

FEB 2022 - JUN 2022

Exchange Report

UNIVERSITAT RAMON LLULL LA SALLE



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Period of study: 3/2-2022 to 11/6-2022

Introduction

Since the first time I heard about studying abroad, I knew that it was something I would like to do for myself. Therefore, it has been a goal of mine to be able to do this through my studies at KEA. I am currently studying the Top Up Digital Concept Development at KEA and this report will look into my 6th semester studying abroad at La Salle in Barcelona, Spain. I had many expectations for my semester of studying abroad and I was very focused on having the “real” study abroad experience. What I realized throughout my exchange semester is that there is no ‘real’ or ‘right’ way for your semester studying abroad. I found that the most important thing to do for me was doing what I wanted to do and not let expectations control my choices in order to have the exchange experience I thought in the beginning was the right way to study abroad. If you end up studying abroad I hope that this is some advice that you can use if you would end up feeling the same. So the point is; there is no right or wrong way to do your semester abroad.



Where and when did you study abroad?

I studied abroad at Universitat Ramon Llull La Salle Barcelona. My exchange period was from february till june exact dates were 3/2-2022 - 11/6-2022. We had the orientation day on the 3rd of february and then classes started on the 7th of february.

What KEA program did you attend at the time?

I am studying Digital Concept Development.

What classes did you take during your semester abroad? Please briefly explain what each class was about.

AD011 Foreign Language II - Spanish 5ECTS

Professor: Marta Peso

I liked the Spanish classes. It was nice to get some things repeated since I had Spanish in high school, but I still learned a lot of new vocabulary. I am not fluent after one semester of Spanish but if you put in the effort you could be able to get around easily in restaurants or asking for something in the supermarkets/stores ect. The midterms and exams were quite easy, nothing to be afraid of. For our written exam we had an hour to complete a paper of different questions, write a longer paragraph, and a listening exercise. For the oral exam we had to do a dialogue in pairs where we were buying some different clothing items and the final oral exam we had to present 4 minutes about describing a person. Of course the exam can be different in the future or for the fall semester but it's an overview of how the exams were when I studied there. Also just to mention sometimes there would be homework but not so often.

AD100 Digital Marketing Strategies 5ECTS

Professor: Lluís Campderrós Reyes

I can highly recommend this class. Lluís is a great professor and he has a lot of knowledge. If you come from a Multimedia designer background which I have, this class won't offer too many new things you probably don't know already. If you're studying Multimedia design then it's a very relevant class that is very useful. The topics for this subject were organic social media, email marketing, google ads/digital advertisement, SEO, Ecommerce and Influencer marketing. The midterm and the final exams were all presentations in groups and for the final exam we had to make a webshop through wordpress. We never had day to day homework but we had to do the work for the three presentations we had throughout the semester.

AD102 Brand Management 5ECTS

Professor: Patricia López

The first half of the semester it was mainly the professor Patricia who talked a lot about theory in the subject and the second half we did a brand simulator game, that was a lot of fun because our group was very dedicated to get the best position in the class. Midterm and final exam was presentations about how to launch an international brand in the Spanish market. We had a few assignments and study cases throughout the semester.



AD104 Marketing Services in the Digital Era 5ECTS

Professor: Dawn Hiscock

Probably one of my favorite classes because of the professor. Dawn is a super nice lady and very passionate about the subject. She makes the classes very interesting. The class focuses mainly on services in terms of marketing. I learned a few new things in this subject that I didn't know already from KEA. Before the midterm we had assignments to hand in every week. Except for the first deliverable we could make the rest of the assignments in pairs. For our final project we worked with the company Mediamarkt where we had to make a campaign for a CSR action that they could do to become a love brand instead of a company being focused on cheap prices. We also went on two trips during the classes. First place we visited was the Banksy Exhibition at the Disseny Hub Barcelona and a park with a labyrinth called Parc del Laberint d'Horta. The visits were a part of two different assignments.

AD204 Emerging Technologies and Smart Cities 5ECTS

Professor: Didier Grimaldi

I liked the course but I don't know how much I would recommend it. The class was mostly focused on giving information about emerging technologies and technologies to build smart cities. We had in total three presentations one focused on a chosen emerging technology where we had to explain about the technology, how and where it's used ect. Another presentation we had was about a smart city where we had to present about what made the chosen city a smart city, how to improve ect. And lastly our final presentation we had to choose a problem for example my group had about quality of life for blind people in cities. We had to make interviews with relevant people and organizations in the field. We visited multiple blind associations and organizations in Barcelona and had online meetings as well.

