

The University of Tokyo Study Abroad/Student Exchange Program Report Form
(for programs from one semester to a year)

Date: MM/DD/YYYY

Faculty/Graduate School at UTokyo:	教養学部	Year at the time of Study Abroad	4年生
Program Attended:	BALAC at the Faculty of Arts	Host University:	Chulalongkorn University
Occupation after graduation (intended):			
	1. Research		
	2. Specialist (Medical • Judiciary • Accountant)		
	3. Civil Service		
	4. NPO		
	5. Private sector (Type of industry:)		
	6. Entrepreneurship		
	○ 7. Others (大学院に行くつもり)		

Outline of the receiving institution overseas

Chulalongkorn University is considered as the UTokyo of Thailand. They are very actively engaged in globalization, and created eight programs in English in 8 different faculties of their institution (Arts, Engineering, Business, Architecture etc...). As a result, Thai students can choose between studying fully in Thai or fully in English. There are many Thai students thus speaking in a mix of Thai and English to each others on campus. Unlike PEAK, those programs are primarily made for Thai students and secondly for international students, and therefore it is way much easier for international students to make Thai friends than it is in PEAK to make Japanese friends. Overall, Chulalongkorn thus feels like a truly globalizing university where thousands of Thai students achieve their education in English in an international environment and international students feel welcomed and included.

Reason why you decided to participate

I was interested in learning about Thai and most globally South-East Asian cultures as it is an area generally overlooked in other parts of the world. I also wanted to experience living in a developing country.

Period of Study etc.

(1) Academic status before the program:	Completed the	2nd	semester of the	3rd	Year of	Undergraduate	study in year	2017
(2) Status during the program:	Exchange student							
(3) Duration etc.:	From (Month) (Year)	August	2017	to (Month) (Year)	December			2017
	Departing in	4th	year of	Undergraduate	study in year			2017
(4) Registering for classes on return:	Re-registered for classes from	2	semester of the	4	Year of	4	study in year	2018
(5) Period of job hunting:			in the month of			of the		Year of
			study in year					

(6) Number of credits earned at UTokyo:	Number of credits earned before program:		59	credits
	Number of credits earned during the program which will be processed for transfer:		8	credits
	Number of (expected) credits after program:		17	credits
(7) Enrolled/ Expected timing of graduation:	Enrolled: (Month) (Year)	September 2014	Graduated/completed: (Month) (Year)	August 2018
(8) Time taken from enrollment to graduating/completion:	4 years		0 months	
(9) Reason for choosing period to study abroad:				
Personal reasons connected with family events.				
Preparation for the program				
(1) Application process (please give any advice on dealing with the application process)				
Start writing your application and asking professors about recommendation letters in advance to avoid any stress. I did not know much about Thailand or Bangkok, I had never been before applying but do not hesitate to go to a new destination: a big part of the exchange program for me was to deal with new situations, new norms, new issues in a very different environment, make new friends with different mindsets from people here. Consider your time abroad as an adventure, and that is how you will learn the most from it!				
(2) Visa application (type of visa, where to apply, processing time, any advice on visa application)				
I had an issue applying for my visa and anyone should be careful about it. You usually need your passport expiry date to be 6 months later than the beginning time of your visa abroad. I started to make a new passport in June but had to wait 2 months to book a meeting at the embassy. In the end it did not work as I was planning to go back to my country for a few weeks before my exchange, so I had to apply for a passport there and finally for my Thai visa, which I received on the day before I left for Thailand. Thus I would recommend to make sure 6 months before you apply for your visa that your passport will not expire.				
(3) Medical check-ups (health check-ups before departure, inoculations, etc.)				
No particular problem. I recommend going to the doctor before and after the exchange to check if there is anything to be done.				
(4) Insurance (information about insurance for travel/studying abroad purchased)				
Despite having an insurance in my home country covering me 100% against anything, I was forced by UTokyo to subscribe to purchase another insurance in Japan.				
(5) Procedures required by your Faculty/Graduate School (any information about course registration, credits, exams, submission of dissertations etc)				
The credit transfer procedure happens way too late (a month before the end of the next semester) so if you are going on exchange in the 1st semester of your last year like I did I would recommend you not to count on the credits you earned abroad to graduate, but rather to consider them as a bonus.				
(6) Language preparation (language level before the program, lessons etc.)				

