

# SEP Report

## 1. Student Information

|   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Faculty/Major   | Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences |
| Host University   | Sciences Po Paris                   |
| NUS Semester and Year of Exchange<br>(eg. AY14/15 Semester 1) | AY15/16 Semester 1                  |

## 2. Study at Host University

Please provide information on the academics at your host university:

- Studying or learning culture at your host university. How were classes conducted?
- What did you like most or dislike most about the academics at your host University?
- Advice on module registration and module mapping

Classes were conducted in either lectures or seminars. Most of my classes were English language modules attended by other exchange students. Students participate actively in class discussion, and frequently share their opinions based on their existing knowledge back in their home university. What I liked most was the diverse array of opinions that the wide variety of cultures had to offer. Students were very respectful to their teachers and mostly very fond of learning, which made learning more interactive and enjoyable for me as well.

Advice for module registration: Bidding for modules are based on fastest fingers first, so be sure to camp in front of your computer at the stated registration timing.

Please list the courses that you took during SEP. (Please take note that the list of modules available to exchange students at the host university are subject to change. This table merely serves as reference.)

| Host University |                         |             | NUS Equivalent |                        |                |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------|
| Module code     | Course title            | ECTS Credit | Module code    | Course title           | Modular credit |
|                 | Economics of the EU     | 10          |                | Economics of the EU    | 4              |
|                 | Law and Economics       | 5           |                | Economics of Law       | 4              |
|                 | French A2               | 5           |                | French 2               | 4              |
|                 | Environmental Economics | 5           |                | Environmental Economis | 4              |
|                 | Development Economics   | 5           |                | Development Economics  | 4              |

## 2. Accommodation

What kind of accommodation did you stay in during your exchange (eg. on campus / off campus)?

Would you recommend this accommodation to future outgoing students?

Do you have any other suggestions?

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I found my accommodation through Airbnb, since the school did not offer any housing options. I would recommend students to start finding accommodation earlier – 3 months before they move over. Housing in Paris is rather scarce and the good deals get taken up quickly. It is recommended to stay within the 1<sup>st</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> district within central Paris for safety reasons and convenience.

## 3. Activities during SEP

Were there any activities organized by school/student group/external organizations at your host university which you would like to recommend to other students?

The welcome package is pretty pricey, but many exchange students made a lot of friends there. There are many other meaningful activities to join too – hiking activities, short trips to suburban areas of France, refugee help association, UN Model, and many others. Instead of travelling every weekend like what every Singaporean does [which I did and regretted], treasure the opportunity to immerse yourself in a foreign school culture and environment and experience living and integrating in another part of the world.

## 4. Cost of Living

Please provide an estimation of how much money you spent during your SEP?  
Please list travel expenses separately.

Housing – 1000 per month  
Transport – 100 per month  
Food and entertainment – 250 per month  
Miscellaneous school expenses – 500  
Insurance – 500  
  
Travelling – 10,000 in total

## 5. Challenges

Did you face any challenging issues during your SEP stint? How did you overcome it/them?

It took time to get used to their culture and social practices. The language barrier is also an important factor in preventing us from communicating effectively with the French. They actually appreciate it a lot if we make the effort to speak their language. Also, I really wished I had joined more school activities instead of planning so much travelling every weekend and school break.

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## 6. Overall SEP Experience

**Please write one paragraph about your exchange experience and attach some photos that represent your exchange experience.**

The first week in Paris was filled with much inability to communicate with the French, not knowing what social practices I was supposed to do, and not knowing what to expect. The idea of Paris being the city of romance was quickly shattered when I lived away from the touristy areas. Still, day after day, after mastering sufficient conversational French, and exploring non-conventional areas of the city, I found myself appreciating and integrating into a city that turned out to be much more fulfilling than I had expected in the first place. I met a lot of different types of people from all parts of the world in school, felt for once what it feels like to be a foreigner in school, and realized that it takes much more effort to socialize and integrate into a community that I have nothing much in common with. For once, I saw no need to get involved in the rat race in school, instead taking time to slow down my pace, appreciate the beauty of cityscapes, the joy of accepting and embracing another culture, and coming to terms with the less rosy image of Singaporeans that Europeans typically have. Also, I would never forget the experience and emotions of working with school mates of the same interest, and meeting inspirational and needy people when I joined TEDxSciencesPo and the Refugee Help Association.

## 7. Suggestions for future outgoing students

**Please share any other suggestions for future outgoing students.**

Don't fear rejection or the lack of reciprocation from others when you try to build meaningful friendships with them. Focus on truly living and integrating yourself in another city, and not just enjoy yourself. Be very open minded in considering alternatives to step out of your comfort zone.

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