

EXCHANGE RAPPORT



UNIVERSITAT RAMON LLULL LA SALLE BARCELONA

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INTRODUCTION

One of my main objectives to study a top up on KEA, was to go study a semester abroad. I knew that KEA had a wide selection of partner institutions within Design & Business, and that a lot of these was highly interesting for me. I knew that my 6th semester on KEA would be the last chance I had to study abroad, and I had zero doubt in my mind that I had to seize the opportunity. My hopes and expectations was to be taught in a different way with other courses than I was used to in Denmark. I wanted to gain friends, expand my network and basically experience how it was to live and learn in another country. Being on the other side of my abroad journey, I can only pass on the biggest recommendation my self. If you have the possibility to go abroad, I seriously believe you owe it to yourself to do it.

EXPERIENCES AT THE HOST UNIVERSITY

I choose to apply for Universitat Ramon Llull La Salle, as I found their management of business and technology program to be highly relevant for my professional skills and educational goal. I personally chose the following courses:

AD011 - Foreign Language I - Spanish(5 ECTS) - Maria Riu Puig

When studying abroad, I believe you should do your very best to learn about the country's history, culture and traditions - and what better way to do that than by learning the native language. I had never been taught in Spanish, so obviously I faced a challenge, but I'm so glad I chose to do so. I didn't have an expectation to be fluent in Spanish after the course, but I hoped to learn the basic communications skills, in order to have minor conversations with the local students and citizens of Barcelona. The approach of the course was very expedient, as we were divided into beginners and intermediates. As part of the beginners, I was taught in commonly used sentences, greetings and basic facts of the students(nationality, age and appearance). Throughout the course we covered themes as family and friends, vacation, culture, history and much more. For both the midterm and final exam we had a written and oral exam. In the

written part you had to answer multiple choice questions, find the errors and write a text about one of the above mentioned themes of the class. In the oral part you had to give a presentation and answer some follow-up questions from the teacher. In no way dangerous and in a level where everyone could follow the pace. It was very satisfying to feel the progression I made in terms of my Spanish skills. In the end I was able to greet people properly, order at restaurants, ask for directions or seek guidance in stores.

AD052 - Transfer of New Technology into the Economy(4 ECTS) - Llewellyn Thomas

This course was a bit out of my comfort zone, as a lot of the lessons were about statistics regarding innovations and diffusion curves of new technologies. Furthermore, we had to work a lot in Microsoft Excel, which can be difficult if you aren't experienced in the program. Fortunately, the teacher was quite helpful and tried his best to explain the basic tools in order for us to complete the given tasks and assignments. Throughout the course we were taught in the diffusion of innovations, together with intellectual property and how to protect them through patents, trademarks and copy rights. For both the midterm and final exam we had a written and oral exam. The oral presentations were about a given innovation of which you had to present your results and findings. The written part was questions regarding the syllabus we had been covering in class. A quite interesting course once you got the grip of it, but honestly it didn't have the biggest relevance to me as a student of design and business.

AD100 - Digital Marketing Strategies(5 ECTS) - Lluís Campderrós Reyes

Properly the course I gained the most knowledge from, in terms of my personal and professional interests. Throughout the course we were taught in e-commerce, e-mail marketing, social media management and much more. Most of the classes would start with a theoretical approach and end in a practical session, so that you had a chance to convert and try out the knowledge you had gained. We had a couple of assignments about landing pages, e-mail marketing and social media, which lead up to the midterm and final exam. In both cases you had to create a more or less complete e-commerce store with elements from the lessons. Afterwards you had to present your result for the

teacher and explain how, why and what you did. I would definitely recommend anyone to take this course, as it is highly relevant and focuses on the latest trends and techniques within design and digital business.

