

Global China Studies

An Elite Undergraduate Program

NEWSLETTER, FALL, 2013

GLOBAL
CHINA
SEMINARS

GLOBAL
EXPOSURE

INTERNSHIP

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GCS students visiting the News Information Services Division at
Television Broadcasts Limited in December, 2012

"Global China" as a New Way of Thinking

What does it mean to look at China from a global perspective? The term "Global China" is intended to call forth a new intellectual framework that enables us to explore critical issues relating to China comparatively, globally and across disciplinary lines. In the past year, we launched several Global China Seminars to facilitate dialogue and exchange among faculty and students in thinking through the meaning of the global, as well as the implications for the local, in the context of Greater China. The discussion indeed inspired us to think about China and the world differently.

Global Exposure

During the past year, 32 GCS students went on exchange either for one semester in Asia, Europe and the United States or for the summer in Shanghai. Experiences such as these expand students' global horizons immensely. As one student puts it, "the comparative perspective and global experience provided by our Global China Studies program is indeed beneficial for observers of China." You will find more sharing by our students further on in the newsletter. The Jefferson Global Seminars, jointly organized by the University of Virginia and our School, is another highlight of our global learning initiative.

Internship as Social Engagement

Over the past summer, we launched our first GCS Internship Program on an expansive scale with some 30 students, mostly from our first cohort, joining the program. As diversity is our hallmark, the internships were wide-ranging including (a) mass media, (b) culture and publishing, (c) politics and NGOs, and (d) business corporations. This newsletter features student sharing on their unforgettable internship experiences in all these areas.

We train our students to be concerned and engaged citizens, globally and locally.

-- Prof. Agnes Ku, Associate Dean, SHSS



GCS students in Paris, Spring 2013

GLOBAL CHINA STUDIES

INTERNSHIP

MEDIA INTERNSHIPS



"My second year at UST has been all too wonderful with my perspective being broadened through my internship. Even though working at a TV station was not something I had ever dared dream of, I was given the golden opportunity to work at TVB this past summer. There I encountered great people and was assigned some very exciting tasks. The most unforgettable experience during my internship was being assigned to interview several important figures, including Dr. Ko Wing-man, Secretary for Food and Health. I never imagined I would get to hold a microphone, stand amongst the other reporters, and ask pertinent questions." -- Ho Chum Him, Simba

"I still remember how excited I was to find out our School had an internship offer from TVB. Working in the media has been a lifelong dream and I am really grateful to have been given the chance to intern as a reporter. Working as a journalist is in no way easy; sometimes you have to wake up very early and other times you have to go out in really terrible weather. The upshot is that you have to know why you love this job and then stick by it. Every day reporters meet different people through their work. If you were impolite, people might refuse to help you and then you wouldn't be able to finish the tasks at hand. Worse still, people may complain about your bad attitude to your boss. Therefore you have to be passionate and professional in your job and just go for it. During the internship period, I learnt a lot about the media industry and tried my best to perform well. I am very thankful to TVB and the School for such a great experience." -- Lingling Ng



BUSINESS INTERNSHIPS

"Working in the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong (AmCham) was the most fruitful and valuable internship ever! During the three month internship, I learnt a lot about executing tasks which covered aspects of both government relations and public affairs. I was entrusted with things like providing administrative support for advocacy items relating to the HKSAR Government, and ensuring a liaison between Hong Kong and Washington D.C. The learning journey provided me exciting intellectual challenges and global connections I never had before. Furthermore, a meaningful project, AmCham Annual China Conference – Hong Kong's role in China's next round of reforms, has further cultivated my desire to dig more deeply into recent China issues for my final-year capstone project. This unique experience has inspired me to keep abreast of current



issues in China and the world, and to become a more critical thinker. I am so glad to be a GCS student! The Bsc Global China Studies program has provided me with all-round experiences that have definitely enriched my university life! Thank you GCS." -- Wai Tin Ying, Skying



