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INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM/EXCHANGE EVALUATION REPORT

Yonsei University at Seoul, South Korea
Fall Semester/Quarter 2011

1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

I had relatives who lived fairly close to campus, so I was able to arrive in Korea a couple months before the program even began. I heard many other students who arrived and arranged hostels to stay at until school started; however most students chose to arrive the day of move in. If you don't feel comfortable in a foreign country by yourself or have no intentions of traveling on your own, I recommend arranging your arrival to match the day of move-in.

MAKE SURE YOU ATTEND ORIENTATION. I have to admit, I was really tempted to skip out on the long ceremony and there were moments when the backdoor looked ever so enticing. But I think they really do a thorough job preparing you for the next weeks ahead.

2. ACADEMICS:

I think it really depends on how ambitious you are with your schedule. Blame it on senioritis, but I stacked my classes and took only electives. My classes were very small and intimate compared to those of my friends. The professors for study abroad courses were very friendly and understanding; they really want you enjoy your time in the foreign country rather than spend time just in the classroom. A lot of my assignments reflected their desire to have us explore. As for the library, computers, and classroom facilities, Yonsei is second to none.

3. HOUSING:

Korea offers a variety of different housing options. Many students chose between the options of home-staying, living with relatives, or just dorms on campus. No matter how close the home-stay is or your relatives are from main campus, DORM! I understand the cost benefits of the first two options sound amazing, but in the end, nothing beats living close to your friends, classes, and anything else that happens on campus. Not to mention, it's a bonding experience all on its own.

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

The campus is beautiful; the only downside is that the international dorms are so far from central campus. Yonsei University is located right in the middle of Sinchon, which is an amazing city within the larger city of Seoul. There's so many things to see and explore within Sinchon, but remember not to limit yourself to just this one city. The subways and buses can take you virtually anywhere, so go explore!

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY:

None that I can think of.

6. CULTURAL ASPECTS:

I, along with many other international students, joined a study abroad club and meet students who actually attend Yonsei as well as those from around the world. The actual organization-led events were not that great, but this program introduced me to people I still keep in contact with and plan on visiting long after I graduate.

7. FINANCIAL:

I notified my bank at home about my trip abroad and how long I will be staying. I didn't open a temporary account in Korea, which is something I heard that other students did through relatives. I just withdrew cash in bulk and used my credit card. There is a fee, but it's not that bad, considering the exchange rate between the Korean Won and US Dollar was to our benefit. Just think of it as tax and you'll be fine (this is, of course, if you're not spending money on buying really expensive things.)

I set a budget of about \$400-500 dollars of spending money a month, which includes food and other miscellaneous things. However, I don't actually remember sticking to this budget; rather this arbitrary number served as an average or reference point to keep my spending manageable. It's tempting to want spend more money if you see fellow study abroad students shopping all the time, but remember that YOU CAN'T TAKE EVERYTHING WITH YOU BACK HOME. The food, transportation, and most entertainment is cheap, so you don't need to worry about the necessities. BUT THAT DOES NOT MEAN TO CHEAP OUT EITHER. Just make choices that are smart and ones you can handle the consequences of.

8. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATION:

I think the IPE office did a fantastic job preparing students for this trip; I have absolutely no qualms about that.

9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE:

Students who want to experience a completely different culture without experiencing too much of a "culture shock" should really check out Yonsei. Korea is on the top of its game in terms of technology, food, cultural experiences, and openness to foreigners. Many of the students, including myself, ending up wishing we had stayed the full year rather than the single semester.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

I've been on two study abroad/exchanges prior to this one and I can honestly say that Yonsei was my favorite. Granted, it might also be because I am a Korean-American so there was a personal aspect that really made an impact on my overall experience. However, a lot of other, non-Korean students who had no prior exposure to Korean culture found this trip exceptional. If I could, I would redo this experience all over again in a heartbeat.

