

EXPERIENCE REPORT



SEMESTER ABROAD

2016



California State University
SAN MARCOS

by

THOMAS TAUCHER

I am a student of Automation Technology and Economic at the University of Applied Sciences CAMPUS 02 in Graz. To gain more international experiences, I've decided to write my Master Thesis at the California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) in California. The CSUSM is a public comprehensive university and one of the 23 campuses of the California State University system. There are 13,000 students and the University is quite close to San Diego. From my point of view, the education level at this University is high and they offer everything that the students need – therefore I can recommend this University to everyone.

My flight to San Diego started on August 8th, so I had two weeks of leisure time before the orientation week of the University began. I spent my first week in San Diego and was living in the best hostel of the town and in two party hostels on the beachside - this was an awesome experience. After this first week in America I took a bus from San Diego to the city San Marcos, where my University was located. San Marcos is a city with around 100,000 inhabitants and it is close to San Diego. I was living with a host family not far away from the University and it took me only five minutes by bike from their house to the CSUSM. My host family was very friendly and we did a lot of awesome things together. For instance, we visited a huge birthday party with more than 100 people at a range on the countryside. My host father and my host mother were almost famous in their neighborhood and we visited a lot of other neighbors. After a short period, I knew almost all our neighbors which was very good for my social life in this small town.

The CSUSM organized an orientation week for all international students and therefore it was easy to meet new people and to find international friends. In the first weeks, I did a lot of activities with all the other international students because most of them had the same interests. We visited several beaches and made sightseeing trips to cities like San Diego, San Francisco, Los Angeles or Las Vegas. In my whole study period in San Marcos I have never seen another student from Austria but there were several international students from Germany. I have participated in four courses at the university and all these courses were very interesting and I've learned a lot about the American politics, culture and cultural habits.

Additionally, to these four courses at the University I wrote the biggest part of my master thesis in San Marcos and that was a big difference to most of the international students at the CSUSM because they only had to pass their courses. The combination of studying at the University, writing my master thesis and all the free time and traveling activities was a little bit stressful, but it was a positive stress and an awesome time. I met a lot of fantastic people, saw beautiful cities and places and I learned a lot about the American lifestyle. I can recommend taking a semester abroad in San Marcos to all students who want to collect international experiences and live the real American lifestyle. It was one of the best experiences in my life and I would do it again.

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