

Exchange Report

Paris School of Business

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As a part of my Business Administration studies I did an exchange at Paris School of Business. Even though the exchange was mandatory, I was very excited about the possibility of studying abroad. I chose Paris as a location because first of all I love France and also because I have studied French in school and this was a great opportunity to use the language in everyday life.

The semester started quite a bit later than here in Stockholm; orientation day was on September 16th and the classes started on September 26th. The time between orientation day and classes was an orientation week filled with events organized by student associations and aimed for international students so we would all have a chance to get to know each other and make friends. The orientation week ended on a fantastic two-day trip to Normandy, where we visited a bunch of small cities, all different and unique. Throughout the semester the associations had all kinds of events, mainly of course bar and club nights. The French association members kept us updated well on everything that was going on, so joining in was easy. The fall semester ended before Christmas so it was quite short, just about three months.

I got a studio apartment within walking distance from the school, which is located in the 13th arrondissement. The area itself is not super fancy, but the campus is brand new and has cafés and places to study, even though it is pretty small. There is also a lot of places to eat around it. All classes are in small 20 to 30 student groups and there are no big lecture rooms so the experience is quite different from Stockholm. The classes are long and attendance is mandatory so school takes time during the weeks. On the five courses that I took I had great teachers, and in such a small class there is much more interaction between the professor and the students so you get a much better understanding of their thoughts on the matter and not just what the course book says. I focused on management studies and the fact that all teachers had business work experience from their respective field was really nice as I got to hear how things are done in the real business world.

Contact with the host school's administration worked very well all through the exchange, although if you are used to the way things are organized in Sweden, the French way can require some adjusting. There is some paperwork you have to work out, and sometimes their way of doing things can seem pretty illogical. Not all information and websites are translated properly in English and sometimes information about classes, meetings or deadlines can be given very last minute.

However, the school had a good international office and an international coordinator who answered all questions quickly.

Paris is a great city to live and has a lot to offer. There are few things to keep in mind. Paris is a big city and it takes time to travel from one side to the other. Public transportation is quite expensive and traveling takes time so it pays off to live close to school. The cost of living is high in Paris but not unreasonable. A lot of places offer discounts for students and young people and you can also find a lot of free things to do and see. Most of the museums are free for young EU-citizens and of course just wandering around Paris is an experience.

All in all the exchange was a great experience. On the courses that I had, almost all of us were international students so I met people from all over the world. A semester abroad gives an opportunity to see new ways of teaching and get a different perspective to the subject you are studying. On top of that you get to experience a whole new social circle and spend time in a new city. If you are looking for a destination that has something different to offer for every day, Paris is the place to go.