



TECHNISCHE HOCHSCHULE
OSTWESTFALEN-LIPPE
UNIVERSITY OF
APPLIED SCIENCES
AND ARTS

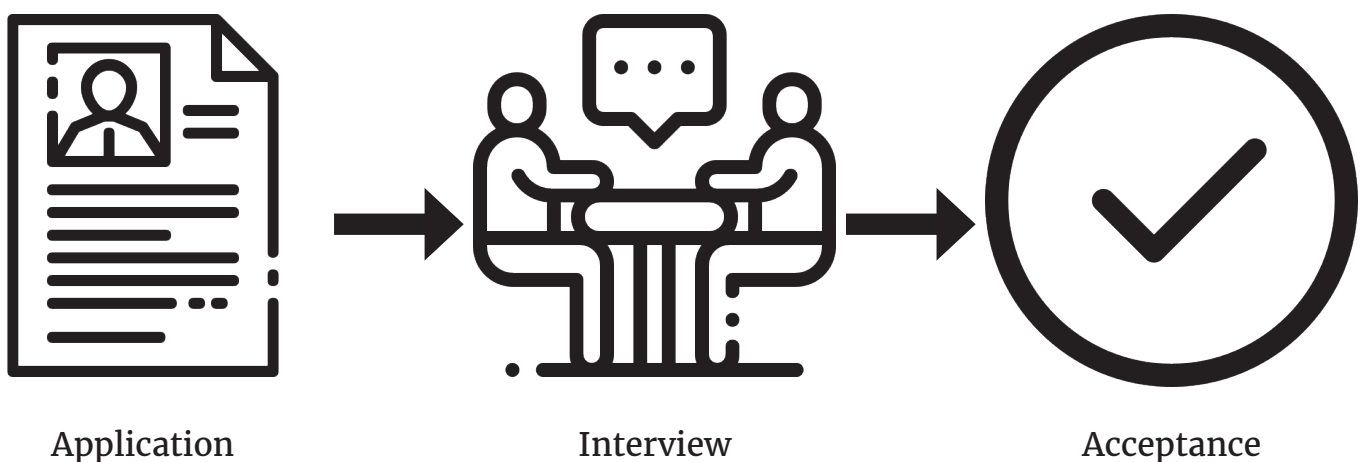


University Of Florida
Exchange Semester Fall 2019

Doing an exchange semester as a master student have been quite an interesting experience, I got the chance to see the difference between the different inputs and outputs in both countries which I have studied at till this moment. This allowed me to see different prospects of both countries thus developing and widening my perspective about Germany and USA.



My journey started by applying for an exchange semester to study in the US, as I would like to explore the far western part of the world. I started by sending my application, Portfolio and certificates proving I was eligible to apply for an exchange semester to the US. Next step was an interview with a committee from TH-owl explaining my interest, proving my proficiency as an english speaker and the reason I have applied for this exchange semester.



Tuition fees to study at UF for one semester usually costs 11,000 USD, but as an exchange student I didn't have to pay these fees, therefore I would like to thank TH-OWL for this opportunity and for accepting my application to study abroad. What am also thankful for is the financial support from the DAAD committee to be able to finance myself through the ISAP scholarship there, as living costs are also high.



Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service

Once I got accepted, I started preparing myself to travel there by arranging my accommodation and study program to fit my criteria as a student studying façade design, which was quite an interesting approach to do.



