



IT University Travel Report

Host University: Instituto Europeo di Design (IED), Barcelona

Study Programme at IT University: Digital Design and Interactive Technologies

Activity Abroad: Sommer Course in Service Design for Innovation (5 ECTS)

Exchange Period: semester (autumn/spring) summer year 2019

Your stay abroad

Please describe your stay abroad:

As part of my 2-year master programme in Digital Design and Interactive Technologies, I chose to take the summer course Service Design for Innovation (5 ECTS) at Instituto Europeo di Design (IED), Barcelona. This course replaces Cross-Disciplinary Team Work (7,5 ECTS) in my 3rd semester. Regarding the last 2,5 ECTS-point, I am writing a report with a given problem statement.

The course Service Design for Innovation was a 12 days course – from the 1st of July to the 12th of July. In these days we went through a design process. In the lectures, we learned about theories and methods in relation to service design, which we applied in our group projects. We also had different workshops and went on several field trips to visit companies that work with service design.

Through this summer course, we learned a lot about service design, how to work with it and apply it in a real-life situation. As we were a group of 20 people from different countries and with various backgrounds, we also experienced how this knowledge can be and is applied differently regarding our understanding, culture, and experiences. IED was very good at embracing our different mindsets, while they tried to give us a basic understanding of service design, that was relevant for all of us.

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

I had several goals with taking this summer course at IED. I wanted to get an international perspective on design and develop my academic skills. I wanted to be a part of a different culture and get an international network. Lastly, I wanted to expand my knowledge of design by studying Service Design and prepare myself for the future by entering an unknown environment. I believe that this summer course has met my expectations and made it possible for me to achieve my goals.

First of all, it was my impression that IED was very prepared and experienced in offering summer courses. The teachers were very competent and had a lot of knowledge to share. They were able to give me another perspective on design due to both their knowledge and professional experiences. They challenged our mindsets, while we also challenged each other's mindsets, as we came with different backgrounds and perspectives. During the course, there was a lot of dialogue between the teachers and us, but also between each other as we worked in groups of approximately 3-4 people. This gave me an international perspective on design, while I had the opportunity to be a part of an international network. Furthermore, before taking this course I had never worked with or learned about service design, but these 12 days opened my eyes for a new field as well as different theories, methods and other ways to explore and work with design, which have developed my skills.

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?

By entering this unknown environment, I experienced that I developed my skills both personally and academically. Being a part of this international group of 20 people I had to come out of my comfort zone and being openminded. As said earlier, we came with many different backgrounds, both based on culture and professional experiences, which resulted in a lot of interesting discussions. I was in a group with a graphic designer from Peru and an engineer from Brazil, which showed me new ways of thinking and doing things. It was also an interesting learning experience to share my knowledge and explain this to people, who may think differently. These insights and understanding of others are something I will take with me in my future studies when working together with different profiles.

According to my academic skills I have as mentioned earlier expanded my knowledge by learning about service design and getting hands-on experience through a group project. This knowledge is something, that I am looking forward to combining with my future studies in User Experience Design. In my studies at ITU, I have specialized in UX Design, so by taking this course Service Design of Innovation at IED I have achieved a more holistic perspective on design by not just looking at the product but the whole service from end to end and back to front. By this, I have gained new tools and a wider perspective on design that I advantageously can use in my future studies.

All this knowledge I want to share with my fellow students at ITU, both concerning the personal and academical skills I gained by taking this summer course at IED.

Arranging your stay

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

I went to Barcelona with three fellow students, so we planned the trip together. As we first received the approval for the summer course at the end of May, we only had one month to plan everything as the course started on the 1st of July. Fortunately, IED was quick to approve all our documents and within a week we were admitted to the school. Just after this, we started looking at flights and accommodation. This meant that there was not a lot of options left, so the process was a bit stressful. Though everything turned out fine – maybe just be aware of this when applying.

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

We looked into former travel reports from students, who have been to IED, Barcelona. We also spoke with some of them, and they gave us a lot of useful advice that helped us plan our stay.

How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?

Finding accommodation was a bit difficult as we first started looking three weeks before going to Barcelona. Almost all Airbnb's were already gone, so my three fellow students and I ended up booking an apartment through <https://www.apartmentbarcelona.com/>. The apartment was quite good, and it was placed half an hour walk away from school, which was perfect.

Expenses and Financing

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad

The course itself cost around 13.400 DKK, though I received 7.400 DKK from SU Udlandsstipendium. I spend around 4.000 DKK on accommodation for 14 days and the flight tickets cost approximately 2.000 DKK. Besides this, you have to be aware that Barcelona can be an expensive city to live in.

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

I did not apply for any scholarships as I found it difficult to find some that were relevant in my situation. Though I applied for the ITU Travel Pool, which helps you cover half of your flight tickets and that one I would like to recommend.

Recommendations for other students:

If you want to learn outside ITU but are not up for an exchange, then summer school is a perfect choice. For a short period you get to live in and experience another city, study with all kinds of people with different backgrounds and nationalities and very important you learn new ways of thinking and get a bunch of different tools, that you can apply at home in your studies or future job. If that sounds like something you would like, then I can only say "DO IT". Though, I would recommend that you start planning as soon as possible, so you avoid a stressful process and expensive flight tickets and accommodation.