

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING THE STUDENT REPORT

You can write the report in English or Icelandic

Name of host University: Universidad de Carlos III
Department/school you studied within: Social Sciences

Name (student): Kristinn Björnsson
Exchange semester: Fall / Spring, 2014
School at RU: International Business

I GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The campus is nice and the facilities in excellent condition. The campus is spacious, green and full of life. Each building is somewhat characterized by the subject taught there, much like at Háskóli Íslands. There is an astonishing amount of exchange students, one out of every four that you meet on campus is foreign.

II PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Pre – Departure: Quality of Information before you left

I received information pack about the school two weeks before first day at school. The most confusing thing is the matriculation process, there is a certain date when the enrollment opens and you need to be on your toes as there is a limited number of places in each course.

Academic Calendar – important dates

The introductory week is from 1-5 of September, and classes start on the 8th. Last day of classes was 28th of November. The regular examination period is in January but I was able to arrange for all of the exams to be taken in December, and that seems to be an option for all Erasmus students.

Reception of incoming students – describe how you were welcomed

There was a reception ceremony which I did not attend. I had no problems when I came to class. It takes a little time to learn how to get around and find the classrooms, a good idea is to study a map of the area beforehand.

Housing

I found my housing on Airbnb.com 2 months before I went. It is a very good way to find short term rent, whereas contracts are normally minimum 6 months.

Costs

Rent is rather expensive. However, if you decide to share flat, like most students do, it's not more than 400 Euros. I didn't need to buy any books and the cost of living is cheap compared to Iceland, especially food and drink. Transportation is a cost factor, especially if you live in Madrid and need to travel to campus each day (40 min).

The International Office

The International Office is located at the main campus in Getafe. I was rather pleased with its service, and got all the relevant information. The first few days after arrival are very busy, though. The office is closed from 14-16 in the afternoon.

Social Activities

I did not participate in any activities for incoming students. Neither did I communicate much with other exchange students, but on a positive note when I did. There is a student

organization, but I do not know anything about it. There are a lot of incoming students and there seems to be a lot of stuff for them to do. I played for the university basketball team, only with local students. It was well organized and funded by the university.

Culture and Language

I am a fluent Spanish speaker and used that to my advantage. Some of the school's staff don't speak English. But there are a lot of fellow students one can ask and the International Office speaks English. Madrid is an excellent city to experience Spain. However, the campus is in Getafe, in the outskirts of Madrid. I recommend looking for an apartment in central Madrid.

Cultural and Social Effects from the Exchange Experience

I was extremely happy with the overall effect of the semester abroad. I fortified my Spanish speaking skills and gained insight into a different culture. My idea was always to combine business studies with Spanish and look for a career in an international setting.

III ACADEMIC INFORMATION

The Teaching situation

- In which language are the courses taught?
Spanish or English.
- How would you evaluate the level of study in relationship to the level at RU?
Similar level.
- Is the teaching primarily practical or theoretical?
Rather theoretical.
- Are the professors using cases, group work or lectures (or a mix)?
A lot of lectures.
- How is the workload compared to that at RU?
Slightly less.
- How is the relationship between faculty and students?
Good.
- What is the relationship between the students in the classroom?
Good, but not much mixing between foreign and Spanish.

Required reading

- Was all required reading in English?
Not for me but it's possible.
- Is the reading material used for detailed knowledge or a broad overview?
N/A.
- Were examinations based on the reading or on the lectures?
Yes.

Exams

- Please describe what types of exams were you given?
Traditional written exams, one was only multiple choice.

Other

- Do students have easy access to the library and its resources?
Yes.
- How is the access to the computers?
Good.
- How is IT used in the teaching or as a distributor of information?
Aula Global is the online venue of the school. Extremely important to learn how to use it.

Description of Courses

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

Example:

<u>Course name:</u>	<u>Prereq.</u>	<u>Exam</u>	<u>Major at RU</u>	<u>Approved as</u> (Common/elective/extra)
Spanish Politics	None	Written	Int. Business	Elective
Research Techniques				
Advanced Marketing Research				
Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management				

All of those were rather easy, except for Research Techniques.

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Please fill in all the courses you have taken

Any other experiences you would like to talk 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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