

Master Double Degree Programme

International Mechatronics Winter Semester 2013/2014

report by M.K

Introduction

My name is Kirill and I am the student of Saint-Petersburg Polytechnic University and Leibniz University. I study double master diploma program in these two universities. Winter semester of educational year 2013-2014 I have spent in Germany, Hannover.

Visa

The most difficult thing was to get student visa. The whole process takes several weeks. However on practice, it takes much more time. There is a big queue in getting long-time visa in Russia. You should book it at least before one and a half month before meeting. In total, it takes approximately three months what is really long time. For every next student I would suggest to start all preparation for travel as soon as possible.

Educational process

The main reason of trip was to study in University. So a lot of time was paid to educational process, studying and learning. These things consist of organization of courses, content and people.

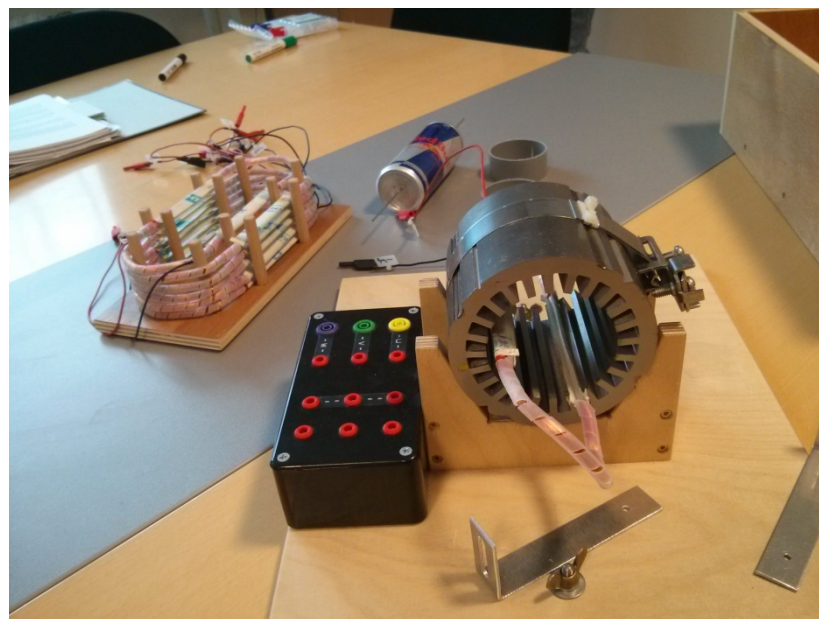
On average, the organization of courses is higher than in Russia. All courses were unique and new, however they were well-organized. On one subject we have been equipped by printed lections for each of us. During another lecture, there were coffee pauses with cookies. Normally we were only three on lectures, and for all our courses there was a lecturer, what is not that easy as I think. Only on one subject there was a small misunderstanding, when professor denied giving lectures (exactly because of our number). Nevertheless this problem was solved in coupled weeks. University also provides dormitory for us, what was important, because we could not find any apartments.

Most of lectures provide information about modern technologies of metal forming, optoelectronic manufacturing and nanosystems. The level of material supply is high. Every lecture provided by electronic presentation with lots of explanations, educational videos, animations, practical works and patterns. All techniques and technologies which were explained are modern and with the future in mind.

All teachers were really friendly. The level of English was quite good to give lectures and to understand them. There were no problems to change the dates of some lectures and to be in touch with professors and other teachers. Examination also was qualified organized, according to material on the lectures and there were no situations when somebody was stuck and had no clue for problem. Personally, I would add that some of the exams were not so hard and from practical and educational point of view, I would like to complicate it, as strange as it may sound. It could be more useful for Russian students.

I could say that all exams were fair. Nobody is interested in giving free marks as well as force people to fail it. Fairness and honesty – best words to describe the organization of exams and grading. Everybody get what they deserve.

There was one problem in education, that the programs of two universities are not well-combined. Mostly in Russia we have studied things, close to programming. Here, in Germany, all subjects were mostly connected to the devices and how they work, processes, materials and technologies, what was new for me and not expected.



P.S. May be there was only one bad thing – the ITA center was not so far from my place of living, but for my friends it took more than one hour to get there. May be next time it could be possible to settle people not so far.