I took Thai beginner lessons at UTokyo and also in Chulalongkorn. I would not recommend taking the class at UTokyo, but having said that I do not regret taking it as it taught me to decypher the Thai alphabet. The class was mostly in Japanese, directed towards writing and reading Thai but not at all speaking and listening, and extremely demanding for little results. The class at Chulalongkorn, although you do not get any credit, is very useful for getting a basic level of Thai. Also, I recommend practicing with the Thai friends you will make, mines were very eager to help me learn Thai!

(7) Items which should be taken with you from Japan and any other advice on things which should be done before leaving Japan.

Ask your doctor to give you those good bacterias which can fill your stomach and avoid bad bacterias coming to stay and make you sick. It can save you from some food poisoning experiences in Thailand. Don't take much clothes, especially warm clothes which you will never use. Clothes in Thailand are very cheap so it is a good time to do shopping. You will have to buy a uniform to go to classes at Chulalongkorn, so you can bring nice formal shoes and trousers in advance if you want.

Information on the academic/research program

(1) Copy of list of subjects taken (if classes were taken)

※ Please mark with ● all subjects which you are processing to transfer credits to the University of Tokyo

subject	number of credits	credit transfer	subject	number of credits	credit transfer
Thai Literature and Culture	3	●			
Thai History	3	●			
Basic Thoughts of Asia	3	●			
Contemporary Asian Cultures	3	●			

(2) Outline of the program (Style of the lessons/preparation study/review study, thing which left an impression on you, etc.)

I took mostly introductory classes on literature, history and thoughts (religion) as well as one more advanced on cultures. The system is similar to seminars at UTokyo, but with quasi systematically mid term and final term examinations. Some classes also have small tests every 2 or 3 weeks. I thought I would study less than I did during my exchange, but I do not regret as I learnt a lot about Thailand and SEA, and the classes as well as my experiences in Thailand outside of campus (exploring Bangkok, traveling in Thailand and in Cambodia, talking with my friends) converged on making me understand a lot about the country and the region.

(3) Number of subjects/credits per semester, number of hours of study/research time in a week (including class hours and study out-of-class hours)

4 subjects plus Thai language which was 2 times 2 hours per week for 3 weeks. The other subjects were each 3 hours per week. Besides I had readings in all subjects almost every week so an extra 4-8 hours out of class (less if you skip a few extra readings but some are really necessary and interesting.)

(4) Advice on aspects of academic/research work

I had way more exams and way less essays to write. I prefer essays but in the end the examinations are not too difficult, just study with your curiosity and you will have good grades. I did spent a few days studying before the exams, but in the end it feels good when you realise how much new knowledge you accumulated. There are possibilities to do internships for a research institute within Chulalongkorn University. I got in touch with them but ended up not doing it.

(5) Problems experienced with language issues, advice concerning language, etc.

Try to learn the basics of Thai, but most of the Chula students speak very good English so it will be a great occasion to practice English too if you want to get better in that language. I recommend to really socialise in the beginning and make Thai friends. The friends I made really helped me throughout my stay for any language related issue.

Aspects of life

(1) Accommodation (Type (home-stay, room-sharing etc.), cost, atmosphere/appearance of accommodation, how you found it, etc.)

I do not recommend staying in the dorm as it is expensive and small. I stayed in a private residence called C Residence, close to Chula, cheap and with a lot of space and I really recommend it. There are either studios (without kitchen) which I took, 1 bedroom apartment (with kitchen) or 2 bedroom apartment (with kitchen too). If you know someone going to Bangkok too, why not sharing an apartment with him or her?

(2) Living environment (such as climate, environment around the institution, transport facilities, food, managing your money (overseas money transfer, credit cards))

Be careful at the ATM: you receive the money BEFORE the credit card comes out of the machine. I lost my credit card because I left with my money and forgot it there... October is the rainy season in Thailand, it rained a lot. November-March is the best time to go. In May-September is the summer, very hot but bearable. As for transportations, I did not like motorbikes and tuk tuk that much but went around with the skytrain, metro and taxis. Get the application called Grab, it is like Uber but cheaper and everyone is using it in Bangkok. I had another issue with my credit card as I got withdrawn money I did not get, and then I could not withdraw anymore because I had virtually already withdrawn money. It was stressful but using skype credits I spent some time on the phone with my bank in France and had to send a few emails and in the end everything got solved.

(3) Aspects of risk and safety management (safety of local region, condition of medical facilities, any action taken in maintaining your mental and physical health, etc.)

