IT University Travel Report

Host university: Hanyang University ERICA campus

Study Programme at IT University: Computer science

Exchange agreement or Free mover: Exchange agreement

Courses studied abroad: Network security, AI in Medicine, Probability and Statistics, Embedded System Design, (Introduction to Korean – I did not get credits for this, but took it in my free time)

Period studying abroad: 7th semester (autumn) - year 2024- 2025

If you wish to give advice to other students regarding your travels, please state your contact info here: sando@live.dk
Feel free to reach out if you have any questions regarding life in South Korea or Hanyang ERICA campus

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Your stay abroad
What was it like to study at the university (including choice of courses, academic level, social life at campus)?
Studying at Hanyang University ERICA Campus in Ansan, South Korea, was a really good experience. The campus is modern and well-equipped, and the social life is vibrant, with lots of student organizations and cultural events to participate in. The courses I took were diverse and engaging, each offering something unique.
The courses I took were: Embedded system design, Probability and statistics, AI in medicine and Network security.

One highlight was the Embedded System Design course, where we had the chance to program and build Lego Mindstorm robots. We worked in teams to complete specific challenges, which was both fun and educational. The Network Security course was another favorite. It struck a good balance between lectures and hands-on exercises, making the material more interactive and practical.

That said, many courses were structured as lecture-based, lasting 1.5 to 2 hours with limited interactive components. Compared to ITU, the academic level felt somewhat easier. I found myself studying about half as much as I usually would at ITU, yet achieving top grades (A+).
It's worth noting that English-taught courses are often considered less challenging than classes in Korean.
There was a lot of competition to get courses, and this was overall a stressful process in my opinion. I would recommend taking as many courses as possible just to fill your schedule and then dropping the courses if you find some other course that you want more. Even if you start with zero courses, don't worry all exchange students eventually secured all the courses they required.

Be aware that some courses listed as English-taught may involve partial Korean instruction. I was fortunate that my professors either taught entirely in English or repeated key information in both languages. The first week was mainly an introductory period, which allowed time to adjust your schedule if needed.

What was your initial motivation for going abroad and did your stay meet your expectations?
I have always known I wanted to take a semester abroad as I really like to discover new cultures and see how different universities work. South Korea is often regarded as a country where technology is booming, it therefore seemed like the obvious choice for me.
I have previously lived in Japan, and therefore thought it was going to be similar, but discovered that South Korea is vastly different from Japan.

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?

Academically, I gained practical skills through hands-on courses like Embedded System Design and Network Security. These experiences deepened my understanding of programming and systems integration, which I believe will benefit my future projects and career.
On a personal level, living in South Korea allowed me to adapt to a different culture and environment. It taught me resilience, problem-solving, and how to navigate unfamiliar situations—skills that will undoubtedly help in my studies and beyond

Arranging your stay

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

Choosing accommodation was one of my main concerns before arriving. I debated between staying in the dormitory, renting an apartment near the university, or living in Seoul. Ultimately, I chose the dormitory, and it turned out to be a fantastic decision.

The dormitory is a high-rise building with 18 floors, each floor having around 20 rooms. I stayed on the 8th floor in room 808, which was conveniently located at the end of the hallway—great for privacy. The rooms are reasonably spacious (around 20 kvm), with large bathrooms. While the dorms are shared (2 people per room), I was lucky to have a sweet roommate with a similar schedule. Generally, they try to pair exchange students together, but some students did have Korean roommates leading to some language problems.
There are a lot of students from all over the world and some of the people coming from other Asian countries come to study in the Korean track and therefore do not speak English.

For those who prefer more privacy, renting an apartment in Ansan is an option, though it's pricier, ranging from 4,000 to 6,000+ DKK per month. In contrast, the dormitory cost about 6,500 DKK for four months. Living in Seoul is also possible, but it's a 1.5- to 2-hour commute to campus, depending on your location. If you're considering this, look for accommodations near Line 4 of the metro, but do note that it wil likely make it harder to get integrate into the campus life.

A few things to note about the dormitory: while it claims to have a kitchen, access is highly restricted. You can only book kitchen slots for the entire week on Mondays between 9-12 in the morning, and the kitchen is closed on weekends. There's also no fridge in the rooms or common areas, but you can rent a mini-fridge if you have a Korean bank account.

If possible, I would recommend living on the lower floors as there are only 2 elevators. They do have them split up so one goes from 1-10 and the other from 1+10-18, but some of my friends

complained about the long wait times for the elevator either up or down.

