

Name of the University: University of Oslo  
Names of the students: Margrét Rán Kjærnedsted  
Exchange semester: Fall / Spring, 2011\_\_

## I GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

1. **Describe the school and its surroundings – very short**  
*The law faculty was located on the main street in Oslo, Karl Johanns gate, right next to the Palace. Very beautiful and very old buildings, therefore the seats were tree benches and plug-in where not common in the lecture room*
2. **Current faculty divisions and special areas.**  
*Law faculty. The special areas where the:*
  1. Department of Criminology and the sociology of law
  2. Department of Private Law
  3. Department of Public and International law
  4. Scandinavian institute of Maritime Law
  5. Centre for European Law
  6. Norwegian Center for Human Rights
3. **Number of students - graduate and undergraduate – number of exchange students**  
*There are 34.000 students in UIO but I was unable to get more specific information about the students. Exchange students where many, probably between 250-500 persons (at least very many)*
4. **Study structure**  
*Lectures, mock exams (we got no grade for that one) and then a final exam (4 hours long) where you got your final grade*

## II PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### Information before you left

- **When did you receive the information package from the University?**
  - Early in November
- **Any difficulties?**
  - Manly concerning housing – they where experiencing a new two in a room deal which I didn't found very interesting and the only guaranteed accommodation they would provide me was this deal. So it wasn't possible for me to get a single room (even though some other students got some).

### Visa Procedure and travel experiences

- **What problems, if any did you encounter?**
  - No problems
- **Does the visa cost anything?**
  - Did not need one
- **How did you order your ticket – any problems?**
  - No problems at all

### Academic Calendar

- **Arrival date – introductory week**
  - Orientation week was very well organized, both by ESN (student organization for exchange students) as well by ELSA (European law students association) for law students.
- **First day of the semester?**
  - 29 of January
- **Last day of classes?**
  - 30 of April
- **Examination period?**

- The whole may for Law students, but for other students the exams started in the beginning of may and ended around 15<sup>th</sup> of June.
- **Any special events?**
  - The University was 200 years old that year so there were several events that where related to that, but I didn't attend any of them.
  - ELSA arranged for many events for the law students, such as parties, cabin trip and other things.
  - ESN had a calendar for the whole semester and there was something happening every single week (more then 1 event pr week). Events where both focusing on introducing Norwegian culture, such as movie nights and cross-country trips as well all kinds of parties through the semester

#### Reception

- **How was the reception at the school?**
  - Good and easy to find
- **Was the administration and faculty well prepared for your arrival?**
  - Yes I would say so
- **Did the school's students participate in the reception of the exchange students?**
  - Yes, manly the ones who where in the ELSA committee as well as the ESN committee. Only met other students in the parties that the law department took me to in the beginning of the semester

#### Housing

- **Did you have housing at your disposal or did you have to find your own housing?**
  - UIO guaranteed housing for us, but we had to share a room with other exchange students.
- **What support did you receive from the school in locating housing?**
  - They guided us how to apply through SIO
- **Any special issues or good ideas for prospective students?**
  - While I had to share the room with another exchange student – I also lived with 120 other exchange students in the same building and got to know so many grate people very quickly and have a grate time with them. So even though I wasn't looking forward to sharing a room, it was only temporarily and the people who lived in the same building shared a lot of good moments together.
  - At the time I decided to go to Oslo I wanted to live in the center of the city, but after a careful look I decided to accept the two in a room deal in Kringsja, even though it was 20 minutes away from the center. That ended up being grate because next to Kringsja is a huge outdoor area where there is easy to go cross-country skiing in the winter and enjoy the beauty of Sognsvann (lake close to Kringsja) where we had BBQ, went for a jog, played volleyball and got to see how actual Norwegian live there life. So in the end Kringsja was the perfect place to live to experience the true Oslo.
  - The two in a room deal was not ideal for studying, because you had to share a desk with your roommate and when it comes to studying its impossible to share a desk, especially during exams. There was no wireless internet, so you where obligated to stay in your room if you needed to use the internet for your studies – but we did manage to get through it and me and my room mate didn't have exams on the same time so we where able to divide the use of the desk.

