

Final traineeship report **[C1]** ERASMUS traineeship – Academic Year 2022 / 20

Version: February 2020

Please fill this form out on a computer, not by hand, and send it as an email attachment to the EU-ServicePoint: eu-servicepoint@international.uni-mainz.de

Your report will be made available to other students looking for traineeships. Therefore, please make sure to provide important websites and other helpful information!

GENERAL INFORMATION

Host country:	Germany
Program of study:	Cognitive Science, Department of Developmental Psychology
Home university:	RPTU Kaiserslautern-Landau
Professional field of traineeship:	Psychology and Cognitive Science
Language of work:	English
Duration of traineeship:	from 13/03/2023 (dd / mm / yyyy) to 04/06/2023 (dd / mm / yyyy)

ORGANISATION/ENTERPRISE OF THE TRAINEESHIP

Name of receiving organization/enterprise	UCLA Semel Institute of Neuroscience and Human Behavior
Street/P.O. Box:	760 Westwood Plaza, 2nd Floor Semel TRCN
Postal code and city:	Los Angeles, California, 90024
Country:	USA
Website:	https://www.semel.ucla.edu/ https://greenlab.dgsom.ucla.edu/pages/
Email:	mgreen@ucla.edu

BEFORE – Information about preparing for the traineeship abroad

Please fill the following fields in in a detailed manner and give exact information about your search and preparation (websites, tips, contacts, etc.) for the traineeship.

Search for traineeship:	I was searching a lot of labs related to clinical psychology, schizophrenia, and cognitive science. After finding some labs, I sent an email to each lab to ask their professor if they accept international students like me to do a traineeship in their lab.
-------------------------	---

Application (process, unsolicited application, interview, etc.):	Dr. Green was asking me to provide him three reference letters and he would review these letters to consider if I could do my traineeship in the Green Lab.
Search for accommodation:	I was using Facebook to search for my house in LA. There are many different Facebook groups where I could find many rooms or houses that are rented.
Insurances:	I bought an insurance package which is offered by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in Bonn.
Telephone/Internet access in the host country:	I bought a local sim card when I arrived the States.
Bank/opening an account:	No, I didn't open a local bank account. I was using my Germany bank account.
Helpful websites / Other things:	I think your website, EU-ServicePoint, already gave me many clear directions about what I need to do or provide to you when I was applying for ERASMUS+ Scholarship.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE TRAINEESHIP

Please fill the following fields in a detailed manner and give exact information about the traineeship as such (websites, tips, contacts, etc.).

Type of traineeship:	It is a traineeship that I gained some skills to finish my master's thesis.
Tasks within the traineeship: Could you apply learned skills and knowledge? Were the tasks too much / not enough? etc.	Yes, I did learn enough skills to complete my master's thesis. Because I was able to go to the Green Lab, I had more opportunities to talk and discuss my questions with them in person. I learned some analytical skills in quantitative research, specifically cross-lagged panel analysis, which I would definitely need to use for analyzing data in my master's thesis. Additionally, I had the chance to observe how to work with participants with schizophrenia, personality disorders, PTSD, and other conditions. I learned some clinical skills from observing these interviews, all of which will be useful in my future career.
Supervision (introductory/concluding conversation, weekly/monthly feedback, etc.)	I had weekly individual meetings with Dr. Green and another PI to discuss statistical analyses. Additionally, I attended weekly lab meetings with all lab members. Apart

