

韓國高等科技管理學院(KAIST College of Business) 交換生 生活報告

111 學年 秋季班 陳顯宜 政治大學國際經營管理英語碩士學程(IMBA)

I. 交換學校及課程介紹

a. 學校介紹 (Introduction to KAIST)

Although the exchange program to KAIST is to the campus located in Seoul, however, the main campus is actually located in Daejeon. Daejeon is a central-west city of South Korea located about a 2-hour drive from the KAIST Seoul campus. The official full name of KAIST is ‘Korean Advanced Institute of Science and Technology’ and was initially established as a research-oriented science and engineering university. When speaking on the universities of South Korea, many have heard of the S.K.Y. institutions, and even though KAIST is not considered one of the included schools within S.K.Y., the school itself is still regarded as one of the most renowned and prestigious universities in South Korea.

In 1995, KAIST opened the first full-time MBA program in South Korea and since then have secured its standing as one of the top business schools in the region. The Seoul campus itself was established in 1996 focusing as a graduate school for management programs and more commonly known as KAIST College of Business (KCB). While playing a key role in pioneering South Korea’s management education, KCB now provides various programs and courses with innovative approaches on ESG values and an emphasis on “responsibility management” and “sustainability management”. The three pillars in which KCB aims to provide advanced education following their core values are Environment, Social Responsibility, and Startups.

As an exchange student, all are enrolled as a Techno MBA student. KCB’s Techno MBA program focuses on providing practical skills in the realms of business analytics with a functional technological knowledge. However, students are also allowed to select and take courses from and with students of other programs such as Social Entrepreneurship MBA, Green Business and Policy, etc. Overall, KCB provides a well-rounded curriculum for students to expand their business knowledge in the fields of their interests.

b. 課程和選課介紹 (Course Registration and Course Description)

選課介紹:

All course registration was completed online within the KAIST portal system that does provide English language for easy navigation. Prior to the official registration period, the exchange coordinator from the KCB office sends multiple emails providing

all the necessary information, important notices, and clear descriptions of the processes to ensure students can successfully register for courses. As each semester the course offering differs, it is pertinent that students pay close attention to the emails in order to be notified of the most updated offered course list. To make the process more accessible, the coordinator attaches via email a list of English-taught courses that will potentially be open and the link to find the syllabus for us to research and have an idea of what courses we may be interested in taking. In this course list, the course numbers and any information needed to be used to register for the course itself was also included. From the provided information by the school coordinator, there were no issues in selecting and registering for the courses. As mentioned previously, students are able to register for courses outside of the TMBA program. As a result, besides required business courses such as marketing and managerial economics, other topics such as finance, green business, entrepreneurship, and Korean language courses are offered.

On the administrative side, each exchange student is required to take a minimum of (6) credits and maximum of (15) credits during the semester. KCB courses have two systems, (3) credit courses and (1.5) credit courses. (3) credit courses run for the typical 16 weeks of classes while (1.5) credit courses run for only 8 weeks. There is a possibility to attend some courses before registration as KCB provides an additional add/drop period after the first week. However, some courses may reach the maximum capacity, and, in some situations, it is possible to contact the course professor to see if any possibility to still register despite the restrictions. In terms of course registration, it is quite a smooth and easy process with the resources provided by the KCB exchange coordinator.

課程介紹:

Below will provide a personal reflection on the courses taken during the Fall 2022 semester at KCB. As prior to my exchange semester, I had already completed all required credits for the IMBA program, while at KCB I had chosen to take only the minimum of (6) credits which translated to (2) courses total. As for the classroom setting, similar to IMBA courses usually hosted on the 6th floor of the Commerce Building of NCCUC the classrooms at KAIST were also mocked after the Harvard-style. The teaching style of the professors were also similar in using lecture notes, various case studies, in-class discussions, guest speakers, and group projects to guide the course. An online platform similar to WM5 was also used where professors had the ability to upload resources, assignments, and other related items for students to access and study.

1. Entrepreneurship and Innovative Startups (3 Credits): This particular course focused mainly on the concepts surrounding new ventures and startups allowing

students to learn how to conceptualize, develop, and manage successful new ventures. The professor provided various tools, systems, and models in which those interested in creating your own startup can take into consideration and apply practically. Not only does the course touch upon starting your own venture, but also the idea of being an entrepreneur within an existing organization is discussed extensively. The format of the class consisted not only of in-class lectures, discussions, and guest speakers but also of individual case reading assignment and simulation exercises as well as group activities and a final group project. Overall, this course provided valuable knowledge of entrepreneurship and startup but also provided students a professional environment to work with and network with a diverse group of individuals.

2. Korean for Graduate International Students (3 Credits): The Korean language course offered to international students has two levels: Korean 1 and Korean 2. Due to students from various programs registering for the course, it is often packed and reaches capacity. However, the professor is quite lenient in the sense that a quick evaluation is conducted to determine your language proficiency level. From there, the professor determines how to split the students accordingly within the two levels. Furthermore, students are also allowed to sit in for either course once approved by the professor. Korean 1 is focused more on the basics of the Korean language such as the alphabet, numbers, and introductory conversation skills. Korean 2 is focused more on the grammatical sides of the language. As prior to arriving to Seoul I had self-learned some Korean as a result I was able to attend both Korean 1 and Korean 2 while officially registered just for the Korean 2 course in the school system.