Seoul, S.Korea

Yonsei University

Fall 2009

✓ THW
✓ FH
✓ EB
✓ DB

JUN 10 2010

1. Arrival Overseas/On-Site Orientation: Orientation was canceled due to swine flu.
2. Academics:
 - a. Lots of lectures, not so much discussions (maybe because I took many engineering classes)
 - b. Attendance is very important—I believe professors generally try to give out good grades so do the work and show up and you will be fine.
 - c. The courses I took were difficult but the professors and TAs work hard to help you.
 - d. Yonsei's Samsung Library is great. Take the library tour and utilize it well.
3. Housing:
 - a. On and Off Campus
 - b. Both have pros and cons. Student housing is not very expensive, also, some students manage to find roommates and find apartments or "hasuk".
4. Program/Exchange Site:
 - a. Shinchon, where Yonsei is located is a very lively area. With Ehwa Women's University nearby, there is lots of restaurants, shopping, bars, etc. Hongik University station, 1 station away from Shinchon, is where many clubs are located (Although, Gangnam provides better quality ones in rumor)
5. Health and Safety:
 - a. Places like Rite aid and Bartell, called "Yakguk", is everywhere. Medical services are not too expensive in Korea. Also, I feel like Seoul is pretty safe city because there are people out all the time and lights everywhere, esp. in the main areas.
6. Financial:
 - a. Option 1: Communicate with the bank about traveling abroad, this way they do not block your account when trying to withdraw out of the country. Always have some Korean Won on person and withdraw from the ATM when needed.
 - b. Option 2*: It is really easy to make a bank account in Korea. Yonsei uses Woori Bank and it is on campus so it is very easy to access. If you make a checking account (they do not use the word 'debit' so say 'check' account) they give you a card and electronic booklet that keeps track of what you spent and where for you. Ask the teller how it can be used. But basically, you put the last used page into an ATM slot and it will fill out how much money you spent where and when. This way you can manage your finances easier.

- c. South Korea provides lots of good varying in a spectrum of prices. There are very nice expensive items but also nice not-so expensive items. It is very easy to get carried away with spending.
- 7. Program/Exchange Administration:
 - a. IP&E was helpful and friendly but not very responsive to emails.
- 8. General Advise?:
 - a. Shinchon is really fun place to be but South Korea is more than Shinchon. Some background research to make more out one's experience in Korea will provide more valuable experience.

JAN 17 2013

IP&E PROGRAM EVALUATION OUTLINE:**Name:****Student number:****Program Location: South Korea****Term/Year of participation: Fall 2012****Permanent Pho****Current Phone****Email address:****1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:****a.** Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

Be prepared to keep travelling as soon as you land. Take the subway to Hongdae or a bus. Easy.

b. If your program/exchange had an orientation, what did it cover and how did it help you adapt? Mostly covered how not to be an idiot and respect the country and learn about its culture. I've lived there many years so it was easy to make the transition.**2. ACADEMICS:****a.** Please evaluate the instruction you received abroad. Compare the following to the University of Washington's system:**- classroom structure:**

Is pretty rigid, but tends to be confusing.

- instruction

Again, rigid, but confusing.

- teacher/student relations

In general, good. But I did have a terrible experience with one professor. I thought he was strange and possibly very perverted. He also copied his entire text course without citation which I thought was odd and uncalled for.

- grading/exams

Tend to be confusing and can be changed the day of the exams.

- administration

Good! Probably a highlight here.

- library, computer, and classroom facilities

Great. But difficult to learn how to use because it's all in Korean.

b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

I honestly didn't like it. I didn't learn much, and it was too expensive as a whole. I would like to see if the Graduate program is any different which I feel it would be.

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

No. I would not recommend this undergraduate Exchange Program.

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

I'm not sure. I had to complete 15 elective credits and absolutely love Korea so I did the exchange. In terms of the exchange I really loved the program, but not what I actually learned in itself. Still, I would do it again regardless.

3. HOUSING:

a. What housing options were available to you?

On or off-campus.

b. Which did you choose, and why?

On-campus for convenience.

c. What would you recommend?

Off-campus if you want a better exchange experience. I did both, so I was able to experience the country much better while 'outside' of the dorming situation. You're surrounded by a very immature mentality for better or worse, but dorming was okay.

