

About TecnoCampus

TecnoCampus is filial of Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona, the university is located 30 kilometers north of Barcelona in a smaller city called Mataró, and the university is according to the teachers at TecnoCampus the most modern university in Spain. Unfortunately I was not very impressed by the university itself, nor the education they provided or the activities they arranged for incoming students.

The communication upon arrival was very confusing, to construct a learning agreement that SBS would approve was almost impossible because of the lack of curriculum on the web page, it was a very frustrating experience. They expected us to send the learning agreement by one date, but the lack of information made it impossible to meet their expectations, they ended up prospering it one week. But thanks to the help and services from SBS I was able to send it on time. Even though I had to use Spanish or Catalan curriculum to get the courses approved.

Quality of teaching

Speaking of the curriculums I was really excited to go abroad and to study at TecnoCampus, but I soon learned that it was too good to be true. The courses look really good on paper, but how they were carried out and how the teacher taught was no way near the written curriculum. This made me really confused and almost betrayed by the receiving university; I was expecting some of level of education and not go back to high school again. Generally speaking, I was disappointed and I if I had known what I know now I would never have applied to TecnoCampus.

I have never felt as frustrated as I did when I participated in the first years' classes. The teachers assumed that no one had any experience of academic studies; I have only studied for five years and think I have some idea what it is. The level of education was not the only thing that was problematic it was also an issue for me when most courses did not use the appointed course literature; they used everything from their own personal blog, to google tutorials. I believe I did not read any academic book or article for that one semester and I passed all my courses without any effort from my side. I even took an extra course in Sweden during the exam period.

Orientation and Welcome programme

TecnoCampus had really good intention with the welcoming program, but it turned out to be a big joke. We met native students at the welcoming day and we were introduced properly. During the tour around the campus they were keen on viewing the TV-studio, and the high-tech equipment used within the communication program and the labs within the technological and nursing programs.

Unfortunately were we, business students, completely neglected, my experience of the tour was that it was only a way for them to brag about the studios and equipment. I had no idea where my classes were when Chith's courses started. I had to ask in the reception, but they were unable to speak English, which made it complicated to find the rooms. They also introduced a buddy program the first day, but it took half the trimester before the sent any further information about it. I had already found people to study with and to spend time with outside school. But as I said, the intention was good though it was not in use when we, the incoming students, needed it.

Housing

The school used different sites they recommended when seeking for a room or an apartment. I used the services they recommended and got in contact with two men who had apartments. The first one I was in contact with stopped replying after we had come to an agreement that I were to rent one room in his student room facility. The other one decided to rent the available room to someone else less than twelve hours before my departure from Sweden, imagine sitting next to an elder happy couple popping champagne on the flight when you have no idea if you are to stay or go home within a week. I secured my first days by booking a hotel room for two nights and hoped that the housing would be sorted within these days.

Fortunately, I have friends who know people in Barcelona, and through one of them I got contact information to two who needed a roommate. I contacted the one my friend recommended, and weirdly I had to meet him in the middle of the night. I brought a friend of mine, for safety, to look at the apartment, and because of my lack of options I decided to stay there. Generally, the pricing for rooms and apartments is quite high in Barcelona. Most people, who have been earlier in Spain, and Barcelona, have had an experience that rent was low. But by time Barcelona has grown to be a big tourist destination the prices has increased.

To live in Barcelona

Disregarding the prices of the apartment and the lack of heat in it was Barcelona a nice city to live in. For me was it a real experience to not understand a word of Spanish or Catalan to be able to follow easier conversations, only by living in the city. Most people have a romantic image of Barcelona, but most of them have only visited the most touristic areas of Barcelona. I would say that Barcelona is more diverse than the regular tourist know, I have seen places within and around the city and it is easy understand why they are not happy having tourists, students, and other foreigners staying there. The city is polished where the these people usually move, and outside it is a big garbage pile. I do understand them, and I think I experienced my fair share of Barcelona.

An other fun thing was the laid back style, maybe it was not as fun when mañana was used in class and when the student smoked weed and drank beer during the siesta. Me as a person is not that interested in using drugs, maybe Barcelona was not the right city for me. The mañana lifestyle is not very applicable in a Swedish context, though I tried it at work and ended up getting happy and satisfied clients.

Things I learned while living abroad

I think personally it was a good experience, I hated the mañana lifestyle the first few weeks but when I got a hang of it I really enjoyed my time. Even if I stayed within EU I think I got a great cultural experience. I learned that Spanish people do not expect you to speak any Spanish if you are blond and blue eyed, that even if I tried they would reply in English. In school I learned how to google, as if I did not know that, I learned that level of teaching was no way near the expectations on the exams, and that you can be a professor teaching a theory that does not exist. Have you ever heard about homus organisativus?

Furthermore, I had the greatest landlord. He knew a lot about Barcelona, what do visit, where to eat, how to behave in the city to not be targeted by salesmen, robbers, and other vicious people. I think the tip I can give when going abroad is to not stay in a house full of other Erasmus students, look for a native it will enrich your cultural experience of

your stay. It is a safety to have other students, but to get as much experience as possible it to step out of your comfort zone and take a leap of faith. That is was I had to do when I lost two rooms.

Most of all, I am really grateful that I have had the opportunity to study in Sweden my entire life. I have received a great education throughout my 18 years studying. Finally I would like to say if you go abroad choose wisely, choose education before place. If I could go back I would have chosen differently. I would also encourage you to communicate with SBS if you believe the education you have chosen does not meet your expectations. Please let them know and make sure no one else has to go through it again.