

JUL 07 2015

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM/EXCHANGE EVALUATION REPORT

Your Name:

Name of Study Abroad/Exchange Program: Seoul National University, South Korea

Quarter(s) of Participation: Fall 2014-Spring 2015

E-mail Address:

1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

a. Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

If you book ahead of time, a Goshiwon is a good and affordable place to stay for the first month or two. They are tiny but generally clean and secure.

b. If your program/exchange had an orientation, what did it cover and how did it help you adapt?

It had the general UW exchange orientation and one on-site orientation that was helpful in informing students about the school itself.

2. ACADEMICS:

a. Please evaluate the instruction you received abroad. Compare the following to the University of Washington's system:

- classroom structure

Basically the same as UW

- instruction

The graduate level classes I took were similar to those at UW and extremely high quality. I think that undergraduate classes may be different.

- teacher/student relations

They tend to be a little more formal but also closer. More respect is shown for the teacher but it is also common for students and professors to go out drinking or eating.

- grading/exams

You do not get any grades until the end of the quarter, so it can be difficult to monitor your progress. Many classes also have a curve as part of school policy which allows only a certain percentage of students to get As, Bs, Cs, etc.

- administration

Basically the same.

- library, computer, and classroom facilities

There is a new, very high-tech library and all facilities are very up-to-date. Internet speeds are faster here. That said, almost all websites are made for internet explorer and mac users will have trouble.

b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

The quality of my classes was excellent, on par with UW courses in terms of challenge and critical thinking.

c. Are there any courses or instructors you would recommend to future students?

If anyone can take one of the gender studies classes with Moon Hyuna (문현아) I would recommend it. They are usually taught in Korean which provides a new perspective on gender issues, especially since the majority of your classmates will be native Koreans.

d. How did your study abroad coursework relate to your UW education?

All of the classes I took were related to my Korean Studies major and one actually replaced a required course.

3. HOUSING:

a. What housing options were available to you?

On campus housing was hard to come by. Off campus housing was mostly Goshiwons.

b. Which did you choose, and why?

I chose a Goshiwon for the first month because it was close to campus and then moved in with friends for safety and more space.

c. What would you recommend?

If you can get an apartment with other people, do it. If you can get campus housing, do it. Really it depends on the individual. I have not stayed in any accommodations that I would not recommend. I would not recommend living in Sillim-dong, though, as it tends to be less safe at night. Naksongdae is a good area and the area near Seoul National University station is also good.

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

The campus is in the side of a mountain which makes for some tough walks but amazing views. It is out of the way of the real center of Seoul, though, so it is more an area for studying than partying.

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Please describe any health or safety concerns (e.g., quality of medical facilities, unsafe districts, theft, etc.) associated with your study abroad experience.

I never felt unsafe. Just exercise the same caution you would in the U-district (which is a far more dangerous area anyway).

6. CULTURAL ASPECTS:

a. How did you integrate into the culture and meet members of the community? (e.g., clubs, sports, extracurricular activities, pubs, etc.)

I have lived in Korea before so I was not very active in the campus community. I lived kind of far away from campus and made friends outside of school.

b. Describe cultural differences and challenges you encountered and how you addressed them. (e.g., gender issues, social etiquette, stereotypes, etc.)

7. FINANCIAL:

a. What is the best way to access/transfer money from the U.S.?

Take out money from the ATM on a regular basis.

b. How much spending money do you recommend per month? Please include rent, food, transportation, etc.

If you have off-campus housing I would recommend about \$1000 per month. It depends on your rent and your commute. On campus housing you can get away with a lot less.

c. Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.

I do not recall any.

d. If you used Financial Aid to fund your program/exchange, were there any problems? If so, how did you address them?

I received FLAS and the financial aid office tried to increase my tuition fee since I was studying abroad. I contacted them and worked with Robyn Davis to get it figured out.

8. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATION:

a. If the IP&E administered your program/exchange, please comment on the effectiveness of the office's services. What service could be improved?

The office was very helpful. I do not recall any issues.

b. If the IP&E did not administer your program, please evaluate the program's administration, both in the U.S. and abroad.

9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE:

Please describe the type of student for whom this program is best suited.

Seoul National is probably best for those who are serious about school and Korean language training. Other schools may be better for those who just want to go abroad anywhere or want to party in Seoul.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?

Pretty realistic as I had been there before.