Accommodation



Courses

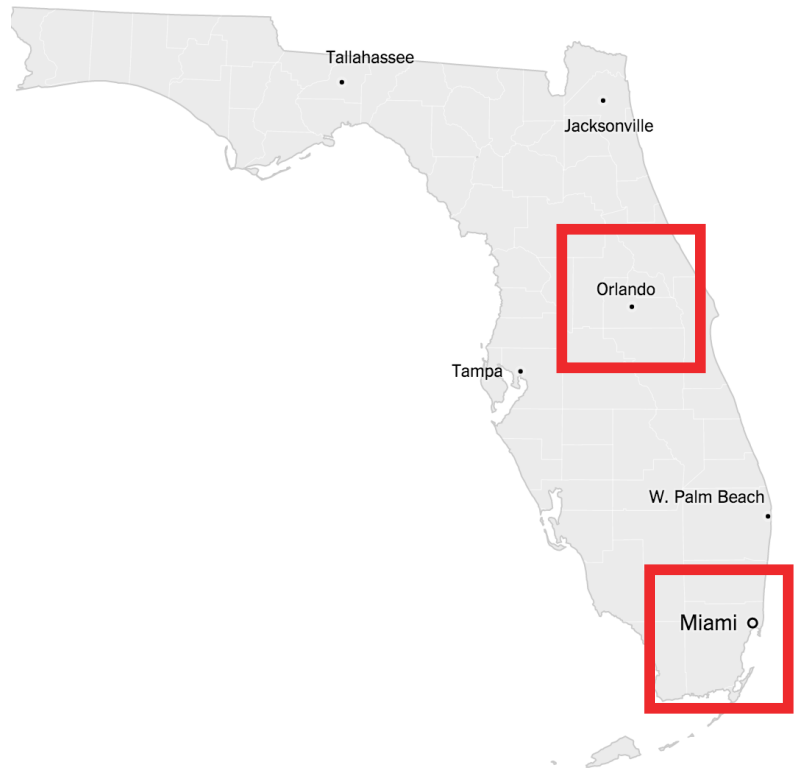
As a foreign student in Germany I had to apply for a study visa at the U.S Consulates General in Munich, as you can apply for a visa at one of these Three locations: Berlin, Munich or Frankfurt.

First, I had to complete the required application online for a nonimmigrant Visa, then I booked my appointment which usually is available within two to three weeks at the embassy or the consulate. I had to take a couple of documents with me only, the most important one was the DS 2019 form that you need to present at your interview.

If there is any documents that you have forgotten to bring with you, you can print them at the embassy for a fee, just make sure to have them with you.

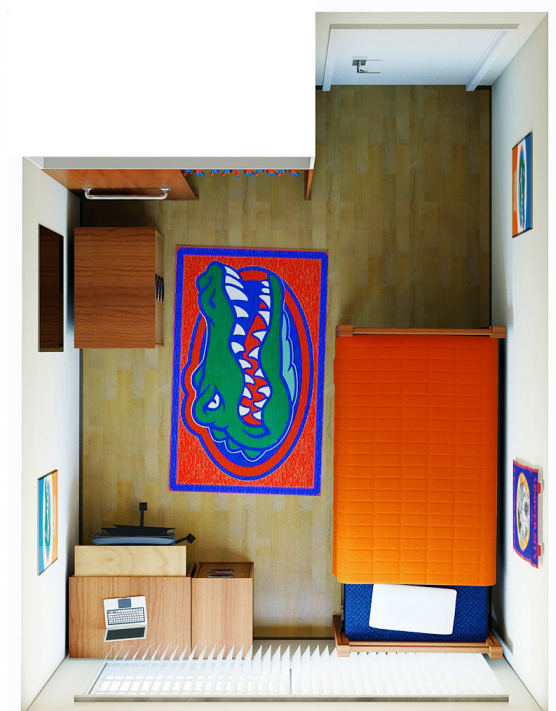
The interview was quite direct and simple, they have asked me about the purpose of the visit, as I have explained and presented my documents for proof. By the end of the interview my visa was already accepted, and I was told my passport will be sent to my place of residence. (This service is provided by ups which you can book and pay for after finishing your online application.)

Once I received my visa, I booked my flight from Düsseldorf to Gainesville, I would recommend that you book a one-way flight only and to big airports in Florida (either Orlando or Miami) as the flights are significantly cheaper.



As I have arrived in the student complex I started settling down and exploring the university. My room was a single bedroom at weaver hall.

