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I chose to do my exchange in Brazil in order to improve my portuguese, get to know Brazil and its people and also to experience what it was like to study in South America. I had heard that the city was huge and had a population of twenty two million people which felt a little bit overwhelming. Chosing to do my exchange in Brazil was a great choice because very few people speak English there and it is nearly impossible to live there unless you know some portuguese, and that was the challenge that I needed in order to become fluent in portuguese.

Upon arrival in Brazil, all exchange students are assigned a buddy if they wish to have one. I had two buddies who helped me to get settled. Upon arrival in Brazil, all foreigners with a Visa, need to register at the federal police within thirty days. The process of getting registered and obtaining your foreigners identifications card was extremely demanding and stressful. The authorities in Brazil does not work as well as they do in our part of the world. I had to go back there three times because I did not get anything done the first two times. There is always one or two documents missing, if not stamps. Brazilians love documents and stamps.

The courses and the way of studying was different from Stockholm Business School. First and foremost, no coursebooks are used or even required. At the beginning of the semester, I found it a little bit odd when my buddy told me that nobody buys or uses course books. I was told that if I wanted or had to read a certaing book for a course, I would have to go to the library for that. Usually, the students would book a time at the campus libraries whenever they wanted to read a book. Furthermore, the teaching was not divided into lectures and seminars. We were always in classrooms. The first half of the semester, the professors would hold lectures. The second part of the semester consisted of students forming groups and holding a seminar or lecture. Each group were assigned a topic to reasearch about and then present it in class. In other words, instead of the professor teaching, the students would teach. It was different from Stockholm Business School in a sense that, the presentations lasted for a minimum of thirty to fourty minutes, followed by discussion. All classes taught in English were easy to pass because not all of them had written exams. The final grades were based on attendance, performace of all written tasks and/or group presentations. In addition, all courses are taken at the same time and classes are held once a week for each course.



The courses I took:

Conversação em Português Língua Estrangeira

International Management: Doing business in Brazil

Topics of Marketing

Topics of Quantitative Methods and Informatics

Topics in Operations

Management of Organizations in Brazil

My first two weeks before school started, I stayed with a friends family. First day of school i moved into a house where i rented the master bedroom. The school did not provide any housing for exchange students. The house was a fifteen minute walk from campus and five minutes to the faculty with the campus bus. My rent was at R\$1100 which is approximatly 3000SEK per month.

The school had a canteen (Bandejão) that provided breakfast, lunch and dinner for R\$2 per meal which is approximatly 5SEK. The food was not the best but it was ideal when you wanted to save money. In addition, the Bandejão was also open on weekends.

My advice to future exchange students at USP is to get your Visa processed in time and to go to the federal police as soon as you can. Both the Visa process and the federal police were stressful things to go through.

As far as arriving at the faculty, try to join all the events put together by Clube Internacional which is the club for exchange students. They organize a lot of fun activities including a weekend get away to the beach Maresias. Apart from Clube internacional, there are other groups for foreigners outside of the faculty such as Fly Intercâmbio and REI. It is a great way to get to know students from other universities in São Paulo and also Brazilians. As far as practicing portuguese, I went to the events put together by Poli Lingo which is a language exchange group. I would approach people who spoke portuguese, and people who wanted to practise English would approach me (unfortunatly Swedish is not a known language).



Dont expect everything to be cheap because it is South America. São Paulo is expensive. For shopping, I would recommend Brás(on the red subway line) because it is cheaper than the malls but the products are of the same quality. For groceries, I recommend Carrefour which seemed to be the cheapest option. In addition, try to find out what areas are safe and what areas are not, before deciding where to live. Certain areas are more violent than others and robberys and assaults are very common. Most of my friends were robbed. For example, you can not use your phone on the street like you can here. The chances are that you will get robbed. I was told to put my phone on the inside of my pants and not in the pockets. Furthermore, we used to take out cash once a week, so that we would not have to risk losing our credit cards if we were to be robbed. It is important to be cautious.

To conclude, I have no regrets about Brazil. Despite being there for a short period of time, I fell inlove with the country and the student life. The professors at the faculty were professional and had a lot of experience and knowledge. I gained a lot of knowledge during my exchange and I want to share that with others!



