Travel Report

Hanyang University

Host University: Hanyang University

Study Programme at IT University: Softwaredevelopment

Exchange Agreement or Study Abroad: Exchange agreement

Courses studied abroad:

Technology Analysis and Strategy (6 ECTS) – as a replacement for Business Processes and Organization

International Business (6 ECTS) – as a replacement for Business Processes and Organization

C++ programming (6 ECTS) – as a replacement for Operating Systems and C

Micro-processor applications (6 ECTS) – as a replacement for Operating Systems and C

(Programs as Data, remotely at ITU, 7.5 ECTS)

Exchange period: autumn semester 2018

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

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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)?

It was very different study experience compared to ITU.

All available courses are up for grabs and with a certain number of spots reserved for each year and major. The course selection is very competitive and it can be hard to get the courses you want, but the professors are often open to letting exchange students take their course anyway.

The day of course registration might be earlier than when SAP has given your pre-approval, which makes the process a bit trickier, but my advice is to be very certain that the courses you've chosen can be approved and maybe apply for several courses that can fit yours, as it is possible to drop courses. (You can't apply for overlapping courses). It is also possible to make a nice schedule for yourself if you play your cards right with the courses, I managed to have three days full of classes and then a four-day weekend, which was nice for travelling around Korea.

The academic level was lower than compared to ITU, and most of the midterm and exam is based on memorization (closed book exams) rather than understanding the syllabus, but the level differs from course to course. I managed to get quite good grades with a bit lower effort than required at ITU. I did however learn a lot! The grading, at least for my courses, depended on projects, attendance, class participation, homework, the midterm test and the final exam. The project, midterm and finals accounted for more in the final grade. There is mandatory attendance to all classes, and you are only allowed to miss up to four classes before you fail, however how strict the professor can change a lot. I never heard of anyone failing from missing classes.

You should beware that even though you might register for a course in English, they might still speak Korean during lab classes (similar to exercises classes at ITU), or maybe even in the regular classes. I was stuck in a class where they taught in Korean half of the time, however I still managed to pass with a nice grade.

The social life in campus are quite different too. As everyone has different classes you will probably end up with a few friends in each class. The school has a quite good buddy program, or so I've heard, they forgot to include me in it. But there are plenty of opportunities to meet and socialize with other exchange students as well as local students. There are clubs such as Hanyang Global Lions, Glitter, etc. that arrange social events for exchange students as well.

Overall the campus is really nice, how nice the facilities are can differ a lot from classroom to classroom. Be prepared to walk a lot as the campus is build partly on a mountain, but most likely your classes will be in buildings close to each other. There are great canteens, but remember to go to the more hidden ones, which are the ones the locals use, where the prices are cheaper and the food often better (but exclusively Korean).

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

My initial personal motivation for studying a semester in Korea was to experience another culture, broaden my horizon, as well as challenge myself. My stay met all of these expectations. The stay in Korea allowed me to submerge myself in a greatly different culture, language-wise, food-wise and with a different set of norms and values.

The academic motivation for me studying abroad, was to develop my skills further in a different learning environment. This was fully met, as Hanyang University provided a great atmosphere for studying, and along with competent professors and engaged students, I feel like it was a great place for me to develop my academic abilities.

Another motivation was for me to develop my understanding of different cultures and to learn to adapt in a global setting. This I believe would be beneficial, as I hope to work in a global context in the future. My stay at Hanyang University greatly challenged me on these points, and I learned a lot about how to adjust to people from different cultures and how to behave in a setting made up of different nationalities.

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 developed myself academically with the courses I took at Hanyang University.

In the course Technology Analysis and Strategy, I learned how to analyze and evaluate a company technological strategy and capabilities. I also gained a great understanding of technical patents and how to gain insight from these via quantitative analysis, in terms of analyzing a company's or country's technological knowledge base. Also, by analyzing these technical markets via patents, I learned how to identify which companies were market knowledge leaders.

The course C++ Programming gave me a greater insight into the world of both functional and object-oriented programming, and gave me further knowledge about how computers allocate memory and do garbage collection.