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

It's a beautiful campus, but the community is difficult to engage with.

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Very safe; that being said, try to avoid people in the military, people who drink too much, and keep your things locked up. Stay out of Itaewon.

Medical is great, and just make sure you have insurance and access to a phone.

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 already have friends there. I didn't do any clubs.

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

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

They're hard on people but that's to be expected. Don't get mad, just enjoy the country.

7. FINANCIAL:

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

Through a single bank transfer.

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

\$800-1000 was typically being spent.

c. Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.

It's easy to lose track of your budget, but make sure all the exchange fees are paid. It shocked me when I saw the bill for tuition plus IPE fees plus books.

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

No, they did a great job addressing my worries.

If so, how did you address them?

Not applicable.

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?

Less changes in the personnel in the office; it would be easier to streamline the process that way.

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

Not applicable.

9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE:

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

Sophomore/Junior undergraduate.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?

I loved the program, but I wish I had learned more for how much it costs. I will return there after this Winter quarter to work professionally and I'm thankful for the experience. It helped put one more building block in place to prepare me for working there in just a few short months.

JUL 09 2015

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INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM/EXCHANGE EVALUATION REPORT

Your Name:

Name of Study Abroad/Exchange Program: Yonsei University Direct Exchange Program

Quarter(s) of Participation: Winter/Spring Quarters 2015

E-mail Address:

1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

a. Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

Most people arrived on the same day as dorm move-in, thus no additional accommodations were needed upon arrival. However, I arrived in Korea about a month early and stayed with a host family until I moved into the dorms.

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

There was a one day orientation where we were introduced to Korean culture through presentations and performances (e.g. K-pop dance, Yonsei pep-squad). In addition, all the facilities that we had access to while at Yonsei were introduced (e.g. the libraries, copy/print centers, etc...). This second part was the most useful part. However, all the information covered could be found in the welcome packets that we were given.

2. ACADEMICS:

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

- classroom structure
- instruction
- teacher/student relations
- grading/exams
- administration
- library, computer, and classroom facilities

College classes in Korea are taught differently than in the US. For the most part, professors lecture their material and students simply listen. In my experience there was very little interaction/dialogue between professors and students during lecture. There are no quiz sections in Korea so students are expected to absorb and review material completely on their own. Professors do have weekly office hours though. Attendance is mandatory in Korea. If a student misses a certain percent of lectures (20 or 30 percent) they cannot receive an A in the class. Most classes are graded on a standard bell-curve. Therefore, only a few students receive As, the rest receive Bs and Cs. Thus, classes are very competitive. Most of my classes included a presentation, midterm, and final exam. There is an international office where international students can find support. The libraries do offer tours in

English for international students. There are plenty of study rooms and materials in English. However, one can often not find a spot to study in the library so I studied for the most part in my dorm room.

b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

Like in the US, there were some professors who I enjoyed and there were others who I did not. Korean professors at Yonsei University are top experts in their respective fields in the country.

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

I would recommend any classes taught by Professor Kim Hyun Jung. She teaches mostly international law classes. Her research focus is in the Law of the Sea.

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

The coursework was the same. However, I had to give more presentations at Yonsei (one per class) than I have had to at UW.

3. HOUSING:

a. What housing options were available to you?

Most international students lived in the dorms (either in International House or SK Global). However, I knew students who either stayed with host families or found their own studios near the university.

b. Which did you choose, and why?

I chose to live in the dorm International House because its located conveniently on campus and is cheaper than SK Global. International House dorms have mini-fridges in all their rooms (single-and-double rooms) while only single-rooms in SK Global have them.

c. What would you recommend?

I would recommend living in International House. Besides price, there is no real difference between the two in terms of facilities.

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

Yonsei has a great campus. However, it is under-going major renovation so walking through campus can take quite a while. Yonsei is located right near Idae, Sinchon, and Hongdae, three of the most hip places for young people to go eat, drink, and hang out.

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. I felt completely safe during my exchange.

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.)