II. 生活及文化交流

a. 日常生活 (Everyday Life at KAIST)

1. Accommodations:

As I personally had chosen to live off-campus, I am unable to provide a true account or experience of the KAIST dorms. However, from conversing with other exchange students and classmates, they have said the dorms provided and has all the essentials needed to live comfortably (i.e., laundry, fridge, small kitchen area, common TV area, etc.). In the common area, exchange classmates often will hang out with other local students to watch movies, sports games, or just relax with some food and drinks. As the dorm fee is quite reasonably priced (within 700,000KRW), it is a good option for exchange students living on a budget. Additionally, the school also provides each exchange student with a Lab Room which can be accessed 24/7 and is shared with around 10 other KCB students. The labs provide a personal study desk cubicle and a printer.

My off-campus housing was more costly than the dorms provided by KCB. The monthly rent however included all utilities, maintenance fees, Wi-Fi, and bedding. The accommodation can be similar to a service hotel combined with co-working spaces. For example, common areas included a work/lounge area, library, gym, kitchen, laundry, and more. The location of my particular housing was also just a singular 20-minute bus ride to the KCB campus making it quite convenient.

2. Food

Overall, the food may not quite fit our Taiwanese tastes but around the KCB campus food can be conveniently bought from restaurants as well as convenience stores within 10-minutes walking distance. The campus itself also has one student cafeteria located on the second floor of the Student Union Building. The menu is posted each week with at least two selections per mealtime. The cost is cheaper than food off-campus and is around 4,500KRW per meal. Each meal contains a main dish coupled with some side dishes and usually a soup as well. In the SUPEX building second floor (Atrium) there is also a café that does sell simple meals and snacks besides from a wide selection of drinks. The cost per drink at the Atrium is around 3,500KRW.

Additionally, the KCB campus is located between two other universities, Korea University and Kyunghee University. Due to this location, the surrounding area houses a variety of restaurants, fast-food chains, shops, and stores where students can easily get food off-campus with many different selections such as Japanese food, Chinese food, Indian food, and even western food. Furthermore, the Kyunghee campus has one cafeteria that is opened to non-Kyunghee students which provides an extra option cheaper cost meals as the cost of eating off-campus food usually is at least double to triple the cost compared with the campus cafeteria meals.

3. Transportation

Getting around Seoul and within South Korea is fairly easy and convenient with various options such as metros, buses, and trains. Similar to the transportation card in Taiwan, the T-Money card in South Korea can be easily used to access and pay for various modes of transportation. To top-up the card, however, only cash is accepted but can be done at the metro stations or at the counter of convenience stores.

When arriving to Seoul, no matter which airport, getting to the KCB campus is also convenient. There are three main options: Taxi, Bus, Metro. A direct taxi from the airport to campus may cost around 60,000KRW to 80,000KRW. When taking the taxi, it is best to ask them to drop off directly at the dorm entrance as from the main KCB gate to the dorm there is quite a trek with a few flights of stairs. The airports also offer an airport limousine bus service with multiple drop-off locations around Seoul. The cost is around 17,000KRW and the closest stop near campus is Cheongnyangni Station. From this station there are buses, or a taxi can take to the KCB campus directly which will take less than 15-20 minutes to arrive. The last option is the metro which will need

to have a few transfers before arriving to the closet station to the campus which is Hoegi Station. Although within metro stations there are some elevators and conveyor belts for luggage, not every transfer route has as most are still stairs.

In terms of everyday travels, although the KCB campus is located in Seoul it can be seen as located more so on the outskirts of central Seoul near the north-east. As a result, it usually takes additional time to travel to the city center. This is the one downside of the location, similar to NCCU. Thankfully, there is a bus stop right outside of the campus main gate and the Hoegi Station is within a 20-minute walk. Also, as Cheongnyangni Station is a train station and bus terminal, there are some buses/trains with direct connections to cities outside of Seoul. So, although it may take more time to travel to places, there is still multiple convenient options for transportation around the KCB campus.

4. Surrounding Environment

The campus itself is located on a hill and is surrounded by nature. There is a small nature trail that can be used to take a stroll around the school. As the area is also more residential and with other universities away from the city center, it is more quiet and not very hectic. The local area also has easy access to stores that sell living essential products such as Daiso (near Hoegi) as well as the Lotte Mart and the Traditional Market (near Cheongnyangni). Despite the location being a bit farther from city center, the surrounding area provides all the needs for daily life with no issues.

b. 文化交流 (Cultural Exchange)

1. KCB School-Related Exchange

As KCB was not the main campus and was quite a bit smaller than the main one in Daejeon, there were many clubs and activities that could not be attended due to the distance. However, the Seoul campus still had some student clubs which club members would make promotions within the common area such as the Atrium for all students to join. A good thing about this is that they did not limit only to full-time students or local students. For example, even exchange international students still had the opportunity to participate in the Student Council and their activities. Furthermore, to allow students to know the main campus and network with other students, KAIST had hosted a sports day. For this event the school provided food, transportation, and various activities to allow students from the Seoul campus and the main Daejeon campus to get to know one another. I had personally attended the event and was able to meet a lot of new classmates as well as the chance to tour the main campus. It was a very fulfilling day where despite language barriers and distance, we were still able to come together and have fun.

