

Strategic Partnership of Leibniz Universität Hannover, Germany  
and St. Petersburg Polytechnic University, Russia

**Double Degree International Mechatronics Masters Program**

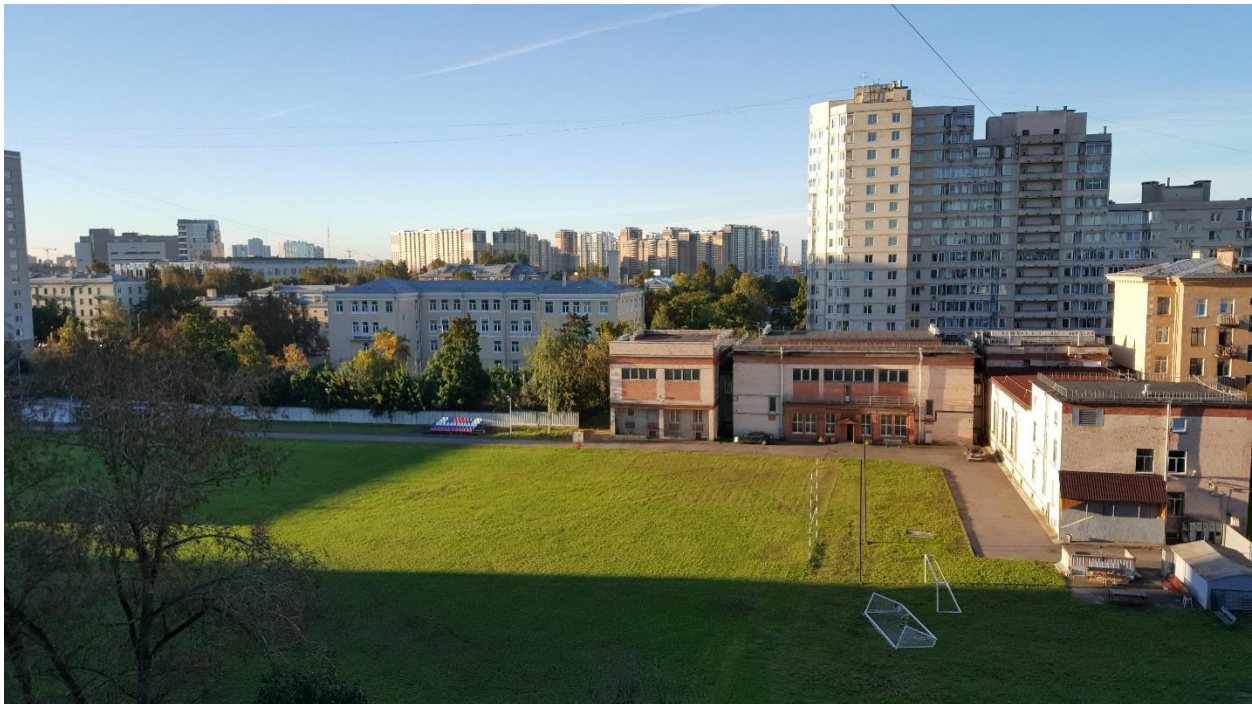
Report about my first semester in SPbSTU, Russia  
St. Petersburg, Feb 2017



My name is Samer Moghnieh. I'm a current student of the double degree International Mechatronics Masters Program. I was one of the students who applied to the program through university of Hanover and as a requirement I should spend the first year in Russia studying in the "Control Systems & Technologies" department of Saint Petersburg Polytechnic university.

Now after I've finished my first semester here, I'm writing a report about the main things that we've faced during the past period. I hope my report will contain useful information to the subsequent students.

In our first semester we had to go to classes four days a week to the same building and to the same floor every time so we didn't have to move between building and we were very comfortable with that. Our building was the one just next to the international building (IMOP) where we had to go when we first arrived to pursue our visa extension and university registration processes. Students from our program were sent to the same hostel, dormitory # 12, which was a new and comfortable building and is 20 minutes walk from our department's building.