This dormitory is for international students mainly, located on campus next to the dining hall. As a master student I got the single bedroom, but my colleagues in their bachelor's degree received a shared bedroom with UF students. The dormitory has a service area that assist the students during the day, and each floor has a resident assistant that helps each student if they had problems, concerns or questions



The university of Florida offers many activities and programs for its students to keep them active during the semester both on the educational and social level, where I have met student from different parts and different cultures.



There are different services the university offers for its students, especially for dining on campus. You can pay for the meal plan where you can eat during the open-ing hours of the dining hall as much as you want. This will save you the trouble of buying groceries, cooking and cleaning. Although it might appear to be expensive (meal plan costs around 2100 USD per semester) it saved me lots of time as grocery stores were a bit far from campus. The food is good although I got bored in the end by it as they offer the same things over and over, and the quality of the food might get reduced as in certain times there would be lots of students where they have to be served as quick as possible.



You receive one cash exchange meal swipe per day from any of these locations!

Cash Exchange Value: \$6.50, per swipe



For my master courses, i took two courses related to my field of study as a Facade designer. The first course that I took was a design studio supervised by Prof. Jeff Carney, Prof. Ryan Sharston and Prof. Steven Bender to explore Energy efficient emergency shelter housing for post disaster conditions in Florida, were the objective was to come up with a prototype as an alternative for caravan houses and trailers that could serve a lifetime cycle for it's users as well as be further developed and expanded.



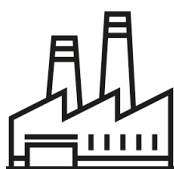
Prof. Jeff Carney



Prof. Ryan Sharston



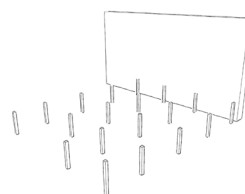
Prof. Steven Bender



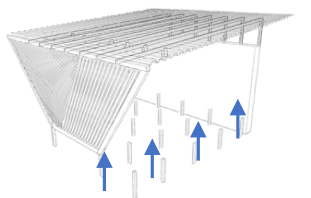
KIT components are manufactured in the factory to meet the standards and regulations.



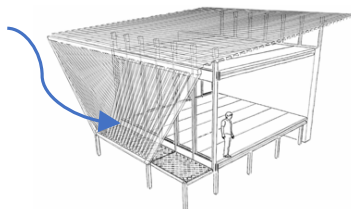
The kit gets transported from the factory to the site



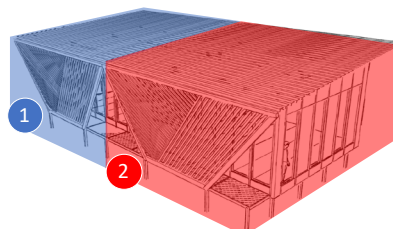
Helical piles and the Supplying wall are constructed in advance in order to prepare for the kit assembly



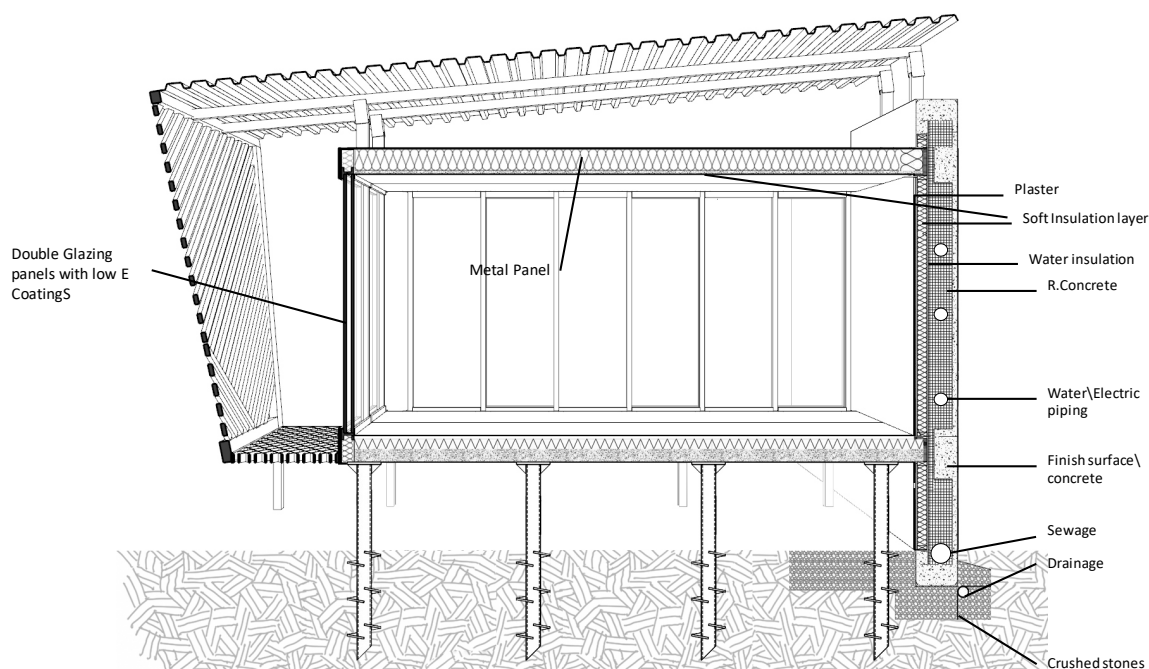
The exterior envelope is first assembled



