



University of Missouri Kansas City
Final report- Joint Study (USA) – Fall semester 2011
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Since I started my business study at the Alpen Adria University Klagenfurt I knew that I want to spend one semester abroad, because a semester abroad is an exciting and inspiring experience which enriches your whole life. I have planned to visit the United States already a long time because it's a very exciting and diverse country and I also wanted to improve my English skills and what would be a better possibility to match both as a semester abroad in America. The University of Missouri, Kansas City (UMKC) is an excellent place to study and to get to know the American way of life. The UMKC and its "Henry W. Bloch School of Management" is ranked under the top 15 universities in the U.S. for undergraduate management and innovation programs. This program perfectly matched my current studies at the University of Klagenfurt and especially my specialisations in "Marketing and International Management" and "Management of Innovation". On the other hand the Henry W. Bloch School at UMKC is an Experienced Faculty with Personalized Attention which is very similar to the University of Klagenfurt.

UMKC Application Procedure, Visa and Flights

After receiving the positive nomination by the BIB Klagenfurt the real work began. I had to contact Kate Wozniak which is the study abroad coordinator from the UMKC. She gave me all the necessary information to complete the application which was a very long process, because they needed a lot of documents. The admission package for prospective international exchange students included: International Student Application for Admission, Narrative Statement, Academically Credentials, an optional English Proficiency (ask Kate because it's not necessary for all exchange students), Financial Statement, Biographical Page of Passport, exchange student information form and an immunization Certificate from the family doctor. All this information could be found under the following link

<http://web2.umkc.edu/international/Exchange/Stu.aspx>). Additional all exchange students have to pay a non refundable application fee of \$50. After completing the application process it took about 6 weeks before the ISAO issued my DS-2019 which I needed to apply for my J-1 Student Visa at the U.S. Embassy in Vienna.

The first step in the Visa application process is to make an appointment at the U.S. Embassy. All information could be found under the following link (www.usembassy.at/en/embassy/cons/niv.htm). For your visit at the Embassy it's important that you get all necessary documents before your appointment and that you finish the online questionnaire. Following documents are needed for the appointment at the U.S. Embassy: valid Passport, original DS-2019 from the admission letter, DS-156 Nonimmigrant Visa Application, DS-158 form, DS-157, Passport Picture (U.S. guidelines), SEVIS I-901, non refundable visa application fee, stamped DIN A4 envelope with your contact address. Costs for an J-1 Student Visa (\$180 SEVIS fee, €98 Visa). If you want to travel before or after the semester it's important to note, that you are allowed to enter the U.S. only 30 before your Visa is valid and that you have to leave the States within 30 days after the expiration date of your Visa.

After receiving my Student Visa I booked my flight to the U.S. I decided to travel around in the states before the fall semester at the UMKC starts. A round trip from Austria to the International Airport to Kansas City, Missouri cost approximately € 1.300. Unfortunately the semester starts in August and ends before Christmas it's difficult to get cheap tickets. To save money I would recommend to book flight immediately after completing the Visa application process.

Check in at UMCK and Housing

After a three week trip beginning in New York City and continuing with a road trip through California I arrived in Kansas City on 15th of August. I had been picked up by a volunteer of the international office which had been taken me to the Campus of UMKC. I checked in at OAK Place Apartments which is one of two different housing opportunities on-campus which Kate Wozniak the study abroad coordinator of UMKC has organized for me. I share one apartment with three other international students. Living on-campus especially at OAK place is a little bit more expensive than off-

campus (§ 702/ month) but I have chosen this opportunity because it's easier to get in contact with other students and it's very close to campus which could be a real advantage in the U.S. Living off- campus could be very difficult without a car, because distances are very far and the bus system in Kansas City is not as fully developed as in most parts of Austria. All information about Oak Place Apartments could be found under the following link <http://www.umkc.edu/housing/apartments.asp>.

After my arrival at the UMKC I had to complete additional enrollment steps during my first week. On Tuesday was the mandatory international student orientation day and in the afternoon I attended a free bus trip through Kansas City which was organized by students from the ISAO to give new students a general overview about the city. On Wednesday I had an appointment at the ISAO office for the mandatory check in process and afterwards I had to visit Kate Wozniak at the IAP to complete the enrollment process. She also gave me some very important and helpful information which made my first week at Kansas City much easier. Another part of the registration process, was to enroll for the mandatory UMKC health insurance. All students are required to purchase the UMKC health insurance and will be enrolled automatically. The health insurance for one semester costs \$490. In addition to the UMKC health insurance I took an private travel insurance, because the UMKC insurance has not the best coverage and health care could be very expensive in the U.S.

Studying at the UMKC

On Thursday I had an appointment with Nancy at her office at Henry W. Bloch School of Business, where most of all business classes where held at UMKC. Nancy was my academic student adviser. She helped me to organize my class schedule for the semester and enrolled me for my all classes. As a business student I choose only business courses at the Henry W. Bloch School, two in Marketing and two in Entrepreneurship, which are listened below:

Marketing Concepts - MKT 324 (Grade A)

This course was more a repetition from my basic marketing classes I attended in Klagenfurt, but nevertheless the class was very interesting, because we worked with

a lot of examples from the American economy which is totally different than the Austrian one. Topics of the course include marketing mix (4Ps) elements and their use in today's business environment, both domestically and globally marketing concepts, consumer behavior, product planning, marketing research, distribution of goods and services, channels of distribution, pricing, advertising and promotion, marketing ethics, market segmentation and the impact of different competitive structures on marketing decision making. The evaluation was based on: midterm exam (25%), final exam (25%), 5 individual practical applications (10%), team project and presentation (40%).