*The view from my room in the dormitory*



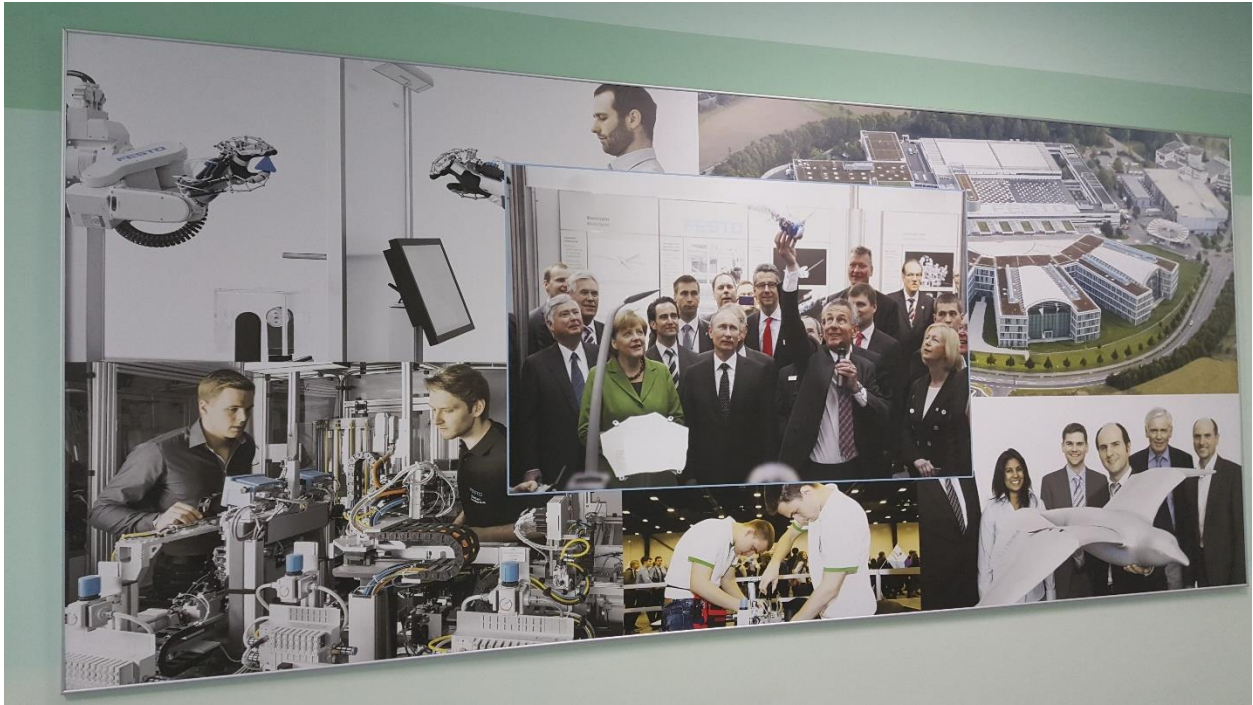
*A winter view from our hostel*



*The way between our dormitory and our department (a sport complex in the frame)*



*Our building and its round canteen*



*A poster in our floor near the laboratories*

During our studies, we faced a lot of difficulties here as the courses were not easy and the professors weren't well experienced in teaching using English language in a way that achieves a suitable communication among us and helps in understanding the courses well enough. Even sometimes it took us a lot of effort to understand what the professor requires from us in his/her tasks. So we suffered a lot, but the suffering wasn't the same to everyone of us, because the ability to deal with the courses pretty much depended on the personal experience and the background knowledge of every individual of us. A good thing is that the department and the professors were always willing to help us. And also the department assigned a chief from our classmates who is fluent in both of Russian and English and he was helping us all the time and we had a very good cooperation through a social network group that was a kind of complement to our classes. I have to mention also that experienced students provided a lot of support to the rest of their classmates. So special thanks to everyone who cared for others.

