

I am Eliyana Mangutas, a 5th year student of Palacky University Olomouc, Czech Republic and over the summer, took part in the IFMSA exchange program to Chung-Shan Medical University Hospital, Taiwan (whole of July).

I was placed under the Colorectal Surgery team, under the care of Dr. Ting Wen-Chien together with two residents and one intern from the local university for four weeks. Throughout the course, I had the opportunity to take part in surgeries, consultations, meetings and reviews. The team had been more than willing to teach me, as can be seen in their willingness to let me ask questions. I was also encouraged to take part in their discussions during morning meetings and the once a week combined review with the other surgical team. The meetings were normally conducted in Chinese but due to my presence, they were willing to conduct the meetings in English, which allows me to take more information.

Within those four weeks the surgical team of the hospital had taken an initiative to help us, the exchange program students to grasp basic understanding and skills in surgery. Every Tuesday, a short course was conducted - starting with a basic suture course, to central venous catheter and Folley tube insertion as well as intubation. This was all done under the supervision of both the hospital's Surgery and Anaesthesiology team and thus giving us hands-on opportunities to learn. It was interesting and very much helpful.

In terms of the exchange itself, the local FMS team had done more that excellent to enable us to truly enjoy and learn from our exchange experience. Each of us were assigned at least 3 local students acting as our contact person to help us find our ways and settle down in Taichung, Taiwan. On a personal level, my 3 contact persons had soon became my friends. In terms of social activities planned, I am more than satisfied with the programs planned for us and am very impressed with the amount of efforts and thoughts put into the program by the local committee.

In conclusion, I would personally highly recommend Taiwan, especially CSMU Taichung to any UPOL students wanting to experience the joy of IFMSA exchange program. It is rich with both learning and social experience that would otherwise be difficult to balance elsewhere.