



## **SKKU Study Abroad Report**

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Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, FEE  
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## Introduction

I went on a study exchange to SKKU in my 3rd and final year of studies in the EECS program and I was one of 3 students from FEE that went this year. Living and studying in Korea is quite different than studies in Europe and the experience was completely worth it. Over the course of the semester, I gained a lot knowledge, learned subjects of my major from a completely different, but useful point of view, expanded my worldview and learned a lot about Korea's rich and unique culture. The purpose of this report is to talk about the university and the various benefits as well as hurdles to going on a study exchange there.

## Study

SKKU is one of the top 3 Korean Universities and its ratings are continuing to increase year after year. The mission of the university is to become one of the leading universities in the world. This ambition is reflected in the teachers and staff there. I took primarily Electrical Engineering courses so my view of the study will be mostly based on my experience with those courses and study at the Suwon campus (as there is the Seoul campus for humanities majors). A lot of classes are in English (a lot more than at FEE). Korean students have to take a certain number of classes in their major in English so the classes typically consist of 30 Korean and 1 or 2 foreign students (it is not uncommon to be the only foreigner in a class - I had 3 classes like that). The campus is set up to be very student friendly - it is very easy to find places to study, out of the numerous study rooms, study booths, library and classrooms.



For EECS: most classes will be in the Engineering building (20), (32) are the dorms, (40) is the library

## Teaching

Overall my impressions of the teaching is that SKKU is on a world-class level. The style of learning here is very heavily focused on memorization (at least more so than at CTU). An

example of this is the class Theory of Computer Architectures, where we had to memorize an entire assembly language in binary. The courses are very well organized - it is easy to ask for help, there is never any doubt about admin and all study-related activities are well prepared. Koreans are punctual, so it is important to be punctual with them as well. For example, turning in homework on time and showing up before the class starts are important. Starting this semester there is a new rule that students check in to class electronically via the SKKU app. This policy keeps students in check and makes them punctual to class (since attendance is ~10-15% of the grade in each course).

### **Courses**

I had 6 subjects at SKKU (they and their equivalent FEE classes are shown in the Documents section). The workload is very balanced and makes one work throughout the semester - more homeworks than at FEE. Each class is 1 hour and 15 minutes long. Most courses use powerpoints and teachers' notes. There is no division into seminars and lectures - all are considered lectures and have theory and examples throughout. Overall the feeling is not too different than at CTU.

### **Students**

One shock that you will get immediately in the classroom, is that when the teacher asks a question no one answers anything; there can be silence for up to a few minutes while the teacher tries to get someone to talk, but ends up answering the question himself anyways. This has to do with Koreans' shyness when speaking English - something that one notices in and out of the classroom. In the beginning Koreans are closed, but after a while they open up a little and it's not hard to get to know them. Korean students are very hard working and have a good work ethic - they study a lot and value knowledge and learning very highly. A common scene from the Suwon library: At 3:00 am during exam week there is not a single free seat.



This is what my dorm room looked like

### **Accommodation**

During my stay in Suwon I lived at the Shingwan-B dorm. If you live at Strahov, Bubenec or any of the dorms at CTU you will be pleasantly surprised... mostly. The dorms are very clean and new - there are 2 people in a room with a private bathroom and toilet. The furniture is new, the floor is clean, there is air conditioning... There is also a cafeteria that has inexpensive meals for

breakfast, lunch and dinner. But of course all this comes at a much higher price than the CTU dorms. Another option is to rent out a room or flat from private individuals or Airbnb, but it might be inconvenient and more expensive.