Joining Yonsei's "Buddy Club" and other foreigner-friendly clubs that allow international students to meet regular Yonsei students. However, besides these, most other clubs are weary of allowing foreigners to join them because they assume international students cannot speak well enough Korean. Also, drinking is a major part of Korean culture and it is an easy way to meet Koreans.

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

I did not encounter any cultural difference and challenges that impacted my experience. Because I have a working knowledge of Korean I was able to bond well with other Koreans. However, other international students who could not speak Korean found it hard to befriend Koreans.

7. FINANCIAL:

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

Whenever I go abroad for longer periods of time I always set up a bank account with a local bank and just transfer money from my US account to that account. This ensures I can easily access my money wherever I go in that country. However, most Korean ATMs will accept foreign cards so withdrawing money with a foreign bank card is not a problem.

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

Per month, I would recommend between 500 and 600 dollars depending on one's eating and drinking habits. Dining plans are not included in the dorms so you need to be prepared to eat out for almost all of your meals.

c. Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.

None

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

I did use my financial aid to fund my trip, however, there were 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?

The IPE office was very helpful with answering/clarifying any questions I had prior to leaving for Korea. In addition, they responded promptly via email while I was abroad. There's nothing that comes to mind that I could recommend for IPE to address or change.

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.

In my personal opinion, this program is best suited for a very outgoing, independent person who truly has a passion for, or willingness to learn about Korean culture and language.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?

My overall experience in Korea was fantastic. While I think I prefer the teaching style in American Universities better than in Korea, I personally could not have hoped for a more fun, enlightening, and engaging experience while studying abroad.

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM/EXCHANGE EVALUATION REPORT

Your Name:

Name of Study Abroad/Exchange Program: Korea Yonsei University

Quarter(s) of Participation:3

E-mail Address:

JUL 09 2015

1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

a. Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

b. If your program/exchange had an orientation, what did it cover and how did it help you adapt?
It helped with immigration information, like where to go to get our alien registration card. It would have been nice if they considered that not everyone will live in the dorms, since location is important when registering. I had to look up the information for my area.

2. ACADEMICS:

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

- classroom structure
- instruction
- teacher/student relations
- grading/exams
- administration
- library, computer, and classroom facilities

The way we receive our grades is very interesting since we must first fill out an evaluation and then the grades are only available for a certain period of time.

b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

The instruction was pretty good, but it did depend on the professor. Some professors were not very clear on what we were doing or how we were being graded so it lead to confusion.

c. Are there any courses or instructors you would recommend to future students?
Chinese Character and Beginning Korean Writing.

Out of all of my courses these two stood out and the professors were caring and helpful.

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

There were enough classes that would transfer over and were a part of my major, so I wasn't worried about not being on track from graduation. There are also courses that I found interesting that could count towards my major but that are not offered at UW

3. HOUSING:

a. What housing options were available to you?

There are dorms available and then there is off campus housing. There are a couple ways to find off campus housing if you are interested

b. Which did you choose, and why?

I chose off campus housing because I wanted to live with a friend and I thought it would be helpful to my experience

c. What would you recommend?

I would want to recommend off campus housing, but it would depend on the person. Financially it can be burdensome if you are not able to find a good place and the dorms can help make friends.

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

The campus was under construction at the time of my program so it was not great. It was really inconvenient at times and the building where most of the study abroad courses took place are far from the other building. The surrounding area is very lively especially on the weekends where different events would be held.

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.

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 some clubs and also met some of my friends through different language exchange programs and they helped me a lot

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

I don't remember facing any big cultural differences but if there ever was any I would ask a Korean friend about it.

7. FINANCIAL:

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

I just used my debit card in Korea. The international fees were not great. If you plan to do this I would recommend telling your bank so they don't cut off your card.

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

600

c. Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.

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

Because my program started before I recieved financial aid so I had to save money for buying my plane ticket and the first months rent.

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 think everything was good. Nothing really stands out since I don't think I used their services very much.

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.

Whoever is interested in experience a new culture.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?

I think I expected more from the classes, (non Korean) but overall I had a good experience. It was a change from the quarter system and the US system in gereal.

