

MY STUDENT EXCHANGE EXPERIENCE

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If I could sum up my exchange program in the Czech Republic in one word, it would be: **essential**. I believe the word essential could work perfectly due to all that I have learned here - not only on an academic basis but also on a personal one. The reason behind this is that upon my arrival, I felt completely overwhelmed by the unsureness of doing everything on my own and completely alone. After my family and my closest friends dropped me off at the international airport in Rio de Janeiro, I had to figure out every single step of my next 5 months journey on my own, such as: how to arrive in a foreign country by myself, how to adapt to a new culture, how to make friends from all over the world knowing there could be some linguistic barriers, how to manage my scholarship in order to last for 5 months, etc.



This overwhelming feeling definitely challenged me at first, but it also taught me how to be self-sufficient and somehow free, a characteristic that I am totally glad for. During my Erasmus experience, I did not have to respond to anyone but myself, I knew my limits and I was able to establish my boundaries - something that I did not need to do before in my hometown and in my country. In terms of academic aspects, I believe that the University of Hradec Králové is one of the best choices for your Erasmus in the Czech Republic. The reason behind this is that they are not only extremely welcoming and respectful, but they are also available to assist you in every step of the way and to help you communicate with your home university



(which in my case was the Pontificia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro, known as PUC-Rio). Besides, within the walls of this institution, there is a rich academic community, with an extremely interesting board of courses and with a faculty available to their local and foreign students, and there are also support groups created by its students to help you out with anything you may need and to socialize with you during these 5 months, such as the ESN and Afro UHK.



I highly recommend you to go to Erasmus in the Czech Republic, especially to the University of Hradec Králové (UHK). I will always cherish these 5 months that I have lived here, all the memories, the events, the trips, the parties, and the people I have met here will somehow forever stay with me. Thank you!

As the Czechs would say, *na shledanou!*

In terms of the country, I believe the Czech Republic is the perfect country for anyone who thinks about doing a semester abroad, considering it is an extremely safe country, fairly priced considering its neighboring countries that have the euro as their currency, with an approachable system of public transport and a welcoming population. It was within the Czech borders that I had the chance to meet people from all over the world, now my closest friends are not only from Brazil (my home country) but also from Colombia, Portugal, Slovenia, the United States, Spain, Turkey, México, and France. And it also gave me the opportunity to travel around, I have traveled around many cities of the Czech Republic itself, but I also went to different countries, such as Austria, Germany, Greece, and Italy.