The shelter is then placed inside the exterior envelope



Since it is a modular system, the living space could be expanded along as needed. (Present or future)

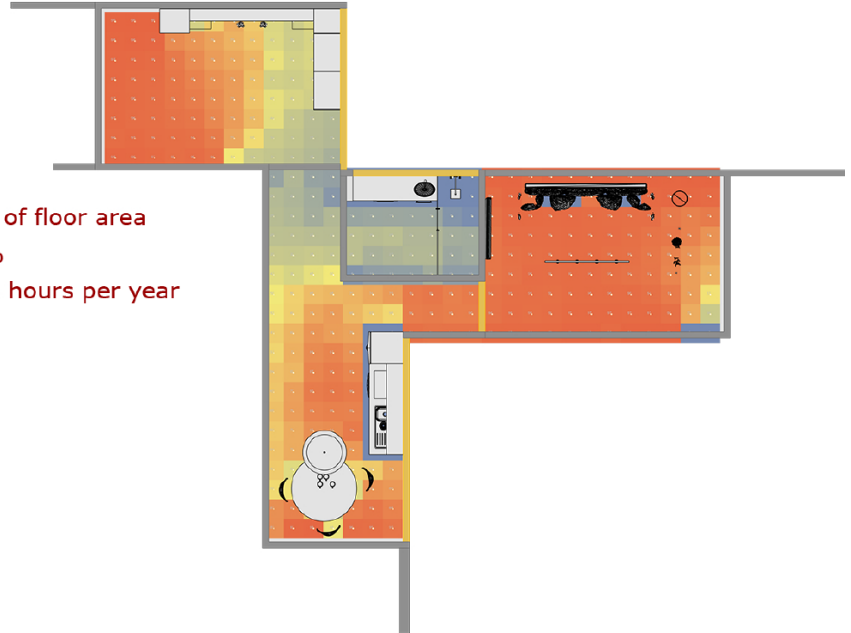


The second course that I took was supervised by Prof. Ryan Sharston, the material of the course focused on studying building energy performance and how could it be enhanced by conducting simulations for acoustics, lighting Design and energy consumption. This course helped me in how it is possible to optimize buildings, and it aided me in my proposed prototype for the design course.