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INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM/EXCHANGE EVALUATION REPORT

Your Name:

Name of Study Abroad/Exchange Program: Yonsei University Direct Exchange

Quarter(s) of Participation: Winter 2015, Spring 2015

E-mail Address:

1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

a. Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

I recommend being in the dorms designated for exchange students, either SK Global House or International House. If you cannot get housing, then you can get a one-room or "hasukjip" in the area for a bit cheaper than the dorms. You do not need to search too far in advance, as these places are generally open for lease.

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

Very standard orientation.

2. ACADEMICS:

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

- classroom structure similar
- instruction similar
- teacher/student relations similar
- grading/exams based on A-F not GPA, generally curved
- administration never had to deal with admin
- library, computer, and classroom facilities great

b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

The quality was good, I took business and study abroad courses. Study abroad and cultural classes are generally easier, but still quality classes.

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

I took mostly business classes and Korean. If you are a business student, I recommend taking Corporate Ethics/CSR here. It is much better than UW's. Also, if you want to learn Korean, I recommend taking KLI which is 5 days a week. May be a big commitment, but most students take KLI anyways so you will be bored during those two hours if you have nothing to do.

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

Directly affects my major GPA.

3. HOUSING:

a. What housing options were available to you?

On-campus dorms, off-campus one-rooms and rooms with house moms.

b. Which did you choose, and why?

Dorms in order to socialize more.

c. What would you recommend?

Definitely dorms.

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

Campus is right in the middle of a big city and district called Sinchon. Great to go out and eat or drink – a lot of fun places to go during the day and at night. Very convenient to bus, also kind of close to the subway.

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.

Korea is very safe. There are pharmacies everywhere and Yonsei hospital is a top hospital in Korea. Huge plus if you can speak Korean, but you can get by using English.

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.)

JOIN SCHOOL CLUBS otherwise you will not meet local Korean students.

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

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

Asian people are generally more passive and if you are extremely outgoing, it is not necessarily a good thing. Be able to read the social environment, reach out first, but do not be too aggressive.

7. FINANCIAL:

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

There are weird wire transferring rules to pay the dorms. I used my Travel Rewards credit card which had nearly no fees. If you don't mind incurring ~5-10% fees, just withdraw from any International ATM.

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

After paying for tuition and housing, you should have at least \$3,000 spending money. I spent \$5,000 on the whole trip.

c. Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.

Travel - \$1,500

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

My second payout was not until 2 months into the trip, but I brought enough to survive until then.

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?

Everything was good, except I wish I could have met all the UW students going to Yonsei beforehand. I did not know any UW students there – although it did not really matter in the end.

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.

Local Koreans are not very good at English, so you must be prepared to do communicate with your hands and have patience. If you are interested in Asia, Korea is a great place. There is a great nightlife and party culture if you are into that. Food is spicy. Very modern and in the times – highly trendy area... If you can speak Korean, even better.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?

I did better than expected academically, and I was very satisfied personally.

JUL 20 2015

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM/EXCHANGE EVALUATION REPORT

Your Name:

Name of Study Abroad/Exchange Program: Yonsei University Exchange Program

Quarter(s) of Participation: 3 quarters/full academic year exchange

E-mail Address:

1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

a. Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

If you are arriving to the country before school starts or before the dorms are available, I recommend using Airbnb to find a guesthouse to stay near the school. This way it will be easy to tour around your school beforehand as well as start getting used to your surroundings. Airbnb is also fairly easy to use and cheap. Some guesthouse owners know English, so they can help you get to their guesthouse as well as help you adjust.

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

We had an orientation at Yonsei University a couple of days before school started. We received the student handbook that was very useful and it included a school map. They covered the general information about the school, all the resources that were available, and even had a guest speaker talk about her experience studying abroad here at the school. We were also introduced and encouraged to join some clubs that would help us meet new friends, Korean and non-Korean. The orientation was very informative and I was able to join a club that day.

