IT University Travel Report

Host University: IED University of Barcelona

Study Programme at IT University: Digital Design and Communication

Activity Abroad: Summer Course in Design Thinking for Business Transformation (5 ECTS)

Exchange Period: Summer 2018, One week in July

Contact info: Tenna Telfer Nielsen, tten@itu.dk

Your stay abroad

Please describe your stay abroad:

As a part of my 3rd semester of the master program in Digital Design and Communication, I took a
summer course in Design Thinking for Business Transformation at the IED University of Barcelona. I
took the summer course instead of an elective course in the autumn semester. In order to obtain 7.5
ECTS (which is required for an elective course), I am writing a 2.5 ECTS reflection report about my stay.

The summer course was equal to 5ECTS and lasted for five intense days of study in Barcelona. The
course built upon a lot of the same methods as I am familiar with from both my bachelor (DMD) and
from my current program (DDK); e.g. Design Thinking, Value Proposition, Business Models, Usability
Testing, Prototyping etc. However, the course were not primarily focused on developing digital
technologies, and a lot of the other students came from various backgrounds and countries. It was
exiting to experience how the same methods are applied in different areas all over the world and to
experience that you can develop almost everything from a basic set of design methods.

It was clear that IED had a lot of experience with summer courses and I immediately felt very welcome
and both the teachers and the entire course seemed very structured.

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

I decided to apply for the summer course as I wanted to lower the number of courses that I had to
attend in the autumn semester, as the spring semester had been very stressful to me having to attend
four courses at the same time. Furthermore, I wanted to have a chance of experiencing studying
abroad. I do not want to take a full semester abroad, but a summer course is a nice way of
experiencing student life in another country. I can fully recommend a summer course, for those who
want to have extra time in one of the semesters and on the same time wants to travel abroad.
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 learned how the methods that I know from ITU are being applied all over the world and in many different disciplines. As such, I got a new academic perspective on how design thinking can be applies. The course gave me hands on experiences with facilitating a design process as well as how to plan and structure different design activities; such as research, brainstorming and concept development. As of now, I have already used some of the methods to conduct an idea generation workshop together with my team in one of the courses that I am currently attending. In my further studies I will try to use these new perspectives and inspiration when I am planning and conducting a design project.

Arranging your stay

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

Barcelona is a very popular place to go in the summer time. This means that you (ideally) have to be planning both flights and accommodation in good time. However, we got the answer from SAP about 1,5 month before the summer course. This was very stressful as the flight ticket had become more expensive and the accommodation that we had found in advance were gone. You have to consider the date of the summer course and when you can expect to have an answer from SAP (on you pre-approval).

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

We used ‘Travellink’ to search for flight tickets and ‘Airbnb’ and ‘Momondo’ to search for accommodation. We furthermore talked to fellow students with previous experiences of going abroad, in order to make sure that we had covered all the practicalities.

How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?

The IED University offered help finding a place to stay, but we ended up finding an apartment on Airbnb. I travelled with two fellow students which made it easier for us to find a place to stay, as we could split out the expenses.
Expenses and Financing

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad

I ended up using around 8000 DKK in total (including accommodation, food etc.). I stayed in Barcelona for 12 days as I also stayed a few days before and after the course, in order to experience the city of Barcelona. I payed the tuition and the application fee upfront but I got almost all my the expenses in relation to the summer course covered by ‘SU Udlandsstipendium’ (I payed around 1500 DKK myself and SU covered almost 8000 DKK of the 5 ECTS course).

This means that you only have to cover expenses connected to food and accommodation yourself, if you apply for both ‘Travel Pool’ and ‘SU Udlandsstipendium’.

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

I found it difficult to find scholarships that I could apply for, as I was only attending a summer course. I ended up only applying for the ITU Travel Pool, which I can recommend. The Travel Pool covers travel expenses such as flights tickets up to a maximum of 2500 DKK.

Recommendations for other students:

Start planning your stay as soon as you can and make a list of tasks and deadlines that you have to meet in order to apply in time for the course. I planned my stay with to fellow students which made it easier for me, as we could help each other in the process. Together, we created a ‘To-do’ list in Wunderlist with all the documents, deadlines, practicalities etc.

Feel free to contact me on tten@itu.dk if you want to know more :-)