

Personal Report

Dr. Wegenkittl, my supervisor at the University of Applied Sciences Salzburg, Austria encouraged me to undertake my master's project at the City University of New York (CUNY) under the supervision of Gabor T. Herman, Ph.D., which was an outstanding opportunity for my personal development as well as for my career. My project was possible due to the generous financial support of the Marshall Plan Foundation, which I am very thankful for.

Overall Impression of the research period

Generally, the research at CUNY was a very exciting and enriching experience for me. I highly improved my problem solving skills and I now feel even more confident working on research topics with a deep theoretical mathematical background. I also think that I can use the insightful experience from the frequent discussions about various theoretical concepts and mathematical problems in my research group to argue more confidently and skillfully in different areas of my studies. Moreover, it impressed me that I had the chance to work with highly skilled people from different institutions from all over the world. It was my research stay in New York that incited me to continue my studies with a doctoral program.

Quality of the research institution

As CUNY is the third-largest university system in the United States, in terms of number of students, I can only state my opinion about the Graduate Center, where my workplace was situated.

The Graduate Center is the major research institution in CUNY for doctoral students in arts and sciences. It is placed in the heart of New York City, right next to the Empire State Building. It also has its own library, which is actively used by the students. In the Graduate Center, I was given a workplace in an office that was used by two other researchers. Despite the office, I also had access to the offices of my research group where I could use any equipment if needed. It is also worth mentioning that having access to one CUNY institution makes it possible to visit all the other CUNY institutions and, most importantly, use their libraries. This is very valuable, as in the US it is not always easy to access university buildings where you are not enrolled.

Last but not least, it was Professor Herman, my supervisor at the Graduate Center that helped make my research project in the field of medical imaging such a success. Professor Herman

is absolute expert in his field and he authored several books about fundamental aspects in medical imaging, e.g. *Fundamentals of Computerized Tomography: Image Reconstruction from Projections* (2009) or *Advances in Discrete Tomography and Its Applications* (2007). Despite his heavy workload, he always showed interest in my progress, provided me with thoughtful and timely feedback. He allowed me to develop my own ideas and methods for the research while also exposing me to a wide array of ideas, thoughts, and views.

Integration in the research institution/organization

From the beginning to the end of my stay, the climate within my research group was such that it encouraged collaboration, cooperation, and teamwork. I had to continuously present the progress of my research not only to my supervisor but also to all the members of the “Discrete Imaging and Graphics Group” in the Graduate Center, including Marcelo Zibetti, Ph.D. and Chuan Lin, Ph.D., which were visiting scholars from Brazil and China at the time. Such presentations were always very interesting as the whole group participated in asking questions and giving helpful suggestions on how to improve my ideas. Furthermore, I could listen to presentations of the other researchers, where I was also always welcome to ask questions whether I was new to their field or not. Moreover, other researchers from CUNY or from New York University also presented their current research in the field of medical imaging, in order to get suggestions on how to improve their projects or to establish collaborations in certain projects with Prof Herman’s research group. This open-minded, highly skilled and encouraging environment helped me tremendously in executing my project at the Graduate Center.

Recommendations for future MPS scholars/fellows

There are several reasons why I can highly recommend the CUNY Graduate Center. First of all, the teaching professors are highly skilled experts in their respective fields. They also encourage and support their students to perform at their best in their individual fields of research while also allowing them to discover their own way of looking at problems.

Furthermore, being a part of CUNY also means that you can access every other CUNY institution and benefit from their many resources. The situation of the Graduate Center itself is also highly convenient as it is right in the heart of Manhattan and easily accessible via public transport.

Naturally, being in New York itself is a tremendous opportunity. I can only recommend to all future MPS scholars at CUNY to not only engage in their studies but to also experience the rich cultural life of the city of New York and the US in general, as researching in a new environment is also about getting to know other ways of life and, hence, new ways of thinking. Most importantly, the trendsetting IT community in New York offers numerous events and Meetups that one absolutely needs to be a part of.

As far as accommodation is concerned, I can recommend living at Kolping Haus in Manhattan to all male candidates, as getting to the Graduate Center usually only takes about 20 minutes and the rent is cheap for Manhattan standards.

Contact information after the research period

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