

Final Report on Study Exchange at the University of Lucerne

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

Mobility program	PARTNERSHIP
Home university	Singapore Management University
Field of study	Law
Semester	Spring term 2013
Name und E-Mail (optional)	

General impression Please describe your stay in 4-5 sentences	My stay was enjoyable because it was a good time for me to find out more about myself and my interests. I even wanted to extend my studies here, because the university and facilities are so conducive for study.
Entry/ arrival in Switzerland Immigration formalities, visa	My Singaporean passport made it quite convenient for me, but I did not know about the various stages of migration and community office registration. I think it will be good to let incoming students know there are such processes and costs before we come.
Searching for rooms/ accommodation Experiences and useful addresses	I was told to get my room at Steinhofstrasse, I was not told about Emmenbrucke. Steinhofstrasse was good because I did not need to spend on public transport, but sometimes, walking for half an hour felt too much. If given the information and choice, I might have chosen emmenbrucke.
Public transportation Train, bus, accessibility of university buildings	I walked to the university so to reduce my transport costs. I only paid for the half fare, and I did not get a bus card. On hindsight, that might have been useful, but only if there is a half year validity perhaps.
Prearrangements Registration for courses, language tests, academic records	It is quite convenient to arrange for courses etc. because everything is in English for exchange students. However, because of how uncertain the schedule is right up to just before school starts, it made it very difficult on my home university side, which required me to plan my courses in advance. Without the spring schedule, it was uncertain and scary because I didn't know if I could clear the modules I had to. However, if there is no choice, then perhaps Unilu can assure our home university administration, via a generic letter, that our modules can be eventually mapped over.
Information on university Location, size, infrastructure	It is small and cosy, a nice change from big universities.
Studying at the university Content of lectures, credits, assessments	Content was good for me because I am genuinely interested in human rights and international law. I know that some students were less enthusiastic about those courses. It was quite well-paced, however, there was really a big gap between the last class and exams. Also, some classes were cancelled or shortened abruptly during that day itself, it was quite unexpected.
Assistance at the university Student advisors, Mobility Office, mentors, contact with other students	The mobility office is very helpful, thank you. However, there were really quite a few visits to make at the beginning, especially regarding insurance etc, and the office has very limited opening hours. Maybe an email can be sent out with these details before incoming students reach Lucerne.

<p>Budgeting Living costs, study material, money transfer</p>	<p>Some readers were costly and not well-used because there was too much syllabus and too little time (either due to cancellation or shortened classes, or simply too much readings in the first place). The books were rather costly too. Hopefully, professors can tune and adjust the syllabus after some experience, so that we do not have to waste too much money on what we do not use.</p> <p>Housing at steinhofstrasse is also a problem because it seems that there can be penalties quite conveniently. The deposit of 800 francs is a lot indeed, and although I understand that it is important for students to ensure cleanliness before leaving the hostel, I know of people who were charged 250 francs to clean up some messes that did not seem so expensive. I was also almost charged for changing my room due to emergency reasons, and I really wonder if all this is imputed into the contract.</p> <p>The contract has been very strict and some friends who had to leave in May were made to forfeit the payment for June. I think that is very unfair, even if the contract had stipulated so. Further, those students had no choice but to choose Steinhofstrasse because they were either not informed about emmenbrucke, or it was too difficult to negotiate for rent of private accommodation in German language. I think there should be more clarity instead of arbitrary charging at Steinhofstrasse, and the rental agreement should be fairer such that students who have no choice but to leave Luzern at the end of May, are not forced to pay 550 francs for the month of June. That is quite unreasonable, and if I were made to do so, I would have absolutely disagreed.</p>
<p>Living/ leisure Meeting places, sports, culture</p>	<p>Luzern is beautiful. The Hochschule sports programme was also amazing. I was very happy and impressed.</p>
<p>Comparison What is better/ worse at the University of Lucerne compared to your home university?</p>	<p>I think Unilu runs on a more adhoc basis, i.e. schedules are out later which makes planning of personal schedules very difficult. Informing us of class changes or cancellations or shortened classes, or sending out the exam schedules earlier, would be a very important improvement. Otherwise, Unilu is really very conducive.</p>