

IT University Travel Report

Dear Student, this is a template – the aim is to inspire other students who may wish to follow in your footsteps. You are free to give your report the shape you want and to go beyond the questions. You are also very welcome to include pictures and contact information – but you need not.

Note that by filling in and sending the report you automatically consent to publishing it on ITU student.

Host university:

Study Programme at IT University:

Exchange agreement or Free mover:

Courses studied abroad:

Period studying abroad: semester (autumn/spring) _____ Autumn _____ year
_____ 2023

If you wish to give advice to other students regarding your travels, please state your contact info here:

_____sofu0284@gmail.com_____

Your stay abroad

What was it like to study at the university (including choice of courses, academic level, social life at campus)?

In terms of academic level, I experienced that the workload was very high, but the level itself was not so high. I.e. many times we had to do tests by hand, which forced you to spend hours just remembering things in your head, but not necessarily very hard level things. My major is computer science, and my specialty is Artificial Intelligence. There was very interesting courses, and I did not have a problem finding something similar to / or even better than on ITU. For example I had Computer Vision, Deep Learning Applications and Big Data Mining, but even in my other courses, there was also areas of Artificial Intelligence included. All my courses was in English, and I did not have problems with some professors talking in the local language instead.

Social life was very good. There are a lot of student clubs, so you can choose to enroll in a student club in the start of the year, and do activities with the Taiwanese students. I for example enrolled in the Mountaineering Club and the Tennis Club. Many students sit on the University until late, which gives a nice vibe – feeling that the university is always awake. However, I will say, it was hard to become friends with Taiwanese people, both because of the language barrier – many Taiwanese speak extremely poor English, but maybe also cultural barrier. As an exchange student, I realized it was way easier to become friends with other exchange students. A final note is that many students are younger than we are at ITU. For example some students are under 18.

What was your initial motivation for going abroad and did your stay meet your expectations?

My initial motivation was that I wanted to try to live and have my life in another country for a bit longer than a couple of weeks. Also, I wanted to experience Asia, with all its culture, atmosphere and cuisine. It was an absolutely incredible experience to go to Taiwan, and it really opened my eyes about the country and how beautiful and exiting it is. I can 100% recommend both going to Taiwan, but also just exchange in general. I would say it is one of the best decision and experiences in my life. However, you have to be open minded and active in finding a some friends and some things to do, since your life will be quite different than in Denmark. Also, you have to be okay with lesser level of cleanness in the city. You can feel that it is a poorer country than in Denmark, and that it is not Europe.

Please describe what you got out of your stay, both personally and academically, and how do you expect it to contribute to your further studies

I got some new friends all around the world that I think i will see again. Then I got countless trips around in the country, surfing, diving, hiking etc. I think I have become more independent and robust to life after this trip, since I also had to deal with situations that were a bit out of my comfort zone - for example cockroaches in my room - walking alone in the forest through a group of monkeys, navigating and surviving in a country that almost doesn' speak english, finding new friends in a completely new setting etc.

Academically I have learned more about some old school techniques in the area of Computer Vision and Digital Image Processing - and I've learned apply more sophisticated machine learning models, for example YOLO, transfer learning, reinforcement learning i.e.

Arranging your stay

Please give a short description of the process of arranging your stay:

Generally I just filled the paperwork on the necessary deadlines, it is pretty good described on ITU's webpage. In terms of courses, I had to use last years course list, but just applied for preapproval on maybe 8 courses and got 6 of them approved. When I got to Taiwan, I got 4 out of the planned courses, so I had to take a 5th one, and apply for preapproval for that one afterwards. Luckily I got approval for that one as well. I had 5 courses so 30 ECTS.

Many people had less ECTS to enjoy the stay more. For me, I was used to having a 15-20 hours a week job meanwhile taking 30 ECTS on ITU, so just having 30 ECTS without a job, felt like a lot of freedom to me, and I would say that I would not have preferred less ECTS. However, the only trade of is, that I considered doing a language school course (chinese) meanwhile, but dropped that since i didn't feel I had time to do it with 30 ECTS. Generally I had a lot of freedom and went to maybe 6 or 7 weekend trips (long weekends) with friends and alone to different places in the country, and also Hong Kong, and those trips and memories were definitely some of the highlights of the trib.

What resources did you find helpful in planning your stay and which people did you use (if any)?

I didn't use any, just the www.legatbogen.dk for grants, which i will describe later

How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?

I went with a friend from ITU, so we decided on trying to find an apartment together. We started looking maybe 2-3 weeks before the stay began. We found something pretty easy through a facebook group. We just made a post that we needed accommodation in some preferred areas, and some guy wrote us an offer. It was not very expensive. We payed 15 000 NTD each for big rooms with bathroom in a 5 person apartment, similar prices to the other exchange students.

I considered doing the Dorms, and I know many people that did it. I think I would have done it, but my friend from ITU didn't want to do, because it has a rumour of being very unclean, and also you have to share room and bathroom with others. However they are extremely cheap, and I know many people that lived there and was totally fine with it. Generally the rooms are pretty unclean all over Taipei, so they are not that much worse than what you can get in an apartment.

Expenses and Financing

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad

I think I used around 70K on everything. I ate out almost everyday, which is kind of normal there because food is so cheap. I got around 35K in funding, and then I had saved up 20K during the summer, and used 15K from SU lån.

I applied for the big grants, maybe 10 grants. I got 10 k from Nordea fonden, 8k from William Demant fonden and 15K from Knud Højgaard fonden. Then I got 2.5 K from ITU travelpool.

Recommendations for other students:

Go!! It is maybe a once in a lifetime opportunity, and while it is a bit expensive, I think it is doable for everyone, and it is a lot of adventure and good memories. I had my brother and my girlfriend visiting me while I was abroad and we made some great memories together as well.