Additionally, the KCB campus focused on sustainability and startups. Thus, almost weekly there would be seminars, career talks, or experience sharing within these related

topics. The school would send out emails constantly to invite students to join various talks. Unfortunately, some of these talks were hosted solely in Korean therefore I could not attend.

2. Korean Cultural Exchange

The KCB exchange coordinator prior to our arrival to Seoul had already provided us with local Korean senior classmates as our mentors, similar to the Buddy Program at NCCU. These mentors had helped us to assimilate into the culture and provided guidance on things we had questions with such as where to buy certain things, what to eat, etc. One of my mentors was truly welcoming as he showed us some local foods and invited us to his parent's house for a meal. From his heartwarming welcome, as a foreign exchange student I was able to experience local cultures and have a nicer time in Seoul.

In addition to our mentor, September is also a big month for many school festivals and anniversary celebrations. With the help of our mentor and other classmates, we were able to find information easily and had the chance to attend the festivals of other schools as well. Most of the schools around Seoul open these festivals and events to non-campus students. One major event of these festivals were the many concerts where schools invited notable KPOP/musical acts to perform. These festival events are free to attend so for the month of September, my classmates and I had enjoyed fun times attending the various events hosted by different schools around Seoul.

3. International Students Cultural Exchange

As most exchange students attended the same English-taught courses we had many moments to hang out and learn from one another. Many of us had also taken trips to surrounding cities together. Although we all were in Seoul, just by interacting together and conversing we were always able to learn more about our diverse cultures. Furthermore, as I lived off-campus and had a large, shared kitchen space I was able to invite some classmates over for cooking nights. We've made various dishes such as Italian pasta, Taiwanese foods, and Japanese curry. Through our love of food, we were able to share our different cultures together and enjoy our short months of exchange at KCB in Seoul.

III. 交換需注意之事項

- a. Visa Process/ARC: As KAIST is an accredited school, for the visa only the application form needs to be filled out and apply in person at the visa office located near the Taipei World Trade Center with no fees. A slip is then given for when the visa will be ready to pick-up. However, when picking up only the passport will be returned back with a paper of instructions of how to go online to download the printable single-entry visa. This will need to be provided to the immigration officer when entering South Korea. After, to have valid legal status in South Korea, you will need to apply for an

- “Alien Residency Card”. This part of the process along with the National Health Insurance will be assisted with from the KCB coordinator.
- b. Banking: You will need to apply for and open the bank account by yourself. There is a Woori Bank located near the Kyunghee Campus. As that school also has many international students, it is best to apply at that location as they are more likely to approve the application. It is not 100% certain they will approve the application as exchange programs are only short-term. However, you can still try, and you will definitely need to bring your ARC card, Taiwanese ID card, Passport, Proof of Enrollment letter, and a 20,000KRW deposit. If approved, the bank will help with the application form and then provide you a debit card and bank book. The debit card can be used like a credit card for both in-person purchases as well as online purchases.
 - c. Phone Plans: Also located near Kyunghee University is a mobile provider store called Chingu Mobile. This store provides cheap phone plans, and they also speak mandarin. They have different packages depending on how many months, data amount, speed, etc. You can first use your passport to apply for the phone number, however, remember to go back and provide them your ARC in order to register your number under your name. This will make it easier to utilize other internet-related services, restaurant reservations, etc., during your time in Seoul.
 - d. Online Purchases/Tickets/etc.: The reason a local bank account and phone number may be important to obtain is if you plan to make online purchases, concert/exhibition tickets online, etc. Unlike Taiwan, many services need to certify your identity via your ARC number and mobile phone number. As a result, if you do not have either you are not able to use certain applications, online accounts, etc. As for the bank account, many online purchases only accept local bank payments, international credit cards are not accepted.
 - e. Messaging Applications: For exchange/school related noticed the KCB coordinator utilized WhatsApp and many classmates also used this app for communication. Another application used for communication that is more for Koreans locally is Kakao Talk.
 - f. Navigation Applications: Google Maps does not work therefore the applications that are best for navigation throughout the country are either Kakao Maps or Naver Maps.
 - g. Budget: You will notice right away that the spending in Seoul is quite higher than that of Taipei. Especially in food, you should expect to spend at least on average 10,000KRW per meal. Therefore, budget wise, please plan to spend roughly 1,000,000KRW per month (inclusive of some leisure travels, food, transport, etc.).