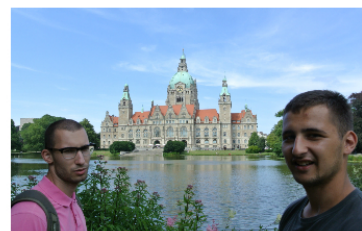
Scholarship

Of course scholarship was important. It is costly to live in another country, especially when the level of life is higher than in your home country. Russia is counted as a developed country. However it is not that true, so scholarship really helps me and my friends to pay for bills, such as dormitory and obligatory self-insurance what costs less than in Russia. Money from DAAD helps to decrease the stress, related to money and allows concentrating on study. As a result, all marks

on obligatory and non-obligatory courses were high and big great credit for this belongs to DAAD. I want to say “Thank you, DAAD” for this.

Travelling

Unfortunately, there were no so much time to travel. I and my friends have visited only Cologne, Bremen and Dortmund however these trips were nice. Cities are not so different, especially Hbfs, but generally all these cities were clean and cozy. I was impressed by Cologne’s cathedral, Dortmund’s Westfallenstadion and Bremen’s outlet’s center.



Dormitory and community

I have been living in Hannover, on Dorotheenstrasse, near well-known for parties silo. This dormitory is really nice. There is lots of thing which are entertaining there. Piano room, mini Basketball pitch, place for barbeque and tables for table tennis. Also nearby there is a good place for jogging. And the location is not so far from the three places in university, where I studied.

A lot of different people live here, with different cultures, color of skin and confessions. And I have never seen any conflicts here, what is really nice. The window into the big world, which I opened before, during the Sommeracademy, grows into big gate. I practiced my English and German. Also help some people to practice Russian. Also I planned to start learn Spanish and Korean. I made friends with people from Bulgaria, Afghanistan, Germany, Spain, Italy, Kazakhstan and Indonesia. Get used to German shows but not the humor =). I would say, that people are the same in Russia, not good, not bad – just a little bit different, with

different principles and interests but still young energetic (and not so) students which are hungry to life, to adventures and new impressions.



My birthday's photo.

Party

Student's life is hard. Sometimes I do not understand parties disturb educational process or educational process disturbs party time. Party is the perfect place to meet new people, relax and socialize. It is a kind of obligation to visit a party at least for hour.

P.S. this is a worldwide spread myth that Russians drink more than others. It is not truth. After my calculations Germans drink the same amount of alcohol per week however it is more spread during the week.

Jogging

I would say that in Germany a lot of people go jogging. Or ride bicycle. It is a part of total policy of ecological, right way of living. Supporting physical conditions is one of the parts of harmonically human being. In Russia it is harder to do that because half of the year temperature is under zero, so here it is simpler. That's why I join this trend.

Food

As a part of ecological, right trend, Germans try to eat healthy food. Mostly, it incarnates in salads. However it doesn't cancel the fact that most of them like to eat pizza and sandwiches (also with salat inside) and drink beer. So, from some point

of view, these facts are little bit in contradiction. But Germans cope somehow with such paradox.)

Winter

Winter is warmer than in Russia. When people say that it's cold and was surprised by snow – only on that moment I felt like the real winter came. However it lasted less than one week. From some points of view I would say that I missed Russian winter with snow and cold temperature, cold and ice, because for me winter should be winter but not the never ending November.



Some unique days with snow.

Cloth and appearance.

Definitely, Europeans dress more elegant and stylish than Russians. I would say that they pay lot of attention to hair-style, cloth, shoes, color combination and others. However there are some dominating trends, for example hairstyle ala Marco Rues. It is not as popular in Russia between men, because this appearance is not a part of tendency of being discreet. However, for me It does not really matter. I slightly prefer European style, because it is better looking.

I saw one interesting example when my mate didn't know what to dress, and on the same time he didn't want to buy new quality thing. His solution was to go in Primark – very cheap shop – to buy shirt for ... one time. And after that time, he didn't use it anymore.

Summary

This semester was quite new and interesting for me. I have made some new discoveries for me. New knowledge will definitely help me in future as well as practiced English and German. Also new cultural impression will help me to look on the world wider. I would say that program was very quality from the organization point of view. May be next time it will be better to invite more people on this program, not to provide courses just for three students and make this program more global and fundamental.