#### Costs

- **Describe the most important expenses such as rent, books, food, etc.**
  - Norway is an expensive country to live in. For Icelanders the shock isn't as bad as for other students because it's not that different from Iceland. But still most things where more expensive than back home.
    - Rent was 2200 NOK pr. Month with electricity, heat and internet (not wireless though).
    - Food was always a little bit more expensive, but surely the exchange students found there way to buy the cheapest products which often meant that we would go to 3 shops in order to buy groceries, first Grønland to buy vegetables, then to Rema 1000 to buy some products

and then to Kiwi to shop the First Price products. It was a big change from going always to Bonus.

- Books were a little bit more expensive than back home, but at the same time we didn't have to buy as many books as in Iceland because I only had to take two courses.

#### The International Office

- **Is there an international office?**
  - Yes there was one at Blindern campus
- **Who is responsible for incoming exchange students?**
  - The international office
- **How does the international office function?**
  - Quite well, they gave us good information in the beginning and had a good schedule through out the stay. But it did take a month to receive my semester card (which I needed to prove that I was a student registered at UIO)
- **Do you receive all relevant information?**
  - Yes, I believe so.

#### Exchange promotion

- What kind of activity did you take part in to promote exchange to Iceland at your exchange university?
  - During the international week there was no option of promoting your own university, therefore I didn't participate in any special promotion of University of Reykjavik

#### Social Activities

- **How is your relationship with other students?**
  - My class where mostly other exchange students, didn't get to know any Norwegian that attended class with me.
- **How is the relationship among the exchange students?**
  - Very good, both within the law students as well as the students that I lived with
- **Is there a student organization, and if so, are the exchange students part of it?**
  - As previously said there was ESN and then ELSA, which was a specific student organization only for law students on exchange
- **Are there any special activities and gatherings for exchange students?**
  - Yes, there was a tight schedule the whole semester.
- **How do you like it at the school?**
  - The school was very beautiful and old, especially the law department. There was a good place to study for the law students but there were opening hours of the library as well as the reading rooms, therefore we had to study within a certain time period which I didn't really like. The classes were very different and not as organized as in Reykjavik University, only notes from the teachers (no power point for example), in one of my courses they didn't set out a particular reading material – only recommended to buy a certain book and then you had to find the reading material yourself. But we had very interesting guest lectures in one of my courses, International criminal law, and got first hand information from for example the UN prosecutor of East Timor as well as a lecture about the ICC from one of the guys who wrote the ICC.
  - So all in all I liked it, but I also learned to appreciate Reykjavik University and what it has to offer so much more.

#### Culture and Language

- **Do you have any language problems with the faculty or other students?**
  - No not particularly with the law department nor other students – everyone spoke English. And I've to say that the teachers took me by surprise with their English, they didn't have a strong Norwegian accent as I had prepared for.
- **How are the possibilities to experience the country and the culture?**
  - Well ELSA helped us a lot in the beginning, we were invited to Norwegian parties and got to see how other Norwegian law students live. Then we went to a typical Norwegian cabin with the ELSA as well, so they played an excellent role in

introducing Norway. We had the possibility to rent Cross-Country skis the school for a fare price, which was so nice because all Norwegians Cross Country ski every opportunity they get. If you took Norwegian course the teachers were grate in introducing Norway and there culture. So I would say we had quite a lot of opportunities to experience the Norwegian culture

