

Name of the University: ESADE Business School
Names of the students: Katrín Erla Sigurðardóttir
Exchange semester: Fall 2010

I GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

1. Describe the school and its surroundings – very short
 - a. ESADE's business school campus is located in Sant Cugat, a town about 40 minutes outside Barcelona. It is a small, friendly town with lots of trees, parks and old houses. The school is a large, modern building, very spacious and with a great cafeteria.
2. Current faculty divisions and special areas.
 - a. N/A
3. Number of students - graduate and undergraduate – number of exchange students
 - a. N/A
4. Study structure
 - a. Each course has a class once a week, for several hours.

II PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Information before you left

- When did you receive the information package from the University?
 - I received an acceptance letter and a welcome letter that included all necessary information on April 30th 2010.
- Any difficulties?
 - No there were no difficulties.

Visa Procedure and travel experiences

- What problems, if any did you encounter?
 - N/A
- Does the visa cost anything?
 - N/A
- How did you order your ticket – any problems?
 - I ordered the ticket through Icelandair, they had direct flights to Barcelona at that time.

Academic Calendar

- Arrival date – introductory week
 - Arrival date: August 28, 2010
 - Introductory week: August 30th – September 3rd 2010
- First day of the semester?
 - Exchange students had a two week optional “crash course in Spanish” after which the semester began on September 20th 2010
- Last day of classes?
 - November 30th, 2010
- Examination period?
 - December 10th-20th, 2010

- Any special events?
 - There were many “bank holidays”, strikes or Spanish holidays, where we missed school for a day, a week or a number of days.

Reception

- How was the reception at the school?
 - The reception was fine. There was nothing special done, it was just like being at school any other day.
- Was the administration and faculty well prepared for your arrival?
 - I wasn't too aware of their preparation, Maja, the woman in charge of exchange students seemed to be our only contact, and she had a lot to do the first two weeks. However, everything was fairly simple, except for choosing classes, many classes overlapped, many of the few English classes were overlapping, or full, etc.
- Did the school's students participate in the reception of the exchange students?
 - Everyone was assigned a “buddy” but not everybody met their buddy, I never met my buddy, which was fine by me.

Housing

- Did you have housing at your disposal or did you have to find your own housing?
 - I found my own housing, there was a campus, but I had no interest in staying there. Also, the campus is so far from the city center, that only one of the exchange students I new stayed there.
- What support did you receive from the school in locating housing?
 - No. The school does not help with housing.
- Any special issues or good ideas for prospective students?
 - There are many Icelandic people in Barcelona, that are renting out flats. I found my flat right away by googling “íbúðir í Barcelona”.

Costs

- Describe the most important expenses such as rent, books, food, etc.
 - I did not need to buy any books; most of the professors hand out photocopies or bound material in your personal “mailbox”.
 - Rent was reasonable; I lived in a more expensive flat than most people there, so maybe my input on this is irrelevant. But you can join in a flat with up to 10 other people or find something smaller, so the rent really depends on where you are and with who. Also, there are many “student” buildings downtown where you get your own room, but share common area and bathroom with others.
 - Food was very inexpensive compared to Iceland. There are not many big supermarkets, however depending on the neighborhood, you will find a suitable supermarket or store, and start to get to know what brands are best... but most of the small neighborhood stores are relatively cheap.
 - One of the main costs is a train ticket. You need one to get to school, and around town. There are several options regarding the ticket you can buy (one way, return, 10 trips, 30 day ticket, student ticket, one zone, 2 zone, etc.)

The International Office

- Is there an international office?
 - Yes
- Who is responsible for incoming exchange students?
 - Maja Murkp
- How does the international office function?
 - The only contact I know is Maja, it is very busy, and EVERYone always needed her for something, but in the end she did a good job.
- Do you receive all relevant information?
 - Yes. Although it took a few weeks for me to be assigned to all the right classes, and rearrange my schedule. I think the school should have had that prepared before school started, as it became a common problem with everyone. Also, it was difficult to register in classes that were in English, because we never knew which class was in English, and which not.

