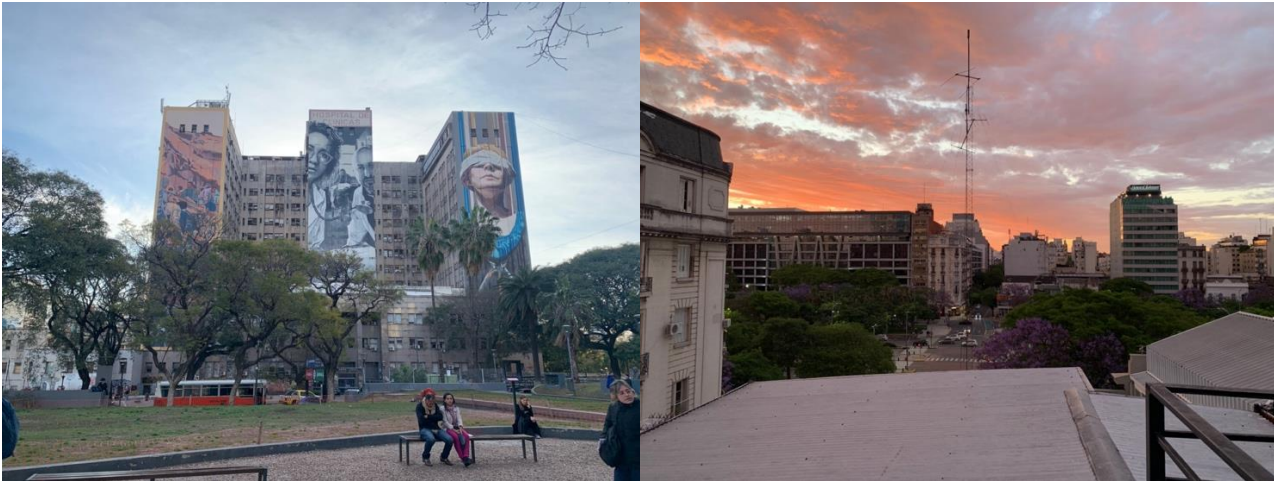


## BUENOS AIRES

I chose Buenos Aires as the destination for my exchange semester because I had heard that this was a city with a huge cultural offer. I think that for people who want to get to know Latin America, and are a bit afraid of the culture shock that this entails, Buenos Aires is a perfect choice: a city a bit smaller than Berlin, super nice, lively but not so chaotic, well connected, green and clean. Since I wanted to stay in the capital my almost only option was to choose the University of Buenos Aires, besides its importance in international rankings.



## PREPARATION

In my opinion the process of preparing all the documents for a semester abroad seems exhausting and tiring. However, I can say that after passing the acceptance process of the Viadrina, the rest of the process is quite easy. The University of Buenos Aires (UBA) did not give me any problems and accepted my application very easily.

It seems to me that many students prefer to stay in Europe in part because of the Erasmusgeld. However I highly recommend using this possibility to leave the continent and get to know other realities outside the European one. I didn't have a scholarship, but I was paying more or less the same amount as my monthly allowance in Berlin. The highest costs for me were the plane tickets. However, the lifestyle there is not so high and I could afford to make several trips on the continent.



- Visa

Regarding the visa, it was possible to get it from an embassy in Berlin, but getting it in Argentina seemed easier to me. You have 90 days as a tourist, so I think it is enough time to issue it. The university staff will also give you clear instructions once you arrive, so don't stress over it, you don't need many documents. I processed mine until November, since every time you leave Argentina the 90 days count starts from zero. This way you could stay the whole semester without a visa. However, you are asked for it when the UBA hands in your grades.

In total I was charged less than 10? euros to get my visa directly in Buenos Aires. In Berlin it would have been almost 100 euros I think.

- Insurance

For the health insurance I easily expanded my TK Versicherung to Envivas. They charged me 200 euros extra, in addition to the monthly fees, but I was well covered. It included countries other than Argentina, so I could also travel in South America insured. I didn't use my insurance, so im still not sure if with Envivas you have to assume the costs and will later get refunded.

## STUDYING AT THE UNIVERSITY ABROAD



The UBA is a huge university so it has many faculties spread around the city. The Philosophy/Humanities campus was a small building located in a very nice neighborhood called “Caballito”.

The introduction day was at the end of July, and as it was mandatory I had to miss the last weeks of classes at the Viadrina. I was unable to take some exams. However, it was very helpful for me to get to Buenos Aires in advance to adapt to the city before starting classes. There was an introductory event, where incoming students we were given a lecture on how the UBA functioned. The office for foreigners was open many days and you could visit without appointments. They would take a few days to answer emails, but they were always very friendly towards me.

In the university you have to choose between subjects and seminars. You have to consider that at the UBA the load of hours per subject is much heavier than at the Viadrina. I would recommend 2 or maximum 3 subjects, if you want to enjoy your semester without so much work. The seminars last 4 hours per week, while the subjects last 6.