Actually, for this semester we were around 32 students in the same class but from different programs such as double degree program, single degree program and exchange programs. Anyways, we were divided into two groups that sometimes had different schedules or activities.

My group, the group of double degree program, took 7 main courses in this semester. The courses were: History & Methodology of Informatics & Computer Engineering (Java programming), Software Development Technologies (C-Sharp programming), methods of optimization (mathematical course with some programming tasks), mathematical modeling and simulation (Control Theories with MATLAB applications), neuroinformatics and neurotechnologies (Theory and application of artificial neural networks), Intelligent Systems (History and theory of artificial intelligence with some software applications) and Scientific Research work course (Preparing our masters thesis). In addition to that, we had to take a new course at the last month of the semester called Research Seminar in which we just attended 3 sessions that included a lecture, laboratory excursions and students' presentations.

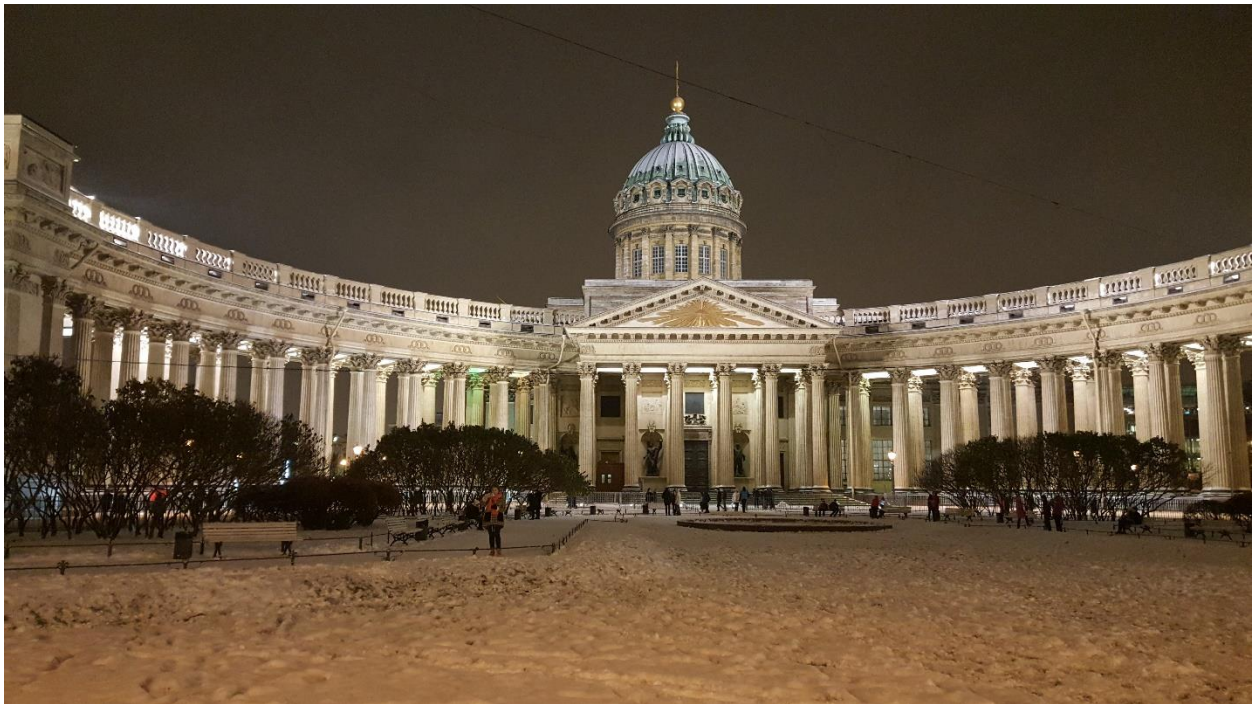
In general I can say that we have learnt a lot of new important things in a very short period of time comparatively. And maybe this is the main reason that makes us feel satisfied about this semester. Despite the language barrier, the level of education was very good as our professors have very high capabilities and they teach the same courses for Russian programs.

