

Report Promos Experience- [REDACTED]

During one of the meetings I had with my thesis supervisor, he made me notice that there were many theoretical overlaps between my work and the one of a Professor from the University of Memphis. He also informed me that it is actually possible, in our university, to apply for some funding for going abroad and work with another professor in order to develop more intensively my own project. This conversation happened on a Friday, and I honestly admit I was very skeptic about handling to give all the necessary documents to the international office, since the deadline of the PROMOS program was on Monday. Nevertheless everything was happening very fast and, despite my love for traveling, Memphis seemed a pretty far place. Here a key role has been played by my supervisor that supported me and instilled in me the courage and the will I needed in that specific moment remarking the importance that the trip could have had for my academic carrier. In a weekend I was able to prepare all the necessary documents, a letter of motivation, one of recommendation written by my supervisor and a quick and summarized thesis project. I wrote different email to the International Office and they always replied very quickly. Few months later the international office informed me I passed the selection.

I immediately started looking for an accommodation so I tried to contact the International Office from Memphis. I had a reply after my sixth email and they were not able to help me. I contacted also different dormitories, nothing worked with any of them. I started putting adds on Craigslist and Roommate and checking websites as AirBnb. I spent around two weeks replying to different emails and at the end I decided to give trust to "the less weird one". It is really important to ask for pictures and sometimes for documents to not get tricked, internet is not really a safe place for these kind of things if you are not using a famous website that can help you legally if something goes wrong. This was how I met a person that I actually consider as a friend now. For a fair price, a Memphis Phd student working on English literature and creative writing rented me the upper floor of his house.

It was my first time outside Europe so I was a bit nervous about spending more than 10 hours in a plane but the service was very good and I had a personal screen at my seat in which I had the possibility to play videogames and watch movies. I have nothing to complain about the food I had on the plane. I arrived at night exhausted and it was raining. My housemate came to airport to bring me home. I was so tired to fall asleep without having the time to notice any details about the house or my room. When I woke up I was actually surprised to notice how pretty the house was.



Let me explain. One of the reason I liked my housemate so much it was because he had weird tastes as much as me. The house was amazing and full of technologies but sometimes I guess the furniture might be considered a little weird. Sometimes it was possible to see some “quirky artifact” inside the house as the knight in the picture.



The knight was one of the most “normal” objects. I found this aspect of this house very amusing.

Regarding my visit to the university, the professor that hosted me was not available for the first week so he gave my email to two Phd students. Two days after my arrival I met them and it was very useful to discuss my project also with them. After our first meeting we started to go out pretty often. When I met my “American supervisor” I was astonished to realize how such an important person was also so humble and kind. I already admired him before our meeting but after my visit I started to respect him even more. He gave me the key of his office and every day I had the possibility to discuss and develop my ideas with him. His suggestions were always very brilliant and appropriate. After the first two weeks we had a conference very related to the topic of my thesis. I met many professors and Phd students working on my same field and I had many illuminating discussions.

Regarding my daily life I obviously went pretty often to the university. The public transports of the city were not that good so a mobile app like Uber was fundamental. The other phd students and my housemate gave me a discrete number of lifts. I feel very thankful to them. I lived close to a place called Overton Square, mostly known for its night life. There were many pubs, restaurants and possibilities to see live music. I mostly went out with my Phd friends and with my housemate and his friends. It was really easy to meet people outside, everyone was friendly. It was enough to go in a pub and sit somewhere to start talking with somebody. Some of the places I liked the most were the Stax museum and Graceland (Elvis’s house)

I would conclude saying that I had great time in Memphis and I am looking forward to comeback. The best part was surely the great time spent with “my new friends” and the great discussions I had with my supervisor and at the conference. I guess the worst experience was to find an accommodation for such a long period on my own.



* My Office at the left and the University of Memphis at the right