

2023 Fall CAMPUS Asia Study Abroad Report

Before Study Abroad

Climate change and environmental protection have been the most urgent global issue in today's world. It seems to me that Asian countries have not worked as hard as European countries in terms of environmental policies and integration for carbon neutral society. I find the program of Campus Asia as a great opportunity to learn international relations with the purpose of political and economic integration for environmental protection. This integration is especially significant in Asia, for mutual understanding in the coexistence of various ethnicities within a country. Throughout the program, I shall learn the leadership in Asia specifically with the diverse cultural and social context. I have chosen College of Political Science and Economics at Korean University as my first choice, with the purpose of better understanding Korean Japanese integration for more an environmentally friend economy and society. Both countries are often compared to each other in economic growth and society building, as the two countries have experienced rapid economic growth while ago and established great networks of urban structures. Moreover, the two countries share the commonness of introducing advanced technology on the global scale which has improved urban constructions and benefitted to the society. Given the common urban features, the countries could work together in developing and improving technology for more sustainable city. On the other hand, there is historically rooted conflicts and controversies between Japan and Korea, which has in my opinion interfered or delayed friendly integration of the two countries. On this matter, more interactive discussions and exchanges play a key role for better mutual understanding between the two countries. Throughout the program, I would like to reach out to Korean youths and peer students and invite to friendly exchange on the Korean Japanese relation. These small steps of young social interaction could contribute to the societal integration for the present and future generations. As Korea University offers many programs for international students as well as actively welcomes student incomings from overseas, the learning environment is expected to be internationally diverse with those from different backgrounds either within Asia or outside of Asia. Interactive communication with international students and Korean peer students could broaden the perspective of how to see and perceive Asia beyond the geographical features.

Study Plan

I would like to study theoretical and practical approaches for integration of Asian countries in making environmentally friendly societies. Within the academic field of social science, I'd like to focus on urban and economic development for sustainable living environment. In my first second semester, I took the introductory course on urban studies where we learned I gained interest in urban development for living environment throughout the theoretical understanding of public and private spaces. Design of space and human behavior correspond and influence on each other, which suggests the design could control users to behave in a certain way that contributes to social or environmental sustainability for example. During my exchange year from the fourth to fifth semester, I studied environmental science in Freiburg, Germany, to be known as a green city with environmentally friendly legislation and the surroundings of nature. Throughout my abroad year, I learned how prevailing the problem awareness and the urgency of climate change is in Europe as a sort of common sense, which I found impressive as well as something we lack in the current Japanese society. There I took the practical course of Environmental Psychology where I worked on a group project to promote veganism from the perspective of environmental protection for students by sharing information on vegan living, recipes and experience of vegan diets throughout social media. As we gained a quite number of followers and positive feedbacks for our project, I learned the impact I have made to change people's behavior. Since then, I become more interested and motivated for leading and campaigning for environmentally friendly living. After the exchange year, I took the course of Environmental Marketing by the School of Commerce at Waseda, where I learned how companies could approach to customers with the promotion of social and environmental sustainability which benefits to the society as a whole. At the same time, I took the course of Global Environmental Politics and Policy, and of Environmental Pollution and Control at the School of International Liberal Studies which I belong to. There I learned the risk and reality of climate change on a global scale and the current measurements taken at the international level of government. From the courses, I have acknowledged the weakness of climate mitigation at international level unless there is some sort of an integrated supervisory system

to monitor the enforcement of measurements in each State. Asian countries could bond together more closely so as to cooperate for more integrated climate mitigation and society building for sustainable living as a division of international level. During the program of Campus Asia, I would like to learn how Asian governmental bodies cooperate together and enforce international agreements as a regional subdivision of the global implementation of international laws. As I have taken these courses on environmental science, I apply for the minor degree in carbon neutral leadership. Though I study environmental science within the major degree of International Liberal Studies, I would like to certify my learning interest in the specific academic field. For the minor degree in Carbon Neutral Leadership, I took the courses on overall engineering for future carbon neutrality and the current issues on energy crisis on the global scale. In the course for the carbon neutral engineering, I was interested in building a smart city where mobility system is collected as data and the urban infrastructure is built friendly to carbon neutral facilities. In the course on the global energy politics, I learned the urgent energy transition to renewable energy is needed across the world, and also the impact of Asian countries for energy transition is important because of the massive energy consumption and the delay in the energy transition. To study the energy usage in Asian countries and investment to renewable energy to maximize the potential of energy transition, the program of Campus Asia offers a great opportunity of learning and exchanging on the existing energy issues in Asian countries. In the Korean University, I would like to learn the development of inclusive and sustainable urban structure and the Japan-Korea relations in leading Asian countries implementing international measurements for carbon neutral society. Korea University offers a range of course variety on international relations, political science and international economics, which enriches my understanding of the position of Asian countries in the global politics and interconnection between Asian politics. Within the academic field of economy, it will be interesting for me to learn the economic and political framework in Korean society with the promotion of environmental sustainability. Throughout learning Korean economy and politics and relation to other Asian countries, I would like to seek how the country leads the region of Asia and Japan collaborates in developing the area as a co-leader. Despite the societal and political conflicts between Korea and Japan, the two countries could make a great impact on the Asian society and economy, even the global economy in building inclusive and sustainable society, with advanced technology and knowledge in well organized urban structures.

