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: San Diego State University

Study Program at IT University: Msc IT and E-business

Exchange Agreement or Study Abroad: Semester Abroad, Free-mover. EDU: [http://edu-danmark.dk/](http://edu-danmark.dk/)

Courses studied abroad: Technology Commercialization, Business Ethics, and Managing Growing Entrepreneurial Firm.

Your stay abroad

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

I studied masters’ courses at San Diego State (SDSU) University and therefore this section is based on graduate courses, academic level and social life at San Diego State University. My perception is, that there is a significant difference whether you study graduate or undergraduate course at SDSU, based on statements of international undergraduate students at SDSU.

Courses I studied at SDSU:

Technology Commercialization: “Assessment of future commercialization potential of early stage technologies. Technology commercialization process including technology and market assessments, business models, revenue streams, licensing, and protection of intellectual property.” [https://sunspot.sdsu.edu/schedule/#](https://sunspot.sdsu.edu/schedule/#)
Business Ethics: “Ethical and social aspects of current issues in business and society. Changing role of stakeholders including consumers, shareholders, and employees. Assessment of operation, functioning and regulation of the market system.” (https://sunspot.sdsu.edu/schedule/#)

Managing Growing Entrepreneurial Firm: “Problems and issues confronting entrepreneurs beyond start-up of a new venture. Focus on issues from both entrepreneur and investor perspectives.” (https://sunspot.sdsu.edu/schedule/#)

At SDSU you are expected to participate actively in class and class discussions. During semester you have to hand in various papers and there are midterms, which all are graded. The grade from the final exam and the grades from semester represent the final course grade.

At SDSU grades are given on a curve, which means that your grade depends on how well the rest of the class performs. The most skilled will get an A, and your grade depends on how good you do compared to that particular student. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grading_on_a_curve)

Distribution in grading in Business Ethics Course

- 20% Class participation
- 10% Presentation and discussion questions of current business-enhics issue
- 10% Taking Sides Debate
- 20% Midterm exam
- 40% Final paper

Academic Level:

Academic level at SDSU was high. I studied business courses and my background is in business, which made it easier for me. Especially because of my work experience. As a graduate student at SDSU you are expected to have some kind of relevant work or work experience, which most of the American students have.

Californian Law:

Students that are enrolled in a full program in Californian universities have the first priority in choosing courses. Everyone else including international students can choose the courses that have available spaces afterwards. SDSU have created Special Sessions, which are only for international students, to ensure available spaces for international students in the popular courses. Special sessions are only for international students.

Course Crashing:

To enroll in regular courses at SDSU, not special sessions, you have to crash courses. As those who are enrolled in full program at SDSU choose first, you have to get the lecturer's permission to attend the course if there are available spaces.
You crash courses by attending the first lecture and after the lecture you ask the professor if there are any available spaces and if you can attend the class. Some professors will interview you shortly and others will admit you right away.

The international office at San Diego State is very helpful, and in the beginning of the semester they explain everything you need to know, especially the course crashing.

**Social Life:**

Graduate courses are in the afternoon or evening. A typical American graduate student has done undergraduate program, worked for a couple of years or more and come back to school to do an MBA or similar. These students usually attend class straight after work. From what I have experienced, graduate students do not socialize and attend university events as much as undergraduate students.

I lived at the beach and not on SDSU on campus. The beach is 15 minute drive from SDSU. Therefore my social environment was at the beach. As a International student you have many opportunities to meet new people through events for international students. You have to remember that there are many people like you, going abroad by them selves, which makes making friends very easy.

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

My initial motivation for going abroad was to get a different perspective on education and to experience living abroad. My stay did meet my expectations. Especially how the basic education was similar to Denmark, but with the American perspective, which made it very interesting.

**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 studied business courses at SDSU. The biggest difference was, that you are forced to think bigger in the states. The theory and the method is the same, but when analyzing a business idea, in the states they are very focused on commercializing, which means how do you get the most money out of your business idea. You have to think big.

I think I have developed a lot personally and academically. The challenge is, you are in a foreign country and you have to adapt to the environment and a different school culture. At some point halfway through the stay, you go from confusion status to a stage where you know what you are doing and you are in control, which is a very satisfying feeling.

The theories from classes I attended at San Diego State are relevant for my masters’ thesis.

**Arranging your stay**

**Please give a short description of the process of arranging your stay:**
As a free-mover you have to arrange everything your self. Everything is a project, from finding courses to getting a study visa, course approval at ITU, but it's all worth it in the end.

I arranged my stay through EDU, and they have been very helpful. http://edu-danmark.dk/

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

I planned my stay with EDU. http://edu-danmark.dk/

I have friends who have been studying in San Diego, who were very helpful.

How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?

Accommodation was arranged through http://www.craigslist.org/about/sites. Once I arrived in San Diego, I search for places to stay in the Mission Beach area, where I wanted to stay and started contacting landlords to see if it was available and I could stop by to take a look.

I rented a car at http://www.dirtcheapcarrentals.com/. If you rent for a semester you get a monthly discount.

Expenses and Financing

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad

Prices in San Diego are more reasonable than in Denmark, but depends on which area you live in. Everything is a bit more expensive at the Beach area.

The biggest expenses are associated with pre departure; flight ticket, insurance, visa etc.

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

I did not apply for scholarships.

I applied for some grants, but most grants are for the fall semester. I went in spring, where number of grants is limited. I would recommend Nordea Fonden and Arla Fonden, which are some of the biggest ones.

Recommendations for other students:

Go abroad if you can, it's worth it. It has been the best experience in my life. Make sure to save money for your stay. Once you are there, you will want to experience as much as possible, and it is a shame not to be able to afford.