

Exchange Report 2022

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Introduction

For my 6th semester i decided to go on exchange in Norway at Kristiania University College. The reason for this was that I have long wanted to go to Norway to study. I have plans to live there one day and i thought it would be a great opportunity to check out the student environment and create some contacts. I also love the norwegian nature and I am a big fan of hiking and skiing.

Another reason was the opportunity to study Art Direction. I think it was a perfect way to incorporate a more artistic perspective into my studies. I Have been in Norway several times, sometimes for months at a time and the first thing i knew i could expect was that everything would be incredibly expensive. The Erasmus scholarship, will not be of much help if you want to have a social life here. So if you wish to go to Norway you either need to save up, or have a job while studying.

My next expectation was that it might be hard to make friends with the norwegians. Dont get me wrong, norwegians are absolutely some of the nicest people you'll meet, but they are (as us danes) a bit hard to get close too. If you can speak a scandinavian language, this will make the process of making friends considerably easier.

Experiences at the host university

I studied Art Direction at the host university. This included the following courses:

- Project Lab
- Editorial Design
- Communication design

Before I dive into the subjects I have to say that this school was all about creative freedom with very little restraint, which is something i have been longing for, for a while. Eventhough I study Digital Concept Development, I have every intention of combining the business side, with my artistic abilities and I firmly believe that it is possible to both be a UX'er and also have a foot in the world of graphic design and illustration. This Exchange will allow that for you.

Project lab was basically about whatever you wanted it to be about. We had to create a concept and then make a bit of brand design around the concept or product whereafter we could choose to physically create the product or to simply create enough visual representations and prototypes to present to the teachers. At this point I was still thinking like a Conceptdeveloper and I dived straight into user research, however it became clear to me after the first supervision, the teachers were only interested in the visual outcomes. I created a concept around sustainable micro gyms. The teachers were nice but honestly the learning outcome was close to zero.

In editorial design we had to re-design a magazine. Our group got "hunting and fishing" and we were supervised by two freelance editors who had a lot of experience in the editorial world. I am not a huge fan of creating magazines, since i don't like rules and fonts and editorial design is nothing but rules. Still i had a lot of fun with it and i actually liked the final product. My knowledge about fonts were refreshed which was nice and I learned a lot about how to set a magazine up properly and how important UX is in that regard.

In editorial design we also had to do a project called Fashion - Eye candy which was a huge very ambitious assignment. We had to create a concept for a norwegian brand and work with a professional photographer and model to make it come to life. I worked with the brand "FLESH" and an amazing photographer called Trine Hisdal. I also found a perfect model. I will warn you, this project has a budget of 0 kr. which means you have to reach out as a poor student asking for help. Luckily most people said yes immediatly. I also had to book a studio which was the most obnoxious part. The whole project was incredibly stressful but it was deifinetly the project with the most learning outcome and I love what i created.

I got some serious skills in time management and planning, plus how to approach proffessionals and how to put together a photoshoot.

The last course was communication design. This was by far the most abstract course. The project was to create something valuable from materials which had lost value. It was more or less an abstract art project. We were not allowed to enter idea process until we had created the product. It was actually the opposite of what we normally do in Concept Development where a lot of the process is based around idea generation. It was like doodleing somehting completely random and then give it a context and a meaning afterwards.

Course Descriptions:

[Project Lab](#)

[Editorial Communication](#)

[Communication Design](#)

Social and cultural experiences

Kristiania did very little to welcome us. We had a brief introduction online due to covid and since heard nothing from the exchange department. Later when Norway opened up, there was no follow up or social arrangements. We and the buddies were responsible for any interaction which we managed. However I was the only exchange student in my class, so that was a bit rough at times. Luckily I speak the language which made it a lot easier to communicate with my fellow students. Norwegians can be very hard to get close to, this is very common in nordic cultures, so I suggest trying to find groups on facebook and whatsapp for international and exchange students.

I personally am not very interested in Oslo city, but the surrounding nature. You dont have to travel far to get into vast forests with lots of beautiful lakes and waterfalls. Being in Oslo is also a great opportunity to travel around Norway. I recommend going to Stavanger, Lofoten, Tromsø and Bergen to mention a few. However one thing which is almost certain for traveling in Norway: There is always something glorious to look at.

Practicall experiences

For public trandport i suggest downloading the app "ruter" and getting the monthly student card. its around 450NOK and lasts for 30 days. Very cheap for Norwegian standards. As for where to live you'll have to apply with SiO. Go to their website, they have lots of accommadations but rememeber to apply in good time! When traveling Norway i suggest going with plane or by train. Train is more expensive but extremely beautiful and its worth the money. The trip from Bergen to Stavanger is supposed to be one of the

Conclusion

Oveall apart from quite a few HR problems plus the school being a bit chaotic, I really enjoyed my stay in Norway. I got to skii, hike and study creative courses which I dont have at KEA. I got to meet a lot of new people and learned a bit more about myself. I love Norway because of the nature mostly and if youre a nature lover too, you should go.