

Final Report on your Study Exchange at the University of Lucerne

Please write the report (max. 2 pages) in German or English and in complete sentences (no keywords).

Mobility Program	SEMP (Erasmus inside Europe)
Home university	Gent, Belgium
Semester	Spring term 2016
Field of study	Social and Communication Sciences, Master
Name and E-Mail (optional)	Margo Desmedt - margodesmedt@hotmail.com

<p>General impression Please describe your stay in 4-5 sentences</p>	<p>In general, I found this exchange semester at the University of Lucerne very interesting. Although the university offers a communication sciences study program, the focus lies on sociology. I learned other aspects of another vision on communication sciences, namely a sociological vision. I would recommend this university for students who want to improve their German language skills as most courses are in German. Of course, Switzerland has a very beautiful nature and especially Lucerne is a charming city.</p>
<p>Entry/ arrival in Switzerland Immigration formalities, visa</p>	<p>As an exchange student you have to register in the city office of Lucerne. You have to bring all documents that might be useful inclusive a photo. They didn't tell me that a few weeks later I would receive a request to pay another 70CHF for my pass. Also for the health insurance, I found it a little complicated as nobody of the city office told me to go there and they sent me a letter and called me two times.</p> <p>Maybe it's an idea to implement a visit to the city office in the afternoon program of the German Course during the first week so that all students can register there.</p>
<p>Searching for rooms/ accommodation Experiences and useful addresses</p>	<p>I lived in Student Mentor Foundation in Steinhofstrasse 15, as the university recommended me. The monthly rent for mobility students is 660 CHF.</p>
<p>Public transportation Train, bus, accessibility of university buildings</p>	<p>I found there was a good public transport network. With a 'Halb-Tax' card you can save a lot of money if you do enough trips during the semester. I came by foot (20 min.) or by bike (7 min.) to the university, but most of the time it was not easy to find a place to park my bike.</p>
<p>Prearrangements Registration for courses, language tests, academic records</p>	<p>The registration for the courses did not go very easily as my home university already in April 2015 asked for the final learning agreement and only in December 2015 the planned courses for 2016 were released by the University of Lucerne.</p>
<p>Information on the university Location, size, infrastructure</p>	<p>The university of Lucerne has a very modern building with good infrastructure. The library has several good places to study, but it can be very busy and full during the exam period.</p>
<p>German course at the university "German Short Course" visited? Content of course, use?</p>	<p>I visited the German Short Course before the start of the semester. For me, this was a very good Course to repeat things I forgot as I was in the advanced group. We were a very small group and we sometimes could split up to do some communication exercises with the teacher assistants.</p>
<p>Studying at the university Content of lectures, credits, assessments</p>	<p>The focus of most courses lies on sociologic themes and as I hadn't any knowledge about sociology was it sometimes difficult to understand the basic principles.</p>
<p>Assistance at the university Mobility Coordinator, International</p>	<p>The International Relations Office and the Mobility Coordinator were very helpful when I had a question or a problem.</p>

<p>Relations Office, student advisors, mentors, contact with other students</p>	<p>The mentoring program was a good idea to get in contact with Swiss students, but maybe an even better idea would have been to assign several mentors to specific incoming students. Then they could play a role of a 'buddy' and then the incoming students have one specific person to contact if they have questions. At the University of Gent this is the case and I was pleased to be a buddy for two incoming students last semester at my university.</p>
<p>Budgeting Living costs, study material, money transfer</p>	<p>The living costs in Switzerland are very high. Although mobility students get a scholarship, this does not cover all costs. I opened a bank account in Switzerland to pay the rent for the student room, which was easier to transfer the payment than from my bank account in my home country. The study material, namely all scientific and academic articles were published on OLAT (the online platform of the university). Some professors did post the articles very last-minute.</p>
<p>Living/ leisure Meeting places, sports, culture</p>	<p>The offer of university sports is very broad. I tried out the Zumba, Yoga and Stand-Up Paddling. I like the fact that you can join most sports for free. Of course the KKL-building is a place you have to see when you are in Lucerne. Therefore, the guided tour organized by the university was very interesting, but it's also interesting to buy a last-minute ticket for students (ca. 10CHF) to attend a concert. A very big disadvantage I found was, that there is no common room in the student accommodation. You barely have contact with other students in the building others than your roommates. Otherwise, there are quiet a lot of bars in the center of Lucerne, but they are expensive.</p>
<p>Comparison What is better/ worse at the University of Lucerne as compared to your home university?</p>	<p>The University of Lucerne is a relatively small university so all courses are in small groups of 20 – 30 students. Especially the seminars I found interesting to discuss and elaborate on different themes with other students. There were some courses which had no additional support in the form of a Power-Point or a hand-out. Due to this lack, it was hard for me to keep paying attention and to take notes in German. I also found the content of the courses very scientific due to the academic articles we had to read and discuss. No really practical examples were given in the class discussion.</p>
<p>Reasons Why did you choose to complete an exchange semester at the University of Lucerne?</p>	<p>Mainly to improve my German language skills, I choose the University of Lucerne for my exchange semester.</p>
<p>Duration Looking back, was the duration of your stay here:</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> too short <input type="checkbox"/> too long <input type="checkbox"/> just right</p>