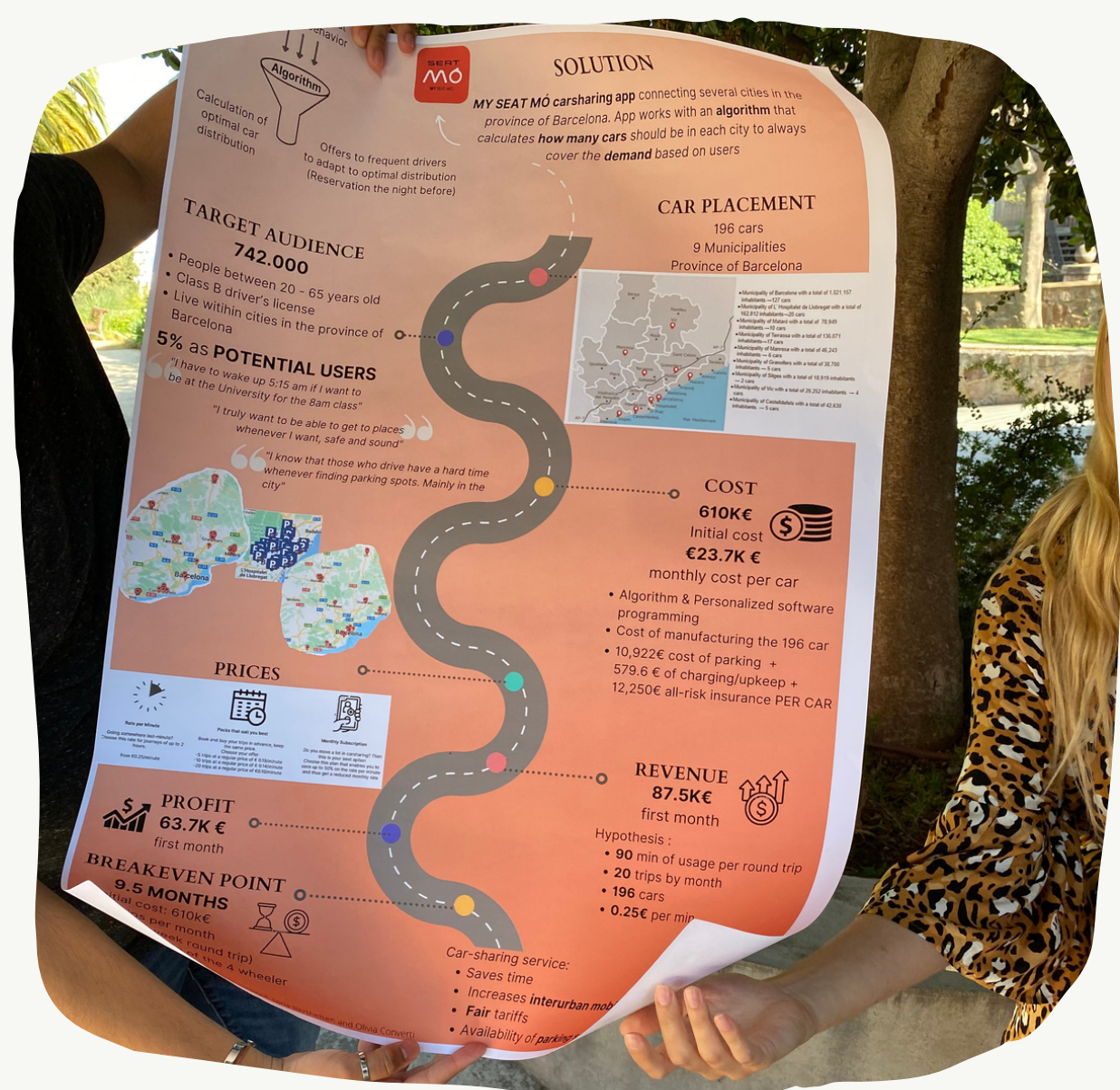
AD041 New Product and Service Development 3ECTS

Professor: Mapi Pilar

This class is relevant for Multimedia design and for Digital Concept Development. The course is basically a big project where we use design thinking methods to develop our solutions. I felt very confident in this course since it's something I knew already from KEA. I learned some new things and also got another perspective on models or analysis I knew from KEA which was very interesting. In general I like the course, but unfortunately I think the structure of the course was not the best. The thing that didn't really work with this course is that it's kind of like a project on KEA, but it's spread out through the whole semester. We work in groups while the group members have different schedules and other projects at the same time, so it's hard to really get deep into the project and focus. It was a little frustrating because it felt a little chaotic when you know another way to do it. Other than that I think it was a good course. We made a project with SEAT and for the midterm and final exam we had to present in front of representatives from SEAT.



Banksy exhibition with Marketing Services in the Digital Era course



New Product Development poster for SEAT presentation

Academic Experience

How helpful was the receiving school in the process of choosing classes and settling you in?

Yes, they sent us a form to fill out and to choose our classes. We had to make our own schedule fit with all the courses we wanted to do. I had classes on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. We had one or two weeks to change to another course if we didn't like the course we had chosen. I changed one course and it was very easy to do.

What classes/study experiences did you find the most rewarding? Why?

The study experience I found most rewarding was the MediaMarkt project I did for the Marketing Services in the Digital Era. My group made it into the final 6 presentations to present in front of MediaMarkt. We had put in a lot of effort into the project and we made an excellent presentation for the MediaMarkt representatives.

What classes/study experiences did you find least relevant or least valuable to you? Why?

