



**IUAV\_Universita luav di Venezia**  
Exchange Semester Report



The following report is my ERASMUS Exchange for IUAV Venice as part of the master's exchange semester. The report will cover my complete experience from the initial visa application process to the final exams.

**(Note: I am not an EU Resident, and the process will be different for those who are part of the EU) It will vary from the application process from applying to the University, Accommodation and the complete travel experience.**

### **Visa, Accommodation & Residence Permit:**

After getting my choice for IUAV, I immediately contacted the university about my exchange request notifying them that I am interested in an Erasmus exchange program which they replied around three days with the application documents for the university with a list of needed paperwork. The first step for myself is I needed a student visa which I naturally looked up online and contacted the embassy in Bern as mentioned on their website. As always I sent them an email in English about the reason for my studies, and weirdly enough I got a reply in French which I do not speak with some help of a friend I was able to understand the email, and they requested for me to provide the following:

1. Passport photo
2. Health insurance covering Italy
3. Letter of acceptance and study in both the host university and original University
4. Bank statement covering 30 euros per day of every day of stay
5. Passport and Residence Permit

With the help of Mrs. Mirijana, she was able to translate in Italian to the embassy in Geneva about any issues with the application, and they needed everything from accommodation, Travel arrangements to be completely cleared and confirmed before seeing the embassy. Important Note (please make sure you contact Mrs. Buchel to make sure you have a valid residence permit for your complete study as they will ask for it for the Visa).

Once I received these emails, I directly contacted the needed contacts from accommodation, University and insurance company (located in Dubai for myself) The insurance company finished my application in 3 days while the university and accommodation took around a month to

simply respond to via email which delayed my application for the visa and moreover, with the delay of the accommodation they replied on a Friday and they request for me to pay a deposit which their deadline for me was on a Saturday which was very inconvenient meaning I needed to rush ASAP to get the accommodation papers cleared out. Once I complete everything on their list, I forwarded everything to the embassy with the help of Mrs. Mirijana. I was waiting for a response from the embassy but no reply for around three weeks. So I went directly to the international office to receive at least some feedback on what's going on from the embassy, and weirdly enough they could not find the application and Mrs. Mirijana was sent from office to office (Zurich, Bern, and Geneva) when that happened I kind of got an indicator of what I am getting myself into in some way. As we found my application in Geneva the best way of communicating with the embassy was to contact them by phone to receive a direct feedback instead of waiting for an email or a phone call. The embassy required a travel ticket, and I got a ticket for the 20th of February because the university starts on the 21st of February and I need to be present for the orientation and introduction process for the University but the embassy was very late and asked me to arrive a week after my university begins which is awful for my initial start of the university because it the official introduction week for the students to understand the system and where all the facilities of the university are located and moreover to meet new students. When I got to the embassy, I noticed a common trait many of the embassy staff members do not speak English which will make it very difficult if English is your first language or is the only language you are able to speak.

once that is cleared out, and I received my Visa I was required to register to the official government building which I got a form I need to fill in and then send to the police station via post which they will then give me a paper with an appointment date to receiving my residence permit.

### **Class Registration: & Timing:**

The University has a very complex and not very user-friendly website which some links don't even work in English. The Idea is once you register using the learning agreement you will not need to furthermore register for anything else only for the exams which will only be available when the exams are open for registration. The Classes are not very organized and do not have a full schedule for the whole semester which is tough to plan for months ahead the schedules are only available per week which



can change mid week which is not easy if you are a very organized individual. Moreover, Classes do not even start as per the schedule they typically begin a few hours after the starting time.

### **Transportation:**

Since you are in Venice depending on your needs, you can either apply or not apply for the ferry. If you will need the ferry on a daily, then it's highly recommended to apply for a ferry card that provides unlimited usage of the ferries.

### **Studio Experiences and atmosphere:**

The University does not have a fixed studio place for the classes due to the high number of programs which is very inconvenient for students meaning they will need to carry around a lot of their items every day and always wasting time moving around. The first day of the studio they made it mandatory for Italian students to have at least one ERASMUS Student due to the issues with Italian students not wanting to interact or work with ERASMUS Students due to their fear of having to speak English with them which does not make sense since the studio is an English only studio. That made it very hard for students to interact or socialize with the Italian students. But with time the Italian students were able to see how serious the students are and they are here to study and work and those barriers started to disappear.

### **Desk Crits:**

Desk Crits are very different from the University of Liechtenstein where formal presentations were only done on the projectors which are very uncommon, and some plans may only look clear on paper then the projector and since the classrooms are huge with a large number of students a microphone is necessary to even present.

### **Table Discussions & Power Struggle:**

I have noticed that there is a lot of power struggle with the professors since many of the professors do not want to listen to the students they only tell the students what to do and not help them think and support their ideas. For example, an argument erupted between a student and the professor mid presentation when the student just did not agree with the professor's point of view, and the professor's argument is that the student is wrong only because the professor saw more plans than the student. Unlike Liechtenstein where the discussion is not aggressive but more innovative and constructive and much more open to discussions with a more understanding atmosphere.

### **Events and the City:**

The City has many wonderful activities, and cultures do to the high amount of people that visit the island on a daily basis, for example, the Venice carnival and a music concert on the water to the official rowing competition that happens annually. The Italians are most famous for is the fantastic food and of course, the amazingly delicious Gelato which every person appreciates in their experience in Italy.







### **Final Feedback:**

This experience is truly a great exchange program, and I am very happy with the outcome of this Semester. Highly recommended for future students of Uni.li

### **Midterms & Exams:**

As Time passed I was able to adapt to the system in IUAV it does take some time to adopt the lifestyle and systems. The midterms and desk crits as time passed was pretty well it was very productive and helped the project progress since there are many different professors from many different fields. The issues I faced the most is the lack of facilities the university does not have any printing facilities, so you will need to go outside the university to print the plans which are time-consuming, and building materials from cards and paper is tough to purchase and move around since Venice has no slopes but many bridges if you want to purchase a lot of building materials for you models it will be very labor intensive because you will need to carry it the whole time way to the university. Thanks to my experience from Uni Li I was able to work in a group of five more productivity and was able to get 100% on the final presentations which are a very rare grade in IUAV.