I did not have any problem of safety or health so I cannot talk about it.

(4) Details of expenses (breakdown of costs, such as airfare, program fees, cost of required books, rent, food, travel cost, money spent on entertainment)

•Monthly living cost and its breakdown

Appartment with internet, water, electricity: 9.500-10.000 Bahts (about 3万-3万4千 yen)
Food: really depends on your taste! But I would say 1/3 to 1/2 of your food budget in Japan. At the University cafeteria you can eat well for 100 yen! Japanese restaurants generally cost more, around 600-700 yen.
Going out is cheap as well, but alcohol is comparatively more expensive than food (although still cheap).
Overall Bangkok is pretty cheap compared to Tokyo and you can expect to do more things here with the same budget. Fancy things are expensive like anywhere, but the normal Thai transportations, food, lifestyle is cheap.

•Total cost spent on studying abroad and its breakdown

See above

(5) Financial aid (if you were receiving financial aid/scholarships, please give the name of the source of the aid, amount, and how you found it, etc.)

I was on the UTokyo scholarship, 126.000 yens per months. It is more than necessary and I could travel with the remaining money.

(6) Activities other than academic/research work (sports, cultural, volunteer/internship, weekend activities, etc.)

A lot! Go to the integration activities at the beginning of the semester as you will make friends there. Then I went out a lot to the cinema, to art exhibitions, gallery openings, museums, art spaces. I went wall climbing, went also to the amazing gym and swimming pool of the University. I travelled in the weekends all around Thailand and also to Cambodia, Hong Kong and Macau. Also spent a lot of times with friends cooking, playing boardgames or having a drink. Chulalongkorn University also has a very active cultural life and I saw a lot of theatrical and musical performances there. There are a lot of clubs too, especially sport clubs like at UTokyo.

Environment of the receiving institution

(1) Support facilities for students taking part in the program (such as language, academic, living support mechanism and counseling services)

Expect to struggle a little bit for registration, administrative procedures etc... Happily everyone was very patient with me.

(2) Facilities (libraries, sports facilities, cafeteria, IT equipment and facilities, etc.)

The general library is exactly like the North Pole in terms of temperature and I fell ill for a week staying there to work for my midterms: I recommend to avoid it. I enjoyed the library of the Art faculty and of the Architecture faculty. There are also many coffee shops on campus to study. The cafeterias are all very good, I recommend the Art faculty and the Engineer one. Eat a lot in Thailand! The sport facilities are all brand new and very nice (gym, swimming pool, outdoor zumba classes on campus every evening)

Studying abroad and job hunting

(1) (those that have job hunted) Impact that the your study abroad had on job hunting, merit and demerit

(2) (those who will be starting job hunting) How the study abroad has impacted your thoughts towards employment

(3) Actions towards job hunting while studying abroad (if any)

(4) If you have succeeded in finding a job, please inform us, if agreeable, as much as possible about your job

- | | |
|--|---|
| | 1. Research |
| | 2. Specialist (Medical • Judiciary • Accountant) (position:) |
| | 3. Civil Service (name of institution:) |
| | 4. NPO (name of organization and field:) |
| | 5. Private sector (name of company and industry:) |
| | 6. Entrepreneurship (field:) |
| | 7. Others () |

Looking back over the program

(1) The significance of the program and how you have developed by taking part in it, any other impression from having studied abroad

I definitely gained a lot of maturity living by myself in a country I did not know or speak the language. The special feeling of being on exchange, there for only a few months really pushed me to be more active than I am in Tokyo and to take the best out of my time there, which I did. I learnt to deal with issues without stressing, to organise myself better and to get new insights about life.

(2) Your plans having studied abroad

I want to go back to Bangkok to visit my friends there as soon as possible ! As for my future, I want to use the knowledge I acquired during those months when I will study my Master in Comparative Literature.

(3) Any messages or advice for future participants

Go on exchange to Chula! Bangkok is a chaotic city but also the perfect city to go for exchange. There you will meet a lot of great people, discover amazing and secret places around the city and make amazing memories. There are a lot of Japanese students, Japanese food, Japanese products in Thailand. If you are Japanese, try not to stick with it, and push yourself to really explore and discover Thai people, food and things. It is more difficult, but also more exciting and rewarding!

Miscellaneous

(1) Websites or publications which were useful while preparing for or during your time overseas

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(2) Please submit any photographs which may be used on the University of Tokyo websites or publications.

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