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CHINA | SPRING, 2007 STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM EVALUATION

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CLASS: 2008

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MAJOR1: English

MAJOR2: Select second major--

MAJOR3: Select third major--

ABROAD_DURING: Spring 2007

PROGRAM: CIEE Beijing, Peking University

COURSE_NAMES: Oral Chinese Intermediate

Written Chinese Intermediate

Chinese Characters Intermediate

US-China Relations in the Ninetieth and Twentieth Centuries Pronunciation

TYPES_OF_COURSES: Combination of program and regular university courses

EXPLANATION_OF_COURSES: Program sponsored and university sponsored

COMMENTS_ON_COURSE_WORK: As you're studying the Chinese language basically in all classes, learning rate is accelerated than were you to be studying in the States/Amherst. Class size was small, smallest 12 students, largest 20-25. Peking University has an excellent reputation in China, so the teachers were top-notch. There were weekly mini-vocab quizzes, a mid-term and a final. Teachers tried to make the classes interactive and welcomed questions. Homework wasn't too overwhelming, as I feel you do most of the learning in class.

STUDENT_BODY_COMPOSITION: Their international community at Peking University was surprisingly large, relatively speaking for a Chinese university. All students in Chinese classes were foreigners, mostly Koreans and Japanese, along with Europeans such as Russians and Germans. There were also Americans and Southeast Asians such as Vietnamese.

COMMENTS_ON_TEACHING: Teaching methods were interactive and meant to be as interesting as possible. However, because the Chinese language requires memorization, teachers would teach new vocab words every. Quality was just as good as at Amherst, and though students were immersed in learning all the time, I don't think homework was as rigorous as Amherst. Attitudes were very open-minded; they recognized that we were foreigners and that we were learning their language, thereby setting their expectations accordingly. Teachers were very accessible.

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ACADEMIC/LANGUAGE_PREPARATION_NEEDED: Take at least one Chinese course before going to China. The more preparation the better. But don't let this hinder you from going abroad. Peking University, despite CIEE's titled "Intense Chinese Program," offers classes for people at all levels. Your learning rate will exponentially grow if you are learning the language in a local setting. CIEE is a great program with a helpful staff, tons of side trips to various "cultural" locations, and Peking University is a GREAT place for foreigners to learn Chinese as there's a significant foreign student population there.(I've made friends with people from all over the world.)

DESCRIPTION_OF_HOUSING_&_MEALS: We lived at a "hotel" with room service, air conditioning (which is essential come the beginning of late spring/early summer). There was a bowling alley, a swimming pool. We were in charged of finding meals on our own; food is very cheap.

WHO_MADE_HOUSE/MEAL_ARRANGEMENTS: Yes. All of it by CIEE.

LIVING_COSTS: A good meal would cost \$4.

MEDICAL_FACILITIES_AVAILABLE?: Never really had to seek them out so I am not sure. Friends didn't seem to have a problem; they were directed to the appropriate facilities.

WHAT_PROGRAM_SERVICES_WERE_AVAILABLE?: n/a

HOW_DID_YOU_MEET_LOCALS?: Dont come with expectations. China will shock you, in very ways hopefully. Be prepared for culture shock. Interact with locals. It'll take you a while to TRULY understand the mentality of the Chinese. Having said that, be prepared for a great experience IF you are open-minded and flexible. It's all part of the fun of the game!

DID_YOU_EXPERIENCE_DISCRIMINATION?: Confusion towards homosexuality, yes (though never hatred). Internalized cultural superiority, perhaps. Discrimination because you look Chinese vs white, sometimes. Harassment/violence, NEVER.

Beijing is VERY safe.

DID_YOU_TRAVEL?: Both.

WOULD_YOU_RECOMMEND_THIS_PROGRAM/UNIVERSITY?: Yes. Very sound program. Not only is Peking University one of the most prestigious universities in all of China, but it offers a very sound program for foreign students.

SUMMARY: Do it! China's definitely an exciting place to be in right now. It's essential to be open to new experiences, meeting new people; be ready to seek a challenge as Chinese is not an easy language. The beauty of it is that you must EARN it.