#### 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?**
  - After exchange I think I'm appreciating everything I've got in Iceland so much more then I did before. It has affected me a lot, in a good way. I became more mature and realized how much I love nature and loved living in the suburbs, which I didn't do in Iceland. The Norwegian culture wasn't that different from the Icelandic one, but I got to know so many people from around the world that shared there culture with me and it made me appreciate the Icelandic culture and our traditions even more. From a social point of view I believe the main difference is that now I've friends all over the world in stead of only in Europe, as before. So no matter where I'm in the world, I'll always be able to pick up the phone (or go on facebook) and pay and old friend a visit.
- **How do you think the exchange experience influences your future career possibilities?**
  - Yes I do. It's a lot of work to go on exchange, you need to step out of your ordinary routine and learn to adjust to new situations – new rules – new teachers – new learning environment and that was much harder then I had expected. Before you leave you need to know what to do with your stuff that are in Iceland, what do I do with the apartment, with my furniture, my car and so on. But I got through it and I believe that's an advantage for me.

### III ACADEMIC INFORMATION

#### The Teaching situation

- **In which language are the courses taught? Any problems?**
  - English. Only minor difficulties in the beginning, but I got pass them.
- **How would you evaluate the level of study in relationship to the level at RU?**
  - It's very different because I only had two 15 ECTS courses instead of five 5 ECTS courses in RU, therefore the workload was different, I had a better overview of the courses but at the same time had to read more. But in RU there are more exams/projects over the whole semester so the workload is more, because you need to study for each one of them, instead of one exam in the en of the semester. So all in all it's quite similar.
- **Is the teaching primarily practical or theoretical?**
  - More theoretical I believe
- **Are the professors using cases, group work or lectures (or a mix)?**
  - Only lectures
- **How is the workload compared to that at RU?**
  - Very similar, but it was harder because it was all in English – you couldn't look in to any Icelandic material as often is possible in Iceland. That made it a little bit more difficult to read, but in the end it was fine.
- **How is the relationship between faculty and students?**
  - It was good I believe, but not as personal as Reykjavik University
- **What is the relationship between the students in the classroom?**
  - It was good, many of them lived with me in the student village so you saw a familiar face all the time, but you didn't really have to associate with the other students because there where only lectures and one final exam. I quite missed the group work, because then you often get to know new people that you normally wouldn't get to know.

#### Required Literature

- **Is the literature in English?**

- Yes, all in English
- **How do you estimate the level of the literature?**
  - It was hard, I spoke and understood English very well before arrived in Norway but to read an English law text is a whole different thing. But by April I was able to read it as fluently as it was in Icelandic.
- **Is the literature used for detailed knowledge or a broad overview?**
  - Broad overview
- **Is exam based on the literature or on the lectures?**
  - More the lectures then the reading material – but you had to read the literature in order to understand the lectures because they weren't as detailed as in Reykjavik University

Exams

- **What types of exams were you given?**
  - Four hour written exam, with either essay question or a legal dispute which we had to solve.
- **What knowledge level was required to pass the exams?**
  - You had to get an E or above in order to pass.

Other

- **Do students have easy access to the library and it's resources?**
  - Yes, we get a library card when we arrive.
- **How is the access to the computers?**
  - Good, as soon as I figured out how to open the computer lab.
- **How is IT used in the teaching or as a distributor of information?**
  - Going to University of Oslo was like going 10 years back in time concerning IT, they could make there school system so much better. They could learn a thing or two from RU and Myschool ☺ But in the end we all got what we needed to get, but we had to ask for it, like to have the power point/notes from the lectures for example.

Description of Courses

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

- **Name and code of the course**
  - International Criminal Law JUR5570 (ICL)
  - Criminology JUR5101
- **Prerequisites, if any**
  - none
- **Exam form**
  - Written four hour exam
- **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>
<i>JUR 5570 ICL</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>4 hours written</i>	<i>Law</i>	<i>Elective</i>
<i>JUR 5101 Criminology</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>4 hour written</i>	<i>Law</i>	<i>Elective</i>

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Please fill in all the courses you have taken

Any other experiences:

Names and e-mails:

The International Office will appreciate if you will inform about your e-mail addresses, so that other students can contact you for more information.

Margrét Rán Kjærnested

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