

## GUIDELINES FOR WRITING THE STUDENT REPORT

*You can write the report in English or Icelandic*

**Name of host University: ESade**

**Department/school you studied within: Business**

**Name (student): Atli Geir Hallgrímsson**

**Exchange semester: Fall                      Fall / Spring, 2015**

**School at RU: Marketing**

### I GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

1. Briefly describe the school and its surroundings

-The school is located in Sant Cugat which is a small town outside of Barcelona. It takes about an hour for most people to get there from the city, 20 minutes to walk to the train station, 20 minutes by train and 20 minutes to walk to the school. The building is rather new and modern. There is a cafeteria and a canteen in the main building and a restaurant/café in the other building. There is a small library in the school with some tables to study at, however it's often packed and there are not many other places to study at the school.

2. Please list the current faculty divisions and special areas.  
ESADE is a business school that specializes in MBA, finance and international business Management.

3. Number of exchange students

Around 150

4. Study structure

-It depends on the courses that people enrolled in. In some classes there were two teachers teaching at the same time. Some teachers invited guest lectures while others just taught alone. There were a lot of group assignments, some classes had 1 small group assignments each week while other had just one big final project. The workload was similar to RU but there were much more smaller assignments and the exams were much easier.

### II PRACTICAL INFORMATION

#### Pre – Departure: Quality of Information before you left

- When did you receive the information package from the University?  
-When I was accepted.
- Any difficulties, such as communication or late responses?  
-Many students had some problems selecting courses. Most of the courses that were taught in english were filled in minutes after we were allowed to apply, so there were only Spanish courses left. However, the school offered extra courses for those who couldn't apply to their preferred courses. In the end I think that most of the students were happy about it although it caused some people stress for the first week.

#### Academic Calendar – important dates

- Arrival date – introductory week: 1-7th of September
- First day of the semester: 15th of September
- Last day of classes: 18th of December. However It really depends on the classes. Many people finished their classes in the beginning of December.
- Examination period: 10-20th of December. But again, it depends on the classes and some students didn't take any final exams.

#### Reception of incoming students – describe how you were welcomed

- Was the administration and faculty well prepared for your arrival?

Like mentioned above, there were some difficulties at first selecting classes, but in the end they managed it very well. There was also a mandatory attendance for the first week where they gave us some helpful

information, such as history of Catalunya, the political environment of Spain, prices of train tickets, how to avoid thieves and the rules of the school.

- Did the school's students participate in the reception of the exchange students?

No, there was one short meeting with 3 local students where they gave us some tips about traveling in Spain and where to party. Other than that, I don't think the exchange students and the local students had much communication.

### Housing

- Did you have housing at your disposal or did you have to find your own housing?

I used Airbnb to find an apartment for the first month until I got my own. It's possible to apply for a room at the school's dormitory. However, it's very expensive (800-900 euros) and it's located in Sant Cugat, so it takes more than an hour to travel to the city. Sant Cugat is also rather small and there isn't anything happening there, I wouldn't recommend living there.

Although it can be tiring to travel for an hour each day to get to school most of the students found apartments in the Barcelona city, as it's much cheaper and more fun.

- What support did you receive from the school in locating housing?

No, just the dormitory.

- Any special issues or good ideas for prospective students?

Some found apartments before they arrived while others stayed in a hostel or a room through Airbnb for a couple of days until they found an apartment, or met some people through the school that were searching for roommates.

I would recommend to arrive first to Barcelona so you can take a look at the apartment and the neighborhoods.

There was one group that had found an apartment beforehand that was scammed and had to find another apartment. Other than that, I don't think that anyone had problems finding apartments.

Barcelona is divided into a couple of neighborhoods. I found an apartment in Gracia which is rather calm and nice neighborhood with a lot of bars, restaurants and cafés. It takes about 30-40 minutes to walk to the city center from there. I would not recommend to stay any further from the city center than Gracia. Many students stayed in Raval, Gótico, Born and Eixample which are more central. Each neighborhood is different so I would recommend to read about them beforehand.

### Costs

- Describe the most important expenses such as rent, books, food, etc.

Most of the students paid around 300-550 euros for their share of the apartments. We didn't have to buy any books as the reading material was provided by the teachers. Food is cheaper than in Iceland and eating out can be from 8-12 euros.

- General cost of living

### The International Office

- Who is responsible for incoming exchange students?

Caroline Beckerhaus

- Did you receive good service from the office?

Yes

- Do you receive all relevant information?

Yes

### Exchange promotion

- What kind of activity did you take part in to promote exchange studies at your host university?

There were no activities.