2. ACADEMICS:

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

- classroom structure: The classes were almost structured the same. Depending on which class, there was more encouragement for discussion than others. Usually it was just an hour-two hour professor led lecture where students simply took notes.
- instruction: On the first day of class, the professor would give a detailed lecture on the syllabus and clearly state what was expected of the students. After the first day, you knew exactly how the class would be conducted and what assignments and homework were to be expected.
- teacher/student relations: Depending on the class, the professors were more willing to actively engage with the students. Some professors were friendly and wanted to memorize every student's name and some professors would walk into class, lecture, and leave when the time was up.
- grading/exams: The grading and the exams were a little tricky. We knew what was expected of us, but the grading scale and rubric was never clear. There was a general idea of what was needed to get a good grade, but it wasn't too specific. After an exam, you were never quite sure if that was what the teacher wanted, but you tried your hardest to answer all the questions and prompt. There were a lot of

accounts of students asking the professor exactly what they wanted to see in the exams and were given a vague answer.

- administration: They were very helpful. If I had any questions, I would go to the office that was responsible for study abroad students, and they were able to help me.

- library, computer, and classroom facilities: I did not spend a lot of time at the libraries on campus, but from the accounts of other friends, it is very accessible and the facilities are easy to use. All the buildings that held our classes were equipped with computers that are accessible to students. There are also ATMs which proved to be very useful as well.

b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

I would honestly say that the University of Washington's quality and content of instruction is by far better than what was provided for Yonsei's study abroad program. The study abroad classes had a mixture of either really good professors who made their classes engaging or it was professors who would just lecture off a Powerpoint with few questions asked to the students. It really depends on what classes you decide to take.

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

I would recommend taking the Law and Justice and Korean Writing class. Both professors made the class very engaging and interesting. I would also recommend taking the KLI classes for learning Korean. If you have not taken a Korean class and decide to study abroad in Korea, I would strongly urge you to take a Korean class! Even if you only take Korean 101, it will really help with daily conversations and make your study abroad experience much more beneficial. Students say that they don't want to take it because it is from 4-6pm every day, but this is where you can meet good friends and learn the language of the country you are living in!

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

As I said above, I regarded it as less than my UW education. This does not say that I didn't learn anything from my study abroad coursework, but it was a very different style from UW. I just wish that some of the professors made the class more engaging. At some points, I would think I could just read the articles and the professor's lectures at home instead of going to class because there was nothing new that the professor would add to it. However, I would like to separate the study abroad classes from the Korean intensive language class. Since the class was every day for two hours, my Korean greatly improved. At UW, I took Korean classes but the classes at Yonsei were definitely more consistent and I learned a lot.

3. HOUSING:

a. What housing options were available to you?

I could either stay at the dorms, do a homestay, or find my own apartment.

b. Which did you choose, and why?

I chose to find my own apartment with one of my friends because we believed that it would be cheaper for us and we would be less restricted than staying in the dorms or a homestay. We also both had studied Korean two years prior to studying abroad in Korea, so we wanted to try and live outside in the Korean society.

c. What would you recommend?

If you are alone coming to Korea, or do not know the Korean language, I would recommend staying in the dorms. Korea has a completely different culture than the United States so staying close to the school and their resources for you would be a better idea. If you really would like to be emerged into the Korean culture and lifestyle, a homestay would be perfect! However, remember that you are living with a family and that you must respect their house rules. If you know some of the Korean language and you know some of the Korean culture, I would recommend finding your own apartment close to the school. I would also recommend having a roommate because the security deposits are usually from \$1,000-\$5,000 and the rent can really vary. If you have a roommate/s you will be able to split the costs and be able to live more independently. If you are looking to find a place of your own, we used Craigslist for Korean housing near the Yonsei/Ehwa/Hongdae area. Almost all of the listings are in English and the realtor can speak English as well.

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

While we were studying at Yonsei University, the campus was unfortunately under construction. Every day we had to walk through the loud construction to get to our classes. Some parts of the campus were very beautiful but the main gate up to the center of the campus was constantly under construction. Sinchon is the area near the university. It contains a shopping mall, a lot of good places to eat, and many shops such as for cosmetics. Ehwa is also close by and because it is also near a women's university, there are many cheap clothing shops and cosmetic shops.