"I was fortunate to have worked for Goldman Sachs in their Hong Kong office this summer for 10 weeks. The intern-tailored events have enabled me to understand the firm from multiple perspectives. I was particularly impressed by the unique corporate culture. What I learned from the internship experience is that, skillsets aside, people will evaluate you on three attributes no matter what you are doing: having a hardworking attitude, effective communication and practicing humility. These are important not only for job seeking but for living a healthy well-rounded life in general and so everyone, including me, is better off harnessing and improving their character by talking to different people, learning how to incorporate constructive feedback, and planning ahead for your future." -- Jin Hyung Won

CULTURAL INTERNSHIPS



"My internship at the Antiquities and Monuments Office enriched me with knowledge in museum operation, as well as an understanding of heritage sites and monuments. I understand more about the preservation of historic buildings as well as declared monuments, and appreciate their value in linking the past and present community development in Hong Kong. I found that being an intern is sometimes tough but overall an enjoyable experience." -- Kong Ka Suen

"I interned at the Tung Wah Museum, through which I learned a lot about the history of Hong Kong regarding the role played by the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals in society. In particular, I learned how this organization affected the development of medical services, and the linkage between China and Hong Kong. I also had the chance to learn and practice archival skills in managing different sources of documents and information. I am incredibly grateful that my supervisor not only explained every single detail of my work to me, but the meaning behind it." -- Cheng Wing Shan

"My internship experience at Sino United Publishing has been very inspiring as I learned useful out-of-classroom skills in technical areas I've never encountered before. Not only that, I met wonderful friendly staff and colleagues here that made my journey in the company an unforgettable experience." -- Au Ka Yi, Ada

"Through my internship at Sino United Publishing, I became familiar with the e-book industry and got involved in the Hong Kong Book Fair. The Book Fair was the busiest and most important event for the company and I was glad to be part of the team from the preparation to the end. It was not just a great learning experience, I also made some good friends among the other interns." -- Ngan Yu Ning, Elaine

POLITICAL & SOCIAL SERVICE INTERNSHIPS



Politics and social service include a variety of internships including political parties, NGOs, social enterprises and also the Legislative Council. Keivis Li interned as a campaign assistant at Oxfam conducting research on green eating habits, vegetarianism and food waste. Other students were exposed to other social issues and got involved in projects in interesting areas such as organic farming and community work.

"I engaged in the major daily operations of the organic farm of a social enterprise. For any occupation, there is specialized knowledge that you can't gain if you don't fully engage yourself. For me this is an unforgettable experience." -- Fok Woon On, Winnie

"The internship with a political party provided me with opportunities to get in touch with people from all walks of life, gain first hand experience and know more about social problems people in our society face. It really was a very meaningful experience." -- Leung Nga Yan, Joanna

"The internship at the Legislative Council far exceeded my expectations, allowing me to have a thorough understanding of the behind the scenes operations of the legislature." -- Yau Ka Cheuk, Stanley

"It was a rewarding experience working at HKSKY Lady MacLehose Centre. I gained a much deeper understanding of the concept of social responsibility and the missions of HongKong social enterprises." -- Chan Yi Yan



Global China Seminars

The seminar series started with the topic of "China & the World: Historical & Comparative Perspectives" (Profs. James Lee, Li Bozhong and He Wenkai). The dominant thinking in Western literature views China's development as less advanced than that in the West and seeks to explain why. The speakers instead suggest that we avoid stereotyping either China or the West when comparing them and put things in their proper historical contexts.

The discussion also brought to light a global way of thinking by highlighting the historical global flow of people, goods and ideas that have made China and the world. Very interesting issues were raised regarding what constitutes China/ the Chinese identity, and the difference between a using national framework and a multi-centric framework to make global comparisons.

"Lots of national narratives emphasize the difference in nationality. Most of social science studies are still trying to put themselves into these frames to prove the statement of "national state", an idea dating back to the 19th or 20th century. Nowadays they still do not open their minds to finding out what really happens in our society beyond these frames. "China Studies" implies distinctiveness and centralization while the "Global China" frame is more open. There is no global study in any other regional study; we are the pioneers." (Professor James Lee)

Other topics include: "China's Global Relations" (Profs. David Zweig, Barry Sautman, and David Chang); "Rethinking Global China from Local Perspectives" (Profs. Pun Ngai, Cai Yongshen, and Ma Jianxiong); "Deconstructing 'China': Chinese & Western Perspectives" (Profs. Chen Jianhua; Shaw May-yi; Kenny Ng).