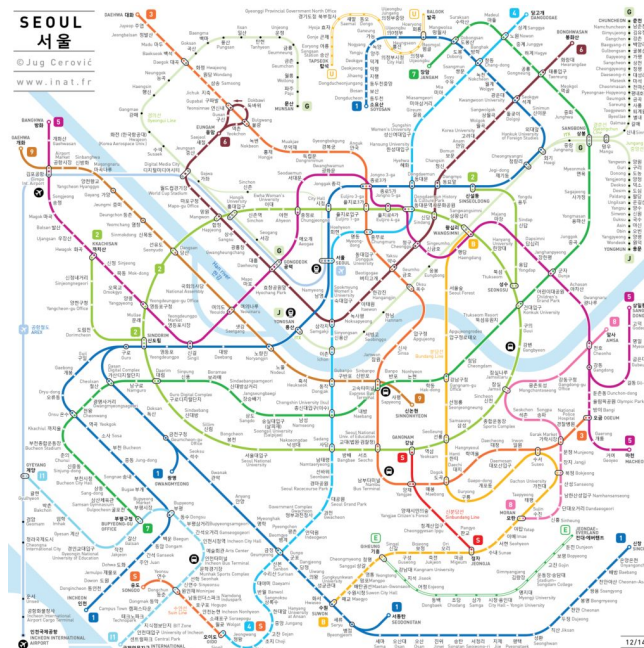
Learning Factory entrance

### **Amenities**

SKKU has a lot of infrastructure to set up comfort for the students. Particularly there is gym for anyone from the dorms, there are restaurants around campus and close to it, making it easy to grab a bite between classes with a full schedule. Furthermore there are places to study all over campus - whether private booths, classrooms that can be accessed after hours or the library it is full of places to allow for studying. But the most unique extra amenity is the Learning factory - there anyone can use 3D printers, soldering irons, CNC machines completely for free. There is a booking system online, where one can reserve a given tool for a set amount of time.

### **Transportation**

The Seoul Metro system is huge. It is easy to catch the subway in the wrong direction or the express line. Therefore traveling with locals or being very careful with the KakaoMap app is a must. Going from Suwon to Hongdae or Gangnam or within Suwon is best done by bus, but anywhere else the subway is probably faster. Buying tickets from Prague to Incheon Airport (Seoul) can be expensive so it is a good idea to buy in the “goldilocks zones” - 6 months or 6 weeks in advance or around those time slots.



Seoul Metro reaches other cities, like Suwon

## Food

The staples of Korean food - rice, noodles and kimchi are everywhere. There are lots of vegetarian dishes such as Bibimbap, while the Bulgogi beef is great for meat-lovers. Overall the food is very spicy, but one gets used to within a week.



### 1-1. Consonants

ㄱ	ㄴ	ㄷ	ㄹ	ㅁ	ㅂ	ㅅ
g	n	d	r	m	b	s
ㅇ	ㅈ	ㅊ	ㅋ	ㅌ	ㅍ	ㅎ
ng	j	ch	k	t	p	h

### 1-2. Vowels

ㅏ	ㅑ	ㅓ	ㅕ	ㅗ
a	ya	eo	yeo	o
ㅛ	ㅜ	ㅠ	ㅡ	ㅣ
yo	u	yu	eu	i

### 1-3. Vowel Combinations

ㅘ	ㅙ	ㅚ	ㅜ	ㅞ	ㅟ
ae	yae	e	ye	wa	wae
ㅠ	ㅡ	ㅢ	ㅣ	ㅤ	ㅥ
oe	weo	we	wi	ui	

KoreanClass101.com

## Language

Hangul, the Korean alphabet is extremely easy to learn and is indispensable for communication, navigation and life in general. It is so easy to learn that one can literally ready all of Korean within 20 minutes, because it is extremely logical (letters that sound similar look similar). The reason why it is useful is because there are a lot of English-loan words that are written in Hangul which you will be able to understand; also often times there are no English signs in buses, streets, and being able to read and perhaps type Hangul is really helpful. Overall the cost of learning it (20 minute online video or blogpost) is so small compared to the benefits (able to write names of places, navigate in transport, recognize types of stores, restaurants, be able to explain what you want in a store...). I never took a single class in Korean (although you can if you have time in your study schedule), but just knowing Hangul and a few simple phrases I was able to haggle at markets, find the most difficult places and get closer to the locals.



## Tips

- Must have apps: KakaoTalk (Korean messenger), KakaoMap (Google maps has very limited information in Korea), SKKU app (there are a few, make sure to get the one below).
- Get a credit card at the school bank (its free of charge)
- Make sure to always rate and give feedback to the professors (there is an online system for it) - if not you will not find out your grade until 2 months after the semester ends.
- Get a T-money card as soon as possible (used for paying for transport) - can be bought at any convenience store.
- If staying at a dorm bring or buy bed sheets and pillow (none are provided)
- Korean Embassy in Prague: A visa is needed to be able to enter Korea, it is important to do this well in advance
- Alien Registration Card: getting this card in Korea is a legal requirement and is best done with the SKKU administration which does it with all the students about one month after arrival.