Before Shading

Daysim Simulation Report

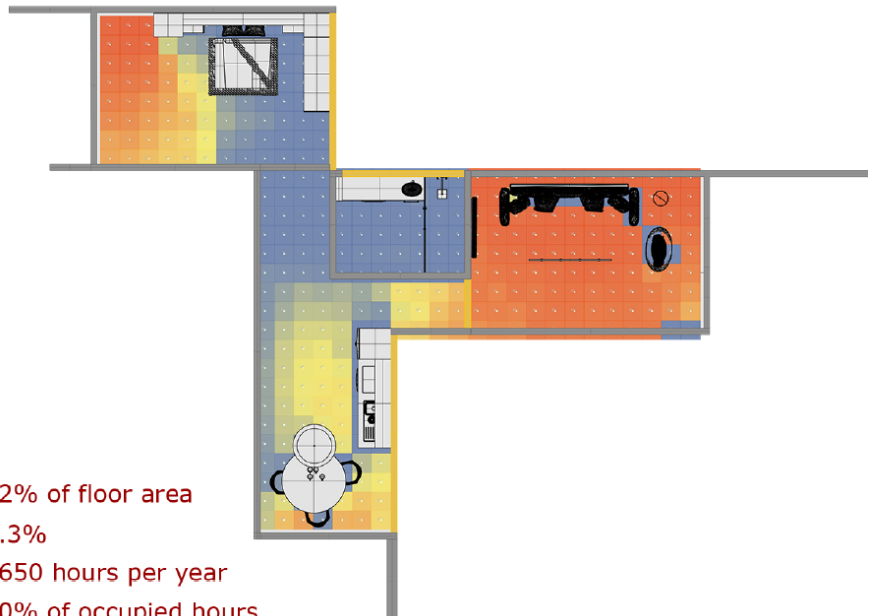
Daylit Area (DA _{300lux} [50%])	86% of floor area
Mean Daylight Factor	9.5%
Occupancy	3650 hours per year



After Shading

Daysim Simulation Report

Daylit Area (DA _{300lux} [50%])	42% of floor area
Mean Daylight Factor	2.3%
Occupancy	3650 hours per year
Shading Group 1 open	10% of occupied hours



University life included going to trips in different parts of Florida, gatherings and events with the students as well as Football matches.



Football in specific is a vulture where the students and fans from different ages get together to support the university's team, the championship is on national level and celebrated by Americans to the fullest. It could be compared to the Bundesliga in Germany and the Fans are like Dortmund Fans. Personally, I had no clue about American Football, but now am a Gator Fan (The university's team)

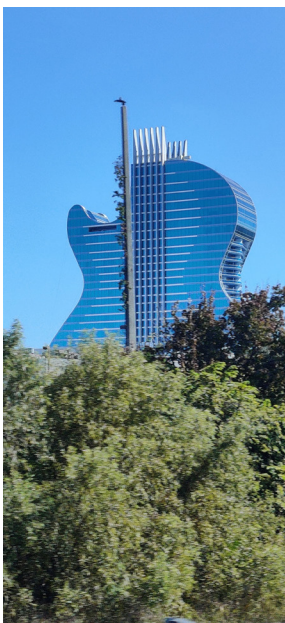
What really got me in touch with the students of UF is the mentor – mentee program, a program where visiting students are matched with UF students to get them together. The students that I met through this program were helpful and we got to hang out and support each other, learning from each other, and creating a long-lasting connections.

As a student there is always something that can get you involved, whether it is an activity, a class, a group of people, a trip, and the list goes on and on.



Exploring different cities was a goal I tried to achieve as well, especially that you can easily rent a car and travel around in Florida, there is also the option of traveling by bus and using airplanes. Personally, I would I highly recommend road trips as they have been quite a unique experience to do in the U.S.







Finally, I would like to mention during my study abroad I received a lot of support from both Germany and America. I would particularly like to mention Mrs. Maryse Niemeier from the International Office in Detmold. Whenever I had questions about preparations, course of events and uncertainties about the semester in America, I was able to contact her, and she would get back to me as soon as possible.

At UF in Gainesville also had a very dedicated contact person. Carolyn Caesarotti who has only been responsible for exchange students in the International Office since 2019 but did her job very professionally and was always there to help. Once again, I would like to thank the DAAD, As the ISAP scholarship made a lot of things easier and easier for me in America.

The semester in Gainesville was the best of my time as a student and I am incredibly happy that I was given the opportunity to do so. I would encourage every student to apply for a semester in America.

Thank You