Career Plan

After gaining valuable experience in the program of Campus Asia, I would like to apply the knowledge into further learning of environmental science or urban studies in master program. In addition to my experience in Europe of learning people's active involvement in environmental protection, I will understand how Asian society works and plays a role towards environmentally sustainable development. Seeking how Asian countries and Japan could lead the global society in making the world more sustainable, with advanced technology and bonded relation to other States will enable me to contribute to the development of better urban structure for environmental sustainability. I would like to learn the gap between the urban and rural area with the perspective of sustainable development at a graduate school, for which I value the learnings from the study abroad. With the background of belonging to the seminar on urban studies and city planning, my interest for graduate program could be urban development in global south and how global north contributes to the development with the support for sustainable society building. In the future, I would like to work for an international organization to promote inclusive development for urban structure at the international level, including domestic development in developing countries and investing in the technologies from the developed countries. I believe that urban structure is important for the economic growth by designing and planning people's behavior for more environmentally friendly manners. I am also interested in designing and planning the infrastructure itself for better utilization for sustainability as an urban planner. In the future, I would like to contribute to climate justice by promoting smaller actions for climate mitigation and adaptation to the public and assisting business to take a great investment to environmental protection as well as raising the awareness of their responsibility in climate action. Understanding the situation of climate change and the reason for climate action could change and improve people's behavior towards better living environment. By raising public awareness of the problem and action for climate change, we could change the community itself more considerable for the environment and sustainable development. Throughout working at international organization or private company, I would like to bring influence on the society for the behavioral change. In the community that I belong to, I would like to involve my surrounding in activities of climate justice so that the community makes larger impact as a whole. I am hopeful that I could lead a societal change by starting with small involvement of my surroundings into climate action, which leads to larger

involvement of groups with a gradual pace. For these objectives to be achieved, I study at the Asian university to gain knowledge and experience to become a natural leader.

Completion Report

Prior to study abroad, I was a bit concerned with the social issues in Asia, especially the relationship between Japan and South Korea because it has a complicated history and political matters. They include Japan's colonization of Korea, treating them unfairly for example. There have also been arguments about history, like whether Japan admits to their past wrongdoings. Furthermore, there's a dispute over some islands. All these things have made the relationship between the two countries tense, and it strongly influenced how people see the counterpart in both countries as a social norm. Therefore, the social norm or wide-spread prejudice over South Korea have somehow affected my original image of the countries without myself trying to examine and see the truth on my own. On the other hand, the two countries have close exchanges and interaction of cultural matters. Living in Japan, I have seen many Korean tourists enjoying their activities at various tourist spots. This has made me wonder that Korean people might have less hate or negative impression of Japan especially among young generations. Similarly, many Japanese youths and young generations love Korean music and TV dramas as Korean idols or actors have become more famous worldwide and expanded their activities to Japan. These communities in favor of Korean pop culture have expanded all over the nation nowadays so that many Japanese people might have familiarity or even positive impression over South Korea. However, it is not still clear if the active cultural exchange could affect positively or activate their motive or initiative to solve severer issues such as political and historical ones. Additionally, both nations are frequently compared to each other in terms of their economic expansion and societal development, having undergone significant periods of rapid economic growth and the establishment of extensive urban infrastructures. Moreover, they both share a propensity for adopting cutting-edge technology on a global scale, enhancing urban development and societal welfare. With their shared urban characteristics, these nations could collaborate in advancing and refining technology to foster more sustainable urban environments. In current phase of the diplomatic situation in the two countries, it seems that the historical and geopolitical matters have stopped the bond collaboration for cultural and economical matters from accerlating and fostering the collaborative force as the region of Asia in cantrast to Europe where nations collaborate and depend internationally. Not only the two countries, Japan and South Korea, these kind of collaboration and dependance is missing among the east Asian nations.