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 was not met with any serious medical concerns while I was there. Thankfully, there are pharmacies on every block, so getting medicine for a cold or pain reliever was not difficult. Towards the end of my study abroad, the MERS outbreak occurred and at school we were informed of the health precautions we needed to take in order to prevent us from contacting MERS. If you took public transportation, they advised us to wear masks and there were hand sanitizer dispensers distributed at almost every exit and entrance. But I strongly advise for everyone to take advantage of the

pharmacies that they have. I had a fever and the medicine they gave me worked almost instantly! I also slightly sprained my thumb and they gave me a pain reliever cream that helped tremendously. Also the medicines aren't too expensive! Regarding safety, I have felt safer walking home alone at one in the morning in Korea than I have felt walking home alone during day near the University District. The area around Yonsei University and the surrounding neighborhoods are very safe. There are CCTVs everywhere, so you can be a little more rest assured.

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 one of the clubs that Yonsei had to offer that integrated study abroad students with regular Yonsei students. We went hiking, ice skating, and biking for the club events. However, I think I grew closer to the other study abroad students than the Korean students. They still hung out among themselves but they did try to make conversation with us. I also signed up for a language partner and he wasn't very helpful when it came to meeting consistently but when we did meet, we would speak only in Korean and he also helped me with any questions I had about Korea. I had language partners at UW that were back in Korea so I met up with them and they were also a big help while was I studying abroad.

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

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

Social etiquette. Even if you think you knew all the etiquette towards elders, you will still at least once, mess up. Whether it be who goes on the elevator first, who gets to eat first, or who gets to pour the soju first, it takes a while to get used to. In the United States, we sometimes regard elders as our friends. We don't treat them too differently from friends our own age, however in Korea, they are not your friend and they deserve more respect. I did not have a problem with this but when I did have older friends who encouraged your relationship to be like close friends, there was still a boundary of respect that should not be crossed. They are still older than you.

7. FINANCIAL:

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

The best way would be to take out the maximum amount of money you can take out of the ATM maybe two or three times a month that will cover your rent and living expenses. I would take out equivalent to 300,000 won three times a month with would cover my rent and living expenses. You will receive international fees but because 300,000 won is more equivalent to \$283, the fees seemed to balance it out.

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

As I said above, I would recommend having at 900,000 won per month, which includes rent and living expenses. My rent was 350,000 won so the rest went towards food, transportation, utility bills, etc. However, it does depend on your housing and your own living expenses. I rarely went shopping and clubbing which could cost more. When I traveled, my transportation tickets were mostly bought online, so it was a little more than 900,000 won per month.

c. Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.

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

There were 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?

They were very helpful. The application process went very smooth as well. If I had any questions, they were quick to email me back. I can't think of any service that would need improving..

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 type of program is great for anyone interested in coming to Korea. It is really a life changing experience, especially if you study abroad for a whole academic year. However, you must want to learn about the culture and the language to fully appreciate the study abroad experience. If you have no interest in Korea or only want to party and go clubbing every night, this isn't for you. This isn't a vacation. You are going to school not only to learn about new subjects and how they are perceived by country but you also have the opportunity to engage with a different culture in more ways that cannot be experienced through just a vacation.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?

I think my overall study abroad experience was even better than my expectations, personally. I definitely grew as a person and now can proudly say that I can sufficiently travel alone and navigate around in a foreign country. I can speak another language, I can engage in conversations and ask questions without the fear of a language barrier or the fear of simply talking to someone. I feel more independent now that I can say I have lived in another country that is completely different from the United States and have learned to appreciate and adapt to these differences. I am also more aware of the impressions that I make towards people. Especially towards the way we treat our elders!

Academically, Yonsei's study abroad program was less than I expected. I still learned a lot and some classes were very engaging, however, overall, it wasn't something I was too excited about. At times, I even missed my UW classes. They were not as challenging as I hoped, but easy in a way that it was too broad and not specific which left room for errors and guessing for what the professor really wanted.