

Personal report

How time flies! Three months have passed without my notice in Reutlingen University. It had been a long time since I wanted to study abroad in my dreams. I am honored to have the chance to become a short-term exchange student from Xi'an Polytechnic University to Reutlingen University. Hereby, I am particularly grateful to my home university for giving me this opportunity, and thanks for the help given by host university. This experience not only enhanced my ability but also broadened my horizons. The following is my summary.

Preparations for the stay abroad

When I entered Xi'an Polytechnic University, I already knew that we had the opportunity to go abroad for exchange and I would really like to attend, so I asked many teachers and classmates who strongly recommended to the Reutlingen University that is a long-term cooperation program with our school. I have been following this program during my first year as a graduate student. Finally, international department of our school made a notice on the official website in April, I submitted the application quickly. I actively prepared before the interview and passed the interview smoothly.

On May 12th, I received an E-mail from host university that I had been nominated by my university to study one semester as an exchange student in international program at Reutlingen University in fall 2017 (September-December 2017). The teacher in RIO (Reutlingen International Office) asked us to register online in Reutlingen University, and told us about course selection, our pre-semester intensive German language, culture course in September 2017. We were asked to prepare five pdf files and there were academic transcript of records (pdf), CV (PDF), certificate confirming that you have passed your Bachelor's degree only Master's students (pdf), Certificate of enrolment/proof that you are still enrolled at your home university while on exchange in Reutlingen (pdf), Passport sized picture for student ID

card (preferably 300x400 pixels; your head should be completely visible).Then,I registered online and prepared things actively.

On June 6th,the teacher at RIO advised me that I have registered,who send me the letter of acceptance,and told me that I was going to receive a DAAD STIBET Matching Funds scholarship of 1.300€ which will help me to cover my accommodation.

In the following two months,I began to apply for a visa,opening a Deutsche Bank card,and AOK insurance.After twists and turns,I had completed finally.

Studying in your host country

On September 19th,I finally arrived in Germany and moved into a double room shared with my classmate.We were very fortunate to have a room arranged by RIO and the room fee was paid by the scholarship.

In the introductory week,I attended the intensive German language and culture course and got acquainted to new environment,and there were two important things to pay the semester fee of €87.80 and handed in proof of health insurance.I chose a few professional courses during this period.

I have been studying here almost three months,and I found the classes are quite different here and China.Before class,the professor would put the notes on the Internet in advance for student to preview.In the class,the professor is very humorous to make the atmosphere of class very relaxed,and most of the students want to participate in the class,and student can ask questions whenever they have questions.My German teacher who named Gesine is my favorite teacher in Reutlingen University.When she teaches us new knowledge,she asks every student to speak in class and corrects us again and again patiently and encourages us constantly.

What surprised me is the teacher in addition to teach students knowledge, but also organized leisure time activities. For example, in the first month I just came, the teacher in RIO organized exchange students to climb mountain and ask a tourist guide to introduce for us. As the Oktoberfest was approaching, the teacher in RIO sold tickets in campus, and on the day of the Oktoberfest, they took tickets at the venue and had a carnival with us. This phenomenon will not happen in China.

There is an interesting thing that I have a language partner for English/Chinese. It's a good way to communicate with each other constantly to improve our language skills and to know different country's culture.

Staying in your host country

When I got into Germany and just got off the plane, everything in sight was quite different from that in China. It was a clean and simple city with few cars and not many people.

As time passed, I was slowly familiar with the life here and I found a lot of good things here. The cashier at the supermarket always smiles and says "hello" when she meets the customer, saying "Danke" and "tschüss" when leaving. The driver on the road let people go first when he looks a man want to cross the road. Here's a detailed garbage classification which let me know the importance of environmental protection. When I went to visit Audi industry, I amazed at how modern it is here. It's no wonder that a world-class car will be produced in Germany.

Germans are very friendly. After I came to Germany, I was in trouble several times and I asked my neighbor, leader in our dorm, my language partner, and my Students4Students for help. They are very enthusiastic and patient, to help me until problems were solved.

Practical tips for future scholarship holders

I have a few fair suggestions for students who are coming to Reutlingen University. If you like to travel, you can go to Neuschwanstein, Lake of the King, or Tübingen next to Reutlingen; if you like shopping, you can go to Outlets Metzingen taking six minutes from Reutlingen by train. If you want to make friends, you can participate in all kinds of activities, such as Oktoberfest, Thanksgiving's dinner, climbing mountain and you can find more information from Facebook.

Personal conclusion

In the three months, as an exchange student, I learned a lot better than I expected. Not only I broaden my vision, but also the experience makes myself more brave and independent.

During this time, all I have spent 4,000€, including registration fee, daily expenses, traveling fee to three countries, cost of buying gifts for my family and my friends. I didn't pay any extra fee, and there is a scholarship to pay for accommodation, so I didn't spend a lot of money. I am very grateful to DAAD for providing me a scholarship.

In my opinion, this is an invaluable opportunity being able to study abroad for young people. We can chat with students from different countries to know different customs and cultures and make us more tolerant. There are many excellent teachers and students here. Only when we have personal contact can we stimulate more curiosity and make us be better men.

I believe that it will be one of the most memorable experiences in my life.