

STUDIERENDEN-ENDBERICHT 2012 /2013

Gastuniversität: University of South Bohemia, Budweis, Czech Republic

Aufenthaltsdauer: von 17. 09. 2012. Bis 16. 07. 2013.

Studienrichtung: Biologische Chemie

BITTE GLIEDERN SIE DEN BERICHT IN FOLGENDE PUNKTE:

1. Stadt, Land und Leute
2. Soziale Integration
3. Unterkunft
4. Kosten
5. Sonstiges (Visum, Versicherung, etc.)
6. Beschreibung der Gastuniversität
7. Anmelde- und Einschreibformalitäten
8. Studienjahreinteilung
9. Einführungswoche bzw. –veranstaltungen
10. Kursangebot und besuchte Kurse (kurze Beschreibung und evtl. Bewertung)
11. Credits-Verteilung bezogen auf Kurse, „study workload“ pro Semester
12. Benotungssystem
13. Akademische Beratung/Betreuung
14. Resümee
15. Tipps und was man sonst noch unbedingt wissen sollte

4. Kosten

Ausgaben im Rahmen des Auslandsaufenthaltes (in €):

Monatliche Gesamtausgabe (inkl. Quartier):	400 €
davon Unterbringung:	97 € pro Monat
davon Verpflegung:	40 € pro Monat
davon Fahrtkosten am Studienort:	/ € pro Monat
davon Kosten für Bücher, Kopien, etc.:	5 € pro Monat
davon erforderliche Auslandsranken-/Unfallversicherung:	20 € pro Monat
davon Sonstiges: _____/_____	/ € pro Monat

Nicht monatlich anfallende Kosten:

Impfungen, med. Vorsorge:	/ €
Visum:	50 €
Reisekosten für einmalige An- u. Abreise:	20 €
Einschreibegebühr(en):	/ €
Sprachkurs (Landessprache) Kursgebühr:	/ €
Orientierungsprogramm:	/ €
Einschreibegebühr(en):- _____/_____	/ €
- ____/_____	/ €
- ____/_____	/ €
- ____/_____	/ €

8. Studienjahreinteilung

Orientierung:	3. week of September
Vorbereitender Sprachkurs:	3. week of September
Beginn/Ende LV-Zeit 1. Semester/Term:	4. week of September / 2. week of January
Beginn/Ende LV-Zeit 2. Semester/Term:	3. week of February / 3. week of May
Beginn/Ende LV-Zeit 3. Term:	/
Von obigen Daten abweichende Prüfungszeiten:	End of January-

	beginning of February, end of May-June
Ferien:	last week of December and first week of January, Easter Monday

Czech Republic – country of beer, warm people and beautiful nature and castles

Academic year 2012/2013 I spent in small Czech city near the border with Austria named Budweis. After all my impressions finally shrugged, I can tell that this was one of my best years. City is relatively small – it is consisted of approximately 100 000 people. However, it seemed to me very vivid like there was double of that amount. During the both day and night there could be seen people enjoying the bank of the Vltava, taking long walks in the beautiful park Stromovka or simply refreshing nearby famous fountain on the main square in the old part of the city. Budweis is divided into two parts – new one, where many famous and popular boutiques and restaurants can be found and old one, still surrounded by ruins of the wall that used to serve as a protection in former times. People are friendly and open to foreigners – and when you try to talk to them in your poor Czech, they love you even more and respect your effort to accommodate. ☺ Czech Republic as a country is a huge area and it is hard to see all of its beauties. Of what I caught a glimpse is a part called South Bohemia, or as Czech would say, Jižní Čechy. Only in the circle of not more than 30-40 km around the city, there are three castles situated in the villages close to Budweis – Hluboká nad Vltavou, Nové Hrady and Český Krumlov. There are around 40 castles in the Czech Republic what makes it land of castles. As I already mentioned, it was not difficult to feel like home in Budweis. Culture is more or less similar to the rest of the Central Europe. However, one possible barrier was language. Czech belongs to Slavic group of languages, meaning that it has rather tough grammar and unusual letters and voices. In my opinion, it takes more than one year to overcome this language but it is still possible to learn basics. As their English is not on a very high level, there were sometimes some problems with understanding. All in all, after couple of beers, all misunderstanding were solved. ☺ Regarding accommodation, there exists 6 dormitories where it is rather acceptable to have a room. Two of them are a bit further from university, bit more expensive but more up-to-date as well. I was accommodated in one of the 4 dormitories near the university and I was very satisfied. It was not perfect, but bearing in mind very cheap costs, I was more then happy. Additionally, there is always a possibility to rent a flat. This option is, again, more expensive, but for standard of developed countries I think it quite ok. Life is general is much more cheaper comparing to the rest of the countries within European Union. Groceries, pubs and clubs, public transport, trains, health insurance – everything is not rarely even twice cheaper. As I am coming from non-European country, I did have to make visa and to get card for permanent residence. It was no more work then usual – documents confirming your acceptance to university, accomodation and monthly income are needed. In the case of members of European countries, simple walk to foreign police confirming your address and duration of stay is enough. ☺ One of the things I was the most impressed by is our University. Campus is huge – it is consisted of more than 6 universities sharing their space with related institutes. Two the mots representative buildings are Library and the Faculty of Philosophy, which are built only couple of years ago. Those are big red building with glass as a dominant material and the traces of the architectural style of the modern age. When it comes to university as an institution, it would be enough if I would say that University of South Bohemia is one of the best in the Central Europe in the field of Biology. There is a high concentration of scientiscts and people of all degrees eager

