



YONSEI,
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Study abroad at Yonsei University in South Korea

I am very thankful to have attended Yonsei University located in Seoul in South Korea during the fall semester in 2014 (August 2014-December 2014). It is a sky university of South Korea and thus belongs to the best universities of Asia.

However, I believe that the focus of a study abroad semester should not lie on the academic side, but on getting to know other nationalities and in particular the host country with its culture, customs, sights and people. Thus, after my arrival in Seoul, I started to plan trips across Korea with other exchange students and to neighbouring countries such as Japan, China and Hong Kong.

Preparation

However, before leaving to South Korea you have to arrange some things: Firstly, do make sure that you apply and pay on time for student housing if you want to live on campus. I applied to the International House and was sharing my room and was very happy with my choice, as you are immediately in a social environment. Secondly, you need to apply for a visa. Yonsei University will send you a proof of enrolment, which you need to bring. Ask at the embassy for a multiple entry visa if you want to travel during your exchange. Moreover, Yonsei requires a TB test for student housing, so plan this well in advance.

Arrival

Arriving at the airport you need to change money or withdrawal money as you need Korean Won either for taking a taxi, bus or metro. I would recommend taking the limousine bus if you have a lot of luggage. Moreover, make sure that you attend the introduction week, as it is an easy way to get to know people.

Courses

I took 4 courses, which equalled 24 ECTS (12 Korean credits) and will use them for my elective space.

Even though Korea is known for a great dedication to work and students spending 24 hours in the library, I found the subjects at Yonsei extremely easy.

Unfortunately, you have compulsory attendance and this is the only thing professors are quite strict about. Thus, I spent a lot of time to figure out a combination of subjects, which fit into two university days so that I have more time for travelling and it worked out perfectly. I would really recommend doing this! You already have to enrol into the subjects during summer vacations, however it is very hard to get into the subjects you want as classes fill up within seconds. However, do not panic as you can always go to the professor during the first week of university and ask to join their class. I took the subjects Money and Banking, International Business Environment, International Business Communication and Business Negotiations. Money and Banking and Business Negotiations were interesting, the other subjects were easy and did not require any preparation. My favourite course was Money and Banking, as it helped me to draw links in between learned financial concepts and the financial world today. Our professor highly motivated us to regularly follow the financial press and

deepened by passion about finance, by giving some true insight into a world far apart from our textbooks, understanding the global financial markets today. Business Negotiation, which I consider as a very interactive course, was also very beneficial and interesting, as the majority of students were Korean. Thus, during stimulated business negotiation cases, you were confronted with cultural differences, different approaches of negotiation and language barriers.

Check also whether subjects have midterms or /and final exams as you could benefit having the last week of December completely off if no subject has a final exam.

Finances

South Korea is cheaper for food, drinks and some clothes, however not everything is cheap. I would recommend the following budgeting:

Flight	800 Euro
International House (double room)	1250 Euro
Daily expenses: Food per day and some drinks, metro etc. (you will eat out all the time)	15 Euro → total for 4 months: 1800 Euro
Travelling / Scholarship	Depends / got an scholarship from the Korean government for 900 Euro
Total	3850 Euro + travelling - scholarship

Some prices

Easy dinner	3,75 Euro
Sharing dinner e.g BBQ with drinks	7,75 Euro
Coffee	3,75 Euro
Beer	1,50 Euro

Daily life/ Travelling

The daily life in Seoul is very different, as you eat out for all meals. So a big thing of your daily life is to go out for lunch, dinner, drinks and coffee. Thus, you are surrounded by people all the time and it is a lot of fun!

Moreover, having lunch or dinner with some of my fellow Korean students was also a great experience: I was introduced to many delicious Korean dishes such as Bulgogi, Bibimbap and snacks or drinks such as Kimbap or Margeolli. The Korean eating and drinking culture is very sociable and entertaining, which fits my perceived image of a very dynamic lifestyle. You have a great nightlife in different areas of Seoul: you can go out to bars for drinks (they are cheap ;)) which are close in Sinchon, to nice clubs in Hongdae and to very posh clubs in Gangnam e.g. Octogon or Ellui. It is great fun!

Next, as mentioned before, I was travelling and visiting different places a lot:

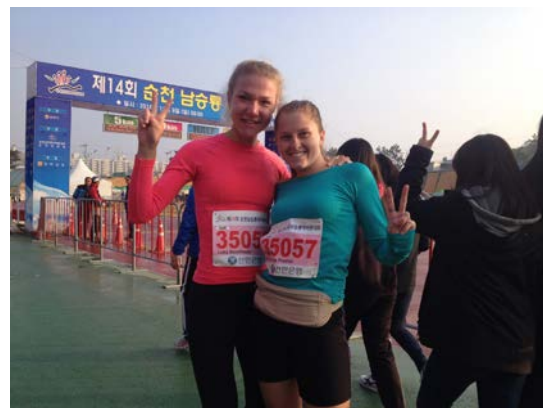
Within Seoul, there are lots of places to see, such as the palaces Gyeongbokgung, Changdeokgung and Changgyeonggung, the Seoul National Museum, the Han River, I visited the Lantern festival, the Bukchon Hanok village, and I enjoyed a fascinating view from the Seoul Tower. However, my favourite views over the



city are from Seoul's mountains. Although, Seoul is one of the biggest cities in the world with around 25 million inhabitants, you can go hiking in the middle of the city e.g. in Bukhansan National Park. Moreover, being a passionate runner, I enjoyed daily runs up the Ansan mountain at Yonsei University. I really

appreciated these runs, as you can quickly escape the business of the city, enjoying great nature (especially you could observe the leaves of the trees changing colours), astonishing views of the city and meet retired Koreans, who are particularly friendly, cheering for you whilst running. This leads me to reflect

upon another great experience: the participation in a half marathon in Suncheon in the south of South Korea. It was a great atmosphere to participate in this sports event. The run started with a warm-up with background K-pop entertainment, cheerleading performances and finished with amazing massages and snacks such as Tofu with Kimchi and many photos with Koreans we met during the run. Moreover, the area of Suncheon has a



beautiful landscape. I especially enjoyed the Suncheon Bay and the Folk Village in that area. This example just reflects how well-coming South Koreans are.



The half marathon had a similar atmosphere as the YonKo games, which was another highlight of my exchange. This big sport event between Yonsei University and Korea University was a one-time experience on exchange: Stadiums were filled with blue (for Yonsei University) and red (for Korea University) and everyone is cheering, dancing, shouting for their teams. It is very

intense, but a lot of fun and there was a big party hosted by Korea University after the game!

Moreover, within Korea I visited Busan, where I enjoyed delicious seafood and beaches. However, the most beautiful beaches are on Jeju islands, thus I agree with the majority of Koreans, who call Jeju “the Hawaii of Korea”.

Thanks to Seoul’s proximity to Japan and China, I also got the chance to visit Tokyo, Osaka and Kyoto in Japan, as well as Shanghai in China and Hong Kong. For me the highlights of my travelling were Tokyo and Hong Kong and I would really recommend doing these trips.

To conclude, I really appreciate my time here in Korea. It is a great experience if you want to have a combination of going out, going out for food, living a very intense social life and travelling. Be prepared that December will be extremely cold though ;). Have fun!