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Industrial Product Design- Batch 2019

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Hey there, I'm Glory! I have a background in design, specifically industrial design. I've also dabbled in graphic design through various volunteer and internship opportunities. The Industrial Design Department of ITS is encouraging students to work with local craftsmen to gain hands-on experience and exchange knowledge. So tl;dr, my department focuses more on the business aspect of industrial and product design. My professional experiences give me an interest in exploring more on UX design, communications, and marketing since the design division of every committee I joined always falls in the marketing department.

So, why did I choose IISMA? **Honestly, I didn't have a specific reason.** As a first-batch awardee, there weren't any testimonials to consider from previous alumni, but the program caught my eye with its promise to cover all expenses. **I saw this as an opportunity to study UX design, which is closely related to my major but not taught in ITS' curriculum.**

This might not be an answer you'll expect from an IISMA awardee: I didn't go to Korea for the K-Pop experience like some of my friends. **I only want to immerse myself in a new but similar environment.** The only thing I hope to gain at KU is knowledge in UX design and business. As someone who wants to pursue a career in UI/UX design, I believe this experience will give me the skills and knowledge I need to excel in my field. Okay, bummer. But, please, bare with me for a little while haha.



Before I left for Korea, there were a few obstacles that I had to overcome. The most significant one was that **my departure was postponed** for a semester due to COVID (Delta variant era). It was definitely not easy dealing with all the uncertainty during that time, but looking back, **I realize that departing in spring 2022 instead of fall 2021 was actually the best thing that could have happened to me.** Departing in the spring of my 6th semester turned out to be a wonderful coincidence that had a huge positive impact on my life.

To be honest, I don't have any fancy strategies for overcoming this kind of hardship. Sometimes, things are just out of our control, and all we can do is try to make the best of the situation. I personally like to follow the **"it is what it is"** mentality and focus on being grateful for what I have.

Another challenge that I faced during my pre-departure period was the language barrier. I'm not great at learning new languages, and I didn't really do much to prepare myself beforehand. But, I was pleasantly surprised to find that Hangul (the Korean alphabet) was actually pretty easy to learn! Of course, understanding the language was a different story altogether, but **I'm definitely grateful for the progress I made.**

Overall, I learned that sometimes **unexpected events can lead to amazing opportunities**, and that a positive attitude and a willingness to learn can take you a long way.

During my exchange semester at IISMA, I had countless exciting and memorable experiences that I wouldn't be able to pick just one to write about! Firstly, **I met so many amazing people**, both fellow IISMA awardees and locals, as well as international friends. We had so much fun exploring Seoul together and making unforgettable memories.

Secondly, I went on many solo trips around the city, and **they were all so therapeutic**. There's something about wandering alone in a walkable city that just makes me feel so free. I did some retail therapy and window shopping, and I also visited some viral cafes and local businesses. It was interesting to see how the cafe culture and small business development in Korea are quite similar to what we have back in Indonesia.

Lastly, something unexpected happened that changed my life forever. In May 2022, KU hosted a week-long free music show and festival. They invited some popular Korean artists like Jannabi, BiBi, AKMU, and even Aespa for the free music show. The festival ended with a ticketed event, but the guest list was kept secret. It turned out that they invited some big K-pop idols like G-Idle, Psy, and Red Velvet. Even though I wasn't a K-pop fan before, seeing their performance live was enough to turn me into a K-pop stan! **The festival was absolutely amazing, definitely changed the trajectory of my life forever!** If you want to dive deeper into my experience, feel free to check @glory.in.korea on Instagram!

During and after my return from Korea, I had the opportunity to volunteer as a speaker and mentor in several IISMA-related events held by different organizations. It was a rewarding experience to share my journey and provide guidance to aspiring students. And guess what? **Not to brag, but some of my mentees even got the IISMA scholarship in both the 2022 and 2023 batches!** I was ecstatic to hear their success stories and it made me feel proud to have played a small role in their journey. Remember I mentioned that I wanted to study UX design a lot at the beginning? **Turned out I wasn't able to take the course as originally planned due to the course availability since the course is only available in the fall semester, butttt, I was able to take other courses that were just as aligned with my interests in media and communications.** One of my most memorable courses was Media and Business Management taught by Prof. Jeong Yoonhyuk. His teaching style was engaging, and **I gained valuable knowledge on media and business that I hope to apply in my future career.**

Overall, my IISMA experience was truly **life-changing**, and I'm grateful for the opportunities it provided me with, both during and after my exchange semester.