to either learn more or to pass their knowledge on to younger generations. The vicinity to real science during the work on this university is remarkable – you can meet people who got their education on prestige places such as Cambridge or Stanford University or the one that were working shoulder to shoulder with the Nobel price winners. Unusual thing about this university is that not the whole process of registration can be done online – as it is a case with the majority of universities. There are certain things for which the office called Study Department must be visited and certain documents signed personally. Nevertheless, nothing complicated and extremely time-demanding is asked or accepted during these registration steps. When it comes to the academic year schedule, it differs in a way that it starts earlier but it ends earlier as well. Lectures are starting somewhere in the second half of the September and they are ending already in the first half of the May. Taking into consideration examination period as well, one can tell that all duties towards the university can be done by the half of the June. I must mention that negative thing is the lack of holidays (two weeks for Christmas, Easter Monday for Easter), so this long summer holiday is more than necessary! Erasmus student organization did their best to make our stay as much pleasurable as possible. They were constantly organizing events such as trips to neighbouring cities or other countries, meeting tables, theme parties etc. We had opportunity to meet both Czech people and their way of living as well as people from other countries and see their customs and traditions. It was very valuable to live in another country surrounded by other foreigners as one could easily notice both positive and negative sides of either hospitable culture and the one met „by chance“ there. In introductory week we had events like „Tour around Budweis“ and visits to famous local brewery, what I found particularly useful as it helped me to learn how to navigate through the city faster. ☺

Courses I attended there were very well covered and I must say I was positively surprised by their quality. Even though majority of lecturers were Czech, I must point out that we had one British professor from Cambridge and one famous Belgium doctor. This was very motivating as not many people have such an opportunity. English of majority of the lecturers was on a high level and I had no problems in understanding them. They all were very professional and helpful. This is the list of the courses I was taking:

1. Biochemistry I – basics of biochemistry, taught by the rektor doctor Libot Grubhoffer.
2. Biochemistry Laboratory I – practical part of Biochemistry I.
3. Biochemistry II – advanced course in Biochemistry, more concentrated on human metabolism and processes it includes.
4. Biochemistry laboratory II – practical part in advanced course of Biochemistry
5. Environmental Chemistry – protection of the environment seen from the angle of the chemists, e.g. what compounds are harmful, why and in which amount?
6. Molecular Biology and Genetics – basics of Molecular Biology and Genetics, including the very beginning of this young branch of science till the modern techniques.
7. Methods in Molecular Biology and genetics – practical part of subject Molecular Biology and Genetics.
8. Biostatistics – basics of biostatistics and credible representation of data.
9. Introduction to Bioinformatics – basics of sequencing, usage of databanks and main bioinformatics tools.
10. Biology of Microorganisms
11. Biology of Animals
12. Biology of Plants

13. WHO Laboratory Regulations and Procedures – summary of all regulations that must be respected and fulfilled.

14. Academic Writing – how to write in a formal way, basics of academic writing.

I did not notice anything unusual in credit distribution, it is more or less very similar to the one at the JKU. I also didn't have any problems in transferring credits so everything here seems to work fine. Nevertheless, grading system is a bit different – instead of 4, there are five grades. There are excellent (1), excellent minus (1-), very good (2), very good minus (2-) and good (3). It is also usual to have a sort of a intermediate exams once or twice per semester (they call this „zápočet“). Academic support was also very well organized – in the case of any problems we could talk to our co-ordinator doctor Libor Grubhoffer, with whom we had great collaboration. He would later direct us to particular office or person. With no exaggeration, I had amazing time in Budweis, concerning both learning and „free-time“ aspects. I learnt a lot from very respected and well-known professors. I gained both theoretical knowledge and practical experience in the field of Biology and Biochemistry as well as in programming. On the other hand, my free time was full of great activities – sightseeing and learning the history of Budweis and other close cities and meeting both Czech and other cultures. I feel I enriched myself on both academic and cultural level and I broadened my mind in an amazing way with a priceless experience. I would advise everyone who is interested in land of warm and positive people, great choice of tastful beer, top science education and carrier opportunity to go for Erasmus to small but worth-seeing Budweis! ☺