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INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM/EXCHANGE EVALUATION REPORT

Your Name:

Name of Study Abroad/Exchange Program: Seoul National University

Quarter(s) of Participation: Autumn 2014

E-mail Address:

1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

a. Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

Try to get a dorm. They are significantly cheaper and more convenient.

b. If your program/exchange had an orientation, what did it cover and how did it help you adapt?

The school itself didn't have an orientation but the program for exchange students (a buddy program called SNU Buddy) had one and it covered basics like cell phone, housing, contact info, etc.

2. ACADEMICS:

a. Please evaluate the instruction you received abroad. Compare the following to the University of Washington's system:

- classroom structure: smaller classes than ones found at uw
- instruction: their English may be a bit more difficult to understand for non-Korean speaking individuals, but it's on par to most of the foreign teachers who lecture at UW
- teacher/student relations: It really depends on the teacher. There are some very traditional teachers who abide by a no-questions lecture, but some teachers are very warm and inviting.
- grading/exams: easier than UW's
- administration: I'm not so sure. Didn't deal with them much.
- library, computer, and classroom facilities: UW's libraries are better. Classroom facilities at SNU are much, much better. They have heated toilet seats ☺

b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

I took mostly business classes. The quality was good. The professors are very intelligent and explain concepts well.

c. Are there any courses or instructors you would recommend to future students?
Special Topics in Business Administration
Principles of Management

d. How did your study abroad coursework relate to your UW education?
Not much since I'm a completely different major at UW, but I planned for it to be that way since I wanted to take business classes outside the country.

3. HOUSING:

a. What housing options were available to you?
Dorming, studios, goshiwons

b. Which did you choose, and why?
Goshiwon because it was the first thing I found.

c. What would you recommend?
Dorming

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

I LOVED IT. I felt happy being on campus and the scenery/facilities are beautiful. The school is in the mountains so you can go for a hike right after class if you'd like. The (Korean) students are extremely intelligent but also kind and willing to help.

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Please describe any health or safety concerns (e.g., quality of medical facilities, unsafe districts, theft, etc.) associated with your study abroad experience.

None whatsoever. Felt much safer than at UW

6. CULTURAL ASPECTS:

a. How did you integrate into the culture and meet members of the community?
(e.g., clubs, sports, extracurricular activities, pubs, etc.)
I joined SNU Buddy and you should too!

b. Describe cultural differences and challenges you encountered and how you addressed them.
(e.g., gender issues, social etiquette, stereotypes, etc.)

Social etiquette is...different than that of Seattle's. People will push to get through and not say sorry, but it's not because they're mean people—it's just their culture

7. FINANCIAL:

a. What is the best way to access/transfer money from the U.S.?
Bring a fat wad of cash. Best exchange rate that way.

b. How much spending money do you recommend per month? Please include rent, food, transportation, etc.
Not entirely sure. Maybe 800?

c. Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.
Trips to neighboring countries like Japan.

d. If you used Financial Aid to fund your program/exchange, were there any problems? If so, how did you address them?
No problems.

8. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATION:

a. If the IP&E administered your program/exchange, please comment on the effectiveness of the office's services. What service could be improved?
I'm not entirely sure about IP&E's services, but SNU's exchange program service on their side was a bit slow and confusing.

b. If the IP&E did not administer your program, please evaluate the program's administration, both in the U.S. and abroad.
n/a

9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE:

Please describe the type of student for whom this program is best suited.

Has at least a slight interest in Korean culture, not easily offended by non-politically correct situations (very few people may point out if you are a larger size or if you are a different race, but they don't mean it in a mean way. They just don't see much of it so it's foreign to them).

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?

The reality surpassed both my academic and personal expectations! It was literally, without a doubt, the best decision I've made my entire college career so far! APPLY!!!

PROGRAM EVALUATION:

Seoul National University; Seoul, South Korea
Autumn 2013- Spring 2014

SEP 24 2014

1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

a. Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

-Hostels and Guesthouses! Great place to meet people and there are tons of them all over Seoul. You can go anywhere in the city with the subway lines!

b. If your program/exchange had an orientation, what did it cover and how did it help you adapt?

-Tour of the campus and what to do when we arrived (Alien Registration Card, Subway/Transit card, SNU ID, etc.)

