



University of Economics, Prague

EXCHANGE REPORT

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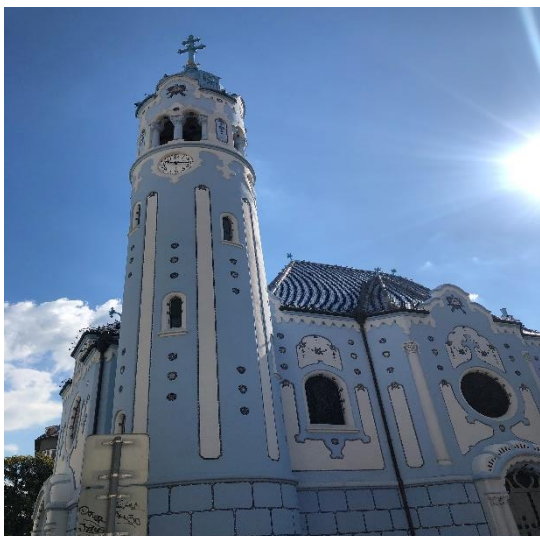
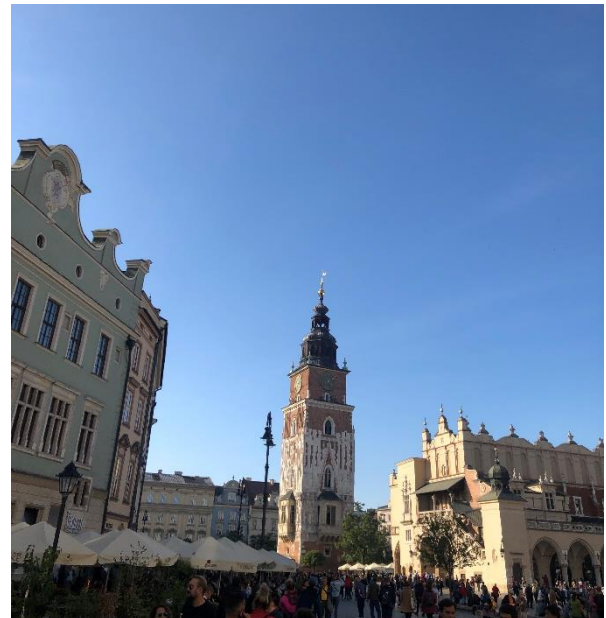
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Monthly activity log

September

I arrived at Prague on 4, September, 2019. My exchange buddy picked me up at the airport and took me to the dormitory. The first week of September was the orientation week, there were a lot of crucial information provided by the school and also ice-breaking activities which help you adapt to the Czech culture. I visited Karlovy Vary (a town in Czech famous for hot springs), Bratislava, Vienna and Krakow with other exchange students from Hong Kong.



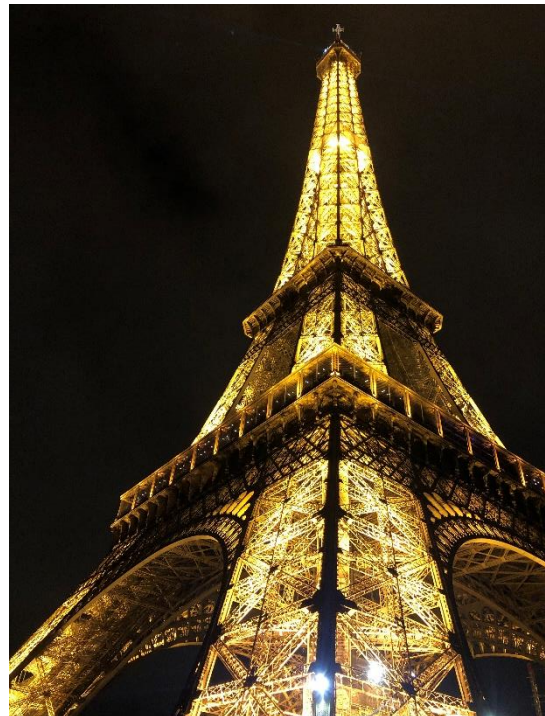
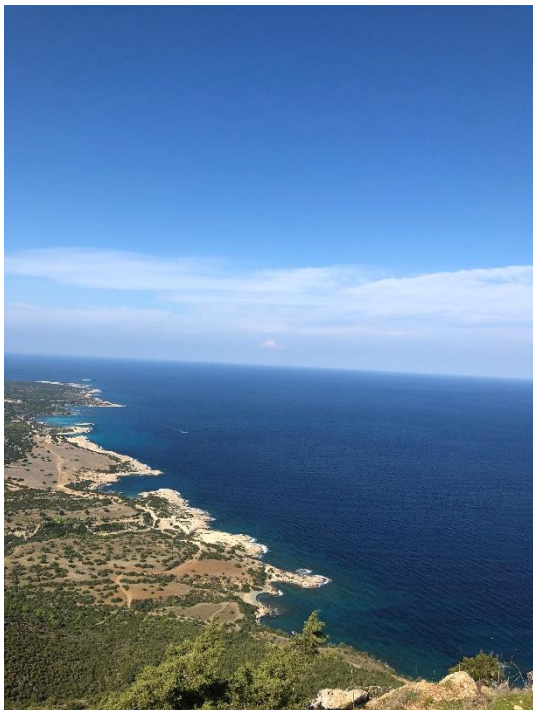
October

