

Day 1: Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July





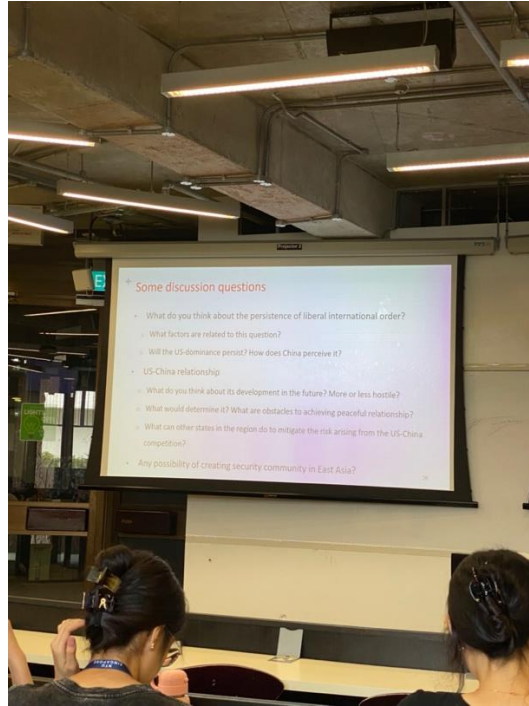




Our first day started at the Haneda Airport. Before our flight, we were able to get to know each other better through playing UNO and talking about what we are looking forward to during this trip. A few people in our group mentioned that it would be their first time travelling to Singapore while some off were returning to Singapore due to their CAMPUS Asia Study Abroad Program at NTU (Nanyang Technological University), regardless, we were all excited to be in Singapore. Now off to Singapore!

We landed in Singapore the very next morning and went straight to NTU! We were greeted by a lot of new faces from Korea University (KU), Peking University (PKU), and NTU. We received our goodie bags from NTU and headed straight to the auditorium at the School of Social Sciences. NTU students gave us a campus tour. By the end of the tour, we were sweating due to the humid weather, but we were able to see the greenery and largeness of NTU. My favorite building was “The Hive”, which NTU students use as tutorial classrooms. Standing in the building made me feel like I was in a Universal Studios ride. A lot of us stopped to take pictures and rest in the shade. Our excursion didn’t end on campus, we went from Jurong to Raffles Place to Katong for our ‘Social Science Treasure Hunt’. Jurong and Katong allowed us to see a more residential and local lifestyle of Singapore. We rode the MRT from the West to the East while talking about different social situations and issues in Singapore, Korea, and Japan. Singapore seems to have a very different educational system like “Junior college” and “Polytechnic”, while Korea and Japan have the same kind of college entrance exam. When we reached Raffles Place, we were able to tour around all the tourist hotspots like the Merlion, Clarke Quay area, and Central Business District (CBD) area. We had lunch at Lau Pa Sat, which is a famous hawker centre for tourists. Our day ended with a double-decker bus ride back to the campus.

Day 2: Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> July



On the second day, we were introduced to a local breakfast called 'Nasi Lemak'. All of us experienced eating rice with our hands and I especially enjoyed the 'sambal sauce' (chili sauce) that we added to our rice. Our second day was filled with different lectures from all the visiting professors. The professors talked about peace and violence, globalization, the security

environment in East Asia, and the cultural influence of social interactions. After each lecture, we were divided into groups where we talked about the current political climate of our country, how it affects the social issues and topics that were talked about, and what could happen in the future. It was interesting to hear different opinions on the same issues. Some students even told us about the reality of their country and how it is viewed differently by citizens outside of their country. We were able to delve into intensive talks, however I believe that this only made us closer to each other and understand each other's culture and society better. Thanks to Professor Tan from NTU, we had a buffet of local Singaporean food for lunch. A lot of the Waseda students seemed to enjoy the 'Fried Bee Hoon' (stir-fried vermicelli noodle dish). Our lectures ended at 6pm, which allowed us to walk round the campus and explore NTU more. For dinner, we chose our own food, which me and a few Waseda students chose to eat Mala Tang (Spicy numbing Chinese dish).

Day 3: Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> July







After an academic day, we were treated with an informative heritage tour. We toured Chinatown, Kampong Glam, and Little India. It was interesting to see how three different cultural areas are located nearby and we were able to see different ways of life in a small country. Everyone was

excited to buy souvenirs, try new fruits like Durian, and learn about each town's history. For lunch, NTU reserved an Indonesian-Thai restaurant where we tried new flavors and foods. Everyone in my group was intrigued by the casava coconut cream dessert. It was our first time to try casava, yet it was our favorite dish.

Day 4: Monday 10<sup>th</sup> July



On the last day, KU and Waseda University students gathered in a classroom, where students who went to the CAMPUS Asia study abroad program talked about their experience studying at NTU, KU, and PKU. I was one of the students who studied at NTU through the CAMPUS Asia program and I talked about the Sociology classes that had the most impact on me (“Singapore Society in Transition”) and how much fun I had making friends in Singapore while living like a local for almost one year. I felt like I was able to impact some of the students when some students from KU conveyed their interest to study abroad at NTU. I also had fun listening to Waseda students who studied at KU. They talked about how the scale of KU’s school events are way bigger than in Japan and that students are very enthusiastic during class discussions. It was interesting to see what kind of goals, expectations, and experiences each student had during their study abroad.

### Conclusion

Though our trip only lasted for a few days, it was packed with intriguing topics that are meant to be discussed, historical and cultural learnings, and new friendships. I was glad to join a group of diverse students who are able to discuss complex matters and have fun learning new topics. If anyone is interested in discussing, dissecting, and solving social issues from East and Southeast Asia or even if you think that you know everything about your surroundings, I recommend the CAMPUS Asia study abroad program and this Social Innovation forum. CAMPUS Asia allowed me to personally cultivate a new understanding of Asia. I was able to delve in topics such as the migration social issues, how local issues can manifest from global issues, and the local and global understanding of Singapore. I also divorced a new side of myself that I would not have otherwise known if I did not study at NTU.