

Korea University

Exchange start semester	Spring semester 2024
Study level	Undergraduate (Bachelor)
Home faculty at GU	Faculty of Social Sciences
Studies at GU	Global Studies Programme

Courses during exchange

- DISS122 - Principles of International Relations
- DISS140 - Globalization and Beyond: Culture, Society, and Political Economy
- DISS241 - Contemporary Korea
- GKSS207 - Global Korean Culture
- SPGE176 - Introduction to Korean History and Culture

Main difference compared to studying at GU

The biggest difference was to study multiple courses at the same time and to also have midterms and finals which we don't have here in Sweden. Another big difference for me was to live in the dorms and to live alone because in Sweden I live at home with my family. So to just take a walk to school instead of taking public transportation was nice, except the pretty big uphill to the dorms from campus. The uphill is horrible (surprisingly there are a lot of hills in Seoul), but you can take a bus up or take the shuttle bus (free), which I did do sometimes when I was feeling lazy or tired.

Arrival, orientation and housing

Me and the other person from GU both lived at the same dorm so we took the taxi together from the airport and then arrived at the dorms to check-in. I didn't have any problems with settling and found that I assimilated quite fast to my new environment. We walked around the first days and bought the necessities for dorm life from Daiso and from a supermarket. Sadly there weren't any big supermarkets close by so we did have to take the bus or subway there.

Finances

Because I still live at home here in Sweden, it definitely was a big difference with the costs. I did however save money from not needing to buy bus tickets and from the course literature (however you did need to buy most of the literature from the uni store so no second hand and I didn't sell them afterwards as I do here in GU). I only needed to buy two books which were nice and the price was quite similar to the literature prices here in Sweden. I did take the CSN loan to survive and I did live quite well from it. I did

however need to pay for the dorm before I got there and needed to show the University that I had enough money in my account before I got there so I am happy that I did take the loan for both the term I was in Korea, but also in the term before.

Life in a new country/culture

I had a nice experience. I wish I could've traveled more and seen more, but they are quite harsh with attendance so I couldn't do that. The University did assign us to a buddy group (a big and then a smaller inside the big group) and my group had weekly meetings for dinner or lunch. Most of my friends came from this buddy group. People are really nice and I also meet a lot of nice people in my classes.

Overall exchange experience

I am really satisfied with my overall experience, sure it would have been nice if I would have traveled more but I'm also happy with what I could and did see. People were nice and all my professors were also nice. The courses weren't too hard around the same level as here or maybe a bit easier even. One thing that did bug me is the group work which I did have in almost all of my classes and honestly it was not good! I don't think any of my groups were good in any of my courses, and it's the same from what I've heard from other friends who had even more horrible groups than me. A lot of people (exchange and Korean) who did not do their jobs or did it but horribly. While everything obviously wasn't sunshine and rainbows I did have a really good time, and do kinda wish that I did it for a whole year instead of only one term, because I really miss it right now. South Korea is a really convenient country, the public transportation is great and CHEAP!! They have convenience stores everywhere that are great and have a lot of good things (some snacks and chips are meh) but the food and drinks are good and there is a big selection of things. Korean food is generally awesome and it's really cheap to eat out. And Koreans do walk really slow and have no spatial awareness (they don't care they will walk into you or stand in the way and not move ect), and sometimes do expect you to know everything and do everything perfectly (some Koreans, a lot of them are really nice and helpful). The cherry blossom season was great, and my favorite week was definitely the festival week, where they had different artists performing on multiple days and then a big festival on saturday with some pretty big artists (korean).