2. ACADEMICS:

a. Please evaluate the instruction you received abroad. Compare the following to the University of Washington's system:

- classroom structure: less structured, more relaxed
- instruction: heavy focus on textbook learning
- teacher/student relations: formal, but very relaxed (going to dinners and outings as a class)
- grading/exams: textbook emphasis
- administration: sometimes slow to respond or no response
- library, computer, and classroom facilities: very good

b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

-Instruction was heavily based on textbooks and not much on creative thinking, which I didn't always agree with. Some teachers only taught in one way, which made their teaching style less effective.

c. Are there any courses or instructors you would recommend to future students?

-Music of the World, Introduction to Korean Music, and Geography of Asia

d. How did your study abroad coursework relate to your UW education?

-Because SNU did not offer my specific major, I was taking classes from different departments that didn't necessarily mesh with my field of study. These departments were not what I was used to and no up to my level of expectations, so I ended up taking courses from random departments that peaked my interest.

3. HOUSING:

a. What housing options were available to you?

-Dorms and renting apartments. Most international students were housed in the dorms, though some were renting apartments.

b. Which did you choose, and why?

-Dorms due to convenience and price.

c. What would you recommend?

-Dorms

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

-Campus is fairly large with quite a bit of greenery. There is a small waterfall on campus and trail, which is nice. There is a small outdoor climbing wall on the south end of campus. Within the campus is a small rocky mountain, Gwanaksa, which many people come to climb. There you can hike the mountain, trail run, or rock climb at the top. The community is welcoming and fairly good with English. There is a free shuttle bus that circulates around campus and to a nearby subway station (SNU station). Within walking or bussing distance is Nakseongdae and SNU station which have many cafes and affordable eateries.

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Please describe any health or safety concerns (e.g., quality of medical facilities, unsafe districts, theft, etc.) associated with your study abroad experience.

-There is a clinic on campus, much like Hall Health. The service is quick and fairly inexpensive. I never experienced anything getting stolen on campus—many students leave their laptops and belongings unattended for hours.

In the busy districts such as Gangnam, Hongdae and Itaewon, students should keep their belongings with them at all times, although it isn't necessary to hide them.

6. CULTURAL ASPECTS:

a. How did you integrate into the culture and meet members of the community?

-I joined clubs such as the music club, mountaineering club, and SNU buddy (which pairs you in a group of international students and resident students and plans events and activities)

b. Describe cultural differences and challenges you encountered and how you addressed them.

-The society is more conservative. Tank tops for women are considered scandalous, but short shorts are an everyday sighting. Respect towards elders is a must. Gender stereotypes resonate everywhere.

7. FINANCIAL:

a. What is the best way to access/transfer money from the U.S.?

-Plan ahead! Transferring money can be costly, so always transfer more than enough. The entire year, I transferred money only 2-3 times.

b. How much spending money do you recommend per month? Please include rent, food, transportation, etc.

-Transportation is reasonable, but keep track of how much you are taking the subway because it can add up, as there is a minimum charge. Food is inexpensive, ESPECIALLY on campus. Per month, \$700 should suffice.

c. Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.

-Doctors visit was quite expensive, as I needed lab results and special care. Dental work is quite inexpensive and good.

d. If you used Financial Aid to fund your program/exchange, were there any complications?

-No complications. All my financial aid transferred to my exchange year.

If so, how did you address them?

8. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATION:

a. If the IP&E administered your program/exchange, please comment on the effectiveness of the office's services. What service could be improved?

b. If the IP&E did not administer your program, please evaluate the program's administration, both in the U.S. and abroad.

-IP&E was excellent. SNU's exchange program was often slow or I got no replies at all, which was frustrating.

9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE:

Please describe the type of student for whom this program is best suited.

-Business students or more "common" majors. As an Environmental Science and Resource Management student focusing on wildlife conservation, courses within my major were difficult to come by.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?

-Academically, my expectations were less than fulfilled. The courses relating to my major were not structured well and I did not enjoy them. Other classes I took out of pure interest that were taught by foreign instructors were good to excellent. It seems as though students studying more "common" majors might have an easier time at SNU.

Personally, my expectations were met. I learned so much and grew through those experiences. It was an experience I will never forget nor regret in any way. I would do it again if I had the chance!

AUG 17 2015

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INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM/EXCHANGE EVALUATION REPORT

Your Name:

Name of Study Abroad/Exchange Program: Seoul National University Direct Exchange

Quarter(s) of Participation: Spring 2015 Semester

E-mail Address:

1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

a. Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

The best accommodation is to stay in the school dormitories. It is the best option because of the location and the price. Seoul National University is located around 20-25 walking minutes away from the nearest subway station. There are buses which do come onto the campus frequently, but the dormitories are located within the campus, which makes it the best choice in being able to make it home easily after classes/activities are over.

b. If your program/exchange had an orientation, what did it cover and how did it help you adapt?

