



The freshman/sophomore UW campuses

What Students Experienced in China

My trip to China was a fantastic adventure. I learned and experienced so many new things. Whether it was learning the Chinese language and culture or climbing the Great Wall, the trip was full of experiences I will never forget.



I recommend this China trip to other students because of the varied experiences I had throughout the trip. We spent a week in the metropolitan city and capitol of China, Beijing. We spent the week sightseeing and shopping, learning history and culture. This week gave us the opportunity to learn and understand the Chinese culture in order to better equip us for the home stays. Three weeks of our trip was spent in the homes of host families. These families gave us insights into Chinese everyday life that we could never have learned from textbooks or tourist sites. With my host family, I visited local restaurants, parks, and even a trip to the hospital; we went shopping; they taught me how to make dumplings and I in turn made an American meal for them. We built a relationship through the sharing and exchanging of culture and experiences. My fellow students and I went on weekend excursions which included sightseeing and visits to peasant villages, where we played “jiezi” (Chinese hacky sack) with the children living in the villages. The variety of settings, urban, rural, and family, gave us a view into the many different facets of Chinese life.

This trip opened my eyes to ideas and cultures I would never be able to experience in any other environment. The friendships I made, the things I learned, and the memories which I will hold onto forever made this trip an incredibly rewarding experience.

Elizabeth Shinnick – Fox Valley Lutheran High School

When I signed up for the trip, I was hoping that the experience might give me a glimpse of Chinese culture as well as improve my grasp of the language. I found that this trip went far beyond my expectations. Not only did it completely immerse me in Chinese culture, but it also allowed me to



experience a side of China most tourists do not see. In addition to seeing all of the must-sees in China, such as the Great Wall, this trip gives students an opportunity to experience the less commercialized aspects of the country, such as a weekend when the group stays with a peasant village.

During the three-week stay in Taiyuan, I experienced China not as a tourist, but as a resident. I felt completely part of the family I stayed with and am still in contact with them. I became very close to them and hope to visit them in the coming years.

In addition, the classes provided by the Mercan School were excellent. The teachers were very helpful, and spoke only in Chinese, allowing for a complete immersion in the language. I feel that I learned more in the three weeks of class than I learned in an entire year of enrollment in my high school Chinese program. I would recommend this program to *anyone* who is interested in China itself, or simply visiting new cultures. This was one of the most amazing experiences of my life and I will never forget it. I already want to go back!-

– Mallory Durlauf, Junior, Madison Memorial High School

My trip to China was a great experience. It's something I will remember for a lifetime. Never do these opportunities come often so when I got the chance I took it. I loved every moment of it. To be able to immerse yourself in another culture and see something different, something that you are not use to or aware of is a good way to broaden your knowledge and way of life.

Being able to spend a good amount of time in China, we were able to live with local families in through the homestay program. This was one of my favorite aspects of the trip. My family was amazing in that they were so caring and made sure all my needs were met. My homestay siblings helped me with my Chinese homework and I was able to help them with their English homework. The bond I share with them and my experiences with them will forever remain with me. I will never forget their generosity and kindness.



The teachers that I had were wonderful. They were great guides and provided a lot of care and attention to all the students. They gave us a great opportunity to learn about them and their culture and allowed us to share ours. They treated as their own and treated us as friends. They were very helpful in answering questions and giving great advice. The professor that went with us was also wonderful. Applying much attention to detail and the wants and needs of the students were strongly displayed and felt.

Overall, this was a wonderful program and if I ever get the chance to do this again I would. This program has opened my eyes to a new world and has also taught me so many things as well as providing me with great and unforgettable relationship.

– Kao Lee Lor, Student, University of Wisconsin-Marathon County