The International Business course gave me tools to understand the global market and how national markets converge with and differ from each other. This course also allowed me to work on different business cases with other international students, which was very rewarding, as I saw different approaches to problem solving, and we had many good discussions.

In Microprocessor Applications, I learned how microprocessors work on a basic level, along with Assembly Language, register memory allocation and bit-level logic. The course was very hands-on and learning-by-doing oriented, which was a great way to learn these things.

On a personal level, the exchange was very rewarding. I've gained great friends, both from Korea and the rest of the world. I have experienced personal growth, and learned a lot from being in confusing, new and different situations. Lastly, I feel like I gained a better understanding of other cultures, and especially the Korean.

In my further studies, I believe this international experience has added an extra dimension to my studies and my experiences from it will help me in further group works, problem solving of cases and in being comfortable in different learning environments.

Arranging your stay

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

First, I applied to ITU, for getting nominated, and next came the actual application for Hanyang University. This process was really straight forward, and the hardest part was proving my financial status (You have to prove you have around 30.000DKK available to finance your stay). SAP wouldn't help me document that I would receive SU and I therefore had to go to my parents where their bank wrote a statement, saying they would finance me. During your application remember to make sure Hanyang receive your Buddy Application (to get a Korean buddy), as they lost mine and didn't tell me before it was too late.

The Visa application was pretty straight forward, you just have to provide the necessary documents at the Korean embassy, and they are very willing to help you through the process if you call or email them. And your visa might be done faster than expected, so don't be afraid to call and ask how long your application is along.

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

I spent a lot of time on google, where I found personal blogs and youtube videos. If you need help don't hesitate to contact me. Also, the other travel reports helped as well.

How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?

I used the website goshipages.com, but I wouldn't necessary recommend it to others. Look at my recommendations for that. Hanyang also offers resources on their exchange site.

Expenses and Financing

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad

I spent around 3000DKK per month on rent, and the same amount on food (I went out to eat a lot). One ride on the metro is around 7-10DKK. 1 bottle of Soju is 10-15 DKK, ½ liter of alcohol of approx. 16%. 1/2 liter of beer costs 5-10 DKK. If you want to buy Korean clothing the prices are relatively low, 60-120 DKK for tshirts, sweaters, pants or jeans.

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

Yes, Lemvigh-Müller Fonden, where I received 10.000DKK.

Recommendations for other students:

Don't book accommodations beforehand, I did that and it turned out to be way more expensive than if I hadn't. Put yourself in a hostel, Airbnb or hotel for the first time being and then go apartment hunting. An advantage here is to either know a Korean or know some Korean to communicate better, but not necessary. If you manage to get a buddy in the buddy program, they will likely be able to help or give you some pointers. There are different types of accommodations, and some maybe be a full apartment and some just a room in a complex with shared kitchen and/or bathrooms (the cheaper option of course). I stayed in a place with shared kitchen, in a very small room and paid about 3000 DKK per month (and no deposit), but I found out I could have found something much cheaper. Be prepared for places with cheaper rent to have a high deposit.

Or you can skip the hassle and apply for staying in a dorm on campus, I have however heard mixed reviews and they may have curfew and so on.

Download these Apps:
- KakaoTalk, this is the main messaging app that everybody uses (compare it to messenger)
- KakaoMetro, convenient map of the subway
- KakaoMap or NaverMap, map for navigating (Google maps or Maps from apple doesn't work properly)
- Naver, the Korean "Google" (only in Korean)
- Papago, translator said to be better than Google translate

As soon as you can you should register for a time at the immigration office, the University will tell you how and which one, as they tend to run out of available timeslots and you need to get your Alien Registration Card as soon as possible. The ARC allows you to stay in Korea longer than 90 days and for you to leave and re-enter the country without a hassle and ending your student visa. Learn the Korean alphabet before you come, its not that complicated and can help you a lot.

For getting a SIM card and a data plan, be prepared for that their data is more expensive than in Denmark. You can get cheaper plans once you get your ARC, but it might not be worth the hassle to change your phone number.

Don't go through the hassle of opening a bank account, it's not necessary and you cant do any online banking, withdrawing cash from your Danish bank is the way to go.