
MARSHALL PLAN - FIELD REPORT

In course of the master program "Spatial Information Management" of the Carinthia University of Applied Sciences (CUAS) and through the International Relation Office (IRO) of CUAS and the Austrian Marshall Plan Foundation, I was given the opportunity to visit the University of New Mexico (UNM) in Albuquerque, New Mexico. In general, I returned with a very good impression of this research stay in New Mexico and would very much like to do this stay again and recommend it to every student. This applies both to quality and to the inclusion of students into the university.

In my opinion, the UNM has shown a high quality as a host institution. On the one hand, the university has proven to be of high quality in terms of amenities, as you can find just about anything you could wish for as a student on the university campus. There are several libraries in which all kinds of literary and digital works and the like from various research areas can be read or borrowed. There is also a large sports center, a stationery store and the Student Union Building, which houses a grocery store, many different restaurants and a bar. I also liked that there is a large rest area in the middle of the campus for all UNM staff and visitors with a pond and surrounding meadow and trees and that some important bus stops for students are right next to the university. Therefore, it was always relatively easy to find a suitable connection from the university to my apartment or other important places, although I have generally not been convinced by the public transport system in Albuquerque, especially the bus connections.

Furthermore, the university has also proven a high quality in terms of organization and staff, especially those of the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies. Firstly, when I arrived at the university, I was warmly welcomed to the department. At the beginning, I was also immediately introduced to all staff members of the department and we (me and a few future Master students of the UNM) got an introductory tour over the entire campus and made a trip through the city to get to know other important and worth seeing institutions and places. This made it much easier for me to know the routes to important buildings at the university and to be more confident to visit other places outside the university. Although, there have been some minor issues with important documents (DS 2019, Social Security Number) at the beginning, these were quickly solved by the very good organization and cooperation of the employees, especially thanks to Mr. Christopher Lippitt, Mrs. Texanna Martin, Mr. Sean O'Neill and Mr. Phillip Gill.

Since I spent most of my time at the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies working on my master thesis, I have established only a few close contacts with staff from other departments of the university. However, I can say that the UNM staff approach everyone very openly, treat

everybody with a lot of respect and usually respond very quickly to e-mails when something is needed. Furthermore, I felt very well integrated into the organization and the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies from the very beginning. On the one hand, the introduction of all employees of the department and the tour of the campus at the beginning ensured this. On the other hand, I was often invited by the employees to visit discourses with them and then spend some time together at the bar in the Student Union Building. This made it particularly easy for me to quickly establish contacts with the other employees. In addition, I was often invited to take part in excursions, for example hikes. Among other things, I had the opportunity to hike with staff to the Sandia Mountains and visit the Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument on the Pajarito Plateau and the inactive "Three Sisters" volcanoes. I was also able to help at the department's stand at the discovery fairs and transfer fairs, thus deepening contacts with other employees and helping the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies to recruit new students.

Due to the high competence and experience of the staff, the friendly and respectful treatment of students, the campus amenities and the discourse and excursion offers, I would warmly recommend this research stay at the UNM in New Mexico to every student! I also really recommend visiting the Carlsbad Caverns National Park and the Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument.