

Could you introduce yourself please?

I am from India and since April I have been studying exchange student in Hildesheim. I am a student for the International Information Management faculty, but back in India, I do my major in Psychology with a minor in Liberal Arts.

Why did you choose Hildesheim?

Hildesheim University and my home university have an exchange partnership. So when I applied for an exchange program at my home university, I was selected on my university behalf to apply for an exchange semester at Hildesheim University. I was then accepted by Hildesheim University allowing me to spend my semester abroad in Germany. 😊

How did the study preparation go?

Study preparation was relatively easy, because the three years at my home university were very rigorous academically. The application process was quite smooth and I did not have any issues with it. I am very happy that everything went well.

How do you find studying online?

I am not that fond of studying online. I do wish that we could be studying in a classroom where we also could have done this interview face to face. Therefore, I do prefer the classroom setting in terms of studying, asking questions and interaction with fellow students and professors. Otherwise, I find it relatively easy and straightforward when it comes to online communication. In my opinion, a classic course of study would have been a better experience abroad for me. Even so, I feel like I got the best study possible through online media.

What did you like about the Hildesheim University?

I think the people at the international office are the sweetest. I do not think anyone else could have made us feel more comfortable or could have been more approachable than the mentors have been so far.

Apart from the international office, I have had some great classes. I totally recommend "Introduction to Literary Studies" and I really recommend "Romantic love across cultures".

Overall, I feel like the courses in Hildesheim have been very similar to the courses I would have chosen back in India. This made me feel very motivated to attend these classes. So for me the classes have been the best part of studying in Hildesheim along with the people and their support at the international office. I have not been able to meet too many students except the buddies I've met but I'm sure the student life in Hildesheim is great as well.

Have you participate in any of the international events?

Yes, I have taken part in the intercultural on boarding workshop. Besides that, I really enjoyed the ESN dinner and the WIN tutor dinner, which I attended during my first week here. Apart from that, I have not been to many other events during the semester due to a lot of traveling and course work, which have kept me quite busy.

What are your special characteristics?

I think I am just not a complicated person, which makes people around me feel comfortable and makes it easy for them to talk to me. I believe I am quite good at communication and have a decent sense of humor.

What are you interested in?

I am interested in the subjects of communication across cultures. I have even taken courses here in Hildesheim, which focus on the topics of cultural communication, how cultures come together and how diversities interact with each other. In terms of personal interest, I really enjoy art across the globe because you are able to experience such diversity across fields and at the same time are able to appreciate every single piece of art on its own for being so unique. Therefore, this was something that I found quite interesting also when coming to Germany. Other than that, I really enjoy food. Both the Indian cuisine but also the German one. I think the foods connects cultures really well since we can all bond over food and experience other cultures first hand.

How do you spend your free time in Hildesheim?

I spend a lot of time with the other Erasmus students in Hildesheim thanks to the Erasmus

network, which makes it easy to connect and meet up. I also like walking around in Hildesheim, because it is so “green” and close to nature. This is a complete opposite compared to my hometown which is an urban jungle. Besides that, I have also managed to attend quite a few student events on the campus where I was able to do some cultural exchange.

So far, I feel like it is relatively easy to keep busy in Hildesheim with joining different college activities, the Erasmus student friend group and just walking around and exploring the city.

What hobbies do you have?

I love traveling. I managed to travel quite a bit in Germany using the semester ticket. Other than that, I really enjoy cooking and coming up with new recipes during quarantine was a good use of time given the restrictions. I also like listening to music and play a bit of guitar, which I try to practice whenever I have time to do so. Another passion of mine is doing digital illustration and art. I think reading a good book is also enjoyable.

Which city did you like the most in Germany?

I have visited quite a few cities in Germany so far. I have visited Berlin, Celle, Bad Harzburg, Goslar, Hannover, Hamburg, Bremen and Lübeck. I do really like Hildesheim but I enjoy my trip to Berlin the most. I really liked being there. I think the city is beautiful and the people are great. Therefore, Hildesheim and Berlin are my favorites.

Have you ever done voluntary work or been part of a project?

I have not done anything like that in Hildesheim yet. In India, I did a lot of community outreach programs. I have been teaching children of construction workers at dedicated schools for them and I did an internship in my hometown that focus on the rehabilitation of students with learning disabilities where I worked with students who have dyslexia, dyspraxia and autism.

What plans do you have for the future?

I am currently doing my bachelor's degree and am looking forward to following it up with a master's degree after graduating in fall 2022. However, before that I would like to spend six months to work in my disciplinary field. Also I am really fond of the idea of doing my master's degree abroad as well because I would be able to return back to India with a lot of experience as well as share my experiences from India with the people I would meet as I have done with the Erasmus group here in Hildesheim.

Do you want to come back to Hildesheim?

Of course, I think coming back to Hildesheim would be a dream. In all honesty I think the university, the people over here along with the curriculum is the perfect fit. I do not think people can get a better exchange studies anywhere else. I would definitely recommend applying for an exchange if you have an option to do so or to study at Hildesheim regularly if you are considering that. I think despite Hildesheim being a smaller town and having a smaller university the people here are so friendly, the academic rigor and the discussion we are having in class are great and I do not feel like there is anything less than what I would assume in a big city. So I definitely would want to come back and recommend coming here.

Have you participated in a buddy program or tandem program?

Yes, I have participated in a buddy program. My buddy is really nice. Other than that I have also met a lot of other exchange students' buddies who were all great as well. I think the buddy network is just a great. Considering the Corona pandemic, this was one of the best ways to meet people and become friends with people and get to know more about the country opposed to looking at it through the lens of a tourist. So I think it really gave me that inner circle view of how the country looks like from someone who lives inside this country.

What do you do together with your buddy?

Other than meeting up and having someone to always talk to through online media it was great for me to have someone looking out for me especially consider the current Corona situation. It

was a really good experience for that reason because you can't really meet people in this situation. When I first came here you could not meet anyone, so just having someone to meet with and talk to was a great help for me to establish some way of communication even if it is just through Whatsapp to check up on each other.

Do you want to go continue learning German after returning to India?

I think I want to continue learning German. I did the basic German course here at the university but when I go back to India I really want to keep practicing my German skills. At first I was a little concerned because my initial fear about learning a foreign language was that the people who speak it might judge me but Germans are very patient and receptive people as opposed to the stereotype. Every time I tried to communicate in German I've always received the nicest and warmest replies which have been a great encouragement for me to keep learning the language. I feel like German is such an easy language to grasp and I believe it can be really beneficial to speak German.

Which German words do find difficult?

I think the name of my major "Psychologie" is really difficult for me to pronounce which is quite unfortunate because whenever someone asks me about my major I'm having a hard time telling them what I study. :D