Since I only have classes on Tuesday and Wednesday, I went for travel almost every week during the semester because the workload from my management courses are quite light. I went to Munich to watch my favourite football team playing a match. The atmosphere in the stadium was amazing. Then I went on to see the Königssee, the view is more than stunning. I also went to Istanbul this month, cruising on the river that separates Europe and Asia was a fun experience.



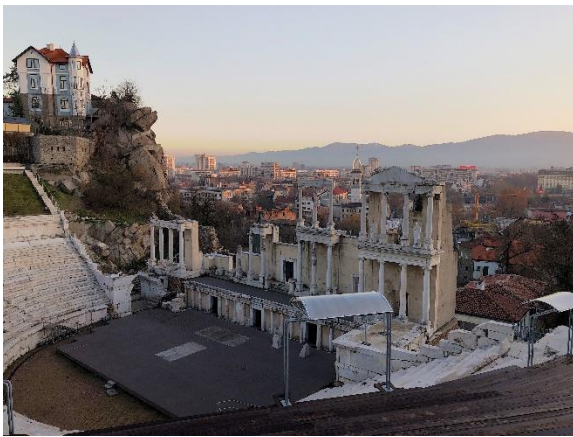
November

Without any midterms, I continue to travel around Europe. At the beginning of the month I went to Cyprus. This place is like heaven for me. The whole country is surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea, so there are stunning sea views everywhere, and there are places of Greek mythology which entice me quite a lot. I travelled to Paris and Croatia as well. The old town of Dubrovnik is the best old town I saw in Europe, it is surrounded by city walls which you can go up to have a stunning view from.



December

After a trip to Barcelona, I had to start preparing for the finals. The finals ended in the second week of December. And after the finals, I continued to travel around the Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Macedonia and Greece). I spent my Christmas in Brussels and to be honest I think the Christmas atmosphere is not as good as Prague. There are a lot of Christmas markets in Prague and Christmas trees almost everywhere.



January

Our hall offer ended on the 13th so I still have some time for travel. I travelled to Germany before going to Iceland.



General Exchange Information:

VISA Procedures:

1. As soon as you received the letter of acceptance from VSE, send an email to Czech Embassy for a letter of applying non-criminal record from Hong Kong Police Force
2. Using that letter, apply for Certificate of Non-Criminal Conviction in the HKPF's website, then you will need to go to the Police Headquarters in Wan Chai to complete the application.
3. Once the Czech Embassy receives the CNCC from the Police, you will have to schedule an appointment with the embassy. Timeslot is decided by the embassy and you cannot change it most likely, make sure you have time.
4. Make sure to check the Czech Embassy's website for a list of document to prepare before going to the appointment, a bank statement showing you have HKD 30000 balance is required.
5. The Czech Embassy will send you an email for buying insurance, then you need to buy an insurance plan which fits the requirements. Make sure you buy from a Czech company because the document have to be in Czech language.
6. Bring the insurance document and passport to collect the visa (You can authorize someone to do that for you in case you don't have time)

Orientation Activities:

The orientation week starts in early September, a week before start of the semester. There were basic a Czech lesson, ice-breaking activities and a few tours to different places in Prague and Czech Republic. The welcome package which includes sim card, ESN card can be bought during the buddy system welcome day in the orientation week, though the sim card is only usable in Czech

International services and activities:

Each exchange student to VSE is matched with a buddy, you can choose your preference of gender for your buddy in the buddy system. My buddy picked me up from the airport and brought me to exchange money in Prague. Every Tuesday is N2N party night, held at different bars and clubs each week, you can join the party and know new people there.

Accommodation:

Exchange students live in the Jarov III F dormitory, which is 25-minute tram ride from the campus. Each flat has two double rooms, toilet, shower room and kitchen. Comparing with the dormitory in other universities in Prague, I consider VSE's dormitory very good, you can get basically all you need there. Big supermarkets are also just two stops from the dormitory so it was really convenient.