Field trip with Campus Asia



Sport event of Korea Univ.

During my study abroad experience, I focused mainly on improving my Korean language skills and engaging in cultural exchanges with local students. Initially, during the last semester before my exchange, I practiced Korean conversations with a language exchange partner, but I felt inadequate for perfect everyday conversations. Fortunately, during my exchange, I ended up living with a Korean roommate, which naturally increased my opportunities for daily conversations in Korean. Additionally, I actively participated in the student activities for language exchange and made an effort to converse in Korean with Korean friends. By taking Korean language classes four days a week, six sessions per week in total, I maximized my time for learning Korean both in school and in private settings during the limited duration of my exchange. Moreover, by forcing myself limit interactions with Japanese students, I inevitably increased my opportunities to speak Korean. As a result, towards the end of my exchange, I was able to understand almost all everyday Korean conversations. Furthermore, being able to engage in equal conversations with local students in Korean changed my impression of Korea and Korean people. Initially, I had slight prejudices about South Korea, a country with many historical and political issues with Japan. I had slight notions that Koreans might have unfavorable impressions of Japan. However, when I interacted with Korean students, they showed immediate interest upon learning that I was Japanese, sharing their memories of trips to Japan and their favorite Japanese dishes. I encountered many individuals who showed such positive reactions, and among young people at least, I did not perceive any dislike towards Japan. Additionally, I noticed that many Japanese people, particularly those interested in Korean culture like K-pop and Korean cuisine, also held favorable impressions of South Korea. Not only literal approach from Japan to Korea in cultures but also bilateral cultural exchanges have taken places in both countries. Seeing this vibrant cultural exchange between the two countries, I felt that if more people from both sides had positive impressions of each other, it could contribute to better relations between Japan and South Korea. The more people become interested in culture of the counterpart the more positive impression they have towards the counterpart. As this kind of change in individual value or perspective and grow more into collective changes in both countries, the bond of the two could become stronger and bring up more collaboration in economic and societal level.



Famous Temple



Eating night snack with friends

Throughout my experience with CAMPUS Asia, I found out the potentials or hopes for a stronger bond of Asian nations for political, cultural, and economical matters and that they work together collaboratively for sustainable societies. This hope has encouraged me to work as a bridge between the nations for more environmental economy as a solution to social issues. Therefore, I would like to realize this as a sustainable consultant or corresponding jobs at a Japanese firm which bases in multi nations. Before studying abroad, I was concerned about the complex relationship between Japan and South Korea due to historical and political issues, including Japan's colonization of Korea and disputes over history and territory. These tensions influenced societal perceptions on both sides. However, there's a vibrant cultural exchange between the two countries, with Korean tourists enjoying Japan's attractions and Japanese youths embracing Korean pop culture. Despite this cultural exchange, it's unclear if it positively impacts resolving deeper issues. Additionally, both nations are compared in economic growth and technology adoption, suggesting potential collaboration for sustainable urban development. However, diplomatic tensions hinder broader collaboration in Asia, unlike in Europe. During my study abroad, I dedicated myself to enhancing my Korean language skills and immersing in cultural exchanges with local students. Initially, I practiced Korean with a language partner but felt inexperienced. Living with a Korean roommate during the exchange provided ample opportunities for daily Korean conversations. Actively engaging in language exchange activities and classes furthered my proficiency. By minimizing interactions with Japanese peers, I maximized my Korean speaking opportunities. As a result, I could comprehend most Korean conversations by the exchange's end. Positive interactions with Korean peers reshaped my perception of Korea. Many Koreans expressed interest in Japan, dispelling my initial apprehensions. Similarly, I observed Japanese enthusiasm for Korean culture. This cultural exchange inspired optimism for improved Japan-South Korea relations, underscoring the potential for enhanced collaboration in various fields. Overall, I would like to contribute to promoting Asian collaboration for more an environmentally-friendly economy and society throughout my experience during study abroad in addition to my experience of the previous study in Germany where I mainly studies environmental science and deepened my understanding of necessary decarbonization and corresponding individual behavioral changes. There are many large firms in Japan that have bases In other Asian countries and outside Asia, where I could seek my experience in deepening understanding in environmentally-friendly business and business collaboration and later promoting business for sustainable societies at global scale.