The majority of the orientation was about how to apply for an Alien Registration Card, how to create a bank account linked to the student ID card, and about a school club intended for exchange students called "SNU Buddy." I arrived in South Korea about a month prior to the orientation so I was already aware of how to create an Alien Registration Card and had already created a bank account. However, it was interesting to learn about the SNU Buddy club.

2. ACADEMICS:

a. Please evaluate the instruction you received abroad. Compare the following to the University of Washington's system:

- classroom structure

The classes take attendance into deep consideration and most students are reserved about voicing their opinions. Most of the lecture is a combination of a review of the prepared readings and side comments from the professor.

- instruction

It may be the rigidity of Korean society – or the brainwashing of being opinionated as being an asset – which caused me to look unfavorably towards how the instruction was managed. There is a Confucian hierarchy which is strongly fixed into the teaching system so in the instance of receiving instruction from certain elderly professors, the professors were quick to brush outside other ways to interpret abstract ideas. Personally, this did not settle well with me because a university is a place to cultivate ideas and to better them; not to discourage the advancement of knowledge which can be bettered.

- teacher/student relations

There was a reluctance of some professors to meet face to face. Instead the questions were dealt with via the phone. When asked how to prepare better for the class, I was given a response along the lines of "you didn't study," repeatedly, versus insight on how to succeed as a student.

- grading/exams

I have no idea how the grading system works because the professors never showed the progress of the student. Also, when asked why I received the score that I did, for one of my classes, the professor could and did not explain. They refused to meet me in person and could not reason the grade that I was given.

- administration

The OIA was very helpful with answering my questions regarding how to settle in. Though, dropping classes was no easy matter. The course registration system is different from the UW one. At UW you can drop and add courses online. However, at Seoul National University, when adding a course (once the classes have begun), students must take a form, receive the professors' signature then turn it in to their department. It is the same when dropping a class (once classes have begun).

- library, computer, and classroom facilities

The new library and computer floor (in the new library) are absolutely wonderful. It is a great studying environment. The classroom facilities can vary from very clean and new to old and ragged. All of the classroom facilities, I was instructed in, had electronic displays, from which PowerPoint slides were shown.

b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

The general feel was that the quality and content were not satisfactory. The school system worked primarily in blocks; every class met once a week and all of the instruction was combined into that one meeting. By cramming so much into the few hours we had together as a class, the material changed too quickly and was not examined very well. Therefore, most of the instruction was easily forgotten or skimmed over.

c. Are there any courses or instructors you would recommend to future students?

To challenge oneself to be active in preparing for the class and developing new perspectives on a topic, I would recommend the Japanese Society and Culture class taught by Professor Younghae Han. The class was driven primarily by the students with the professor including more clarification, and the course helped with teaching me more about Japan.

d. How did your study abroad coursework relate to your UW education?

The courses I took were related to my major. As I was in Korea, I took the opportunity to further my knowledge of Korean history, and I took my first course geared towards Japan. After taking the course on Japan, I am now a little more knowledgeable of what to expect from Japanese courses at UW.

3. HOUSING:

a. What housing options were available to you?

The dormitory and commuting around an hour and a half from a relative's house were available to me.

b. Which did you choose, and why?

I chose the dormitories because commuting every morning seemed like an additional hassle to me. Also, I was planning on being very active with student activities on campus, and it seemed like the commuting time would detract from other pursuits.

c. What would you recommend?

I highly recommend the dormitories. The dormitories are located within the campus (and the campus is quite far from everywhere else) and the cost is inexpensive. The dormitories are also very safe and it is easy to catch the bus or a taxi. Walking distance, the dormitories are around 10-15 minutes away from the heart of the campus. It is reasonable and you do get a lot of exercise walking around the sloping campus.

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

The campus has an overall quiet feel because it is located around 20-25 walking minutes from the nearest subway station. People often take shuttles and buses from the subway station to the campus because of the distance, but it is not a bad length if one enjoys walking. The surrounding community is quite safe; it is not as lively as other college campuses and there is not much of a young pop culture. The surrounding area is not a popular tourist site because the only place people know of is Seoul National University itself.

