

ERASMUS-Erfahrungsbericht

Persönliche Angaben			
Name:		Vorname:	
E-Mail-Adresse			
Gastland	Cyprus		
Gasthochschule	European University Cyprus		
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Bericht (mindestens 1 Seite)
<p>As a student of English and American Studies, it is obligatory to take part in semester abroad. This can be done through the ERASMUS program in the EU countries but also through other programs and in other countries too.</p> <p>Cyprus was actually not my first choice. I initially wanted to go somewhere in Asia, because I like the cultures there, however after some thoughts I thought going to a country in Europe would also not be a bad option since I have not seen much of Europe yet. I then chose Cyprus because I wanted to see and experience something new. Before going to Cyprus, I barely know about the country. I have even probably heard of the name Cyprus not more than five times in total in my life. All I knew about Cyprus is that it is located close to Greece. That is how little I know about Cyprus. But this “mysteries” are what made me decided to go to Cyprus. I wanted to know more about this little country in the Mediterranean Sea.</p> <p>The application procedure to the European University Cyprus (EUC) is relative easy. One just have to be nominated from TU Chemnitz and most documents needed for the application could be sent via email directly to the ERASMUS coordinator of the EUC – Mrs. Michael – who already gave an answer shortly after I got in contact with her. I find it very easy to get in contact with the ERASMUS coordinator there. Even when I had to switch my ERASMUS period from the winter to the spring semester just a couple of weeks before the semester starts, there was no problem at all and every formalities were done in less than a couple of days.</p> <p>Getting an accommodation in Cyprus, especially Nicosia, is quite easy. The EUC itself has some dormitories or apartments for students, however with around 400 euro per month, I think the price is quite high. Alternatively, students who are interested to go to Cyprus can join the ESA group in Facebook and look for any rooms, apartments or roommates there. Additionally, the Student Affairs office would also provide a list of some recommended real estate agencies that could be contacted before coming to Cyprus. Unfortunately, the accommodation and living cost in Nicosia are higher than in Germany, or at least Chemnitz. One room in a shared apartment usually range between 250-350 euro per month without the utilities bills. I was lucky to find one room that costs “only” around 275 euro per month including all the utilities. It was an old house however it was fully furnished (I even did not have to buy bed sheets since the landlady gave me some) and it has oil heating system,</p>

which is a lot cheaper than halogen heaters that are mostly used in other apartments. It is important to know that Cyprus is really cold at night time during winter. Although during the day we could have around 18 degrees, the temperature could go as low as 0 degrees Celsius during the night thus anyone who is interested to spend one or two semesters in Cyprus should not forget to also pack some warm clothes with them.

As an ERASMUS student at the EUC, I was free to choose any courses I want. The list of courses is always available 1-2 months before the semester starts and it is available in the university website. Many classes in the EUC are taught in English, especially in the English Department. Generally in Cyprus, people speak English quite well since it was once under the government of the United Kingdom. Therefore any knowledge in Greek Language is not necessarily needed and one still could get around without much problem. Most of the course I took in EUC are intended for third and fourth year students, thus the level of teaching is also quite high and students are expected to work hard. Reading materials for each week for my courses were enormous. Additionally, there are quizzes and assignments, and of course, the mid-term and final exams. I have heard from a couple of other students that such many works are not required in other study courses, however it is normal for students studying in the English department at EUC to be asked to read and write a lot during the semester. Fortunately, the exams are manageable.

The first day of the semester was quite shocking for me. Firstly, I was not used to with the 3x50 minutes of learning time for each day of the course. Secondly, I was very surprised to see how close most of the professors and the students are. Most of the professors could be called by their first names only and they seem to know their students really well. It could probably be because in the English Literature department there are not many students, nevertheless I was very impressed by their friendliness. I could not imagine a professor in Germany inviting their students for a dinner at their houses, but such things happen in Cyprus, at least at EUC. It was also not a problem to make friends with Cypriot students. Many of them are friendly, open and very helpful. Overall, the Cypriots are very laid back.

The university itself is rather small, however in my opinion it has a pretty neat system. On the registration day, our phone numbers are supposed to be registered in the university's database. This is one way of how the university would contact the students of any important information, such as cancelation of classes or even the final grades for the semester. In addition to that, I was impressed that the university usually posts the schedule of the mid-term and final exam period already in the second or third week of the semester. Because of this, it was not hard to make any planning and prepare for the exams. I had seen other students from other universities in Cyprus who got their exams schedule 3 days before the exams period. But such things do not happen in EUC. ERASMUS students in the EUC are also welcomed to join activities in the EUC. The clubs range from sport club to literature or linguistic clubs and even gamers club. The registration to these clubs can also be done through the university website.

Unfortunately, the library of the EUC is really small. There are some computers that could be used by students there but there are not many books available, especially for the English Literature. Thus it was quite challenging for me to find references for the assignments that I had to write. Luckily, I was able to connect to the TU Chemnitz network through the VPN

and got access to online resources from the library.

For our free time, The Student Affairs office and the ERASMUS office of the EUC also sometimes organizes some outings for the students, such as City Trips or just some bowling nights. Additionally the Erasmus Students Association (ESA) in Cyprus also organizes events regularly, for example trips to Troodos or Paphos and Limassol. For anyone who prefers to see and enjoy Cyprus in smaller groups, it is also not hard to plan and have trips around Cyprus. The beaches in Agia Napa, Paphos or Limassol are easily reached by bus from the Solomos Square bus station in Nicosia and students pay only half price. However, it is necessary to keep the schedule in mind, as most buses in Cyprus do not run until late at night.

Since Cyprus is divided into two parts, one thing that could also be done is crossing the border to the northern side of Cyprus (or the other side, as the Greek Cypriots would call it). We only need our passport and get a visa directly at the crossing points. Some favorite destinations in the northern side are the castle in Kyrenia (which can be easily reached by a mini bus nearby the crossing border at Ledra Street), Famagusta and the Golden Beach.

All in all, I would recommend students to go to Cyprus and study in EUC for their semester abroad, as going to Cyprus was a good decision for me and I am not disappointed at all. Although I had to work really hard for my courses, I also really enjoyed them all. I met many new friends there, had great time and seen many beautiful places too. And now I came back with so many new experiences and knowledge and also good memories.