

REPORT AL RIENTRO DELL'ESPERIENZA DI SCAMBIO - A.A.  
2014/2015

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<b>_Semestre svolto all'estero</b>	2°

### Testo

When I arrived in Chiba I never imagined to have the life I always looked for. Japan allows me to study, travel and have many new experiences as every student should in their university life.

My favorite place is the lab of Design Management, my school headquarter. Here we can find everything we need for our projects: tools, printers, colors but also the teachers who are always available, and the other classmate who work here together sometimes with a bit of music. The environment in the lab encourages students to work smarter. This is something we have do not have in Italy. I think it's important for our professional and human growth to be in contact with other creatives daily: it's a continuous source of inspiration. The projects we did in the first two months were rather interesting: I used to follow courses more difficult in Politecnico but I enjoy my time working on subjects and topics I have never experience before. Free hand drawing is one of this. In Milan I never had the time to focus on sketches and improve this skill. I am very happy to have done it here and I am really satisfied with the results.

My only complaint is that I couldn't freely choose the courses to attend because of language problems. I expected to join an international program where all students and teachers speak English but many Japanese people can't speak English. This situation is discouraging because I would like to join some interesting courses (where Japanese was the main language) and share more my ideas which could be not understood.

This is probably the best life for a young student because we have the time to improve our professional skills, but also to follow our passions. I joined the university swimming club and I am very happy to have done it. University clubs require a hard commitment: they meet almost every day and they usually play at competitive levels. I played waterpolo for many years and I have really missed "the team environment". I found a new family in the swimming club in Chiba and I was surprised to understand what the real meaning of the word "together" is. Everything you do is for the team. All of your efforts improve the strength and the awareness of the team: this point is also the same for design groups. If one person is missing, the team is weaker, even if swimming is an individual sport. In Italy everyone is selfish, we are not able to take care of something bigger than ourselves. This is what I learn from the swimming club. Furthermore, I really appreciate the relation between the club and the university. Chiba university supports sport and clubs, allowing them to use its structures and equipment; in turn sport clubs take care of these items and represent Chiba University in the national competitions. One of the most interesting days was

when we cleaned and tidy up the swimming pool inside the campus. We worked hard together and it looked like everyone was part of something bigger. I can certainly say that having joined this club was good not only for my body but also for my exchange experience. My swimming mates taught to me how a normal japanese student lives. I learned many things about my peers daily life: what they think about their school, how they see friendships and engagements, which are their hobbies, how they are with their parents, which troubles they have now and how they imagine their future. They gave me what I wanted to achieve when I left Italy: a vision of the real life in Japan.

Concerning the more practical side of my life in Japan, I didn't have many problems. Everything is clear there and when something was complicated, I always had help from our "angel" Sugita-san or other people as my tutor, my design management colleagues or my teachers.

For example, in the first two weeks I had some problems with the food and the shopping because I couldn't understand Japanese labels. I asked my tutor to do shopping together and she explained everything I needed. Japanese people are the most willing of the world.

The last two months were more demanding. Each class has its own final project to design and most of the outcomes were real prototypes. I enjoyed "making" because too often our projects stay inside our computer. I had the opportunity to discover and experiment within all the design fields, from graphic to product and service. I passed whole days polishing wood, brainstormings or working on Adobe Illustrator. The university, the teachers and the projects' briefs gave me the possibility to grow as designer because they could reveal capabilities and skills which I didn't expect to have.

Furthermore, I realized at the end of the semester to have a good collection of new interesting projects to put on my portfolio and to present as "calling card" of this wonderful Japanese experience. In June I joined a workshop organized by Chiba University with KISD, powered by Sony. It was one of the best weeks of my experience. Young designers from Japan, Italy, Germany and China who designed together with the help and the support of designers from the Sony Creative Center and by one of the most famous experts in service design, Brigitte Marger. It was a really inspiring experience: I learned so much about the importance of the team spirit and how each one of us should play their role within the group. I also realized how important it is to have a strong relation between universities and companies, something that Japan should teach to Italy.

I was so impressed and amazed by this japanese attitude that I started to consider the idea of searching for a job here in Japan because I'm sure that I have many more things to learn from these amazing people.

In conclusion, I want to underline the importance of having had a multi-faceted experience. I am really happy to have had the time to focus on design, friends, traveling, sport and I am even happier because all these things helped me to understand the soul of Japan with its culture, traditions, rituals and misteries.

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Autorizzo al trattamento dei miei dati personali ai sensi del Decreto Legislativo n. 196/03 da parte del Politecnico di Milano.

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