distances. You will experience some jet lag and I would recommend booking the airport taxi for groups. Do not worry, you will be informed through an official email on how to book them and you will not be alone. Some other exchange students might have booked them too for the same day. Come prepared with cash (won).

I lived at the Hanyang Dormitory. The price for one semester is around 1,090,000 won. The dorm is split in two, the guys and the girls' side. No trespassing is allowed. In

the dormitory, you have two restaurants and one convenient store. Two gyms on the second floor. Bathroom, two beds, two study desks and wardrobes in each room. Even though there is no kitchen in the dorm (only for Muslims), the food at any restaurant is way cheaper than in Denmark. If you are vegetarian, South Korea might give you a hard time, believe me. If you cannot eat spicy food, do not worry, there are plenty of non-spicy dishes too since some Koreans cannot eat spicy either. I mostly ate, in the area outside of the main gate or at the University's canteens. A meal at the canteen is around 3.500 won, in Ansan, between 5.000 – 20.000 won and, in Seoul, expect to pay more than 10,000 won.

In order to use the transportation, you have to buy a T-money card. It is like a card in Denmark for transportation. Where to get this card? At any convenient place. How to put money on it? The same, at any convenient store, or at the subway station. Prepare cash.

Since I had a lot of cash with me, I decided to open a bank account after I received the residence permit. It helped me a lot because you can register your student as a bank card too.

One of the problems, I had, was that the banker forgot to put one "0" in the transaction and I almost lost a big amount of money. Luckily, my mentor was there to help me.

The expenses were around 3,000,000 won in South Korea, but I spend more with the tickets, dorm payment and other expenses before arriving. I would like to add that it

might be important to book two big luggage since you might come back with too many things.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, I would say that Korea exceeded my expectations. Even though, I have been interested in South Korea for more than 9 years, I still had a lot to discover about it. It is a great place for visiting and the people are more and more open to foreigners, nowadays, compared to the past (5 years ago). Moreover, I have not felt any cultural differences since I know so much about the country from the news, SoMe, YouTube, etc.

Professionally, I have been a little bit disappointed since I wanted to learn more coding than designing, but through the semester, I changed my mind and realized that the beginning of the semester is only an accommodation period till you start the mid-term period. I improved my designing skills and the knowledge of the Adobe Creative Cloud programs. Moreover, Korean students are experts at presentations (ppts), but not that much at presenting it because English is not that easy for them. I understand them a lot because I am struggling learning Korean too.

After finishing the semester, I had some problems with the return tickets. Luckily, I booked some new ones on the 13th of January. I am glad and happy that I spend this semester as an exchange student, and I will be back to South Korea during summer break.