### Social Activities

- How was your relationship with other students?  
It was good.
- How was the relationship among the exchange students?  
Good, as far as I know.
- Is there a student organization, and if so, are the exchange student's part of it?  
Yes they had some parties and activities and exchange students are invited.
- Are there any special activities and gatherings for exchange students?  
There was some welcoming party, middle semester party and a goodbye party.
- Did you participate actively in social activities?  
Yes, but not through the student organization

### Culture and Language

- Did you have any language problems with the faculty or other students?  
No, everyone in the school spoke very good English. However, there were some difficulties talking to government employees and locals.
- How are the possibilities to experience the country and the culture?  
There wasn't much communication between the exchange students and the local students as there weren't many Spanish students in the classes that were offered for exchange students. However, it was possible to enroll in classes that were taught in Spanish that had many local students, but my Spanish isn't that good.
- Any recommendations for students?

I would recommend to take the free Spanish classes that the school offers although they aren't mandatory. I would also recommend to go to the events that are organized by Erasmus.

### Cultural and Social Effects from the Exchange Experience

- How do you think the exchange experience will affect you from a cultural and social point of view?  
I learned a lot about Spain, Catalunya and also other countries through my classmates.
- How do you think the exchange experience influences your future career possibilities?  
I think it will certainly help.

## **III ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

### The Teaching situation

- In which language are the courses taught?  
English and Spanish.
- How would you evaluate the level of study in relationship to the level at RU?  
It's similar, but they had mandatory attendance where students had to attend 80% of the classes.
- Is the teaching primarily practical or theoretical?  
It's mostly practical
- Are the professors using cases, group work or lectures (or a mix)?  
They mix it together
- How is the workload compared to that at RU?  
Very similar
- How is the relationship between faculty and students?  
It was ok
- What is the relationship between the students in the classroom?  
It was good

### Required reading

- Was all required reading in English?  
Yes

- Is the reading material used for detailed knowledge or a broad overview?

Both

- Were examinations based on the reading or on the lectures?

Both

### Exams

- Please describe what types of exams were you given?

In one class we had a written exam  
 Other class had two multiple choice exams during the semester that had only 5 questions.  
 One class had 2 exams 50 multiple choice questions each.  
 One was an open book that was available online

### Other

- Do students have easy access to the library and its resources?

Yes

- How is the access to the computers?

There are some computer rooms available for students.

- How is IT used in the teaching or as a distributor of information?

- Everything goes through the "Intranet", which is similar to Myschool. All of the information and reading material can be found there. Some of the exams were also available there.

### Description of Courses

Please list all the courses you are taking in the form below:

- Name and code of the course
- Prerequisites, if any
- Exam form
- Comments: Relevance, Difficult/easy, Practical/theoretical, Enrolment problems

Example:

<u>Course name:</u>	<u>Prereq.</u>	<u>Exam</u>	<u>Major at RU</u>	<u>Approved as</u> (Common/elective/extra)
<b>Anthropology: in Search For a life Philosophy</b>		Final assignment/Written exam		Elective
CEE:The of China in 21st century		Final essay		Elective emergence
<b>CI: Introduction to Sales Management</b>		Take-home exam		Elective
Implementing Processes and Indicators		Final assignment		Elective Strategy:
<b>Spanish and Catalan society through cinema</b>		Final assignment/exams		Elective
Project Management		Final assignment/exams		Elective
<b>Global Environmental Challenges and Business Response</b>		Final assignment		Elective
Marketing from strategy to action		Final assignment		Elective

.....  
 Please fill in all the courses you have taken

### Any other experiences you would like to talk about?

I think that most of the classes were rather interesting. However, the course *Marketing from Strategy to Action* was rather basic. It was like an introduction of marketing so I wouldn't recommend it to anyone who has taken a course in marketing before.

Also, I would recommend to enroll in courses that give at least 5 credits, instead of many courses that only give 2-3 few credits. Most of the courses have some type of homework for each week, and that homework is often a group assignment. So it was rather time consuming to work on a group assignments with 3-5 different groups each week.

I also highly recommend to take the course called Anthropology: in Search For a life Philosophy. The course was very interesting and I think that the teachers provided some valuable lessons. For each lesson, we were supposed to read a short story by classic writers, such as Tolstoi, Poe, Proust, Kafka and Dostoievsk or watch a silent movie. Then the teachers connected the homework to different types of art (paintings, symphonies, poems) and showed how it was connected to to the economy. Then, in the end of each class, they gave us a life philosophy that was connected to the theme of all of the references. Although the class doesn't teach the "hard" skills that are necessary for employees, it provides valuable lessons that I think is healthy for everyone to think about.

Names and e-mails:

The International Exchange Office will appreciate if you leave your e-mail address here, so that other students can contact you for more information.

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