



Hard work pays off with hygge

Before departure

I applied for the exchange semester at DTU mainly because I've always wanted to live in Copenhagen: the glimpses I'd previously seen of the city intrigued me. I wanted to stay close to Sweden, while still experiencing something new. Since it was my last semester before the master's thesis, I wanted to take the opportunity to choose interesting courses with new professors and new methods of learning. Within Scandinavia, moving was easy and the Danes were happy to speak a Swedish-Norwegian-Danish mix (*Scandinavian*).

Arrival

I arrived in Copenhagen a week before the courses started, just in time for the international student welcome. Although I had forgotten to register for the introduction week (reminder to read all emails sent out by the Erasmus coordinators), the buddies were extremely helpful and allocated me to one of the prearranged groups. I participated in a few of the group events held both at university and in the city, and got to know the internationals quite well. I decided to register for a Danish course for Scandinavians, held once a week throughout the semester, in order to be better qualified for potential work in Denmark.

Economy

Copenhagen is more expensive than Stockholm. Sad and unbelievable, but true. However, it is quite easy to reduce costs by biking, buying groceries at cheaper stores (Netto and Lidl rather than Irma or Super Brugsen), and living a bit further from the city centre. I received the Erasmus grant (approx. 15 000 SEK) and an additional exchange grant from KTH (5000 SEK), which just about covered the costs of accommodation and bike + occasional public transit.

Accommodation

I lived in a studio apartment in Vanløse, about 15 minutes by bike from the city centre but 45 minutes by bike to DTU (which is located in Lyngby, north of Copenhagen). It was a new student house with overpriced apartments, but extremely well located close to stores, parks and transit connections. I was initially offered a room through the DTU accommodation, which was cheaper, but not as nice. Two other student accommodations I can recommend were Hjortespring/Persiliehaven (cheap and well-kept but further out of town) and BaseCamp (in town but with shared rooms, as far as I understood). While I preferred living close to town, the international student life was definitely better in the dorms closer to campus.

University and Studies

All courses on master's level are in English, but since most students are from Denmark much of the socializing (and group work) requires some Danish knowledge. I realized quickly that group work is common at Danish universities, as are company-connections and real-life case studies. The lecturers were all great: genuinely interested in their subject, good at teaching, and very approachable (open-door policy). Note that the semester is divided in two study periods: one long "13-week-period" where everyone is meant to take 25 ECTS, and one "3-week-period" where 5-point courses are offered. I took 30 credits in the 13-week-period (which conveniently ends before Christmas), which meant a heavy workload, but not impossible.

Courses

DTU has a great course base webpage, and it is easy to apply for courses if you follow the instructions sent out. I enrolled in the courses seen below, whereof only the first two (*) passed as relevant to my program at KTH. I will still highly recommend the Sustainability Challenges series, as these were held by a joint DTU-CBS-KU collaboration which clearly helped pinpoint and understand the systems perspective on sustainability.

DTU code	Course name	ECTS	Comments
42372*	LCA of products and systems	10	Great LCA course – covers everything Includes case study (in groups) with company Time-consuming...
12122*	Urban Drainage and Stormwater Management	5	Interesting, assignments in MIKE URBAN At times lacking continuity, since lectures were only once a week
42349	Sustainability Challenges I	7.5	Covering Sustainable Development Goals and current global progress Lots of interesting lecturers and reading material (mainly research articles)
42350	Sustainability Challenges II	7.5	Mainly the capstone group project: a great chance to get to know other driven students and inputs from the business and political world on environmental sustainability.

City & Recommendations

Copenhagen offers cool architecture (check out the nice old villas at Grøndal or the new apartment buildings at Amager), amazing and affordable culture (compared to Stockholm, maybe not so much compared to say, London), and beautiful nature (Jægersborgs Dyrehave is a must-see on chilly autumn days). Biking is safe and easy (practically no hills), but invest in a good raincoat. Remember that rye bread with eggs and avocado works as breakfast, lunch and dinner. ☺

