

ERASMUS+ Cote D'Azur University WS 2023

In this paper, I will write an overview about my Erasmus + experience in Cote D'Azur university (UCA) in Nice, France winter semester 2023. All aspects will be discussed with more focus on the preparation period, the accommodation, the arrival, the host university, the courses, and the events.

1. The Preparation

IBE programme is designed to spend one semester abroad while it is not mandatory, but I feel I wanted to try the semester abroad experience because also I like to travel and to integrate with different cultures. As a result, I intended to apply for UCA university while it has a high ranking, and it is in France which is different culture from my home country Egypt and from Germany too.

Mrs. Albrecht, the outgoing coordinator is one of the most cooperated employees in TU ilmenau who helped me chose the university, provided me with important documents and supported me from the first day I started my preparation. Professor Grebel gave me the chance after compared all the applicants for this chance regarding my achievements in my master, my BA certificate, and my CV, then I got the acceptance email from him to study the winter semester in UCA. After that, I started to upload my documents and follow the process and it was not hard. Also, I received an email from the host university to send my documents to them too.

2. The accommodation

I will not exaggerate to say that it was the hardest part for me. In France, they have the Crouse, it is like a foundation for accommodation for students and people who can't afford to pay high rents because rents in Nice are very expensive. When I sent an email to the host university to get a room in Campus, they send my data to the Crouse, and the Crouse took long time to respond. When they respond they asked to follow very long and complex process. It was too sensitive and stressed stage which could prevent me from taking this experience. They ask for too many things such as Visale, Guarantee, Insurance and RIB number with no explanation for what are these and how I can get them in only 7 days, or I

will not be eligible to apply for an accommodation there. After a weird period and many emails, they accepted to give me a room which was allocated in Jean Medicine residency, and I even couldn't choose which one I want to live in. There are many residencies, and they are far from each other's around all Nice.

3. The Arrival

My flight was from Berlin and just two hours to Nice. It was also not hard to find my residency which was near to the Airport but far from University and City center (30 mins by tram). Check-in with the Crouse was easy except none of the reception employees were speaking English and I don't have any French language acknowledgement. The room was 9 m² and I had to pay 250 Euro per month, and it was one of the cheapest rooms in Nice. It is very important to buy a monthly ticket for transportation there, it costs 23 Euro per month for student, and it gives access to all public transportation in Nice and Eze too.

I had to visit the international office in UCA to sign the arrival document, apply for my student card, get access to the Moodle and everything related to the university's portal. They were cooperated and they could speak English.

4. The Host University (UCA)

They have many campuses, so it was important to know which campus I will join and study my courses. All my courses for my master (International Strategic Management) were in Saint Angely Campus in Vauban station. There are also many libraries belong to the university. The campuses were around Nice, they are not in one place, and they are far from each other's.

All the emails, events ... etc were in French language which was a challenge to understand and integrate with no French language acknowledgement. The welcome session for international students was in French language which was disappointed for most of us because most of Erasmus students didn't speak French.

The lecture halls were not that good and not comfortable especially we had many courses from 3 to 8 hours per day and sometimes we had 2 courses per day, from 9 am to 12 pm and from 1 pm to 8 pm, which was so hard and long while the classes were not that comfortable and suitable for these long classes.

5. The Courses

I participated in international trade courses, operation management, sustainability, financial and Introduction to R. The most issue I liked in the courses that they are practical; we applied all the courses in practical life. However, most of the courses depended only on presentations, group work and tasks. Some courses were without any content from the side of the professor. Some professors intended to speak in French but me and Erasmus students ask them to speak in English because we don't know French and they cooperated and give the lectures in English.

The durations for some courses were not so good, we must attend only 4 lectures (6 or 7 hours for each) including the explanation, our presentations, and a written exam.

My biggest problem was that they informed me in the middle of the semester that 3 courses from my learning agreement would not be held during this semester, which means that I will lose 7 ECTS from my LA. Unfortunately, it was hard to find other English courses to enrol instead. Also, the elective courses were overlapping, so it was impossible to participate in 3 of them.

6. The events and free time

Regarding the Entertainment, Nice is very beautiful city which contains mixed culture from France, Spain, UK, and Italy. The weather is warm, but in September it was extremely hot. Even the surrounding cities such as Cannes, Menton and Antibes are unique and different, and it is easy to visit from Nice. You can take a bus (45 to 60 Mins) to any of them with 2.5 Euro per ride. Also, the train is very fast to any of these cities, but it is more expensive (5 to 9 Euro). In addition, don't miss a day trip to Monaco (40 Mins) by bus.

Most of Museums in Nice and in Cote D'Azur are free for students with the student card and some of them are with reduced prices for students too.

Erasmus students have many events together and with some organizers from the host university. Some of the game nights and events were in French but most of events outside the university scope were in English. Students meet on beach to swim, to watch the sunset or to eat together where I met people from all over the world and all of them wanted to integrate and to know each other's. They also organize official and non-official events for hiking to near cities or biking in the summer.

7. Conclusion

It was a very good experience for me and I really want to thank all who gave me and support me to take this opportunity. I worked to give a good reflection of the students of TU ilmenau and I invited good colleagues to apply for an Erasmus in TU ilmenau. I hope also that I could give you a clear overview of my experience there and to be a good ambassador for TU ilmenau which I really appreciate and feel proud that I'm a part of this university.

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