

19/02/2016

Efahrungsbericht

Erasmus + / Studienjahr 2015/16

Vorbereitung (Vorbereitungszeit, Informationssuche, Fristen an der Gasthochschule etc.): It doesn't take much time in order to prepare yourself to travel and start studying in Faro. You just need to make sure that you have the proper clothing as it will be far warmer in Faro than in Bremen. All the information that you'll need about the university, the particular documents and the deadlines you will be able to make inquiries with the mobility office at the university and they will be able to answer all of your questions and they are also very patient and amiable people and very easy to work with.

Formalitäten im Gastland (Unterlagen, Bescheinigungen, Aufenthaltsgenehmigung, Behördengänge, Bankkonto, ggf. Wohngeld, sonstige finanzielle Fördermöglichkeiten etc.):

All the information that you will need will be provided to you by the university in Faro. If you are a non EU citizen and you need a visa in order to stay and study in Portugal then you should apply at least a couple months before your departure if possible for your visa because it will take quite a bit of time and it would be best to have your visa on your person when you first enter the country. I went to the Portuguese consulate in Hamburg since I needed a visa to study in Portugal because I am not a EU citizen. I called the consulate in order to find out what documents I needed. They provided me with the residency permit that I needed.

I didn't open a bank account in Faro, I just kept my bank (Sparkasse Bremen) that I had in Germany. None of the Erasmus students I met opened a bank account either. Of course it is possible and could be beneficial.

I was paying most people I know were paying between 150 euros and 220 euros per month with everything included (electricity, gas ect...) Food prices are similar to in Bremen but are more often cheaper than in Bremen. There are also opportunities to find jobs in restaurants and shops if one can speak Portuguese.

Allgemeine Informationen zur Partnerhochschule (Lage/Anreise, Orientierungswoche/Info-Veranstaltungen für Erasmus-Studierende, Betreuung/Ansprechpartner; Immatrikulation, Campusleben, Freizeitangebote, Kulturelles etc.)

I flew into Faro airport from Bremen airport using Ryanair and my apartment was near the center of Faro city. During orientation week, you will be given and told all the information that you will need during the course of the semester. There will of course be many social events and gatherings so that you will also be able to meet and get to know people from many different countries. This is also an opportunity to learn where other people are staying and their accommodation situation in case you are unsatisfied with your own. Also, if you have to study at Gambelas campus than you may want to buy a bike because it is quite far away (1 hour on foot) and you might not want to pay 30 euros a month for the bus. So during these gatherings you could ask around to see if anyone knows of or if they are selling a bike.

The university will set up a specific day for people to go to the campus of the University of the Algarve and enroll. There are also several different places on Gambelas campus which is where I studied, where you can go eat. I am not as familiar with Penha campus because I didn't spend much time there. There are also many events happening on campus or in the city center and there are fliers posted on campus and also in the city center giving you all the info you'll need to know.

WICHTIG: Kurswahl /Kursangebot/ -beschränkungen für ERASMUS-Studierende, (z. B. Kurswahl an anderen Fakultäten/Kurswechsel möglich? Fristen für Anmeldung zu Kursen/Kurswechsel; wann standen Kurse online und wo (Link)? Besondere Hinweise, z.B. zu Prüfungen, Sprache; spezielle Tipps für Seminare/Kurse, die besonders für Erasmus Studierende geeignet/ungeeignet sind etc.) **Bitte denken Sie daran, dass Sie als ehemalige/r Austauschstudierende/r hier am besten für zukünftige Studierende Auskunft geben können**

My major is Marine Biology so of course they had many different courses that I could take at the university and for the master's program in Marine Biology, all of the courses are taught in English. As far as the other majors I know some Erasmus students had trouble because not all of their courses were taught in English, they were taught in Portuguese and they were still required to attend classes. So as far as what language your courses are going to be taught in, well that depends on your major and if you are a bachelors or masters student and it differs with everyone. Also, if there courses are taught in Portuguese, then some professors will allow you to skip the classes and just write a report at the end of the course or do some kind of project instead of attending classes. You can find the list of courses on the University of the Algarve (Ualg) website but it won't be easy because some of the webpages are only in Portuguese. This is the website that you can use to find out your class schedule (<http://www.fct.ualg.pt/>). 1 ciclos = bachelors programs 2 ciclos = masters programs ect... Once classes begin, you have two weeks to decide if you want to drop any courses or if you would like to switch courses. You will need to use the university email that they give you because often they will only inform you whether or not a class has been cancelled only on your university email. For exams, depending on the course, you may have exams directly after your course is finished or you could opt to take the final exam during the exam period which during the winter semester is in January. You have a total of three tries to pass the exams

