

國立臺南大學

National University of Tainan

姐妹校交換學生心得報告

Inbound Exchange Student Report

姓名 Name	Salvador Ruiz	國籍 Nationality	Spanish
學號 School No.			
交換系所 Host Department	Greenergy		
原學校 Home University	Universidad de Jaén		
原系所 Home Department	Ingeniería Mecánica		
交換期間 Exchange Period	自 From 2019 年 year /09 月 month 至 To 2020 年 year /01 月 month		

I arrived to Tainan in August, I remember that my first impression about Taiwan was the high humidity and how hot it was. At the beginning everyone was quite helpful and polite, but anyway I knew it was going to be a challenge, since even ordering food wasn't as simple as expected.

In NUTN, Gillien has always been quite helpful with every procedure, from making my student account, to paying fees or even contacting professors, thanks to her help every process has become much more manageable, also because of the language barrier with paperwork, as I can't speak chinese.

That's actually my next point, the language barrier.

The school doesn't really have courses in english, which makes learning much harder for exchange students like me, who are here only for a few months before going back to their country. Also most of the professors (at least in engineering departments) can't speak english, bringing a whole lot of hardships from the moment that you are interested in enrolling to the course.

Generally professors just give you an exam in english, the translation of the exam that the taiwanese students take, and don't mind you for the whole semester, so you have to teach yourself about the whole subject. They also still make you go to the lectures in chinese, which on my point of view is quite a waste of time, since I'm unable to understand a single word for the three hour lectures.

All this comes to show that, academically, the school might not be ready to receive non-chinese-speaking exchange students, and maybe that's the reason why most of the exchange students that come here can already speak chinese, it's just not a realistic goal trying to bring people from around the world without the means for it.

Also it's complicated getting to know people for the same reason, in my department almost no students can speak english and even in other departments like the English Department, I've met people that can't speak english despite it being their studies. In the end you always meet some people, there's always someone who can help you, but honestly, I expected more on that aspect, since the options were always quite limited because of the huge language barrier.

Living in Tainan is quite different from living in Spain, the weather is much more humid and hot, food is quite different, and how people live here also different. It's much more convenient here, since people usually don't cook, they just go to the street and grab some food (since it's much cheaper here) also there are convenience stores everywhere, where you can grab some lunch and even paying bills.

One thing I never got used to, is the sound of the fighter jets, there's an airbase close to the city, and usually every morning they come flying on top of the university, crossing through the middle of the city and making lots of noise, sometimes even the professor has to stop talking because the sound is absolutely deafening. Not anyone's fault, but after a while gets quite annoying honestly.

In the end, I think it's been a nice experience despite of all the hardships encountered and every challenge. I believe that's always good to quit your comfort zone, to get out and explore, or do something you never dared to, I've also met some great people along the way, people who has helped me to accomplish my goals here and that have been with me whenever I needed them to, and I've also shown myself that anything can be done as long as you have the will and courage for it.

I believe that the university could be better prepared to accommodate international exchange students that don't only come from China, Malaysia or Japan, where many students already can speak chinese. Just by integrating more courses in english and encouraging the learning of english between the school staff could create a much more appropriate environment for such students like me.

To finish, I'd like to thank to everyone that has helped me to get through these months, specially Gillien, from the International Relations Office, since without her I wouldn't have been able to accomplish such task.



Riding scooter is a must for moving around Tainan, this is me shortly after arriving.



Some friends I met in and outside the University.



Diving in Taiwan.