

OUTACHIDERT Ikhlas, Lane C, Mohamed V university, Rabat Morocco

The story began with Iris' Email response: "Dear Ikhlas, I am happy to inform you that the summer course will take place in late August"

This was for me the best news I received since the start of the pandemic. I actually was keen to take part in the BME summer course at Jade university right after my graduation in 2019, but only after 3 years, that dream seemed to be achievable!

On the 21th of August, everything was all set for me to start the exciting adventure. And I was extremely happy regardless of the confusion of traveling abroad, alone, and for the first time. My flight landed in Berlin at 09.00 p.m. and another long journey of 13 hours was waiting for me in order to get to Wilhelmshaven.

With 8 train connections, almost no sleep for 24 hours, and a hungry stomach, I still was impatient to join the summer course. I was the last one to join on Monday at 2pm. I was exhausted because of the long journey but all I wanted was to be able to attend at least the last class on that day, and I did so!

I was in Lane C, in a small group of 4 people: 2students from Turkey, One from Brazil and I. Hence, my integration in the classroom was easy although I missed the morning's activity of getting to know the participants. Later in the evening's barbecue which was organized by the university, I met the rest of the participants from other lanes. It was really great to get to know people from Mexico, Germany, Brazil, Portugal, Turkey, Iran, and Belgium. I already knew that there was two other Africans, one from Gabon and the other from Egypt, whom I was very excited to meet, but they were not present in that evening's meeting.

Truth be told, the integration in the whole group was a bit hard for me on the first days, since small groups of each language speakers were naturally made, and I was the only Moroccan there. But later on, thanks to the kindness of everybody and to my talkativeness as well, I was able to enjoy really good conversations with others.

In Lance C, the topic of the first week was "amperometric biosensors" and the classes were animated by two Turkish professors. Surprisingly, the rhythm of the course was so fast and I had to get ready to live in serious mode, which I didn't expect before to be honest. I still remember the first Thursday, how everybody was stressed and serious to prepare for the exam and make the presentation. So three years after having graduated, I felt that I am again a hard-working student, staying up all night trying to remember electronics and chemistry lessons and to do the homework that our professors asked us for.

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1: Preparing the PCB of Glucose biosensor



2: Testing the glucose monitoring biosensor

On Friday, however, everything went very well. We did the presentations, we took the exam and I was very satisfied and proud of what I was able to learn and how I managed to be flexible despite all the difficulties.

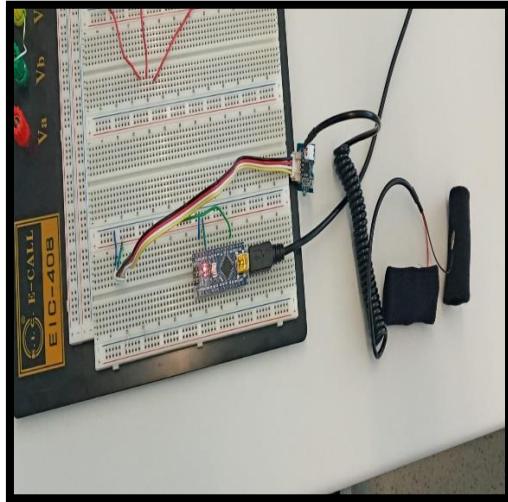
The most important thing I learned from the first week, besides the hard skills and how to build a biosensor of glucose monitoring from scratch, was how to manage the stress and enjoy the "Feierabend" after every busy day just like Germans do!



3: Photo of all the group with the professor at the end of the first week

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The second week was much easier and more enjoyable. We learned a lot about signal conditioning and processing, and we worked on three biosensors: GSR, phonocardiograph and SPO2. The Turkish professor was great at simplifying things for us and he helped us to well understand the projects even in a short time.



4: The GSR biosensor



5: All the group with our professor at the end of the second week

Meanwhile, we had enjoyable activities every day after school. We visited some cities next to Wilhelmshaven like Bremen, Oldenburg as well as a beautiful Island called Heligoland. And I enjoyed playing basketball with guys and other games on the beach.



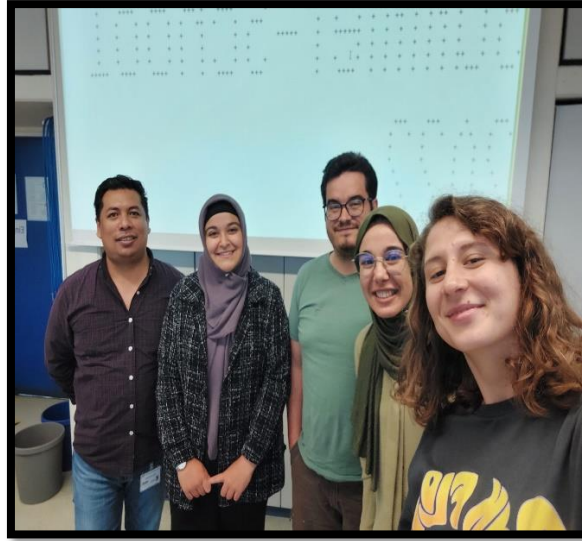
6: In Heligoland

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The third week was the last, and therefore the most precious. Knowing that the adventure is going to finish on that Friday saddened me a little, but pushed me also to enjoy every single moment of the week. We studied embedded systems and IOT for medical technology. The project of the week was about deploying a biomedical application that calculates heart rate and our Mexican professor was very friendly and helpful.



7: During the class in the third week



8: All the group with our professor at the end of the third week

After school, wandering around the city until midnight was my favorite activity. And Felipe, my best friend in the summer course was a great companion indeed. We had great conversations with locals, we tried different food and we learned together how to enjoy differences and to just respect and appreciate everyone for who they are.

Last Friday, it was time for the goodbyes, we did the presentations in front of the jury, we got our certificates and we took some photos together which will remain as beautiful souvenirs in our memory.

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9: Obtaining my certificate



10: The final presentation

All in all, I am really very grateful to have the opportunity to participate in this summer course. I would like to warmly thank Jade University who helped me with a scholarship and provided us with everything for a great learning and stay in Wilhelmshaven. A special thank you goes specifically to Iris Wilters who was very helpful and supportive. She was always there to support and receive us with her beautiful smile.

I also want to thank all the participants for the great moments we shared together, namely, the Mexican guys who were so kind with me and who opened their kitchen to me to prepare Moroccan tea!

A big thanks goes to my Turkish roommate Neslihan, I do appreciate her caring attitude when I got a bit sick during the second week.

I honestly hope to meet all these beautiful people one day again. And I believe that this won't be my last time in the amazing country of Germany!



11: Photo with all the participants and the staff at the end of the course