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Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening everyone. My name is Gilbert Kurniawan Hariyanto, and I'm from the Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember and I was one of the awardee of IISMA mobility program under the Ministry of Education in the Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM). The main reason why I applied to the IISMA program was because I'm looking for **unique programs in my home university**, and at that time, IISMA program was a new program for university students. I was interested in the first part of the program, and I was intrigued to join it.

The first thing that I prepared were some documents and guidelines that I needed to prepare for the program. I also looked at the available courses in the university that were available to me. I was **interested in going to Malaysia** because it is near Indonesia, and I thought that it would not be too different from my home country. Since this was my first time studying abroad, I wanted to experience it and adjust to the university's culture.

After applying and submitting all of the required documents, I received an announcement from my home university that I **had been accepted** into the program. At first, I was surprised because this was my **first time applying for a scholarship**, and I did not expect to be accepted. However, I was grateful and thanked God for this opportunity.



After being accepted into the program, I needed to prepare a list of documents, such as applying for a visa and housing. There were **a lot of documents** that I needed to prepare, but I was excited to start this new journey to be able to study abroad, and it's **all worth it**.

Once everything was prepared, I finally **arrived in Malaysia** and started my studies at UTM. The experience has been so amazing, and I am grateful for this opportunity to learn and grow. Studying abroad has allowed me to **expand my horizons** and gain a new perspective on life. I have met so many wonderful people from different parts of the world and learned about their cultures.

When I first arrived in Malaysia, I experienced a lot of cultural and language differences compared to Indonesia. The buildings, language, and culture in Malaysia were **very different**, with a mix of Malaysian, Chinese, and Indian cultures. In my local church, the prayer was conducted in four languages: Malayu, English, Tamil, and Mandarin, which was something I **never experienced** in Indonesia.

Continuing from my previous experience, preparing for the necessary documents to apply for a visa and getting to know my fellow UTM awardees **was not difficult**. In Malaysia, I noticed many cultural differences, especially in language, which I found intriguing. Unlike Indonesia, Malaysia is home to a **diverse population** of Malaysians, Chinese, and Indians, with each group having their own cultural buildings and temples that contribute to the country's unique architecture. Furthermore, my experience at the local church was one of a kind as the master prayer was conducted in four different languages.

As for my courses at UTM, I had the opportunity to take a wide range of courses, including bioinformatics, mobile application programming, physical fitness and wellness, and urban design and sustainability. **The urban design course was particularly interesting** to me as it involved analyzing the city and identifying areas that could be improved, such as making it more accessible for people with disabilities.

Apart from academics, **UTM also encouraged us to participate in non-academic activities**. I took part in several events, such as the Buka Bersama event during Ramadan and a similar event at the mosque with PPI Malaysia in UTM. All in all, I am proud to be an IISMA scholar, as the program has taught me valuable lessons that **extend beyond my major** and has given me the opportunity to interact with people from different cultures and backgrounds when studying in UTM. The experiences I've gained here are invaluable and have allowed me to grow both personally and academically. One of the things

I appreciate most about UTM is the **diverse range of courses offered**, which has allowed me to explore different areas of study and gain a more well-rounded education. Additionally, the opportunity to meet and learn from other UTM awardees from around the world has been amazing. I have been able to learn so much from them and **gain a new perspective on different cultures** and ways of life.

Aside from academics, participating in non-academic activities has also been a highlight of my time here. Through events like the Buka Bersama and mosque events, **I've been able to connect with locals** and other international students and learn more about Malaysian culture and customs. It has been a great opportunity to **step out of my comfort zone and broaden my horizons**.

In conclusion, my experience in the IISMA mobility program under the Ministry of Education in Universiti Teknologi Malaysia has been a unique and eye-opening one. Through this program, I have had the opportunity to learn new things and gain new experiences, especially in terms of culture, language, and education. It has given me a chance to **challenge myself** and to step out of my comfort zone. I have met new people, made new friends, and gained a greater appreciation of the diversity that exists in our world. I believe that this experience will continue to shape me in many ways and will be **a valuable asset to me** as I move forward in my academic and professional career.