

## Campus Asia Program in China

This time, I studied at Beijing University for a semester through the Campus Asia Program.

Asian countries have common social issues such as geopolitical risks, declining birthrate and aging population, and difficulty in finding employment for young people. I thought that cooperation between the countries, each with different strengths and weaknesses, would contribute to solving social problems.

However, I had a relatively closed impression of China, especially since it was difficult to obtain information of the country from outside.

But when I actually visited to Shanghai, I learned that China has a movement to gradually open up while maintaining its national identity.

After that, while living in China for several months, I was exposed to the country's strong personality and rich traditional culture, and I felt, "It's interesting to see a place with such a strong national color." And I realized that they were definitely worth protecting. It is not easy to balance a conservative attitude with cooperation and openness with other countries. But when I saw China continuing to go through trial and error between them, I felt that there was certainly a possibility of mutual understanding and cooperation among countries with different systems and cultures.

I thought I could understand Chinese to some extent because I had been learning it myself before I studied abroad, but it was harder to understand the conversation and class content with native speakers than I expected. I wanted to study town city planning that I had been studying in Japan for a long time at Beijing University, but I couldn't understand many Chinese lectures, so I gave up taking them. At that time, I felt the language barrier, and I was very frustrated that I missed many opportunities because I couldn't speak Chinese, but I decided to study Chinese at Beijing University because I wanted to start with what I could do. By continuing self study of in addition to putting myself into opportunities to speak Chinese, my language abilities have improved a lot. But now I regret having completely given up classes on town development. Even if I didn't get credit, even if I didn't understand Chinese very well, I might have gained some new knowledge about city planning if I had attended class for now. I shouldn't have missed that opportunity. I didn't think it was impossible from the beginning, I just did it, and I should have given up then if I couldn't, but I gave up even before I did.

However, in addition to the aforementioned regrets, I have experienced many cross-cultural experiences in China, and I have learned that my assumptions and predictions are often unreliable, that I cannot understand unless I have experienced them, and that I have

improved my flexibility.

Also, I was most interested in living in China, so I am satisfied with the knowledge that I know a lot about what I want to know. Traveling to various regions in China allowed me to observe their diverse livelihoods.

Through this study abroad, I realized the characteristics of China and the relative characteristics of Japan. I'm glad that I was able to go to study abroad because my knowledge and values were updated by meeting new people and things. I would also like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your support from many people.