Unterkunft (Besonderheiten bei der Wohnungssuche, Empfehlungen, Internetadressen, Wohnheime/Privatunterkünfte/kurzfristige Unterkünfte, Lage/Ausstattung/Kosten etc.):

The way I found my accommodation was by signing up to this website: <http://erasmusu.com/en/register>. I didn't pay though. I think you can register for just the basic information and then you can register for more detailed information but I think that one cost money. So, I signed up and some other people who had already found accommodation and who were studying in the same major contacted me about a vacant room to rent. Depending I what you prefer meaning city life or living on the beach will determine where you should look for accommodation. The beach housing can be a little more expensive but I hear it is really nice and you have more room. However, the grocery stores, bars ect are farther away and you would either have to take a bus or a bike in order to reach them. Living in the city is convenient because it's close to all the shops that you will need however, it is a bit far from the beach. Of course you can

just take a bus to the beach or ride a bike. Another way for searching for accommodation is to becoming part of the Ualg Erasmus facebook page. There, you will always see posts of vacant rooms for rent and bikes for sale as well as all the different events that will be happening. For paying rent, everyone I knew paid in cash and where I was staying there was no contract. So it would be wise to take photos of your place and take note of the damage already caused before you move in so that you don't get charged for any of it when you leave. The university will also ask you if you want a room on campus which may actually be the cheapest option but if you live on Gambelas campus, it is far from everything including the beach and the city center. You would again have to bike or take a bus. I think prices for living on campus are around 150 euros. For places off campus, the prices don't always include gas, electricity ect.. so just make sure you are aware of that.

Sonstiges (besondere Erlebnisse, Transport, Studentenjobs, Hinweise zur Sicherheit, Internet, Probleme/Anregungen/persönliche Empfehlungen etc.): At the start of the winter semester the bus system is really unreliable so take care when trying to arrive somewhere on time. You will want to give yourself plenty arrive to your destination. Also, if you are just trying to go to campus taking a taxi with a group of people may actually be cheaper than the bus and it is far more reliable. I don't know of any student jobs but I know some students were able to get jobs at some restaurants around the city center to make a little extra cash.

Nach der Rückkehr (z. B. Anerkennung der Studienleistungen, Transcript of Records etc.): Remember to go to the mobility office at Ualg a day or two before you leave to have your Confirmation of Departure document sign as well as signing some other documents that they will have for you. They will send your transcript of records to your university once they receive it.

Fazit (Was hat Ihnen der Aufenthalt persönlich gebracht? Motivation und Ziele für gerade diese Hochschulwahl/ Wahl des Landes; Welche Auswirkungen haben die Erfahrungen während Ihres Aufenthaltes auf Ihr weiteres Studium, Ihre beruflichen Überlegungen oder Ihre Lebensplanung?
ggf. Fotos von der Uni/Stadt):

I chose this university because I study marine biology and they have a wide selection of courses that I was able to take that I haven't taken before. Also, this was the type of climate that I would prefer to study marine biology in and there are some professors at this uni who are conducting research in areas such as biotechnology and microbiology focusing on the marine environments which is what I would like to focus on for my thesis and also for potential further studies. I am completely satisfied with my choice. Ualg was the perfect university for me and for what I am interested in and would like to accomplish in the future. The social aspect is also fantastic. There are many Erasmus students so you will be able to meet people from all over Europe and also the Portuguese people are very amiable and sociable and like to have fun. Now I actually plan to return to Ualg to finish my master's program and write my master's thesis with a professor that I have already conducted some work with during my Erasmus there.