	<p>from these meetings, I actively participated in weekly case reviews where psychologists and PIs gathered to discuss the clinical interviews and diagnose participants for mental disorders.</p>
Social contacts during the traineeship:	<p>I would say I had a great social integration with every member of the Green Lab. I'm not sure if it's because all of them have psychology-related majors or because they work with individuals with psychological disorders, but they were incredibly friendly and outgoing. They were aware that I didn't have a car while I was in LA, and some of them offered to drive me to the lab and back to my house. Moreover, they invited me to go downtown and hike with them. While I was in the lab, they helped me integrate into their community as well. The Green Lab felt like a big family, and everyone made an effort to welcome me as a member. I truly appreciated their assistance.</p>
Language skills (benefits, improvements, etc.):	<p>I spoke English with everyone while I was in the States, and I could clearly see that my English skills improved significantly during those three months. I learned numerous local words and phrases that I wouldn't have come across in English textbooks.</p>
Short overall evaluation of your stay abroad: Private / professional benefit? What were your expectations? Were these fulfilled? What was particularly good / not so good?	<p>Staying abroad and fulfilling my dream of completing a traineeship with amazing psychologists and scientists has always been a goal of mine. That's why I came to Germany to pursue a higher educational degree. Thanks to my previous experience in Germany, I adapted to my new life in LA faster than I expected. As a Generation Z and international student, I understand that working with scholars from different countries is common and exciting. I thoroughly enjoyed collaborating with people from diverse backgrounds who always provided me with fresh and innovative ideas that I had never considered before.</p> <p>Working with the Green Lab exposed me to the latest information about schizophrenia and cognitive science, which I deeply valued. It was only after arriving in the States that I realized how much of an international and fearless student I truly am. Colleagues often remarked on my rich experiences and courageous spirit upon hearing about my background, including studying for a Master's degree in Germany, doing an internship in the UK, and undertaking a traineeship in the US. Their feedback prompted me to reflect on my journey over the past two years, and I came to recognize and appreciate my adventurous nature and personal strengths. Without</p>

	these attributes, I wouldn't have been able to complete these exciting endeavors, including embarking on a solo traineeship in the States.
Duration of the traineeship: Too short, just right, too long? Recommendations for an optimal length of time?	I believe three months is an acceptable duration, but if given the opportunity, I would prefer to stay in the Green Lab for four months. Despite everything being good in LA, the main challenges I faced were the high living expenses and the inadequate public transportation system. If I were to extend my stay beyond three months, I might face financial constraints in affording the cost of living in LA. Additionally, the limited transportation options made it difficult for me to explore other places beyond the lab and my residence. I often relied on services like Uber or had to seek assistance from friends or coworkers to reach my desired destinations.
Average monthly expenses abroad in €; Additional costs in contrast to expenses in Germany:	When I was in LA, I spent approximately 2,245 euros per month. This amount is significantly higher compared to the 800 euros I used to spend monthly in Germany. The rent and overall cost of living in LA are indeed quite expensive.
What should one absolutely know / keep in mind?	<p>Being open-minded and willing to ask questions is crucial when facing new experiences, such as being in a different country or working in a new lab. There were numerous aspects that might have confused me during my time in LA, including language barriers, culture shock, and making new friends. However, I reminded myself that being an international student does not excuse me from understanding and integrating into my surroundings.</p> <p>I made an effort to form new friendships and learn about different cultures. Whenever I didn't understand something, I challenged my initial shyness and reluctance to ask what I believed were "stupid questions." One day, while interacting with a convenience store staff, I began a question with an apology, stating that it might be a stupid question. However, he promptly interrupted me and said, "There is no question that is stupid, just ask!" His encouragement to ask anything I didn't understand left a lasting impact on me.</p> <p>From that day forward, I adopted an open-minded approach and embraced the importance of asking questions whenever clarification was needed. I realized that</p>

	there is no shame in seeking knowledge and understanding. Therefore, I firmly believe that being open-minded and unafraid to ask questions is a vital mindset to cultivate throughout our lives.
Are you of the opinion that the traineeship will benefit you in your future professional career? If yes, how? If not, why?	I do think that this traineeship is absolutely helpful in my future. I had an opportunity to work with a lot of top experts in the fields of clinical psychology, schizophrenia, and cognitive science. I learned how to conduct a clinical experiment, clinical interview, and work with participants with different mental disorders. I would like to apply for a PhD in clinical psychology and study the relationship between individuals with schizophrenia and cognitive science. This traineeship provided me with more practical experience and strengthened my desire to study these fields.
Can you recommend this traineeship? (Please be sure to elaborate) If yes, would the organization/enterprise accept trainees in the future?	I don't think I can be a referee. However, I would think if there is anyone interested in the Green Lab, he/she could send an email to Dr. Green directly to ask if he accepts any trainees at the moment.
Helpful websites / Other things:	Check the Green Lab website to gain the latest information: https://greenlab.dgsom.ucla.edu/pages/

Do you agree with the anonymous publication of your report on the www.eu-servicepoint.de website?

Yes ☒

No ☐