Exchange promotion

- What kind of activity did you take part in to promote exchange to Iceland at your exchange university?
 - I answered constant questions about Iceland, I was understandably the first Icelandic people many had met. People were very interested in Iceland, and as any Icelandic person would do, I bragged about Iceland and HR constantly and encouraged everyone to go there. 😊

Social Activities

- How is your relationship with other students?
 - The exchange students were mostly together in the same classes; there were very few Spanish students in them. However, the Spanish students were nice and helpful.
- How is the relationship among the exchange students?
 - It was great, we were all there in the same situation, alone and did not know anyone, so we bonded and became a great big family, really.
- Is there a student organization, and if so, are the exchange students part of it?
 - No. No there was no social life organized by any student organization.
- Are there any special activities and gatherings for exchange students?
 - Not by the school. But there was a Promoter who organized “Erasmus” meetings and nights out.
- How do you like it at the school?
 - School was fine. However, the exchange students did not spend much time there other than for classes.

Culture and Language

- Do you have any language problems with the faculty or other students?
 - No, none at all.

- How are the possibilities to experience the country and the culture?
 - They are great. Barcelona is a short distance from many great destinations, and traveling is very easy. Also, in Barcelona there are hundreds of cultural experiences, museums, etc. to visit.

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 think it has given me more perspective and experience. Also, my Spanish has gotten so much better. I really did not know what to expect when I moved to Barcelona, but I loved every minute of it.
- How do you think the exchange experience influences your future career possibilities?
 - I think it makes it more likely to be an international career, also I think there are increased possibilities of it involving a Spanish speaking country.

III ACADEMIC INFORMATION

The Teaching situation

- In which language are the courses taught? Any problems?
 - You can choose English or Spanish courses. I chose English courses, although there weren't as many of them as I had liked. Also, I had chosen several courses I liked, but had to change them because they overlapped, and took courses I preferred less instead. Which was unfortunate.
- How would you evaluate the level of study in relationship to the level at RU?
 - The level of study was equal to that in RU
- Is the teaching primarily practical or theoretical?
 - Theoretical
- Are the professors using cases, group work or lectures (or a mix)?
 - There are lectures in class, and then there are case assignments to be done in groups outside class.
- How is the workload compared to that at RU?
 - The workload was MUCH heavier than in RU. I was taking 7 courses, and was in school every weekday. Each class had a group case study due once a week, so there was a lot of work.
- How is the relationship between faculty and students?
 - It was very friendly and the teachers were very laidback, they also encouraged active participation.
- What is the relationship between the students in the classroom?
 - It was as to be expected. There were many people in a classroom, so you did not necessarily know everyone.

Required Literature

- Is the literature in English?
 - Yes, if it is an English-speaking course.

- How do you estimate the level of the literature?
 - The literature were mostly Case studies from Harvard
- Is the literature used for detailed knowledge or a broad overview?
 - Detailed knowledge
- Is exam based on the literature or on the lectures?
 - The exams were based on both.

Exams

- What types of exams were you given?
 - Both essay type, take home cases, and multiple choice
- What knowledge level was required to pass the exams?
 - I don't recall.

Other

- Do students have easy access to the library and it's resources?
 - Yes
- How is the access to the computers?
 - There are computers in the library, as well as computer rooms.
- How is IT used in the teaching or as a distributor of information?
 - The intranet was very bad compared to RU's intranet. However, it was manageable.

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

| <i>Course name:</i> | <i>Prereq.</i> | <i>Exam</i> | <i>Major at RU</i> | <i>Approved as</i> <i>(Common/elective/extra)</i> |
|---------------------|----------------|-------------|--------------------|--|
|---------------------|----------------|-------------|--------------------|--|

Change Management for Service Excellence - None – None

Consumer Behavior – None – Multiple choice Exam

Doing Business Across Cultures – None – Written Exam

Global Supply Chain Management – None – Written Exam

Leadership – None - None

Marketing in Spain - None – Take home exam

Please fill in all the courses you have taken

Any other experiences:

Names and e-mails:

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