

# SEMESTER ABROAD

## *PERSONAL REPORT*

Winter Semester 2017-2018

Field of study: Business Administration-International Business.

Host University: DHBW Stuttgart

Home University: Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila (Mexico)

Semester: 7th

Period of time: September-January

By

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Last year was full of new experiences and emotions that made me think different and fill with the best memories and learnings. The beginning of my journey started some months before arriving to Stuttgart, I was searching for an option to study one semester in a foreign country and Germany seemed a very attractive choice.

My home university provided me with information about the requirements and they put me in contact with the staff of the DHBW campus Stuttgart, that was really helpful to answer all my questions and continue with my preparation to the exchange.

The process was quite long, since I had to find some courses that were similar in both Universities and arrange the student visa, that required go to the Embassy in Mexico City and wait several months until it arrived. In general, was easy and did not have too much trouble thanks to the assistance of both Universities, just it need to be patience.

The first week in Stuttgart was unforgettable, the University welcomed us with some activities and assigned us a German student that help us to settle and pick up from the airport. My Buddy was really kind and friendly and not just helped me when I arrived, but was one of the first persons that I knew in Germany and care of me.

That week we had some dinners, fun visits to know the city and to know people for all over the world. At the beginning was all new for me, I was delighted by the city and trying to figure out how to survive living alone in a different country. I think that at my arrived, the things were easier than I expected, the University help us to open a bank account, the transport card, the registration and insurance, so I did not have too much struggle with that.

Then I had one Intensive German course, since before of arriving I took some courses and I wanted to improve my German. The lecturer was very funny and provided us with a lot of information of Germany and the culture, making the lectures enjoyable and practical.

The first courses that I took from the university was Intercultural Training Germany and Intercultural Negotiation training with the same lecturer. In there we had the chance of knew each other more, because in the lectures were a lot of activities and interesting discussions in which we realize the differences in cultures. These courses help me to be more open with the people, and to forget about fear of speaking one

language that is not my mother tongue, there I improved my communication and learned a lot from other countries.

Then I began with some courses with the regular program, like Finance and Investment and International Marketing. There was a little bit difficult for me at the beginning, because I am study a different degree in my home country (Chemical Engineering) and the terms of business were new to me. Anyway, I learned a lot, the lecturers were really kind and patients with us, they prepare the lectures with a lot of effort and that was one of the things that I liked so much. My classmates were the majority Germans in these two courses, but they were very friendly and included us in the activities.

At this point I was almost adapted to the city, I made some good friends and start to travel to places not so far away. Stuttgart is really a very centric place, where one weekend you can go to other country in a few hours, so I tried to visit several places and was a very unique experience, the landscapes got me amazed, the people, the food, the language, the history, all was new for me. Although I was having a very good time, the one thing I had more struggle with, was missing my country and family. Staying so far away change my mind a lot, and made me realize the importance of what I have. The people here helped so much, they became like my family and were persons that I am going to miss a lot and I am grateful for all the memories shared.

While the courses took place, the university also provided us with many activities, like more visits to museums and meetings with the international students, in order to make our time in Stuttgart more enjoyable.

I really recommend taking the experience of a semester abroad; it helps you to learn many things, to see things different and getting in love with the world. Stuttgart specially is a very good option to live, from the accessibility, like the public transportation that is very useful and easy to work with, to the festivals of the city like the Cannstatter Wasen, the beautiful Christmas market that make the pleasant stay. The university was a very good option for the courses I took; I think they are very prepared with a lot of dynamic activities and interesting lectures.

The system is peculiar, like having the lectures in a few weeks, rather than in all the semester, and just one examination, but it is easy to adapt, and the examinations are in accordance with what you learned, in other words, they give you all the necessary tools.

In the end, this experience gave a lot good thing; I had knew wonderful places, saw beautiful things, and heard many stories that in general made a little change in me. One of the things that I am more surprised about, is know people from a total different place with different culture and language, and understand that they are the same as me, and they are not as different as what we think.

As an advice for the new international students, do not worry about your stay here, there are people that is going to help you. The city and the University is a good choice that will make your residence more comfortable. Even if you do not know German, there is a lot of people that speak English, so try to learn as much as possible to take advantage of the opportunity but if is not possible for you, then do not worry, you still would be fine. Lastly and the most important, when you were here, never lose the opportunity of knowing new things, it may surprise you what you will discover.