Course Registration:

The course pre-registration starts in July for me. They will provide you a list of courses, pay attention that some courses are only available in Czech language. I saw courses that appeared in the HKUST course equivalency database, but end up available only in Czech, so I could only transfer 5 MGMT courses back. You provide them your preference of courses and later they will automatically enrol you into the courses. Just make sure you don't miss the pre-registration otherwise you may not be able to get into the courses you want.

Teaching and Assessment Method:

2PL392 Corporate Social Responsibility in Theory and Practice

A course with very light workload, just a presentation on the group project and some occasional short writings.

Assessment methods and criteria:

Active Participation 40%, Case Studies 30%, Project 20%, HWs 10%

2OP320 Human Resources Management in International Context

An introductory course in HRM, make sure you answer questions regularly during the lecture, just some easy homework throughout the semester, the final exam was about memorizing slides in the lecture, not many slides though.

Assessment methods and criteria:

Active Participation 45%, Final 55%

2OP326 Strategic Management and Business Model Innovation

Basics in strategic management, different analytical frameworks are taught. Answering questions during lecture is required for participation marks. There was also a group project and presentation was on the final lecture, though almost every group got full marks.

Assessment methods and criteria:

Active Participation 25%, Presentation 25%, Final 50%

3MA666 Organizational Design

A course in which the content I found challenging at first, but the expectations from the professor is not as high as I thought and most of the groups ended up getting very high marks. All assessments including the final exam were conducted in groups.

Assessment methods and criteria:

Scientific Article Seminars 5%, Research on OD Models 15%, Interview with company 20%, Project Presentation 25%, Final test 35%

3SG205 Foundations of Business Strategy

A very hard course for me. The professor taught many analytical frameworks for making business decisions, and the term paper is a group project about applying the frameworks in a chosen company. The professor was quite critical to students when it comes to the group project, many students have to rely on the final exam to get a pass, and I almost failed to be honest.

Assessment methods and criteria:

In-class activities 20%, Term paper 30%, Final 50%

Sports & Recreation Facilities:

There was a gym room in our dormitory, but it was old and lacking equipment. It also required a monthly fee to get access to. But luckily there is a football field near the dorm so I played football regularly with exchange students from other countries. The weather could be very cold in winter, though, playing football in rain and snow was a horrifying experience to me.

Finance and Banking:

Czech currency is used in Prague, so bring Euro with you and go for exchange when you are in the city centre of Prague. Credit card is widely accepted in Prague so you can go completely cashless and being able to survive. I used up my Czech currency in late November and it wasn't even a problem. In terms of price level, Prague is comparable to Hong Kong, things in supermarket are slightly cheaper than Hong Kong.

Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities:

As mentioned before, the Erasmus student club holds different kinds of activities, also party night every Tuesday which I didn't really have a chance to join. But if you like to know more international friends you can check out their activities.

Health and Safety:

Prague is generally a safe place, compared with other places in Europe. But be careful at night because there may be drunk people causing troubles occasionally.

Food:

Typical Czech dish is goulash so make sure you try it when you are in Prague. In Prague there are so many Asian restaurants and the price is quite cheap (30-80 hkd usually depending on type of cuisine) compared with other European cities. So if you want to go back to Asian food one day you are full of options.

Transportation:

Tram, metro and bus all belong to the same public transport system, so get a three-month student card once you get your student card from VSE, and depending on your duration of stay you may need another one month card, but it is very cheap. A monthly student card just cost around 40-50 hkd.

Climate:

Prague can be very cold in Winter (under zero degree sometimes). I underestimated the weather and brought too much Summer clothes which were used only in my first two weeks of stay and the Cyprus trip. Make sure you bring enough Winter clothes!!

Cautionary Measure:

You can consider getting a travel insurance in addition to the one SBM provided and the one you use to apply for visa. I didn't really get one but I heard my friends getting things stolen in other European cities so it may be useful.

Also, packing luggage for the return flight can be a pain if you buy too much souvenir, so make sure you don't pack too many unnecessary things or things that can be easily bought there.

Items to bring:

- ID card, student card, passport and softcopies of them (the visa page in the passport as well)
- Passport-sized photos
- Adapters for EU standards

Useful links and contact:

School Website	https://www.vse.cz/english/
Dormitory	https://iskam-web.vse.cz/
Travel:	
Skyscanner	www.skyscanner.net
Flixbus	www.flixbus.com
Regiojet	www.regiojet.com

Summary:

These four months was the best moment of my life. Prague is not only a beautiful city, in terms of lifestyle it is similar to Hong Kong to my surprise, so I had no difficulties adapting to life in Prague. I met a lot of amazing people in Europe, and did a lot of things I had never see myself doing. Going for exchange was a complete change of life for me, and I would like to thank UST and VSE for providing me the valuable experience.