

Thammasat University – Fall 2017

The application for exchange studies at SBS was easy. The only thing I needed to do was to fill out an application and write a motivation letter. After the application, there were some things that I need to do but you will get all information regarding that from Stockholm Business School and your partner university. I love travelling and the decision to apply for exchange studies at Thammasat University was a lovely opportunity to embrace the Thai culture and travel in Southeast Asia. I didn't regret my decision a single time!

Education

The education and communication at Thammasat University was very different from that at Stockholm Business School. Most courses offered at Thammasat University are worth three credits (6 ECTS points when transferred to SU). Having a three-credit course means attending three hours of lectures a week. All courses also have mandatory attendance and when attending courses and exams students at bachelors' level are required to wear a school uniform. The communication from all classes and centre of international affairs was mostly done through Facebook groups, meaning that one needed to follow information posted in about eight groups. In my opinion, it was not optimal. However, it was an interesting experience.

I had six courses, which equals to 36 transferred ETCS points. Many courses have midterm exams, final exams, individual presentations/papers and group presentations/papers. For me this meant that some periods during the exchange were a bit hectic. However, there was time for travelling and other things despite that. The lectures reminded me more of high school than university studies. Mainly because of the feeling of having a class rather than a seminar or a lecture. Over all, I found the education good and I'm happy that I have been able to experience the differences between the Swedish and Thai universities.

Activities

Thammasat University was extremely welcoming to all incoming exchange students and they arranged all sorts of activities. Besides the trips and activities arranged by Thammasat, you will probably find yourself in the middle of activities and travel plans with other exchange

students that you meet in class or at your accommodation. There are numerous opportunities to do all sorts of things, so it's up to you to find and do what you want to.

Housing

The university doesn't provide housing to exchange students. However, they provide incoming students with a list of private housing alternatives. I stayed at Amarin Mansion, which was one of the recommended options and found it good. The room I rented didn't have a kitchen which in my opinion isn't needed since eating out is really cheap. My rent was 7500 THB/month, which is approximately 2 000 SEK. Electricity and water wasn't included in the rent, so having arctic temperatures in your room will result in higher monthly costs. Getting to Thammasat University from Amarin Mansion was easy either by walking and taking a ferry cross the river (approximately 20 minutes) or by taking a motorbike taxi (5-10 minutes depending on the traffic).

Preparations

Once you have received a letter of acceptance from the university, you can apply for a student visa. Sadly, it was not possible to obtain a multiple entry visa when I applied and I think that you will face the same problem when applying for it. If you want to travel outside Thailand during your exchange semester, you can obtain a single or multiple re-entry permit at the immigration office in Thailand. You will get more information regarding visas and reporting to the immigration office at the university. Besides the visa, I recommend you to check that you have the vaccines that are recommended and take care of possible CSN applications. Stockholm business School will ask you to fill out a learning agreement and you might not get Thammasat University's course offering for the semester before the learning agreement should be done. You can just choose some courses that you think they will offer and change the learning agreement later on, in order to get everything done in time.

Travelling and Getting around

Getting around in Bangkok is fairly easy. The public transportation is pretty good and taxis are really cheap. I used an app called Grab, which is like Uber but way more popular in Southeast Asia. With the app you can book taxis, cars and motorbikes. I preferred the motorbikes for shorter distances since you are at high risk of getting stuck in a traffic-jam when travelling on more than two wheels. Going by bike was also more of an experience

compared to taxi, which is probably why I preferred it. Be aware that tuk-tuk rides will always cost you more than a taxi ride and that you need to negotiate the price for the tuk-tuk ride beforehand, which is not needed in taxis since they have meters.

During the semester, I had the opportunity to travel all over Thailand and to visit Malaysia, Myanmar, Brunei and Vietnam. Getting around in Southeast Asia is relatively cheap and easy. Flights are sometimes as cheap as or cheaper than bus and train tickets and can be a good option when time is limited. When you are not in a hurry, I recommend taking a sleeper train, but be prepared that the train might arrive a few hours late. If you haven't been to Angkor Wat before, I highly recommend you to visit the Majestic temples in Cambodia.

I recommend Thammasat University for an exchange semester and will gladly answer any questions you have about studying abroad! Feel free to send your questions to johannes.rossi@msn.com.