The class that I disliked the most was the one that I changed to another course. It was R&D&I Management and my experience wasn't very great. It was not that relevant or interesting to me and I was the only exchange student in the class which meant that the Spanish students would keep speaking Spanish to each other and when we were in groups to work on some tasks in class. My experience with the Spanish students wasn't that great and they seem to have no interest in the international students. This class was mandatory for the Spanish students and most of my other classes were electives so I think that's why this was the class with the most local students out of the other courses I did.

What classes would you advise other KEA students going to the receiving school to choose or not to choose?

I would definitely advise other students to choose Digital Marketing Strategies and Marketing Services in the Digital Era. I think they are relevant and the professors are both very nice. New Product Development was a relevant class but unfortunately I don't think the professor managed the class that well and it's difficult to dig deep into the project because you will most likely have four other projects at the same time with four other groups. I found that it was a little frustrating compared to how we do projects at KEA where we have two weeks for one project and are able to focus and learn.



Sitges Carnival



Studying in the cafeteria



Casa Batlló

Cultural/Personal Experience

What challenges did you experience culturally while being abroad?

I think I adapted to my new situation quite well by being openminded. Even with for example dinner times instead of having a northern european dinner around 6pm I now don't think about dinner until 8pm. I do want to mention here that I think the spanish culture in terms of meeting at a bar at a little plaza is a vibe you don't get in the same way in Copenhagen in my opinion.

a. How helpful was the receiving school in this process?

The school had a big event called La Salle fest where there were a lot of activities and sports going on. In the afternoon during that week there was a DJ, sangria and beer so it was a very eventful week.

What was the best cultural/personal experience during your studies abroad?

The best cultural experience I had was that I meet people from so many countries all in one place; Italy, Netherlands, Germany, Taiwan, Russia, Romania, Argentina, Mexico, Colombia ect. Especially in the beginning we wanted to learn about each other's culture so we had different dinner nights at each other's places where we had a Russian dinner, Italian dinner, Netherlands dinner/party ect. It was a great experience to learn more cultural things about each country.

What advice would you give other KEA students going to study abroad at the receiving school

Advise regarding classes I would say choose the electives over the mandatory classes because at least during my time that's what most international students did and the local students are not very 'motivated' to do much, so my best groups were with the other international students.



La Salle Fest Week



Ibiza trip with friends



Gothic Quarter



BEST pizza in Barcelona and Ibiza
Pizzeria Napolitana Pumarola

Practical Experience

How was the application process?

The application process was long. I think I started the application in August and by October/November I knew that I got into the school. The process is probably going to be a few months anywhere you go.

a. What did KEA help you with?

KEA helped me with some information about the different schools. Information about when to expect things from the receiving school for example when we would receive the course selection and so on. Generally always very helpful.

b. What help did you receive from your school abroad?

They helped me change a class in the first week of the semester and were also always helpful if I had any questions then you could always send them an email and they would answer within 48 hours.

Did you have any practical difficulties settling down at your destination?

Personally I didn't have any difficulties settling down. I made a great group of friends at the university which was the main group of people I spend time with. I know some people who met other people from different universities in Barcelona who were also doing their Erasmus though the different Erasmus events.

a. How helpful was the receiving school in this process?

We had the orientation on a Thursday and then we had the weekend before classes started to start getting to know all the people that we had been introduced to. On the orientation day La Salle said that we should make a whatsapp group with all the exchange students, so they asked who wanted to create the chat and then everyone could join. At the orientation I met a group of people and we made a separate chat. We started as four people and at the end we were maybe 15 people in the group who would do things together. Not always everyone but you could choose yourself or not.

Where did you live?

I lived in an apartment in the neighbourhood of Gracia and I had about 25-28 mins walking to school. I would recommend staying close to the school since some classes start at 8am and if you live far away it can take some time to get to the university. I also liked to be able to walk to school because sometimes I would have 3-4 hours break between my classes. Therefore, I could go home sometimes and eat lunch if that's what I wanted to do.

a. Was it difficult to find accommodation?

For me no, but the school provides some recommendations for student housing as well and you can also live on campus.

b. Was it expensive?

My accommodation wasn't expensive. I paid 900 for an apartment that I shared with another person so it was 450€ pr. person excluding utilities. I know other students I studied with who paid 1100 euro for a studio or 900 euro for a room which is very expensive in my opinion.

What kind of expenses did you have in general?

Rent, food, restaurants, experiences, parties and trips.

a. Did you spend more or less money than you budgeted with?

No, I spent around the amount that I had budgeted or a little bit less.

Conclusion

As I mentioned in the introduction, I learned throughout the semester that there's no right or wrong way to do your study abroad. What is the most important is that you do what you want to do and enjoy the journey! I think the semester went by very fast, so remember to enjoy every moment of it. I would definitely recommend Barcelona as your study abroad city since it has endless opportunities. For me it's a city that has it all; mountains, beach, city, nice small beach towns close by and the list goes on. What I love the most about the spanish culture is that you meet up with friends at a bar outside, have a few drinks and some tapas. The city is so lively and when you walk around the small plazas it has a very nice vibe. All in all I really enjoyed my study abroad in Barcelona and at La Salle and I would recommend anyone who wants to study abroad to take the jump and do it because you will not regret doing it!



Barceloneta



View from the bunkers



Amazing pasta from Ostaia Cucina Italiana