

Field report

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The opportunity to learn from and collaborate with relevant researchers at the Department of Geography of the Texas A&M University presents a valuable experience to me. I was able to receive crucial information about the field of fluvial sciences and geomorphology directly from the experts. Furthermore discussions with the hosting professors and PhD students of the department led to new ideas. Exciting topics arose in meetings by mixing my expertise in Structure from Motion point cloud processing with their knowledge on dynamic river environments. Having had a workplace in an open office for graduate students resulted in mutual interest shown about my as well as project from other students. Many contacts within the department were made and future collaborations within this network of researchers are certain to benefit the domain of environmental monitoring by means of remote sensing.

The department of Geography at Texas A&M is well known within the United States of America but also beyond that. Quality research is undertaken there with the most known findings being the development of the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index. A spectral ratio based index hugely popular in the remote sensing world.

Every Friday lecturers from the field of geography are invited to give public talks. Some of the speakers were really interesting with topics that were true eye openers to me. Generally the size of the department and the university in general allows for endless opportunities of knowledge gain and collaborations – even with people outside the field of geography. After all this is what truly drives research.

From my supervisors Dr. Fillipi was always there for questions and spontaneous meetings. Although point cloud data not being within his research scope he was able give valuable input and helped with the general methodology of my study. The second supervisor, Dr. Güneralp, was on maternity leave during my stay. However two scheduled meetings with her present were fruitful. The PhD student, Cesar Castillo, who is on the same project was my most frequent contact and enabled better understanding of fluvial systems on my side. He was also very helpful to gain better insight in the student live at Texas A&M with valuable tips for settling in.

For future student planning to stay the Department of Geography at Texas A&M I recommend an early application concerning Visa relevant documents. These document have to be signed by several people there and being such a big university this may take time. Furthermore I would recommend using couchsurfing as a means to arrive in College Station. An apartment for sub-let can easily be found via craigslist but viewing is highly recommended. Using the first week to find appropriate accommodation will make a great difference for your stay and couchsurfing is a great way to directly get in contact with local people or even to make friend.

From a professional point of view I can highly recommend a research stay at Texas A&M and the experience will resonate with my and hopefully your future career.

Please feel free to contact me any time: jakob.iglhaut@gmail.com