JEFFERSON GLOBAL SEMINARS

The Jefferson Global Seminars is a unique program that combines the instruction of faculty from the University of Virginia and HKUST to offer students from different universities a multi-faceted perspective of their coursework. During the summer of 2013, our School and the Interdisciplinary Program Office at HKUST co-hosted the seminar, comprising the modules "Global Humanities" and "Global Technology, Environment, and Society".

The most exciting thing about the course "Max Weber, the West, and the World" jointly taught by Prof. Krishan Kumar, UVa and Prof. Joshua Derman, HKUST, was that everyone contributed. Teachers played key roles as leaders of the discussions, helping to set the agenda for each session and, at times, providing profound insights into students' consultation. Highly motivated college students, of different nationalities and educational backgrounds, spared no effort to explore the possible merits and demerits of every thesis they encountered.

It's really worthwhile and beneficial for my academic prospects. For me, to read the original version of fundamental works like *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* was to gain first-hand knowledge and to communicate directly with the master of the field. Challenging as it was, I did enjoy every night trying to figure out the inner logic of Weber's theory together with the refutation from the California School and preparing for "the spark of ideas" the following day. I hope this sort of seminar can be held more and more frequently in the near future! -- Zhang Pengfei

@Sciences Po, Paris

Undoubtedly exchange was a real eye-opener for me, not only deepening my knowledge but also introducing a new perspective on life and people.

Learning in Paris is full of fun and not restricted to the classroom. In the course 'History of Paris', we traced the inception of Paris in terms of architectural history and urban planning. St Germain des Prés, Notre Dame, Pont Alexander III, Tour Eiffel and so on are renowned tourist attractions, but they are also significant architectural structures which represent different parts of Parisian history. Through examining the political, social and cultural reasons these structures were built and the architectural features which have specific meanings, we can understand the political situation and social activities at that time. I really treasure this learning experience, and this is undoubtedly a very special and precious experience to me as I have never learned history in this way before. -- Lau Kai Yiu, Yoyo

I had many "firsts" during my exchange program. I tried new food, became a backpacker, talked to strangers and so much more. The world is huge! There are so many places you haven't heard of before, and people have their own ways of life there. The world is also small! An airplane takes you to anywhere around the world within a couple of hours. This trip equipped me with a better sense of the world and encouraged me to endeavor to know more about the globe. -- Tai Tsz Yan, Angie



GLOBAL EXPOSURE EXCHANGE

@UCLA, U.S.

I became clearer about my academic interests after exploring the different disciplines at UCLA. During my exchange there, a new world became open to me. The thoughts of philosophers such as Nietzsche, Foucault, Bourdieu, Kant, Mead, Goffman and Freud have profoundly changed my understanding of modern societies and people around me. More importantly, they partly answered my question about the meaning of life. Interacting with friends from various cultural and religious backgrounds, I have experienced cultural differences but I have learned to listen to the perspectives of people who don't share my values and to respect their stances. The more effort I make to develop connections among different people, the more I appreciate my friendships. My understanding of American society and the Western world has expanded and deepened. It in turn has shaped my understanding of Chinese society and culture. My experience proved that the comparative perspective and global experience provided by our Global China Studies program is indeed highly beneficial for observers of China.--Wang Yuqian

@SNU, Korea

In Spring 2013, I obtained the great opportunity to study Culture, Art and Philosophy in Seoul National University in Korea. Because I am Korean, to some people, it might seem I didn't have any new experience or lessons from the exchange program. However, I can say that those classes especially the ones related to Aesthetics, are experiences I treasure dearly. I believe in this spring semester I became more confident in my learning and I looked more deeply inside myself. This resulted in me growing up both spiritually and academically. -- Kim Hyun-Jeong

@SJTU, Shanghai

During my summer exchange at Shanghai Jiaotong University, I experienced a different type of school life at an elite university in China. I also went to almost every part of Shanghai and learnt things about the city's street life that rarely appear in academic articles. I also visited places like Suzhou, Hangzhou and Nanjing that represent different unique dimensions of China. It was indeed a fantastic experience that has had an everlasting impact on me.-- Dominic Chan

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