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, as long as you cover the information asked for below. You are also very welcome to include pictures and contact information – but you need not. Remember that the report will be made available on the intranet.

Host University: Georgia Institute of Technology

Study Programme at IT University: Digital Media and Design

Exchange Agreement or Study Abroad: Computational Media (CM)

Courses studied abroad:

LCC 2720 Visual Design
LCC 3705 Information Design
LCC 2730 Constructing the Moving Image
CS 1315 Intro to Media Computation

Exchange Period: semester (autumn/spring): Autumn, Year: 2013

Your stay abroad

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

My exchange experience at Georgia Tech has been challenging and fun in many ways. The challenging aspects about the exchange were the workload during the stay. My schedule was a full week 8 – 15 from Monday to Friday and with a lot of hand-ins during the week apart from the readings. This was an aspect I came to love about studying in the US. Working while learning and implementing theory immediately after learning became a huge motivation factor and supported the meaning of studying the specific courses. The workload probably wasn’t heavier or easier than what we do at ITU but there is definitely more hands on workload and ‘doing’ is a keyword when studying
at Tech. Having said that I also found it kind of a shame that we weren’t able to take a week off studying and explore America as a country. Of course studying is the number one priority, but I also think that an exchange experience has more to it than just studying, and I’m bringing home more than just study-related knowledge. Therefore I would recommend that people wanting to study abroad at Georgia Tech would be informed of the burden and busyness of studying here before going. In this way they can plan ahead to go to the US earlier/ stay longer to have proper time to explore the country in their own time.

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

My motivation for going was exploration of the world as well my creative sense of design’. I must say that I know that there must be more to explore and experience in the US and therefore the stay only mildly met my expectations and spiked a want of future experiences studying abroad or merely traveling. The exploration of my practical designing skillset was met to a very fulfilling extend. The ‘hands on’ approach at Georgia Tech gave me the tools I needed to ‘do’ and practice my theory that I brought with me from ITU.

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 most obvious thing I brought with me from Georgia Tech academically was skills to design practically instead of just handling the design theoretically or merely just drawing. The stay expanded my digital designing skillset and I am now much better prepared to work practically in future projects at ITU. Personally I think patience and working hard and continuously is some of the personal things I brought home with me. Finally experiencing how working hard during the semester actually paid off in a score or a sort of “grade” had a huge impact on the motivation for studying. Patience came along with where I lived. Living with 48 people from across the world and sharing a small kitchen with 24 of these exercised my perception of order and control. Coming to terms with how other people from other countries learn, live and study broadened my view on my own way of living. One might say that my spiritual consideration of the question of “the right way of living” was considered and reconsidered many times during my stay both academically and personally.

Arranging your stay

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

The arranging of getting accepted and understanding and choosing the different courses was not oo hard as we got help from ITU. Although I would think that in the future it would be helpful for ITU to have more hands handling questions from the exchange students as the process of applying is very stressful. Having accepted different courses and having had the approved in advance and coming to Georgia Tech expecting to get these courses we were very surprised to find that some of the courses were not offered any longer. A stronger communication between Georgia Tech and ITU concerning
which courses are available would be a thing to consider in the future. During the stay very little had
to be done and therefore I would recommend that information about the stress during application
and calming the applicants as much as possible would be recommendable as you could avoid
stressing too much while applying.

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

I found it very useful that Rikke Illona Ulstrup helped us out connecting with the people we needed
to get in contact with as well as setting up private meetings with the Georgia Tech students currently
studying at ITU. I think this was very helpful and this sort of setup should be reinforced and made
more efficient in the future, as it was a huge help in planning my stay.

How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?

Rikke Illona Ulstrup recommended the International House at Georgia Tech campus and as the place
sounded as a very nice and exciting place to live then I applied there and got accepted. Had I not
been accepted there was several possibilities of getting accommodation on campus but I would say
that applying and living at the International House is definitely preferable as there is a lot of other
exchange students also looking for things to do and experience in and around Atlanta.

Expenses and Financing

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad

As I sort of expected there was all sorts of unexpected expenses during my stay. Nothing I could not
handle, but I would recommend putting aside an amount of money for unexpected expenses as it
makes life more manageable and fun while you’re away.

I had to pay everything prior to my stay in the US and even my rent was to be prepaid. Before leaving
for the US I therefore had to pay a considerable amount of money and at the time of saving it
seemed like a lot of money that I had to pay for this and that in the US that I was not entirely sure
what covered. In review all the money I paid beforehand meant that I had my entire SU to spend and
no expenses besides food (and the Danish DR License). That having been said this money is well
spent on field trips and travels around the country. But you should be covered to a reasonable extent
with your SU as it is fairly cheap buying food in the US.

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

I did apply for about 30 scholarships and did not get accepted by any of them. As it is hard
differentiating yourself from others and making your application stand out I would recommend
starting on this in plenty time ahead and get help writing and reviewing your application. Use your
study advisors or ask the people at SAP for help. I’m mentioning this as I did not use that much time
going everything ready for the scholarship applications and was very short on time applying for
these. So do it as soon as possible in your application for exchange. Even though you might not get
accepted or the scholarship demands all sorts of papers write your application to get in contact with as many people as possible, as soon as possible.

**Recommendations for other students:**

I would highly recommend studying abroad as it has been one of the greatest adventures in my life so far and has mad me a lot of very dear friends.

Choose your courses wisely and make sure that the courses you’re looking for are still being offered.

If you are planning studying abroad at Georgia Tech I would wholeheartedly recommend that you live in the International House. It was a fun and very friendly environment to do your studying abroad and has been a huge help for me in times of pressure. The people in the International House were always there to lend a helping hand if you had any questions about studying in the US, or where to go if you wanted to experience some exciting things while you’re on exchange. The International House made a invaluable help and was a very strong place to create a network while you are studying abroad and continues to be so, a strong network, as I continue my studies at ITU.