

Exchange experience report National Taiwan University, Fall Semester 2019-2020

- Study Programme

I studied at NTU during the fall semester of the school year 2019-2020. My home university is The University of Groningen, in the Netherlands, where I study a Bachelor in International and European Law. It was my first experience studying outside Europe, especially in an Asian country. Studying in Taiwan and at NTU was by far one of the best decision I have made. The quality of life offered in Taiwan and the reputation of the NTU, being the top university in Taiwan, highly contributed to the enjoyment of my semester.

- Preparation and Contact

After being selected by the RuG, the Office of International Affairs of NTU (OiA) contacted me and explained me the application procedure. Going through this procedure was relatively easy and straight forward. By mid-april, I submitted my application (several documents have to be uploaded, such as the photo of my passport, think of that ahead!), June, I received the admission package and August I was able to register for courses. The procedures are completely in English and the supervisor, Charlotte Chou, can speak good English.

- Academics

Selecting courses at NTU was the most difficult part of the exchange. I studied 8 courses (4 semester-long courses, 4 intensive courses lasting 1 week or 2). Registering for these courses was a complicated and stressful process. The Department of Law does not offer sufficient English-taught courses for all the students and the conversion of NTU credits to ECTS is quite low (1 NTU = 2,5 ECTS, a semester course is 2 NTU). I had to register for at least 8 courses, yet, I had to be lucky enough to get in enough courses. Most of the TA draw lottery to choose the students. At the end, I attended sufficient courses which I passed with good grades. I studied a wide range of interesting courses, such as Law of Torts, International Commercial Arbitration, Introduction to Taiwan's Commercial Law and AI & Robot Law.

- Campus Facilities

NTU campus is everything one could wish for: green areas, well-located in Taipei, well-equipped, clean, offering great facilities. This is really a place to study, eat and relax. The Law department building is new, and has a very nice library. Just in front of the main library is the canteen, offering various lunch and possibilities, for a very low price.

- Language

Taiwan retains the Mandarin Chinese, therefore, this is an ideal destination for those who want to study Chinese. NTU offers free Chinese courses in the evening or in the morning, 6 hours a week. I did not personally take these courses (overlap with my intensive courses), but I heard that the workload in these courses is high, be prepared! Living in Taiwan without speaking Chinese is really not a problem. Everyone speaks basic English, or if not, you can still make yourself understood! Taiwanese are one of the nicest and helpful people I know.

- Finance

Life in Taiwan is cheap. One would need 500-600€ per month, including all the expenses one student needs.

○ Housing

NTU guarantees a place in a student dorm with a short walking distance to the campus. You can apply for a single room, double room or suite with kitchen. I chose to stay in a single room at Shui Yuan dorm, which costed me NT\$7400 per month, around 220€. I did not have a kitchen, which was doable for one semester. One needs to be aware that the rules in the dorms are really strict, for instance, no visitors allowed between certain hours, man and women live in different buildings. If I had known about the rules, I would have probably chosen another accommodation option.

○ Food

Food in Taiwan is simply amazing! As I mentioned, I did not have a kitchen, it was not a problem because having food in Taiwan is really cheap, easy and quick! Night Markets and local restaurant offers food for less than 3 euros, NT\$100. NTU and the dorm is located in Gongguan, where there are many tasty restaurants and a famous night market.

○ Transportation

Transportation is relatively cheap in Taiwan. First, if you live at the dorm, you will not need to pay for transportation, the department of law being 20minutes away by walk. Secondly, you can possibly get yourself a bike if you are not keen on walking. I did not get a bike, as I personally enjoy walking, I am not aware of the price of the bikes.

Taipei has a good MRT and buses connections, it remains easy and cheap to go anywhere. With your NTU student card you can travel around Taipei and also hop on the train to go around Taiwan.

- Free time and traveling

Taiwan is a wonderful country to discover! I personally arrived two weeks earlier to travel in the four corners of Taiwan, and it was just beautiful! I believe every exchange student has enough free time to go around Taiwan and around Asia. Indeed, Taiwan is ideally located, right in the middle of East Asia (Korea, Japan) and South-East Asia (Vietnam, Malaysia or the Philippines). This will make your time in Asia even more interesting!