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CHINA | ACADEMIC YEAR 2006-2007 STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM EVALUATION

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MAJOR1: Economics
MAJOR2: Select second major--
MAJOR3: Select third major--
ABROAD_DURING: Year 2006-2007

PROGRAM: The Chinese University of Hong Kong

COURSE_NAMES: Applied Forecasting Methods Game Theory Industrial Organization
International Finance International Trade Mandarin Chinese: Topical Conversation I, Business
Chinese II, Speaking and Writing II, News II.
History of Chinese Traditional Thought

TYPES_OF_COURSES: Combination of program and regular university courses

EXPLANATION_OF_COURSES: The economics classes were regular university courses. The Chinese classes were program sponsored. History of Chinese Traditional Thought was also program sponsored.

COMMENTS_ON_COURSE_WORK: Quality, difficulty, etc. depended on the course and professor.

The economics courses were generally over 40 students (some even over 100). There was a weekly tutorial session where we met with our TA's. They went over problem sets or taught us how to use a computer program. There's a grade distribution: about 5% A's, 10% A-'s, 15% B+'s, etc for the economics courses. Some classes that were not difficult in terms of concepts and coursework were difficult to get good grades, because of the grade distribution. Most classes were one midterm and one final. One class was two midterms and one final. For most of these exams, if you can memorize the textbook, you'll do well. The exceptions are Game Theory and Industrial Organization which required us to think and solve problems. Most classes assigned problem sets, but that depended on the professor.

The Chinese classes were also mixed. There's a less stringent grade distribution. The coursework may have been relatively hard, but good grades were relatively easy to achieve. There was usually one midterm and one final. Quality of teaching was generally decent. There was not much assigned work.

It's hard to assess History of Chinese Traditional Thought. It was designed for foreign students. There was one midterm and a final term paper. Attendance was very lax for most students. The professor was an expert in the field, but was not very effective in teaching. Grades were generally not a problem, but the criterion was a mystery.

STUDENT_BODY_COMPOSITION: For economics classes, the student body was 90% natives. The Chinese classes were all foreigners, but they tended to be Chinese Americans or Chinese Canadians. History of Chinese Traditional Thought was virtually all Americans and some Europeans.

COMMENTS_ON_TEACHING: Quality not as good as Amherst in general. The teaching methods generally were not as good. Professors usually just taught straight from a Powerpoint.

Attitudes were generally good, except for the professor who refused to listen to me when I had a problem with grading. I got to know one professor fairly well and he was always accessible. He offered me a lot of grad school advice. He even suggested thesis ideas and readings to me.

ACADEMIC/LANGUAGE_PREPARATION_NEEDED: Most economics classes were taught in English. The professors' English ability spanned all spectrums. The Applied Forecasting Methods class was taught entirely in Cantonese.

There are Chinese classes for all levels. There's a placement exam before the semester. I would say most Amherst students who finish 2nd year Chinese can take 4th level courses.

DESCRIPTION_OF_HOUSING_&_MEALS: I lived in the International House along with most of the foreign students. The rooms are small, but that is the nature of living in Hong Kong. There are canteens located throughout campus to eat meals. Meals on campus are subsidized: usually about \$2 a meal.

WHO_MADE_HOUSE/MEAL_ARRANGEMENTS: Arranged by program.

LIVING_COSTS: Food and transportation: ~\$50/week

MEDICAL_FACILITIES_AVAILABLE?: Yes

WHAT_PROGRAM_SERVICES_WERE_AVAILABLE?:

HOW_DID_YOU_MEET_LOCALS?: Local students generally go home on weekends, so there's not much time to hang out with them, but it's definitely helpful to talk to them about Chinese culture. Going out to where locals shop and eat is a good way to learn more.

DID_YOU_EXPERIENCE_DISCRIMINATION?: No.

DID_YOU_TRAVEL?: Yes. I went to Wuyishan in mainland China after the semester ended. Shenzhen (also in mainland China) is about a half hour away from campus. Many foreign students took days off and went on long weekend getaways.

WOULD_YOU_RECOMMEND_THIS_PROGRAM/UNIVERSITY?: Probably not. I went to the program expecting to take Cantonese classes, but Amherst does not give credit for Cantonese, so I couldn't take Cantonese. I did not think classes were unique. You generally can get better

instruction at Amherst. As for cultural exploration, Beijing is much more authentic than Hong Kong. However, Hong Kong is where East meets West. Sometimes it's beautiful; sometimes it's hideous and materialistic.

SUMMARY: Studying abroad has been helpful in understanding more of the world. Even though I have my complaints, I would still recommend studying abroad for a semester. Studying abroad definitely looks good on the resume.



