

National Dong Hwa University inbound international student report

Name : Ivona Adamikova

Host Institution : National Dong Hwa University (NDHU)

Home Institution: Univerzita Hradec Králové (UHK)

Period of study : 13/2/2019 to 26/06/2019

Contact host : Ellen Li (issa@gms.ndhu.edu.tw)

Contact home : Monika Hebkova, (monika.hebkova@uhk.cz)

1.0 Introduction

I was given a chance to study at National Dong Hwa University in Taiwan for one whole semester as an exchange student (Summer Semester), 2019. Hence this has given me a lot of valuable knowledge, especially about the Chinese culture and Language on how the local people live their life with different people from across the world. Furthermore, I have met different friends from different continents like America, Africa and Asia in particular. This is great experience I have encountered in my life and I will never forget the memories of Taiwan. Here therefor is the brief recollection of my experiences during the time I was at the NDHU.

1.1 Arrival

I was assigned to one volunteer who assisted me in many things especially the welcoming in Taiwan and more about Dong Hwa University. She helped me from the first day I arrived at Taoyuan International airport up to NDHU Campus. Her name is Tia and thanks to her for getting me to NDHU which made my trip very easy to reach my destination.

We simply took the train straight from one of the terminals of the Taoyuan airport and then we went direct to Hualien train station then Zhixue where our campus is located.

1.2 NDHU campus

The NDHU campus is located near Hualien City specifically in Zhixue Street and is one of the biggest institutions in Taiwan. Furthermore, the University is nestled between the Coastal and Central Mountain Range. The campus is also full of vegetation especially the beautiful trees and it truly makes for a spectacular sight. One of my favorite areas of the campus would have to be the long tower on education buildings which allowed me to see the whole view of Zhixue street an part of Hualien city and It really made for a great sight.

NDHU has two types' dormitories, old and new but new dorms are quite nice. They are spacious and are equipped with all the amenities a student might need. Each dormitory is equipped with a kitchen with refrigerators for storage and also a microwave oven and a rice cooker. Naturally each dormitory also features a laundry room with enough washing machines enough for everyone.

1.3 What to pack

As exchange students there are things to consider when coming to Taiwan. Since here the weather in Taiwan is very humid and very hot, the humidity can often times reach 75-80%. Because of this I would recommend to pack lighter clothes, more suited for hot weather. I'd also recommended bringing a raincoat or an umbrella with you as it can rain quite often and sometimes the rain doesn't stop for a full week. The other thing that has to be taken into consideration is the insects that bite. Hence, I would recommend having insect repellents. The rest of the essentials can be bought here in Taiwan. And another thing is that the Institution does not provide for mattresses and pillows hence one has buy it.

1.4 Finances

The UHK has provided me with a scholarship in overall amount of 89,756NTD. This amount of finances is what I'd consider to be a sufficient for one semester of studying at the NDHU. I should also note that my accommodation has been paid for by my home university the UHK, so If one were to study at NDHU coming from a different institution I'd recommend looking up the rent and the fees associated with their they at the NDHU. The only fee I was required to pay was the deposit fee of 2,200 NTD. Also a deposit of 2000NTD is required to rent a bike which is almost Essentials for getting around the campus easily and it refundable. I had to pay for my plane ticket out of my own financial reserves to make it easier for my scholarship to last. I find that this amount of money allowed me to travel quite a bit.

Areas visited in Taiwan

During the time I was at NDHU I managed to visit some cities across Taiwan like, Hualien city, Taipei City, Tainan City, Kaohsiung City. But for several times i visited Hualien for its beautiful and inspiring night market with different traditional foods. And I also visited Taroko Gorge National Park which is near Hualien city for trailing. Furthermore I also did the river rafting, sea kayaking and whale watching in Hualien city.

1.5 Studies

During the semester I took 4 courses under the department of Tourism, Recreation and leisure studies. Most of my classes were thus more focused on languages like Mandarin Chinese practical level 1, German class, English for Business class and English communications level 2. My NDHU volunteer Tia helped me helped me navigate the course selection on my first day and made sure I got to picked classes that were the best suited for me. List below are the information about the courses I was taking;

a. Mandarin Chinese Practical level 1

This class was funny though very tough but the teacher was a nice man who always makes the class alive. The class was held by a very friendly teacher Mr. Fu, who always made sure we understand everything and helped us when we were having a hard time learning the Chinese grammar and vocabulary. This class was held in 3 hour sessions and mostly consisted of oral, written and listening exercises. There were two exams for this course, one midterm and one final exam. Both exams consisted of oral test, written test and a listening test with Chinese presentation at the end. The second part of these exams was a short oral exam. We also had to buy a textbook and a student's book for this class. Both of these have cost me around 1,100NTD. Overall I'd say this class is the most important for one's stay in Taiwan as one learns the basics of the language here, which in turn allows one to have an easier time communicating with the locals.

b. German

This class is very similar to the basic Chinese class in the way that it is also designed to teach students the basics of German grammar, vocabulary and conversation. This class was taught by a German teacher Mr. Porsche, which was the best part of the class in my opinion and it helped to motivate me to want to learn the language as best as I could. This class was also held in 3 hour sessions, but no textbook was required. Instead we had to pay only 80NTD for copied handouts which made up all of our study materials. This class covered a wide array of topics. We started with simple introductions and then made our way to German geography, cuisine and we also touched upon the German culture. The class was concluded by a oral exams from all the topics that were discussed in previous classes.

c. English for business

This class was much different from the other ones. It was mostly focus on business and marketing. It also explained some concepts found in the business world. In this class students work in teams on various projects. These projects usually consist of presentations about a certain product or a company. The final exam takes on a form a group project during which students create a commercial for a certain product or service. This movie is then shown in front of the

entire class and is then graded by the teacher. This class is all about teamwork and building a bond with your teammates. Out of all of my classes I think I enjoyed this one the most.

d. English communications Level 2

This was one of the most favorite classes i have ever had at NDHU because the teacher herself was very friendly and sincere to the students and the class was very active. Every student had a motivation to learn the communication skills. Talking to my side, I will say that my communication skills have improved a lot and am able to communicate well in English without facing much problems as earlier. The skills and knowledge that I have gained through this course will assist me to explore more in communication especially when I get to Czech. Our teachers name was Lucia Cheng.

1.6 Conclusion

In conclusion I'd just like to say that I'm extremely thankful for this experience and I would like to give my thanks to both the teams at both UHK (Univerzita Hradec Králové) and the NDHU (National Dong Hwa University) For making this whole trip possible for me and I would also like to thank UHK for the financial support that I have received. This exchange trip has given me more experiences and lots of memories. It's my wish to come back in Taiwan and do further studies if an opportunity arise.