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Bocconi Reflection

Bocconi was in its own way a wonderful experience. As a Fiber Science and Apparel Design major with a concentration in Product Development, I went there to this famous business school to study the business side of fashion. There was one class for undergraduates that taught this topic called “Management of Fashion Companies.” In addition to this class, I also took two other classes, which were “Introduction to Marketing” and “New Products and Product Management.” All of which were at least somewhat useful in their own ways. All the classes I took were taught in English. Bocconi has a whole array of classes taught in English for exchange students.

Classes can be taken attending vs. non-attending. If attending, it’s just as any other class. You go to class every time it is held, you are allowed a few absences, you participate, you have a few assignments throughout the semester, you have a midterm depending on the class (all my classes didn’t have midterms), and you have a final. Your final grade is composed of all these items, each of them weighing a certain percentage. However, if you choose to take a class non-attending, which I had to do because New Products and Product Management completely overlapped with Management of Fashion Companies. Bocconi just allows for students to have conflicting classes on their schedule because of this non-attending rule. If you choose to take a class non-attending, you do not attend any of the classes, you read the entire textbook over the semester, and the final exam is 100% of your grade. Non-attending students and attending students have different final exams. While I found that this approach gave me a lot of freedom, it was all self-learning and I did have to do quite a bit of cramming at the end of the semester.

Introduction to Marketing was as much as you could ask for out of an intro class. The professor, even through an Italian accent, spoke very well English and knew a lot about the topic. I am doing the Business minor at Cornell and Marketing is one of the classes required to achieve the minor, so I decided to take it at Bocconi. The class was straightforward and easy to do well in. Management of Fashion Companies was alright. The professor did have a lot of knowledge about the topic and I did learn quite a bit. It was structured pretty loosely and although I did learn, I felt I did not learn a full semester’s worth of information. New Products and Product Management was the class that I took non-attending. This was my least favorite class. The textbook was written poorly and I had to memorize basically the entire thing. It is a
very difficult class to just learn on your own. I ended up just barely passing. All my classes I took pass or fail with the exception of Marketing.

Outside of classes, I had an amazing time at this program. I met many wonderful people and travelled with them to many beautiful places. The exchange program at Bocconi was huge. There were hundreds of students in this exchange program it was almost like a study abroad program. As a result, all of my friends were from this exchange program. I lived in a dorm that was a part of Bocconi. It was a four bedroom apartment with a kitchen, living room, two bathrooms, and a balcony. Right next to it was a giant supermarket, which was very convenient. My roommate and I cooked a lot so we shopped there almost every single day.

Milan I have grown to love. I think it is a great place to live in for a while to explore and really become a part of it. There is much good food that is better and cheaper than America. There are so many places to shop: the commercial, touristy shops as well as the cute, little, boutiques that you can’t find anywhere else in the world. My favorite thing to do was to explore all the little streets and alleys that had all this little boutiques with such unique things. The food was also one of my favorite things. Eating is considered a social activity there, so people take their time enjoying their food and chatting and drinking. I was also there for Milan Fashion Week and Design Week. During Fashion Week I got to see a bunch of celebrities and a lot of really cool street fashion, which was amazing for me especially as a fashion major. Milan Design Week is an annual international furniture and interior design exhibition. There are so many different events presented by different vendors that are held at all different venues all over Milan. Unlike Fashion Week, where you need an invitation to get into the show, anyone can go into these exhibitions during Design Week. In a way, this made it more fun than Fashion Week. They also offer hor d’oeuvres and champagne to everyone. Design Week is meant to attract buyers and generate publicity.

Traveling was another wonderful part. Being in Europe, travel was so easy. Whenever I could, I would try to go somewhere outside of Milan with friends to explore. I had previously never been to Europe, so this was my first time experiencing all things European. I had so much fun travelling to so many different places and experiencing so many different types of culture and food. I would definitely recommend Milan as an abroad destination. However, Bocconi I would only recommend for Business majors. As a fashion major, I didn’t feel like it offered that many classes that related to me. But, all in all I had an amazing experience in Milan and I wouldn’t change a thing.