AD102 - Brand Management(5 ECTS) - Ferran Blanch Colino

Brand management is a good course to take if you seek to learn how to create and maintain a strong brand. Throughout the course we learned about the brand identity prism, and handled different business cases to analyze the key success factors of well known brands around the world. We were taught in identifying good and bad practices of brand management, with the goal to create a campaign for a given brand ourselves. During the course we tried a simulation program called BrandPro, where we had the chance to act like brand managers and decide on how to communicate, budget and plan for a simulated brand. For both the midterm and final exam, we had to present a complete campaign for a non-Spanish brand, and figure out how we would launch it in Spain. By developing a new or existing brand identity, together with a communication strategy, we had to present our results in front of the class. Even if you're not looking to be a brand manager, the course can still give you an understanding of how to run a business, and how to manage the perception and expectations of a brand.

AD103 - International Digital Marketing(5 ECTS) - Sapna Sehgal

A great course to take if you want to expand your knowledge within digital marketing in an international matter. By far the course with the most homework, we almost read an entire book, but with interesting topics as CRM, SEO, online advertising, video/SoMe marketing and much more. Throughout the lessons we worked with topics from the book, which was basically the syllabus of the course. We had to write two fairly large assignments, in which we had to choose a company that we thought could improve their digital marketing profile, and our job was to analyze and assess on how to do just that. Both the midterm and final exam were written, so there were only oral presentations during the regular classes. The first part of the exam would be short answer questions, and the last part would be a larger essay with a general topic of international digital

marketing. I would recommend anyone studying design and business to take this course, as I believe it's highly relevant to be acquainted with the majority of keywords and terms that is found in digital marketing.

AD104 - Marketing Services in the Digital Era(5 ECTS) - Dawn Karen Hiscock

This course was a bit different than the other ones I took, as it focused more on the physical environment of a business, rather than only the digital aspects such as webpages or social media profiles. It was a quite entertaining course, as we visited a hotel, a museum and a Girona F.C. football game, in order to write assignments on how the level of service was provided in the surroundings and by the employees. The first two assignments would act as our midterm, and the visit to Girona F.C. would be our final exam. We had to present our results from an academic report, which should include suggestions on how Girona F.C. could improve their level of service and experience for their guests during the games. The winner would then have the chance to pitch the idea for the staff of Girona F.C., which was a fun and motivating part of the exam. Honestly I didn't gain a lot of new knowledge from this course, as most of the lessons was pretty straightforward and logical. But the only course that had field trips and sightseeings in the city, which was a great success in the overall experience of the exchange program.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

The school had arranged a good line-up of events for the exchange students, with small tapas nights in the city, to longer trips outside of Barcelona. It was quite easy making friends at these events, because all students were there for the same purpose - having and good time and meeting new people.

Let me start by saying that Barcelona has endless possibilities of tourist attractions, entertainment and cultural experiences, but I'll list a few of my favorites below:

LA SAGRADA FAMILIA - Barcelonas beautiful never-ending cathedral by Gaudí, that reaches hundreds of meters above the ground.

PARC GÜELL - A colorful and surreal park designed by Gaudí, with a beautiful view of most of Barcelona.

BUNKERS DEL CARMEL - The absolute best viewpoint on the Barcelonas skyline. A bus drive away from the city, but definitely worth the trip. Stay until it's dark and see all of the city lights turned on.

LA RAMBLA - A bit too crowded for my taste, but still a must see in order to experience the full atmosphere at the heart of Barcelona. *Be aware of pickpockets!

CAMP NOU - Whether you're a football fan or not, you should do yourself a favor and go see a game. Being Europe's largest stadium, with properly the most dedicated fans, it holds an atmosphere that I've never experienced before.

THE GOTHIC CATHEDRAL - A beautiful and impressive architectural monument in the heart of the Gothic area.

LA BARCELONETA - By far the most attractive beach of Barcelona. You can sunbathe, surf or just socialize in the surroundings of bars, restaurant and a glamorous ocean view.

MUSEU PICASSO - If you're into art, you should definitely go visit the Picasso Museum. A great exhibition with an interesting insight on Picasso's life and artwork.

