

SHAKE THE FUTURE.



Denis ODHIAMBO

Double Degree
European Master on Advanced Robotics (EMARO),
Centrale Nantes, France
Warsaw University of Technology, Poland
2012-2014



1. What were you doing prior to entering EMARO?

Before EMARO I worked as a Gap-Year intern at the Airbus headquarters in Toulouse, here in France, for the Strategy and Future Programmes Department. I was involved in generating, exploring and developing various technical innovations and aircraft concepts necessary to meet anticipated challenges in the aviation industry in the next 50 years... If I did my job right, you should be seeing hints of my work in the next 10+ years. Even so, it would be impossible to talk about the year spent at Airbus without referring to my previous experience at MIT: I undertook 5 years of undergraduate study in Aeronautics and Astronautics with a couple of pet subjects on the side; namely, Engineering Leadership (technical project management), Robotics, and Music. It should now be clear how I ended up at both Airbus and EMARO.

2. How important was The Erasmus Mundus Label in your decision to APPLY to EMARO ?

The "Erasmus Mundus" tag was the principal motivation for my application to EMARO: the prestige associated with the European Commission-backed scholarship together with the multinational structure of the programme that assured me of international mobility as well as international faculty made EMARO a more than attractive option when considering various programmes relating to the field of controls (of which I'm particularly interested in).

3. What about the campus life at Centrale Nantes?

Three words: the "International Relations Office". It would be impossible to overstate the help the office has been right from sorting out the visa application process, coordinating student arrival in Nantes and, most importantly, facilitating cross-cultural exchanges between (particularly) master's students from the various countries represented. Events featuring food and movies were a favourite... but then of course the icing on the cake was my wild idea the Croisiere sur l'Edre which the International Relations Office and master's programmes were so

graceful to support and facilitate! Still, there remains a tiny disconnect between regular events involving French students and the international students' fraternity. However, given the proactive approach the school administration has taken this semester, I have little doubt this issue will be quickly resolved for the betterment of the student experience, particularly for those of us so far from home.

4. What do you think about the Quality of academic advising and guidance

Coming from a system where the school administration was keenly invested in one's well-being both in and out of class, it would be difficult for me to say the academic advising standards at ECN are up to scratch. However, I do understand there are certain features inherent to a school the size of ours (fewer faculty members on hand to guide one by the hand, and fewer resources to engage adequate extra-faculty teaching staff); as such, I have to commend the faculty who have sometimes been stretched but done their level best to meet the needs and demands of the students.

Still, there are areas that my fellow students and I believe can be improved upon, and we'll therefore take them up with the relevant offices.

5. Would you recommend Centrale Nantes Master's Programmes ?

For my programme? Absolutely! Not only does EMARO boast of a component of international mobility both within Europe and the Far East, but it also fosters a culture of collaboration few universities on the continent offering run-of-the-mill master's programmes in engineering would be able to match. Moreover, that the possibility of improvement is vast and the staff have an appreciation for that fact means the programme can only improve.

Can't say much about other master's programmes besides the fact that my friends say they get quite rigorous... which can actually be a good thing!