I could say that I was fascinated by the academic proposal of the UBA. The professors were very well prepared. For example, my teacher of history of art was a curator at MALBA, one of the most influential museums in the latin american contemporary art scene.

You can sense how most of the students are very dedicated, as they are actually very eager about their careers. The readings become very important for the exams, as you usually have 3 exams per semester.



- **My subjects and seminars:**

- Latin American art of the 20-21st century
- Trials against humanity (history of the Argentine dictatorship. We were taken to trials against those responsible for disappearances and torture in clandestine centers)
- Philosophy of Law

My experience at the university was very different from the one I had in Germany. I admire the level of activism of the Argentinian students; they were always having discussions in the patio and would often come in the middle of classes to invite us to join student movements. All university walls were covered in political/ social posters. They held movie nights occasionally. Obviously in comparison to a German university building, the facilities may not seem perfect but for me the philosophy building had much more charm. Interestingly, it used to be an old tobacco factory.



I would say their student body feels much more in connection that the one at the Viadrina. Throughout the semester they would organize student parties in the university facilities.

## ACCOMODATION

I found my accommodation through Airbnb, due to lack of time. It was a very easy way of getting a nice place, but obviously it was more expensive. I decided to do it this way cause I had heard it was recommended to visit the places in person before renting through facebook/ housing internet pages.

My plan was to stay for one month until I could find another place, but I ended up staying as a I got very attached to the people. The students residency was called "Piso Compartido", in Chile 969.

I think a residency is a good way of connecting to people at the beginning of your semester.



My place was in **San Telmo**, and I can say I highly recommend searching for an apartment there. It has beautiful streets with a lot of charm, is mostly composed by old colonial buildings, has many nice bars and a good night life.

Every Sunday the **San Telmo fair** opens and all streets in the area are filled with artisans selling products/clothes/ etc. San Telmo is also very close to the historical center and it would take me 20-30min to arrive to the Philosophy Faculty. Other areas i recommend for living are **Almagro, Palermo** or **Belgrano**.

I could say that I went at a somewhat complicated political time in Argentina's history, as the presidential elections were approaching. The Peso had lost a lot of its value when I arrived, so the foreigner received a very good exchange rate for the "dollar blue". In this way it was possible for me to have a better lifestyle in Argentina than I had before in Berlin. I was able to eat out several times a week, as restaurants and cultural activities were not expensive.

Today with the Milei government the situation has changed. I also know he is trying to cut out the budget for the public universities, so it might become hard as a foreigner student to enter the UBA. I truly hope it doesn't, cause I really loved that university.



### TIPS

I was positively surprised by the transportation system. It was very easy to get a “SUBE” transportation card at the metro stations, where you recharge it. The cost of transportation was very low (approx. 10cent).

I recommend getting a prepaid SIM (I chose Claro) at any “Kiosko” (Späti).

To withdraw money I recommend using Western Union, as they had a very good exchange rate at the time. And never use ATMs or change dollars in the national banks.

### DAY TO DAY LIFE AND FREE TIME:

I suggest looking for exercise studios as these are not that expensive. I used to practice yoga for a very good price in a super nice studio near my house. Taking classes in ceramics, art, music etc. is not so expensive either!



#### • Places I recommend in BA

- Ecological reserve
- Chacarita cemetery
- MALBA museum (free on Wednesdays)
- Museo de Bellas Artes (free)
- Biblioteca Nacional Mariano Moreno
- Empanadas at “La Leñita” in Recoleta
- Library el Ateneo
- Clothing fair in Parque los Andes

#### NIGHTLIFE

- el Puticlub
- Feliza Bar
- Palacio Alsina
- Neomarica party





Biblioteca Mariano Moreno



Caminito (la Boca)



Parque Mujeres Argentina



Librería el Ateneo

- **Other cities in Argentina**

- Salta and Jujuy
- Iguazu Falls (one of the 7 natural wonders)
- El calafate Glaciar
- Film festival in Mar del Plata!!!
- stay one night in Tigre (rent houses by the river)
- Bariloche

Country: Argentina  
University abroad: Universidad de Buenos Aires  
Beginning of lectures and end of exams abroad: 07/ 08/ 2023 until 21/ 11/ 2023  
Study path at Viadrina: Kulturwissenschaften [x] BA [ ] MA



EUROPA-UNIVERSITÄ  
VIADRINA  
FRANKFURT (ODER)



## CONCLUSION

At the end of my exchange semester I can say that I was very positively surprised. Buenos Aires passed all my expectations. It is a big city, but in one semester you can get to know it well. It reminded me a little bit of Mexico City, my native town.

In addition, Argentina offers so many different landscapes (deserts, forests, mountains, falls, beaches) and the travel expenses are not so high.

I feel like we need to change the way we look at Latin America! As long as you are careful and cautious it is difficult for anything to happen. Cell phones can be stolen but you just have to learn to be vigilant. It doesn't feel dangerous at all. I always felt safely walking/ taking buses alone at night. Also, Ubers are very affordable!