SITGES CARNIVAL - A couple of hours away from Barcelona, but certainly worth the drive. The carnival is a very glamorous and colorful parade, where people are dressed up and dances all night long.

GAUDÌ IN GENERAL - Gaudí has been the architect of several fascinating monuments around the city, and they are all worth a visit.

RAZZMATAZZ(high price) - One of the biggest night clubs of Barcelona. Different halls

with different genres of music. Proper place to dance and drink all night. Once in a while with live concert (we saw Lukas Graham).

SHOKO (high price) - Another good night club by the beach. Dance all night or drink cocktails on the terrace with a great ocean view.

MILANO BAR (medium/low price) - One of my favorite bars of Barcelona. Great cocktails for fair prices and live music every night with both jazz, soul and blues.

GEORGE PAYNE (medium/low price) - One of the better bars of Barcelona. Fair prices and the chance to sing karaoke in front of hundreds of people. Super fun experience.

HUSH HUSH CAFÈ (medium/low price) - A highly cozy and intimate bar with a great atmosphere. Open-mic for comedians to try out new material, a truly funny experience.

PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES

I booked my ticket for Barcelona approximately a month before take-off, and I paid around 75 euro for it with Norwegian. I was traveling together with two students from my class, and we rented a Airbnb apartment together in the Gothic area. I never saw the accommodation possibilities in the university, although I was told they were fine. In my opinion it was a much greater experience to live in the heart of Barcelona, as we were always close to the supermarkets, stores, restaurants and city life in general. We paid approximately 535-600 euros pr month, which was much like the prices we see in Copenhagen. We had to take a metro (L7) every morning, and the total trip from home to school would be around 35-40 minutes. Barcelona has a lot of public transportation possibilities, and it's easy to buy either a 10-trip card or a monthly card, where prices depend on whether you are younger or older than 25 years. Overall I spend around 6.700 euros including plane tickets and rent. Your total consumption all depends on how you want to live. You can easily save money by living at the school's accommodation and cooking home most of the time. I spared no expenses as I wanted to live in the city and

try as many restaurants and cultural experiences as possible. After all you only get to travel abroad once.

It isn't difficult to find great restaurants in Barcelona. But an overall recommendation is to not only stay in the center of the city, but to visit the local areas outside the centrum(El Born, Gracia, Raval ect), where you can truly experience the Spanish cuisine. Seeing as Barcelona is a multicultural city, there is also a rich opportunity to eat eg. Italian, American and Japanese food.

CONCLUSION

I chose Barcelona because I've always been very fond of the Spanish language, nature, culture and history. I had travelled to Spain many times, but never to Barcelona, and I can honestly say that it met my expectations in any possible way. On one hand you have the vibe of a big city with lots of life and atmosphere, and on the other hand you have the silent and beautiful nature and beaches. So I believe you have the best of both worlds. One thing to have in mind is that the Spanish people operate in a totally different tempo than we are used to in Copenhagen. Some say they are plain out lazy, but I believe they just don't cave under the daily stress that we Danes have a tendency to do. It felt great to have an every day, where you could just be present and take in the many experiences you would face during the time abroad.

In terms of life at the university it was quite another approach than we're used to in Denmark. Often we have one big assignment at a time, but in my case, I had 6 different courses with homework, assignments and exams for each and everyone. Sometimes the workload could seem a bit heavy, and some lessons seemed a bit boring or irrelevant, but considering that you get to choose your courses yourself, I believe everyone should be able to get through it all and pass the program. No matter which destination you're looking into, I don't believe you can find a program that will suit your interest all the way, so a last good tip will be to really look into the courses you have the chance to pick, and to be sure that it matches your likes and interest as much as possible.

I would recommend universitat Ramon Llull La Salle and Barcelona to anyone, and I can definitely say that I'll be visiting the city again in the future. It hasn't only been my home for the last half a year, but it's also been the reason behind new friendships, cultural and educational experiences and memories to last a lifetime.