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Please describe any health or safety concerns (e.g., quality of medical facilities, unsafe districts, theft, etc.) associated with your study abroad experience.

I had absolutely no safety concerns. The only health issue that popped up was the MERS incident. And even with that, I did not feel concerned about. Rather, I felt that it was blown out of proportion; schools closed, people were barred from entering buildings, and hand sanitizer was incredibly abundant.

6. CULTURAL ASPECTS:

a. How did you integrate into the culture and meet members of the community?

(e.g., clubs, sports, extracurricular activities, pubs, etc.)

I stayed busy with joining the clubs. There are so many student clubs which are active all throughout the week; people will go into the student club rooms and study there, hang out, and practice. I joined a Bible study, the international students club, the choir club, and the swimming club. I also frequently had English conversation sessions with friends and got to learn more about them as well as improve my Korean.

b. Describe cultural differences and challenges you encountered and how you addressed them.

(e.g., gender issues, social etiquette, stereotypes, etc.)

The US and Korea culture difference is incredibly difficult for people who have no prior experience to overcome. Fortunately for myself, I am accustomed to how Korean society functions. However, there was one challenge. The drinking culture in Korea is extremely different from the American one. Many Korean people enjoy the drinking atmosphere and it is not unnatural to be drinking on any day of the week. It was difficult to accept this drinking culture because it was expected that you would drink when going to the after club activity dinners. It was uncomfortable because I did not know how to approach not drinking without breaking the atmosphere, but I drew my boundaries and let people know of it – to which they were accepting of. If a Korean student had done this, I'm sure that it would have been a little more difficult for them to not drink, but as I am from an American background, people saw to leave me as I wished.

7. FINANCIAL:

a. What is the best way to access/transfer money from the U.S.?

I brought the money that I thought I would be needing as US cash and exchanged it into Korean won during various times of the month. I tried to time when to exchange my money depending on when the rate would be highest. The transaction fee on my credit card was also not very high so I did use my credit card from time to time.

b. How much spending money do you recommend per month? Please include rent, food, transportation, etc.

It would be good to invest around a \$100/month for transportation for frequent traveling. If not, then around \$50 would suffice. The dormitory fee was paid all at once and that cost around \$600 total. Food prices are typically around \$7-9, but it is also very easy to find food priced below that amount. The food offered at the school cafeterias are discounted for students and the highest cost for a meal can be up to \$4. My food costs ended up at around \$200/month.

c. Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.

Student club activities can cost a lot. There is the fee for the beginning of the semester, and then other fees for certain events and activities. I would not recommend being active in many student activities without the time commitment and money to do so.

d. If you used Financial Aid to fund your program/exchange, were there any problems? If so, how did you address them?

There was a slight issue with the distributed financial aid (because my financial aid was suddenly cut), but it was addressed with many stressed emails and help from my family in the US.

8. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATION:

a. If the IP&E administered your program/exchange, please comment on the effectiveness of the office's services. What service could be improved?

It was great how assuring it was about making it into the exchange program, but after being accepted, knowing what to do next was really all up to the individual. It was not easy to know what to expect next, but to me, it was not a bad thing.

b. If the IP&E did not administer your program, please evaluate the program's administration, both in the U.S. and abroad.

9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE:

Please describe the type of student for whom this program is best suited.

This is best suited for the individual who is excited about finding opportunities for themselves instead of rushing back to the dormitories once classes are over. This is an opportunity for those who are passionate about getting to know people, and being able to experiment with how to interact with others from a completely different background. If there is hesitation, the experience will definitely not be good because most of the students that I met could not approach me first. It is important to be able to reach out and create opportunities for yourself rather than waiting for them to come to you.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?

On an academic level, I was disappointed; it was not what I was expecting, at all. But, all was not bad. I did learn what is expected of graduate students and I did discover how vital it is to be passionate about what you are studying. For that, I am somewhat satisfied. On a personal level, it exceed my expectations. I have met so many incredible people and been able to try so many different things! Because I am able to speak Korean, I was able to communicate with all sorts of people from all backgrounds. We exchanged and learned more about our respective countries and were able to laugh together and understand each other, more. The study abroad experience has left such a dear impact that it is difficult for me to say goodbye to the country which has given me so much friendship. I can say that I will be returning to Korea to see the wonderful people who have left me with such beautiful memories, and I am looking forward to when they will be coming to the US to visit me.