What resources did you find helpful in planning your stay and which people did you use (if any)?
The dormitory website is only in Korean and therefore can seem a little confusing to navigate and even more confusing if you try to find an apartment. I tried at first to find an apartment but got rejected from a lot of places because I did not have a Korean number or bank account, and didn't speak Korean.
Some of my friends had rented an Airbnb for the first month and then went to a rental company once they got there which helped them find a place, which is also an option.
I can't say much about this though as I did not choose this route but simply heard about it.

How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?
Applying for the dormitory is super easy as you just need to check a box when applying for university and then pay in some months before you come.

Expenses and Financing

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad

South Korea, particularly Ansan, is much cheaper than Denmark. I could comfortably live off my SU while eating out almost daily. Meals at the campus cafeteria were especially affordable, costing around 20 DKK for lunch or dinner and just 5 DKK for breakfast. Plus, you could ask for refills if food was available.

While I didn't travel much outside South Korea during the semester, my SU covered all my expenses, including day-to-day living and occasional trips inside Korea.

Did you apply for scholarships and would you recommend any ones in particular?

I was so lucky to get 2 grants (DDSA and Travelpool). I applied for five scholarships in total but missed several deadlines, so my biggest advice is to create a spreadsheet to track deadlines and requirements.

Take the time to craft strong applications—it takes longer than you'd expect, but the effort is worth it. Start working on your applications as soon as you know you're going abroad.

Recommendations for other students:

For mobile plans I got Woori mobile, which I was super happy about. I got a pre-paid sim card with unlimited data for 400 dkk. They have an office near the airport which there is a free shuttle bus to. They also offer great English support via messenger, so you can write to them any time you have a question, which I really liked.
Once you get your ARC (alien registration card) you need to connect it to your number, which is super easy with Woori mobile as you can keep your number and just need to visit their stores. Another good option is Chingu Mobile, but avoid airport prepaid plans as they're generally pricier and offer less.

For the first month I also had data from my Danish sim card, as the phone company "3" offer usage of data for no additional price in a lot of countries. This I also used when I visited Japan.
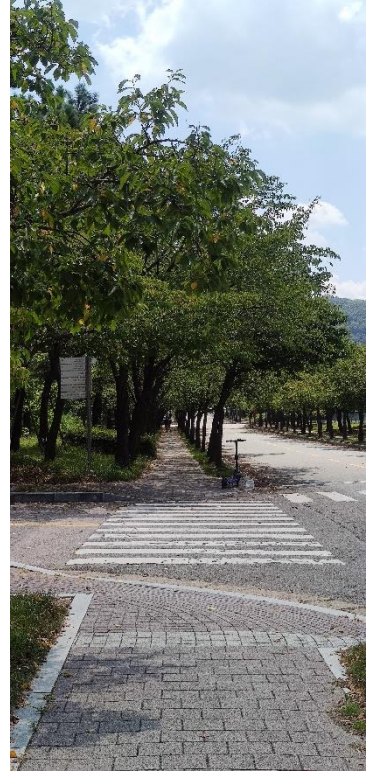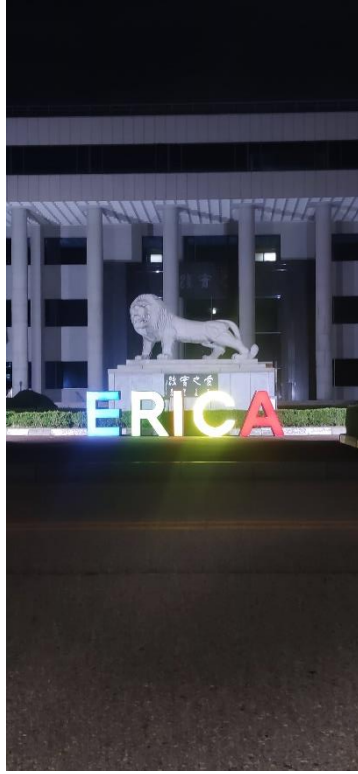
Websites I used specifically for Hanyang Erica:
Free shuttle bus schedule: https://hybus.app/
Menu for the different cafeterias: https://www.hanyang.ac.kr/web/www/re12 (in Korean)

A good tip is also that a lot of airlines offer student discounts if you apply for it. I flew with Turkish airlines for cheaper than their normal prices and for students they allow for 40kg of baggage. Do

note that a lot of them take 48 hours to process the application for a student discount so do this in a timely manner.

For exchange students it is mandatory to have government insurance once you get your ARC. It is possible to get exempt from this but note that for women it is a lot more difficult as they require maternal care to be included, and I would not find any travel insurance that cover this.

Pictures around campus

Picture of one side of the room in the dormitory (there is an identical setting on the other side)