## Documents

Here is a list of documents that are needed at different points throughout the exchange:

1. Before going to Korea
  - Motivation Letter for studying at SKKU
  - D-2 Visa from Korean Embassy (for this you need):
    - passport - they keep it for 1-2 weeks, scan of passport,
    - application for the visa - fill out in embassy,
    - Certificate of Admission - FEE foreign relations gets it from SKKU and gives it to you
    - Invitation Letter - FEE foreign relations gets it from SKKU and gives it to you
    - Certificate of Business Registration - FEE foreign relations gets it from SKKU and gives it to you
    - "Potvrzeni o studiu" - from FEE study department

- Bank account statement - minimum 600 USD per month of stay in Korea
  - Recommendation Letter from FEE, CTU
- Application for study at SKKU: SKKU emails you the code for the application
  - Dormitory Application: SKKU emails you this
  - Srovnávací Arch: see below
  - Application for scholarship (optional)
  - Health insurance (international - but has to cover Korea)

### Studijní plán a srovnávací arch pro studium v zahraničí (mimo program Erasmus)

(student vyplní před odjezdem)

Jméno studenta FEL ČVUT: Kalin Ivanov .....

Studijní program - typ: bakalářský Název programu: Electrical Engineering and Computer Science .....

Partnerská univerzita: Sungkyunkwan University (SKKU) .....

Studijní pobyt proběhne v zimním semestru akademického roku 2018/19 ..... od 28.08.18. .... do 22.12.18. ....

Kód studovaného předmětu	Název předmětu studovaného v rámci studijního pobytu v zahraničí	ECTS kreditů ***	Kód uznaného předmětu	Název předmětu, za nějž bude na FEL ČVUT uznán	ECTS kreditů	Role předmětu ve stud. plánu**	Podpis vedoucího katedry/garanta (jen u P a PO předmětů)
EEE2012	Circuit Theory II	6	BESB31ZEO	Fundamentals of Electrical Circuits	5	P	
EEE2013	Electronic Circuits I	6	BESB34ELP	Electron Devices	5	P	
EEE3050	Theory on Computer Architectures	6	BESB35APO	Computer Architectures	6	PO	
SWE2019	Digital Logic Circuits	6	BESB35LSP	Logic Systems and Processors	6	PO	
EEE2017	Electronic and Electrical Programming Laboratory	4	BESB99CPL	C Programming Language	6	PO	
EME3025	Automatic Control Systems	6	BESB35ARI	Automatic Control	7	PO	
			Celkem bude uznáno kreditů				
Studijní oddělení				Proděkan pro studium			
Datum: Podpis:				Datum: Podpis:			

\*\* Role předmětu je: P – povinný, PO – povinný oborový, V – volitelný. Předměty v roli P a PO vyžadují podpis vedoucího katedry/garanta oboru.

\*\*\* 1 kredit na SKKU se přibližně rovná 2 ECTS kreditů (například Digital Logic Circuits je 3 kreditů na SKKU a napsal jsem 6 ECTS kreditů) – na SKKU jsou maximálně povolené 19 kreditů a 15 kreditů jsou doporučené

### My subjects at SKKU and their equivalent in CTU

- In Korea
  - Alien registration card application
  - Dorm check-in (online)
  - Dorm check-out documents (online)
  - Teacher evaluation during midterms (online)
  - Teacher evaluation during finals (online)
- After coming back from Korea
  - Check in at FEE study department that you are back and completed study exchange

**Conclusion**

The study exchange to Korea is an unforgettable experience and adventure. There are so many good people there, amazing nature and sites, great educational system and entirely different way of life. I would recommend to anyone who has the ability and will to go on this experience. You will learn a lot and gain a wider world view. I am very grateful that I was able to go to Korea and study there and I would like to thank CTU and all the staff that makes study abroad possible.