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Learning something new and doing something to the very best of it; is a principle that I hold for most in my life. I really enjoy and eager to learn about something that is beyond my daily life standard. This eagerness and spirit are the primary reason why I am motivated to apply for TU Dortmund (TUD) Student Exchange 2017.

Motivation

I choose TU Dortmund (TUD) as my host University because TU Dortmund and my sending institution (UNPAR) had a good partnership that allows me to have an international exposure experience through a student exchange program under the ERASMUS+ scholarship.

Moreover, some of UNPAR lecturers had learned and even graduated from TUD. They are amazing lecturers that inspire me to study abroad to TUD as they already did. Beside this academic sphere motivations, studying and being able to be in Germany had already become my dream since I was little.

First days

The first days in Germany were awesome. I was astonished as I arrived in Germany, because most of the things are quite different from my home country. In my first days, the International Office helped me out to get through my academic bureaucracy and managed to find me a really nice room!

As I settled down perfectly in my room, I began to start socializing with people surround me. I met my very first best friend, Clementine Menieux! She is a French girl that gets along easily with me. I felt really excited all the time and did not find any particular strange things as I stay (maybe it's because I was really happy to stay in Germany). I did miss a lot of things, such as my friends, my amazing, funny and friendly lecturers, my church colleagues and the library (I love the library so much!).



I lived in Ostenbergstr 109. It was a really nice *Wohnung*. I lived by myself in a room with one bathroom which they call as *Einzelzimmer*. I lived by myself and shared the kitchen with my neighbors. It was a worthy place to live because I can have my own privacy while in the other hand, I can socialize with people in the kitchen as we cook. And when we were talking about food, we would eventually talk about culture; which I found really fun!



They say, the Germans are stiff, very organized, punctual and they love beers and football. I can not confirm the first prejudice I wrote. They are not that stiff, they are actually friendly and humorous. Most people think Germans are stiff because they are really careful towards people feelings and space, they are simply sensible.

While the other prejudices I mentioned were—in my opinion—true, I proudly am confirmed that! The Germans are very punctual; we can see it from the termin we made with lecturers and the punctuality of the Bahn services. Pünktlichkeit at its best! And for beers and football, I think I had even no doubts to find these characteristics in Dortmund. Who does not know BVB and Brinkhoffs?

Cultural Differences

The main cultural differences between Indonesia and Germany lay on the infrastructure. The infrastructure in Germany is very advanced therefore—I assumed—it shaped the culture and the Germans behavior. This well-infrastuctured country creates the behavior of punctual, respectful, obedient and full-spirited body and mind.

I found a lot of positive experiences in Germany. The classes inspired me to be more active and critical about things. My friends were open minded and respectful. I enjoyed all the facilities and cultural bonding with the Germans and other international students for sure.

I like the Germans a lot! They were really kind, attentive, funny and a really sincere friends. They work diligently and have fun sufficiently (though beers, party and football!). They are respectful towards people and time. Overall, I enjoyed to know every Germans in my 4 month exchange!

Leisure Time

I spend my leisure time on weekdays mostly with my friends to eat out in the *Stadt Zentrum* and to visit the student bars. While on weekend, I single out my leisure time to serve the church through singing. I also helped out a Primary School named *Holte-Grundschule* to teach Indonesian traditional dance for the students.

I visited some of the NRW's area, such as Essen, Duisburg, Mulheim, Dusseldorf, Koln, Munster and Aachen. I travel those areas with my friends, ESN's students and my church colleagues. There were a lot of site to visits in every area that I mentioned. It was a fortune to stay in NRW region.



I love a lot of places in Dortmund. Dortmund is a quite populous and busy city. Aside from its bustling city, I can say that the Dortmund Botanischen Garten is my favourite place in Dortmund. It is a green park that full of plants and trees. It is spacious and allows us to have a lot of activities such as walking, jogging, family picnic, bicycling and even taking a nap! It is truly a peaceful place to have a short escape from the city rush.



I like the courses, classes, classmates, lecturers and the facilities given. I enjoyed studying in the class as well as in the library. The access to books and journals are well-organized in the Bibliothek. The courses are in line with the courses I have in my home University and enlightened me holistically. The lecturers are my favorite as they taught me a lot of informative things. The lecturers are kind, friendly, funny, warm and proficient in teaching the class. The classes I had in TUD are my dream classes!

TU Dortmund University

In my home country, most of the study system is a one way seminar with a little discussion. Most of the students are shy and talk less while the seminar occurred. In TUD, the seminars are conducted mostly through presentation with mandatory readings that will lead the class into a deeper discussion about the presentation topic. This system creates a critical and active participation of the students in the class.

The lecturers in TUD are quiet similar with my lecturers in UNPAR. Both of them are funny, friendly, warm and sensible. The most particular difference is the hierarchy position. In Germany it is more formal, while in my UNPAR—especially my major—it is quite informal between the students and lecturers.

Advice for students, who will come to Germany in the future...

- Make friends as much as you can!
- Use every facilities that are provided for your-self development
 - Library and literature access
 - Hochschulsport facilities
 - Language courses in the ZHB Bereich Fremdsprachen
 - Campus activities and events
 - Free access to Dortmund theater and concert house
- Travel the NRW's area; you are free to travel with the semester ticket
- Join the Erasmus Student Network (ESN) community for new friends and more international exposures
- Pursue your hobbies and interests through campus community and events
- Maximize the study opportunity not only outside the class but of course, concentrate and be serious on learning on the class. This will gives you a more enlightened mind about the courses you take (especially if you find the study system is different with your home university)

Life after leaving

Staying in Dortmund for only 4 months had been a life changing experience. The stay had influenced me so much on stepping ahead for my future ambitions. I learned a lot, experienced various things and overall, I am satisfied with everything I got from TU Dortmund.

My stay had enhanced my soft skills and my ability to be critical and well-prepared person. I learned English in the class (as our main language) as well as learning German through the German course. I interacted with the people on the community which also increased my intrapersonal ability. These skills and knowledge will be very important on actualize my professional goals in the future.



I miss the Wurst and the Bahn(s). I've never enjoyed to eat various of sausages like in Germany. If I could take two things home with me, I would take a tons of Wurst and take the TU Dortmund H-Bahn home (It would be impossible, but, I would love to ^^). I'll set the H-Bahn from my *Wohnung* to my home university!

