

## FIELD REPORT

### GENERAL IMPRESSION OF RESEARCH STAY ABROAD

While attending St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences, I had the opportunity to research Non-Linear Editing programs, specifically Avid Media Composer and Adobe Premiere Pro. Along with gathering information to help me compare and contrast these two NLE programs, I participated in a interdisciplinary course offered by St. Pölten UAS—the iLab. During this course, we were split into small groups and given real world problems that we needed to help provide a solution for. For example, my group was assigned the problem “how can we close the gap between farmers and consumers?”. We went through various presentations where our work would be displayed before a panel of judges, and then the judges would decide if our work had the potential to continue to the next round. The group I was apart of was fortunate enough to pass each gate and survive until the very end of the course.

What I loved about studying in St. Pölten was learning about the wide variety of people who were in the iLab with me. While it was challenging to use design thinking, as I have had very little experience with the process beforehand, I found it stimulating and satisfying to try and push myself to learn something new. There were so many students from all over the world gathered together to help build and lift our society as we came up with solutions for real world problems. Studying in Austria was one of the best decisions I have ever made, not only academically, but personally as well. It was hard to move to a place far away from the comfort of everything I knew, but by the time I was boarding the airplane to fly back home I felt like I was leaving a huge part of my heart behind.

I was also asked by the international student department to write a blog about my experiences during my stay in St. Pölten. This provided a great opportunity to reflect on the many places and memorable moments I experienced during my stay. I visited Rome, Italy and Paris, France—as well as Vienna, Austria many times. I seized every opportunity and made the most out of my stay, and because of that I was able to make friendships within the iLab that will last for the rest of my life. Needless to say, I was putting a lot of my focus and effort to immerse myself in the culture, iLab course, and work on my research paper concurrently.

### QUALITY OF THE HOST INSTITUTION

St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences is a well-organized and reliable institution. Although I did not have classes at the main building, due to the iLab being located in the center of town, I was thoroughly impressed by the access students in the Digital Cinema department had to equipment. While I was not specifically allowed to check out the Cinema equipment, another student in my iLab group was, and I was so impressed with the amount and quality of gear readily available. The broadcasting rooms, as well as the audio studio, were impressive. I found it encouraging that such professional and high-end equipment was available for students to use while studying and developing his or her skills. All of the professors and department officials were always willing to help whenever I had concerns or questions. The students attending St. Pölten UAS were also very kind, patient, and helpful. I could tell everyone who was associated

with the university truly wanted to understand more about me and where I came from. I will always view St. Pölten UAS with the utmost respect and admiration.

Something else I thought was extremely beneficial was the fact that students had access to the main building 24/7. After obtaining my student ID card I was able to go to the main building whenever I needed. This provided a place where I could concentrate on my studies, as well as research for my paper. We also had several gatherings as international students collectively on campus, and the accommodation provided to the students was beyond my expectations. I could tell St. Pölten UAS really cared for their students, and wanted them to succeed in whatever area they were studying.

#### CONTACTS WITHIN THE HOST INSTITUTION, INCLUSION IN THE ORGANIZATION

Kerstin Blumestein, Wolfgang Gruber, Teresa Sposato, Christina Tanzer were the iLab masters, professors, and advisors during my stay. Laura Zauner and Daniela Lohner were apart of the incoming and outgoing student mobility within the International Relations department. Alois Frotschnig was my research supervisor in Austria, as well as the Digital Media department head.

The iLab provided a lot of the inclusion I participated in during my stay. We went on an overnight camping trip in September when we all arrived to St. Pölten, as well as several excursions all over Austria. One of them being a trip to the Zotter Chocolate factory in Riegersburg, Austria. We also visited a Heurigen near Riegersburg as well. The international students committee also arranged “buddies” for all of the incoming students. This was incredibly helpful when I first arrived to Austria. My buddy picked me up from the airport and showed me how the trains worked, where the nearest grocery store was, where my flat was, as well as the where the university was located. Not only did we have assigned buddies to help us navigate and acclimate to life in Austria, but the buddies planned events for all of the international students to do together. This helped me learn more about people from different cultures and backgrounds, and created a small social network within the university.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE MARSHALL PLAN STUDENTS AND FELLOWS

Take advantage of every gathering and opportunity your host university has to offer. You will meet more people who are different from yourself, and ultimately understand what kind of person you really want to be when you’re exposed to so much diversity. This opportunity may be the only time you get to travel outside of your home country, so get out and see everything you can. Meet as many people as you can, and truly try to understand how they think and what qualities you want to inherit from them. Everyone has something positive they offer to the world, and participating in this research scholarship has provided the opportunity for me to learn and adopt these positive attributes and qualities. Yes the research is important, and what you can learn from the research is important, but being around other cultures and people—experiencing life—is something that you will never forget for the rest of your life. Make sure to truly *live* wherever you are in the world, and try to learn from everyone around you.