

Report

”Semester abroad in Reutlingen University”

Stipendium: ABC Lateinamerika

Host University: Hochschule Reutlingen (ESB Business School)

Home University: Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Chile

Field of Study: International Business

Duration Stay: Summer Semester 2013 (02.04.20013-06.08.2013)



My experience in Reutlingen, Germany, beautiful moments!

When I was in the process of choosing the destination for my study abroad, I just knew that I wanted to come to Europe, but was not certain about which country. I began to investigate about different countries to find out which one would be a nice place to study. I have always been attracted to the German culture, but being as I do not speak the German language I did not think that studying in Germany would be a real possibility, until I met some classmates who were studying in Germany a few semesters ago and they told me that it is possible to take classes in English. That semester I also met students from Reutlingen University, who told me about the student life in Germany and specifically the academic culture at the University. Reutlingen University seemed to be a good option, so I contacted a classmate who was studying that semester at the University, to hear his experiences as an exchange student. After hearing about only positive things and great experiences that he had while living there, I then decided to apply to Reutlingen University myself.

Therefore I started to take German classes in the DAAD at my Home University

When I received the acceptance letter, I started to prepare the paper to get the visa and book my flight, and provide all the documents that the university required.

A few days before flying to Germany, I had mixed emotions. On one hand I was a bit sad because I knew that I would be leaving my family and friends for 6 months, but on the other hand I was feeling totally excited for the new experiences that were waiting for me, new people and culture to encounter. This was my first time in Europe, in a country totally different to mine, and with a language that I was not very well acquainted with, that was indeed quite challenging.

When I arrived to Germany my first impression was very good, everything seemed to be very orderly and surrounded by beautiful scenery but the weather was very cold for me, because I had left my country, which is located in the southern hemisphere, in the summer. I also felt shocked with the language, because the Germans spoke quite quickly and with a very strong accent, thus I could not understand very much of what they were saying.

Reutlingen is a small city in southern Germany and a very beautiful one at that. The city is surrounded by forests, nature and green areas. The town is marked with homes built in the classic European architectural style, which does not exist in my country. One of the things that really surprised me about the town, were the several old buildings that can be found in the town or in the nearby cities, such as the towers, churches and castles. There is a lot of history in every city here. The city-life is very quiet. Around seven-thirty in the evening, most of the stores in the city center are closed, and on Sunday everything is closed.

Reutlingen University is a very nice and well-ranked international University that provides students with the opportunities to meet people from around the world. The life on the campus is quite lovely, the classrooms are well-equipped, and the cafeteria offers many different types of foods and beverages. On the campus there are a lot of green areas available, which gives students the possibility to enjoy the time outdoors with friends.

Before I came, I was a bit worried because I heard that the Germans are serious and reserved people. But as the days passed, my impression began to change, once I started to know them. The Germans students were friendly and funny, and always very concerned and trying to help me in everything.

The teachers that I had were very good, they knew a lot about the subjects, that they taught and were always very respectful and friendly. It was easy to see that they enjoyed teaching the classes. The students are encouraged to participate in the classes, and most of the classes have just one final exam.

The residential building is very well located, close to the University and to a supermarket, with a bus stop just around the corner. In this building I had the opportunity to meet and spend time with students of different careers.

One of the big differences between Germany and my country is that, in Germany, people care more about environmental protection, separating garbage and recycling, using the public transportation, car sharing, and in many cities is possible to see many houses with solar panels on the roof.

To conclude, I would like to thank to everyone who support me to come here and everyone who was part of this great experience, which allowed me to know a new culture, and meet people from all over the world.

My study abroad in Germany was one of the best semesters of my life and I love to come back.