

Field Report

This field report summarizes general impressions for research in the period from March to August 2020. I was allowed to write my Masterthesis with the title "Clustering Twitter Trajectories" in cooperation with the University of Chicago.

General impression of research period abroad

In my preparations for the trip to the USA, events concerning the spread of the covid-19 pandemic came thick and fast. Shortly before I entered the country, the entry regulations were tightened considerably, making it impossible for me to enter. Thanks to the University of Chicago, the entire cooperation could be held remotely. In April 2020 the idea to shorten the physical stay and travel to Chicago for the summer semester in June still existed. Unfortunately, these plans were also canceled by the pending University's lock-down and the resulting closure of all buildings. Therefore, all further cooperation was carried through as a series of weekly online meetings. Some challenges regarding arrangements occurred due to the time shift of seven hours between Austria and Illinois. Therefore it was ubiquitous that some "after work" meetings started at 11 pm.

Quality of the host institution

Although I was only in remote contact with the staff of the University of Chicago for the entire time, I can highly recommend this institution. Unfortunately, I cannot give any further information about campus life and facilities at the University, as I could not travel to Chicago in person due to immigration regulations.

Contacts within host institution / integration in the organization

In all numerous meetings carried out remotely, I was warmly welcomed and involved. On all kinds of questions regarding the current research or personal demands, I received competent answers every time. I also felt well supported by my supervisor Dr. Rebecca Willett, who always had excellent advice and kept me on track successfully completing my research. In some "after work" sessions, I had the opportunity to talk to other students or staff members of the University of Chicago.

Recommendations for future Marshall Plan Students/Fellows

For future students receiving the Marshall Plan Scholarship, I hope that they can conduct their research without any restrictions. In general, I think working in cooperation with the University of Chicago was very beneficial for me, from which I can profit. I can only recommend it to everyone, who has such an opportunity.