



IT University Travel Report

Host University: Syracuse University

Study Programme at IT University: MS in IT, Digital Innovation & Management (DIM)

Courses studied abroad: Cloud Management (IST615), Big Data Analytics (IST718), Data Analytics (IST707)

Exchange Period: autumn 2019

If you wish to give advice to other students regarding your travels, please state your contact info here: st.knoedler@gmail.com or <https://www.linkedin.com/in/steffenknoedler/>

Your stay abroad

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

Syracuse University is a private university in the United States and I am very glad that I've got the chance to study in Syracuse. Living and studying in the US is a completely different experience to my study experience in Denmark and other European countries. The campus is huge, and the university offers endless opportunities to get engaged. If you want you can join one of the sports teams, get involved in a student organization or just visit one of the impressive gyms on campus. At the beginning of my semester abroad I got to know approximately 20 other exchange students, who came from a number of different universities. Unfortunately, it took some time until I got to know all of them. Syracuse University did not provide many social events for exchange students explicitly in the beginning. However, the university provides many social events and parties for all new students at the beginning of the semester, which I attended and enjoyed a lot. After some time, Syracuse university also invited all exchange students explicitly and I got to know all other (mostly) European exchange students. I spent a lot of time with them but also got to know very nice American and Indian students. As a DIM student, I somehow got enrolled in the "ischool" and was asked to choose courses from the ischool faculty. However, I know from other experience letters that other DIM students could also take Management courses at another faculty. I chose three courses from ischool, namely Cloud Management (IST615), Big Data Analytics (IST718), Data Analytics (IST707) which were all three great but also pretty demanding. I had a lot of homework, some midterms, endterms, individual projects and group projects. Nonetheless, I really enjoyed these three courses more than any other in my entire student life and I might even have learned more than ever before. I had a lot to do but I also took classes that Syracuse students usually take at the end of the MS in Applied Data Science or MS in Information Management program. Most of my classmates were from India and I had a great time

studying with them. The classes were much more technical than the classes at DIM, but I was more than happy about that. Last but not least, professors usually give very good grades, so I would encourage everyone to take challenging classes. You will learn a lot and not regret taking them.

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

I aim to work as a data engineer or data scientist in the future. Therefore, I decided to take "Introduction to Data Science" at KU in Denmark before I was looking for a partner university abroad. My initial motivation to study abroad was to learn more about Data Science. Unfortunately, DIM does not meet my interest completely, so I tried to "modify" my curriculum. If anyone else wants to learn more about Data Science or get to know a more technical side of IT, Syracuse University might offer you a great chance to do so. Moreover, I was hoping to get to know college life in the US and travel a bit more. Fortunately, I could meet all my expectations and I am now very happy to have made the decision to study in Syracuse for one semester.

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?

The time in the United States helped me to appreciate many things more than ever before. Syracuse University is a private school and not many students can afford to study there. If you decide to study in the US, you usually need to take a big loan and you might not even be able to pay it back until you are 35. I learned many other personal things, mainly from other European exchange students, my Indian classmates or my American friends. Academically, I learned a lot about Data Science and Cloud Computing. It helps me to write the master thesis that I also wanted to write, and I got many internship offerings, partially due to my semester in the US. I am certain that my semester abroad contributed a lot to my further studies and my future career. Before I left Denmark, I told myself to try more technical courses also because I wanted to figure out whether I could imagine working in this field of study later on.

Arranging your stay

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

There is very much to do when arranging your stay in the US. As soon as I got the confirmation from ITU, I had to formally apply at Syracuse University. After the confirmation, the university sent a letter which I had to take to the embassy where I applied for my visa. Next, you need to make sure that you have the pre-approval of courses from ITU and hope that you will be able to take those courses in Syracuse. In my case, I reached out to those responsible at the Syracuse University and asked for my final course selection. It took them a while to enroll me in the right courses but everything worked out as planned. Next, I booked my flights to the US and applied for the travel pool at ITU. Most likely, I forgot some stuff I had to take care of before getting to the US but I guess this gives you a brief overview. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me. I am more than happy to help.

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

Honestly, only former students who have been in Syracuse could really help me planning my stay.

How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?

I've asked former students about their stay and found two landlord email addresses on the Syracuse University website. As a master student, you are not allowed to live on-campus but even if you are allowed to, I would not necessarily recommend to live on campus. As far as I know, living off-campus is usually cheaper and you do not need to share your room with someone else. For me, it was very important to find a place before getting the US- so I just took what I got offered by one of the landlords. In the end, it might not have been the best place, but it was affordable and I use to live close to campus. However, I would recommend you try to find a nice roommate on facebook and try to have a skype call before getting to the US. Moreover, I would recommend you do not take too much with you. If you really need anything, you can always buy it in the US. If you doubt the cold weather, don't be too concerned, it got a bit cold in November but overall, the weather was much better than expected.

Expenses and Financing

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad

Honestly, I do not really recall all expenses, but it was actually quite a lot, considering the fact that you actually do not pay to study there. I might have spent approx. 1500€ on flights & bus trips to get to the US and travel a bit, approx. 300€ for visa and other application expenses, approx. 400€ for "wellness" costs at Syracuse University, approx. 500€ for rent per month (incl. august and December as I always had to pay the entire month) = 2500€, approx. 400€ per month for food and drinks ~1500€. So, all in all, approx. 6000€ (44,800 DKK). I could save money before going abroad, so I was able to cover all expenses. However, you also need to proof that you have enough money to cover your stay in the US when applying in Syracuse. As far as I remember, they ask you to proof that you have somehow access to \$10,000.

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

Only ITU Travel pool.

Recommendations for other students:

Do it! Study in Syracuse and appreciate it. Not many students have the chance to do so. Also, travel in the US and get involved when studying at Syracuse University. You have endless opportunities there and it can be an amazing experience if you are open for new things!

Photos