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CHINA | SPRING, 2007 STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM EVALUATION

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MAJOR1: Economics
MAJOR2: Select second major--
MAJOR3: Select third major--
ABROAD_DURING: Spring 2007

PROGRAM: CIEE Shanghai

COURSE_NAMES: Beginner 2 Chinese
International Relations in China
China's Economic Reforms
Chinese Literature



TYPES_OF_COURSES: Program sponsored courses

EXPLANATION_OF_COURSES:

COMMENTS_ON_COURSE_WORK: because the semester was shorter in length, I averaged 19 hours of class per week. Chinese class had students, others had 12-35. No friday classes. Chinese 4 days per week for two hours plus two weekly 1-hr tutor sessions. 3 other classes met once per week for three hours.

STUDENT_BODY_COMPOSITION: all american

COMMENTS_ON_TEACHING: more lecture, less discussion. Teachers were not as dedicated.

ACADEMIC/LANGUAGE_PREPARATION_NEEDED: there were chinese classes for students with no language experience. the more, the better.

DESCRIPTION_OF_HOUSING_&_MEALS: I lived in a luxurious apartment. I had my own bathroom and my own bedroom. CIEE owned 4 floors of the apartment, so all my

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neighbors were my classmates. The apartment was in a nice are of Shanghai and CIEE chartered a luxury air-conditioned bus every day to class (15 min ride). I had a kitchen, tv, there was an exercise room in the lobby, and a maid came for free every day. The apartment was near many places open late for cheap food. No meals were provided, but you could buy chow mein and dumplings for a dollar.

WHO_MADE_HOUSE/MEAL_ARRANGEMENTS: everything was arranged by CIEE by the time I arrived.

LIVING_COSTS: I spent \$4000 during the semester on food, drinks, shopping, spring break, and travelling. You could eat like a local for \$20/wk or like an American for \$80.

MEDICAL_FACILITIES_AVAILABLE?: hospital.

WHAT_PROGRAM_SERVICES_WERE_AVAILABLE?:

HOW_DID_YOU_MEET_LOCALS?: travel to western china and eat in other areas of Shanghai

DID_YOU_EXPERIENCE_DISCRIMINATION?: blacks/hispanics got stared at, and had pictures taken of them, but no racism

DID_YOU_TRAVEL?: no friday classes, so I travelled during three weekends as well as Spring Break. CIEE provided and paid for one weekend excursion to Putoushang and a week-long trip to southwestern china.

WOULD_YOU_RECOMMEND_THIS_PROGRAM/UNIVERSITY?: Absolutely. The housing arrangements were wonderful (sitting toilets). Dorms in China are dirty. The Chinese university where I took classes was nice and close. CIEE arranged a lot. Shanghai is much better than Beijing or Nanjing to spend a semester.

SUMMARY: My Chinese improved tremendously. This was the only opportunity to spend 4 months in China, which would be too daunting and intimidating to do on my own with only 1 previous semester of Chinese.

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CHINA | SPRING, 2007 STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM EVALUATION

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MAJOR1: Economics

MAJOR2: Select second major--

MAJOR3: Select third major--

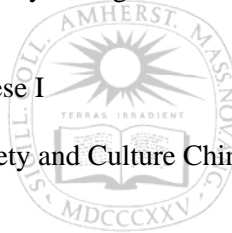
ABROAD_DURING: Spring 2007

PROGRAM: I attended Fudan University through the Alliance for Global Education (Butler and Arcadia) in Shanghai, China.

COURSE_NAMES: Beginning Chinese I

Beginning Chinese II

Issues in Contemporary Chinese Society and Culture
 China's Economic Development: 1978-Present



TYPES_OF_COURSES: Program sponsored courses

EXPLANATION_OF_COURSES:

COMMENTS_ON_COURSE_WORK: My Chinese classes were 12hrs a weeks with one other student. Since we were a small group (8 overall in the Fudan University program), my Chinese class was with only one other student. In the end, I was happy with a class that small because I feel that a class of that size facilitates participation and is immensely beneficial due to increased interaction. With no prior chinese language study, I was very comfortable conversing with the people by the end of the term. We had 3 hrs of class 4 days a week, with daily quizzes on the prior night's homework. Every two weeks we had a test, with one mid-term and one final that were worth the same weight (since it was similar to taking 2 chinese courses). Grading was hard only cause we had so much work, but it was very comparable to the US.

Economics was 3hrs a week on a Wednesday with 6 people in our class. The teacher was a famous professor from the university, and spoke great English so it was very easy to follow. We went on some field trips to businesses in the area and had some guest lecturers. We had weekly written assignments based off our course reader, and our final was a 12 page synthesis paper.

