

Testimonial from an ESADE Themis student at SMU
in the Fall 2015

I participated in the THEMIS program at SMU during the winter semester 2015-2016.

SMU is a relatively young and new university, with an exciting international environment, mainly focused on international and company law. The experience of being a SMU student offers not only the opportunity to study interesting and challenging courses but also the opportunity to develop your skills in a challenging environment. While students are usually from Singapore, Malaysia, India or China, SMU hosts hundreds of exchange students from many different countries. In all my projects I have worked with people with an extremely different background which challenged and enriched me, allowing me to acquire a global and international perspective of the law. Moreover, it allowed me to learn new ways of working and studying.

The internationality found in SMU can also be described as one of the main characteristics of Singapore. This young country (during my exchange program the country celebrated its 50 anniversary), attracts people from every continent for its job opportunities and for its strategic location in the center of South East Asia. Actually, a lot of exchange students spend most of their time travelling around the region. Although its youth, Singapore works perfectly. Based on very well-established rules the city is safe, clean and tidy. One of the most interesting aspects of the country is the convergence between an eclectic cultural challenge inspired by the youth and the “expats” community and the traditional values of the Singaporean culture preserved by the local families. It is a city where cultures from around the world meet and coexist peacefully.

SMU is located in a strategic position in the city center, close to different food courts, tourist attractions, and malls. It is very well connected with the rest of the country. The public transportation (MRTS) can quickly take you to everywhere and it is almost always on time. Although taxis are not expensive, taxi drivers are rude, most of the time do not know the addresses and usually they simply refuse to take you home, especially at night.

The School of Law shares its building with the School of Accountancy (SOL/ SOA), though a new building for the faculty of law is under construction. For the moment there is only one library which is definitely too small and always crowded. However, each School has tables in an open space, study rooms and seminar rooms in order to allow students to study either individually or in group. In the overall, SMU has amazing facilities. There are a lot of different spots and amenities in order to allow students to find the perfect atmosphere to study.

The administrative organization in SMU is also very well organized. Since the very beginning they offer you information of every step the student needs to take in order to proceed with the enrollment, they respond to emails very quickly, and are always willing to help.

With regard to the classes I have taken (5), I would say that this semester in SMU has been very challenging: professors are very demanding and the level of competition is quite hard. In most of my classes I had to do a peer teaching, write a paper and take an exam. The SMU’s system of grading divides the grades into different assignments which

makes you busy most of the time. I would definitely not recommend to take 5 classes; the amount of work is totally overwhelming. However, exchange students usually take up to 4 classes and accumulate them in two or three days a week in order to travel the rest of the week.

I would definitely recommend THEMIS students to apply for the exchange in SMU as it is a very challenging while rewarding experience.