


<u>Experience Report</u>	<b>Thai–German Double–Degree Program in Logistics</b> 
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Country	Host University	Degree Program at OVGU
Thailand	Chiang Mai University	Wirtschaftsing. Logistik M.Sc.
Name	Stay from (month/year)	until (month/year)
Huth, Marcus	August/2016	February/2017

The Thai–German Double–Degree Program in Logistics is a cooperation between the OVGU and the Chiang Mai University. Students of Industrial Engineering Logistics (OVGU) and Logistic Engineering and Supply Chain Management (CMU) are given the chance to do at least one semester at the other university, write their master thesis in English and receive two degrees.

#### Application procedure:

The application procedure is done by the OVGU. The responsible contact person at the OVGU is Dr-Ing. Henning Strubelt. For applying you need a letter of motivation, a transcript of records of your bachelor study and a certificate of english proficiency.

#### Arrival and first impression:

It is not possible to go to Chiang Mai by a direct flight. You have to transfer and use a domestic flight to go to Chiang Mai. When I arrived at the airport, I was picked up by 3 Thai Students. My first impression was that Thai people are really helpful, so I felt comfortable from the beginning on. They invited me to have dinner with them and after that, they brought me to my accommodation for the first weeks, the so called engineer home. From there you can search for an accommodation outside the university or stay there, what I did. At the first days the university and the professors were introduced to me and I had an appointment with associate professor Korrakot Yaibuatathat Tipayawong. As responsible contact person, she gave me some general information about the study procedure. After some days, my classmates organised a dinner to get to know the second year students as well as some professors.

#### Enrolment:

The course enrolment was quite difficult. Due to a change in the administration in the industrial engineering department the knowledge about the enrolment for exchange students was lost. My data hasn't been in the university information system and therefore I was not able to receive a student card and to choose courses in the enrolment period. As a consequence to this, the course adding had to be done manually. Fortunately Thai students supported me solving this problem. The courses are predefined in the appendix of the contract about the Double–Degree–Program. But in my case, the university wasn't able to provide 5 courses in English and therefore I had to do an individual project.

#### Studying and exams in Chiang Mai

Study in Thailand is different from studying in Germany. The semester is divided into two parts, 8 weeks each. After both periods there is a three hour examination in each subject. The final grade is calculated of 50% to 70% of the examination grades. The rests are presentations,

class attendance, course projects or group-works. A lecture takes about 3 hours with a small break in between. In addition the department offers guest lectures in English and field trips to companies. Another difference between Germany and Thailand is, that the classmates have to choose a speaker, who is responsible for the communication between students and professors and to organise scripts, books and presents for guest lecturers.

#### Language requirements:

The Program is in Thai and English. As an exchange student you are only able to study the courses that are held in English language. Most of the professors speak understandable and fluent English, but Thai students are not used to speak English and therefore they have problems in expressing themselves. For taking part in the TGDDP you need to have language skills according to the Agreement, at least B2 to C1 CEFR. The communication with local people is a big problems. Apart from the university and the touristic areas most of the people don't speak English. Therefore it is a good idea to learn some Thai, for example numbers, ordering food or to ask the way. The university offers a basic Thai-course, called "Thai for Survivors" at the international college. But you can also hire a private Thai teacher for about 8€ per hour.

#### Accommodation:

It is a good idea to arrange a temporary stay at the so called engineer home, a guesthouse on the campus next to the department of industrial engineering. Afterwards you can search by yourself for an accommodation around the university. There are a lot of Dormitories, Apartments and flats around the university. The prices are between 80€ and 300€. Because I came to Thailand alone, the university offered me to stay in the Engineer home for my whole stay, what I did.

#### Campus and City

The campus of the Chiang Mai University is located between the city centre of Chiang Mai and the Doi Su Thep national park, with a famous temple in the mountains in a former jungle area. The Campus is quite huge and many times as big as the campus of Magdeburg and it is the place to study for about 36.000 students. In order to preserve the forest the university buildings were placed in between the trees. The Campus has a lot of traffic and cause of its hugeness, 5 bus routes with small electric vehicles serve the students to bring them where they want to go. Chiang Mai is the third biggest city in Thailand with about 1 Mio citizens. The city is located in between two mountain ranges. All ways are heading to the historic squared city centre in the west of the ping-river. It is the most important city apart from Bangkok and has a huge number of temples and festivals. The climate in Chiang Mai is in comparison to the rest of Thailand quite bland. During the rainy season from July to October the weather is quite hot and humid. In the cold season from November to February the climate is quite nice like in German summers.

#### Transport and spare time

In Chiang Mai there is nearly no public transport. The transport is done by so called red trucks, these are modified pick-ups with a roof and seats on the cargo area. There are quite a lot of them driving around town. To stop them you can just raise your hand. But you should negotiate the price in advance. The most common way of transportation are scooters and more and more cars. To rent a scooter is the easiest and most convenient way to drive around the town

and to avoid the traffic jam. There are a lot of things to do in Chiang Mai. For example you can go on a ride with you motorbike and visit a waterfall, a lake, an elephant camp or an indigene hill tribe. It is also a good idea to go to a market and try the wide range of Thai food from street kitchens. The touristic markets are taking place every Saturday and Sunday and are called Walking Street. But you should be aware of the spiciness of Thai food. Small coffee shops and restaurants are located at every street corner. The university offers a lot of sport facilities, like courts for soccer, basketball, tennis and many more as well as a stadium. The first semester students are encouraged to take part in the Doi Su Thep trekking. A must-have is to visit the Loi Kratong Festival in November. The so called light festival with Chinese lanterns in the sky and a lot of candles in the river is something you cannot see in Europe. From Chiang Mai it is also easy and cheap to visit other countries around Thailand, but Thailand has also a lot of beautiful areas in the south of the country.

### Conclusion

To sum up, studying in Thailand gave me an insight in a complete different culture and academic education. You need to learn to be patient and tolerant to succeed in a difficult environment. I would like to encourage students to take part in the double degree program and definitely recommend this program.