Society/Culture class was 4hrs over the course of 2 days, with 7 people in our class. Our teacher was also a famous university professor that was being interviewed by television stations constantly. He had a good English vocabulary but his English took a little getting used to. He

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was a really nice guy and would often take our class out for lunch. We had 2 presentations, a 12 page paper, and a final.

STUDENT_BODY_COMPOSITION: All americans from our program.

COMMENTS_ON_TEACHING: The quality of the teaching was great. The two courses taught in English were conducted by some of the most influential members of the university. The Chinese language courses were taught by 3 young Chinese teachers that were very good even though it was their first time with a class of only Americans. I would say that the quality of teaching was along the same lines as Amherst.

ACADEMIC/LANGUAGE_PREPARATION_NEEDED: You don't need any. Everyone else had some, so I was placed in the beginner class with someone who had only taken one semester. There was no problem with coming in knowing nothing, though I did have to stick with some of the others for the first few weeks when eating at restaurants because I couldn't yet order food.

DESCRIPTION_OF_HOUSING_&_MEALS: The Alliance had three programs: 2 in Shanghai (SHUFE and Fudan), and 1 in Beijing. Mine (Fudan) had far and away the best housing. We were given apartments off campus, which were much nicer and convenient than the normal foreign student dorm. We also were given a chinese student to live with that the program selected, so they practiced English with us and we were able to interact with native students rather than just stay to ourselves. Normally, I would say to stay in university housing, but in China it can be really small and not very pleasant. This was nice and I would recommend this housing situation.

Meals were a little difficult at first, but you catch on quickly. Everything was so cheap that we were able to easily afford to eat out on a pretty regular basis. I can't really speak for the recent problems they've been having in China with health concerns regarding their food, I don't think I ever really had that issue come up while there.

WHO_MADE_HOUSE/MEAL_ARRANGEMENTS: The program gave us the apartments and paid for heating and electricity. Internet was easy and only about 10\$ per month. Meals we were usually on our own, but it was easy.

LIVING_COSTS: Meals can cost anywhere from 50 cents for street food to 10-20 dollars at nice restaurants. Living arrangements were paid for, though we paid about 10\$ a month for internet. Taxis were cheap, which is important because public transportation isn't that great.

MEDICAL_FACILITIES_AVAILABLE?: Yes. I never needed them, but some students got sick. They have a Western hospital in Shanghai, so it was no problem for those students.

WHAT_PROGRAM_SERVICES_WERE_AVAILABLE?: Orientation was only a weekend and not extremely helpful. We tended to learn as we went along, which wasn't too difficult. Counseling was there if you needed it, and the program director met with each student every couple of weeks just to check in.

HOW_DID_YOU_MEET_LOCALS?: Get involved with something outside of your program. The people in my program that tended to be the most insular were those that didn't seek any activity to participate in outside of the program. I had soccer, so I joined a team while there and played at the university fairly often so it was easy for me to meet native people. On the culture side, I recommend people venture outside their comfort area with regard to the food. It was easy

for some to order pizza, but I thought it was more fun and more insightful to go to local restaurants and eat native foods.

DID_YOU_EXPERIENCE_DISCRIMINATION?: I never saw any blatant racism or discrimination. China isn't extremely heterogeneous, so I did hear some misguided conceptions regarding other peoples. I think these views were mostly just due to a lack of exposure among many Chinese to different cultures.

DID_YOU_TRAVEL?: Yea, we had two separate weeks off that we could travel on our own. The program also sponsored a weekend train trip to Hennan and a week-long trip Yunan.

WOULD_YOU_RECOMMEND_THIS_PROGRAM/UNIVERSITY?: Yea. I think other students would enjoy this program. I chose to go to Asia because I had been to Europe before and I wanted to try something new, and Shanghai was definitely a new experience. The teaching was great and I was able to learn a good amount of Chinese. I really enjoyed the people in China, both within my program and those that I met while living there.

Fudan university is a top 3 university in China and Shanghai is rapidly becoming a very modern city. If you are interested in traveling to Asia, I would definitely recommend staying in Shanghai.

SUMMARY: I think my studying really broadened my concept of global cultures. In the past I think I had a very Euro-centric view of global society, but now I think of it in a more comprehensive sense. I will definitely leave the possibility of returning for work open, and I look forward to returning in the future.

