

FIELD REPORT

GENERAL IMPRESSION

All in all, my stay at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee for almost five months to do my internship was a great experience not only on the educational but also on the personal level. I had a very good time in the Mobility Lab where lots of research work is carried out. Besides working on my own project, I was able to learn a lot about the studies from other people working in the motion analysis lab. I learned about the restrictions and what things need more attention when taking measurements of biological signals from human subjects like the paperwork which needs to be done and the important difference about what is allowed in social interaction and what is forbidden. To be allowed to work with human subjects, a test needed to be done at the beginning. Another advantage of helping in other people's studies was the frequent usage of devices in the lab. I was glad to do it while working on the other projects because that would not have been possible by only sticking onto my own project. To do research for my project I could use the library of the UWM and their access to many online databases such as MEDLINE via PubMed and CINAHL. With that I could access many research articles and papers concerning my topic which helped me to understand the matter and dig deeper into the subject. It was also very beneficial to the capability of writing papers in academic English. Being in another country with a different culture naturally broadens someone's mind. I am so grateful that I got the chance to learn so much about another country with a not entirely different culture but still differences from what I am used to in Austria.

QUALITY OF THE HOST INSTITUTION

The equipment in the Mobility Lab was, especially concerning the motion analysis system, state of the art and working with the Department of Occupational Science and Technology enjoyable. The supervisors could help with every question and I was able to use all available devices in my project and a well-equipped library for literature reviews.

The only department which could have done more to make the organization of the stay in Milwaukee easier was the International Office. At the beginning I had no idea where to

get a bus pass or a student ID, which areas in Milwaukee are better to avoid and what leisure activities for the UWM I could be a part of. Unfortunately, there was no effort of the IO to help me with any of these problems, so I had to figure out everything by myself.

CONTACTS WITHIN THE INSTITUTION

While working in the Mobility Lab led to an immediate contact to other students it was not quite the best place to make friends because the people in the lab come from two different institutions and from different programs. Another problem was that the International Office of the UWM kind of did not know that I am at the University at all because of my status of visiting scholar instead of exchange student. It took me a month but then I finally got included into a program from the IO where I got a buddy and met several other people from there on. My colleagues in the Mobility Lab were very kind and especially my supervisors Dr. Kapellusch and Dr. Slavens were always concerned about my wellbeing.

I arrived in the middle of the fall semester but to meet other people and make new friends it would have probably been better to arrive at the beginning of the semester and take part in the introduction week to meet other international students and people who are in the same situation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I recommend doing an internship abroad. Doing it in a laboratory from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee was a great experience to see how working life is in the United States, what is similar, what is different, what is better or worse. Being there, I had the chance to work with great professors who have already published lots of their work and I learned so many things from them concerning doing research. Now that I got an insight into research work in the field of occupational science and technology I can definitely say that I want to continue working in that area, so I would tell everybody who gets the opportunity to do an internship in research in the US to do it. Also, even if not obvious to oneself immediately the English language improves fast. The most important thing is that the way to talk and write scientifically and academically correct in English would be so much harder to learn in a country where the main language is not English.