Note that coming to St. Petersburg city is a great opportunity as it is one of the most beautiful and historical cities in World. Also people here are nice and welcoming to other nationalities. When you come here off course you will have to visit the city center which contains amazing historical buildings with the great "Neva" river that passes through it. Another special place I've visited and I highly recommend not to miss, is the Artillery museum that has very unique things representing the history of the Russian army. (<http://www.artillery-museum.ru/en/home.html>).

At the end I have to thank the German Academic Exchange Service 'DAAD' for providing us with a scholarship for our stay in Russia. I hope my report was comprehensive. Enjoy the following pictures from St. Petersburg and " THANK YOU".

*From the City Center*

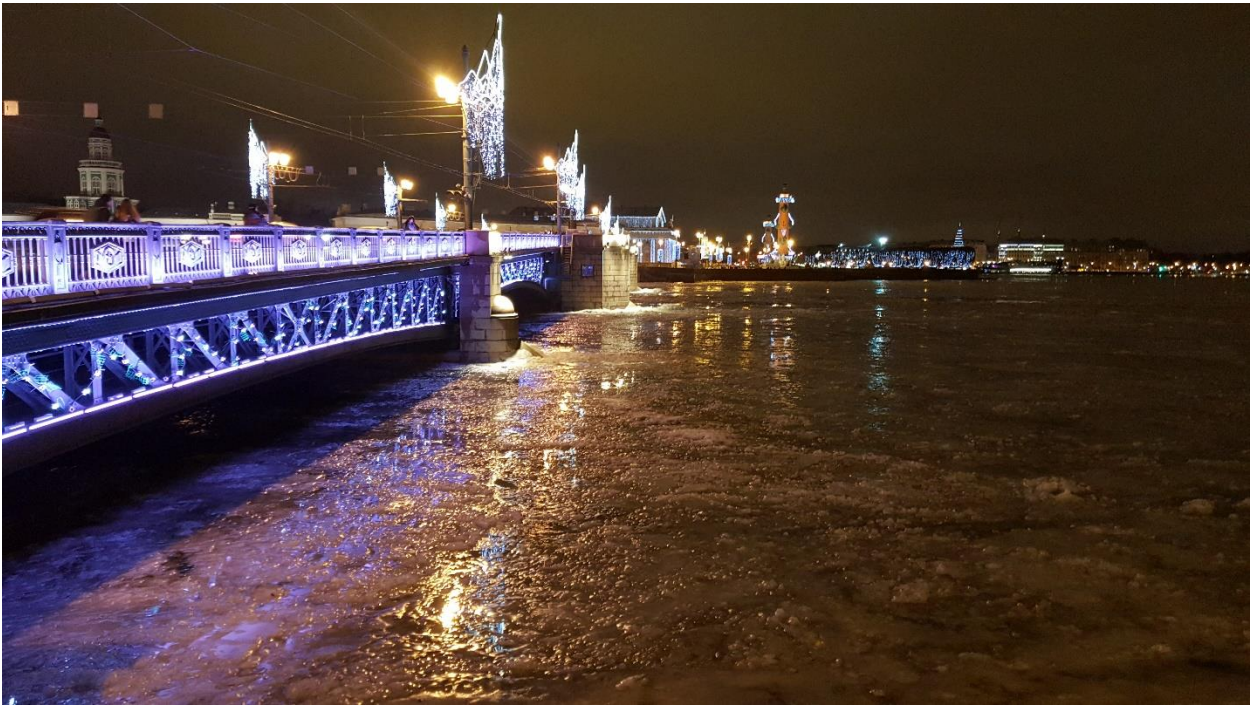








*Frozen 'Neva' River in the Center*



*In the Artillery Museum*



