



中德学院
Chinesisch-Deutsches
Hochschulkolleg



同濟大學
TONGJI UNIVERSITY

Interim Report

Tongji University
Sino-German College for Graduate Studies (CDHK)
Shanghai
P.R. China

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Life in Shanghai

Shanghai is not exactly a representative city for China but having never been to Asia before it was just the right intensity of cultural shock for me. On the one hand, there are a lot of traditional restaurants and people dancing in the park or doing Tai-Qi. Not a lot of people speak English and they might stare at foreign people because of their exotic look. On the other hand, Starbucks and McDonald's can be found all over Shanghai just like they are in every other big city around the world. Restaurants, Clubs and Museums are hot spots for foreigners and they offer a variety of products and services tailored to meet international standards. For the time being, I was able to get a great first taste of China in Shanghai without feeling that I had to lean too far out of my comfort zone.

Travelling China

Outside Shanghai, I have climbed the yellow mountains, slept on the Great Wall and travelled through South China on a scooter. The yellow mountains are about three hours away from Shanghai and the view from the top is breath-taking. Climbing the mountains in China, however, is nothing like climbing the Alps. Nearly the entire way from the bottom of the mountain up to its top is constructed of concrete steps. Furthermore, large groups of Chinese tourists- all dressed in identical shirt and cap combination- are guided around the mountain's top. Although this can be bizarre it is definitely worth an experience. The Great Wall North of Beijing can be accessed from several sites. We climbed the Wall at one of its ancient sites which has never been restored in history. There were no tourists and we were able to sleep on top of one of its watch towers. This was my favorite adventure in China so far. In South China we travelled Guilin and small cities close by. The landscape in this area is simply beautiful with its rounded hills separated by rivers and rice fields. Travelling in China offers so many alternatives and I cannot wait for the holidays to begin.

Classes at Tongji University

At Tongji University, I took classes at the Sino-German school for graduate studies (CDHK), the international school and the school of economics and management (SEM). My favorite classes were "Entrepreneurship in China", "Comparative Studies of Consumer Behavior between China, India and Germany", "New Product Development" and "Advanced Operations Research" which were all offered at CDHK. In these classes I enjoyed both lectures and assignments and also learned a lot about China from an economic point of view. Generally, I found the academic standards in the classes I visited at Tongji University lower

compared to TU Berlin. In some classes neither the structure of the lecture nor the aims of the assignments were very clear which sometimes made it hard for me to follow. Nearly all teachers, however, were welcoming questions from students and taking their time to help.

Campus Life

Tongji campus offers a lot of activities to do: As for sports, we regularly play tennis, volleyball, soccer, go for a run in the stadium or swim in the indoor-pool. Chinese people are very friendly but reserved. If you want to join a sports team you have to go and ask people- they will not just come up to you and ask for your participation. The international student association also offers a lot of activities like dance classes, concerts or field trips to nearby cities. Close to campus is the Si Ping Lu cinema which broadcasts movies in English with Chinese subtitles. There are also parks in the neighborhood where people do Tai-Qi, dance and work out. Finally, there are a lot of restaurants that serve food from the various Chinese kitchens and from other cultures around the world. It is fairly easy to make friends with Chinese Tongji students. Just make sure you have WeChat installed on your phone since this is the easiest and most common way to exchange contact information. You can meet up, do all these activities, let them show you what more there is to do in Shanghai whereby learning about their culture and language. My tandem partner, for example, has turned into a very good friend and an important part of my campus life and China experience.

To sum up, I very much enjoy living in Shanghai, learning Chinese, doing fun activities and travelling China with new friends I have made. I am more than excited for both the travels in winter break and the new classes of the upcoming summer semester. Up to this point, I can only recommend anyone to participate in a double degree program with Tongji University!