Marketing Strategy (MKT 480) (Grade A)

I can highly recommend this course although this course was very time-consuming. Prof. Atul taught us how organizations should develop their marketing strategies in today's dynamic economy. The main topics dealt with the marketing product strategy, advertising, communications promotion and distribution. Additionally we talked about price analysis and its relationship to a successful product launch. In this class we used the following instructional methods: lecture, videos, discussion, case analyses, presentations and a simulation. The evaluation was based on: midterm exam (20%), case analysis (write up+ presentatio (20%), 5 other case analysis (10%), attendance and class participation (20%), simulation official run, paper and presentation (20%) and 3 simulation practice runs and written assignment (10%).

Small Business Management and Entrepreneurship -ENT 364 (Grade A)

In this course I learned a lot about management techniques about SME's. We used mini cases, a lot of video clips, films, self assessments and readings. The course grading can be summarized as: midterm (25%) and final exam (25%), team application journal (15%), entrepreneurial focus presentation (5%) and finally attendance and contribution (30%). Unfortunately this course didn't attract my full interest, because *Prof. Dr. Joe Singer* teaching methods were only to a certain extent motivating.

Entrepreneurial Marketing- ENT-432 (Grade A)

This class was my favorite and I can highly recommend it. Prof. Storm is an enthusiastic and dedicated teacher with a lot of experience in his field. He taught us

the principles and challenges of entrepreneurial marketing by evaluating and improving a marketing plan for a real life start-up business. The course grading consists of 3 exams (45%) marketing plan and team presentation (20%), 6 individual presentations (30%), written assignment (5%).

Campus - student life at the UMKC and Kansas City

The campus of the UMKC is about 30 by bus outside from downtown Kansas City and it is considerably larger than the campus of the University of Klagenfurt. Kansas city provides a lot of opportunities, but as student you do not leave the campus all the time to have a good time. Whatever you enjoy doing outside of the classroom, you 'll find it on campus. They offer a numerous of sports events, international students events, dancing parties, BBQ events, welcome home week event, organized shopping trips to malls. If you are interested to do some workout the UMKC has a great fitness center (including a swimming pool) which is free for all enrolled students. In fall 2011 about 14.100 students were enrolled at the UMKC. At UMKC you will find also a lot of international students. In fall 2011 about 940 international students from 98 nations were enrolled at UMKC for classes.

Kansas City, Missouri is located in the Midwest of America and it is the largest city in the U.S. state of Missouri. The city is divided by the Missouri river into Kansas City, Missouri and Kansas City, Kansas. Kansas City is a very widespread city and its downtown is more a commercial district. Although Kansas City is not a typically tourist location in the U.S. you can spend a wonderful time there. The city is known for its famous BBQ, jazz concerts, first Friday art events, wonderful parks, great night clubs to go out and dance, river market, the Country Club Plaza which is a wonderful shopping district and so on. Even for sport fans Kansas City is a great place to stay (American Football, Soccer, Basketball, Baseball, Ice hockey, NASCAR speed races).

Kansas City has four seasons, because it lies within the humid continental climate, with moderate precipitation and the potential for extreme hot and cold. Summers are hot and humid. Daytime highs could easily surpass 90 °F (32 °C) 44 days per year. Fall days are mild while nights are between moderate and cold .The coldest month of the year is January, with an average temperature of 25.7 °F (-4 °C). Winters are cold

with snow and lows occasionally dip into the single digits and below 0 °F (-18 °C) during this season. Further information about Kansas City could be found under the following link <http://www.kansascity.com/>.

Finance

A semester abroad especially in the U.S (flight, high living costs, housing) requires a lot of financial expenditures, therefore it's very important to elaborate your financial plan. In addition to the Joint Study program you can also find a lot of institutions in Carinthia where you can apply for a scholarship for a semester abroad e.g.: Privatstiftung Kärntner Sparkasse, Dr. Josef Martinz Stipendium, Verein zur Förderung der Wirtschaftswissenschaften an der Universität Klagenfurt, Industriellenvereinigung Kärnten, Julius Raab Stiftung, Uwe Scheuch Stipendium, Auslandszuschuss im Rahmen der Studienbeihilfe.

The following table shows my primary costs for one semester at the UMKC.

	€	USD
Flüge	1.300,00	
Application Fee UMKC		50,00
Zusatzversicherung	339,00	
student administration fee		200,00
intern. Student health insurance		490,00
SEVIS Gebühr		180,00
Visum	98,00	
Rent OAK Place Apartment		3.510,00
costs of living		1.650,00
Books		324,00
	1.737,00	6.404,00
total costs in € (exchange rate 1,35)		6.480,70

Conclusion

As a conclusion I can say that I really enjoyed my semester at the University of Missouri Kansas city and my time in the U.S. Studying abroad is absolute great and everybody should have the chance to do so. A semester abroad improves not only your language skills it's more an unique experience for your whole life. At first it is a lot of work to arrange everything, but it is really worth it. Getting to know other lifestyles, cultures, meeting new people from all over the world and making friendships for life are only some of the major points, why a semester abroad is such an excellent opportunity. Further a semester abroad is an excellent possibility to travel around in this country. I'm very happy and thankful that I got the chance to

study at the UMKC. With this in mind I also want to thank everybody who supported me: especially the BIB Klagenfurt, Dr. Josef Martinz Stipendium, the Julius Raab Stiftung, Dr. Uwe Scheuch Stipendium, the Studienbeihilfe, the Industriellenvereinigung Kärnten and the Verein zur Förderung der Wirtschaftswissenschaften an der Universität Klagenfurt.

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