Wong Tit-shing Student Exchange Scholarship

Exchange Learning Report

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Host Institution: University of Twente

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I went to the University of Twente as an exchange student last semester. I learned a lot during this period both about my study and life.

I got the first impression of Netherlands when I get off the train at Enschede, a small city in the eastern Netherlands. The city gave me a feel as I was in a country unpolluted. I could see cows and sheep very often when I passing by. The kick-in programme was fantastic and gave me a brief introduction to the wild Dutch culture. Then I began to be used to ride a bike to school as most Dutch people do.

Our courses are taken in this way: we usually have lectures on Monday and Tuesday. After the lectures, we often do some self-study. And we team meets up on Wednesday and do the project together. There will be a tutorial on Wednesday teaching us how to apply our knowledge to actual stuff. We can ask questions on Q & A sessions on Thursday and finish our work till Friday.

As I stepped to taking courses, a different education mode showed up. The semester is divided into two parts and we can take one module for each part. A module is a really big course in which the main idea is surrounded by much-related knowledge from many different fields. And the total mechanism is project-oriented learning. After a week's study, we need to finish a weekly project which is done by applying the new knowledge we have learned in that week. Compared to the parallel course mode in PolyU, this mode may weaken our understanding on the theoretical level, but strengthen our ability to apply what we have learned to real applications. Meanwhile, because the knowledge comes from many

different fields, I can have a broader view of the main concept which I have never experienced. Besides, as all the projects are done by the group, I had a deeper understanding of how to cooperate with my groupmates. Finally, we groupmates became good friends and discussed questions frequently. Our projects include a game called Laser Tag which is a very interesting and interactive game. Players can use their phones as guns to shoot or defend. The data is transferring from their phones to the main server and from the server to the other phones. This big project gave us enough space to do what we are good at. For example, I was in charge of doing the human detection part and the other guy who is familiar with web design were constructing the server. And finally, we merged up.

Before this trip, I had no idea about what I was going to do in the future. But now, I began to have some interests in Human-Computer Interaction. A module I learned in my host university called Smart Spaces showed how human can interact with the environment from many different aspects. So, at least I know some kinds of way to design an interactive project now.

Exchange life also taught me many things about life. I learned how to cook to feed myself instead of always eating out. It is very important to live on my own when I am alone. I also travelled around to Germany to see the famous Koln Cathedral and appreciated the beautiful scene of Rhine. Besides Germany, I went to the UK. The beautiful country scenery relaxed me from the tense study life.

In total, I think people here are very friendly and helpful. Meanwhile, we are very free to express our new ideas and they will show much respect. So, it is a good place to do academic

studies. It is a precious exchange experience. I very appreciate this journey.