

NEWSLETTER

Division of International Affairs



CATALOG

Oxford Summer Programme 2023

Central China Normal University Summer Programme 2023

From NTUE to the World

Cross-Cultural Connections: Our Students' Splendid Summers

In this edition of our Newsletter, we're going to share the captivating stories of our students' summer adventures. From the prestigious "Oxford Summer Programme 2023" to the immersive experience at "Central China Normal University" our students reveled in diverse cultures and courses.

Unveiling their journey, you'll find narratives of cultural discovery, where students attended captivating cultural and theatre workshops, and culminated their experiences with impressive presentations.

Moreover, we've captured the essence of our foreign students' perceptions of Taiwan, offering insightful glimpses into our vibrant country.



This summer, the International Affairs team guided 21 students on a journey to the University of Oxford's Hertford College in the United Kingdom. They participated in an 11-day English and Culture summer program. The program's content was diverse, including exploring the Oxford University campus and its history, visiting Blenheim Palace and other beautiful England scenery, touring the Bodleian Library, engaging in presentation and creative writing workshops, participating in Shakespearean Drama Session, academic debating skills courses, learning about contemporary Britain art, and presenting their own reflections and achievements.

Oxford Summer Programme 2023

【Students' Thoughts on the Program】
What have you gained from this program?

A1: Besides personal growth, I also gained the courage and confidence to live independently abroad. I've realized my capabilities and have had a joyful and fulfilling time in Oxford. Additionally, I've had ample opportunities for language practice, both in writing and speaking, and have gained a deeper understanding of British and Oxford cultures.

A2: I believe the most important takeaway is experiencing the joy brought by Western learning methods. We studied Shakespeare through drama classes, practiced English speaking through debates, and explored local attractions through treasure hunts. All of this has made me realize that learning can be both stress-free and enjoyable.

A3: Living in Oxford has been one of the most significant gains. Despite a packed schedule, we have had a lot of autonomy, such as choosing whether to participate in activities. Moreover, interacting with RAs has shown their enthusiasm. They've not only cared for us but also engaged in conversations, answered questions, and organized numerous fun activities.

A4: The most significant gain from this program is my increased confidence in speaking English. Being in the English environment of Oxford, the RAs interact with us daily, making language practice natural and enjoyable. Speaking English has become effortless for me.





YAO-CHENG, XIAO

Under the theme of "阳光支教·孔子行脚" a cross-strait and Hong Kong-Macau university student volunteer teaching program landed in Suizhou for the first time. The heartfelt teaching mission unfolded at Luoyang Town Advanced Primary School in Zengdu District. A total of 12 students and teachers from 6 universities participated. Among them were 2 lead teachers and 10 team members, including 6 students from Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan, as well as 1 international student. Together, they conducted classes for 62 students of Luoyang Town Advanced Primary School, offering them a diverse range of lessons.



Cultural Visit - Central China Normal University and Luoyang Town Advanced Primary School

From July 8th to July 9th, under the guidance of local staff, the team visited Suizhou City Planning Exhibition Hall, Suizhou City Museum, Sui County Mushroom Expo Hall, and the birthplace of Yan Emperor Shennong, deepening their understanding of Suizhou. They participated in ancestral worship ceremonies, enjoyed chime performances, and deeply experienced Suizhou's profound history and rich culture.

From July 4th to July 16th, in just two short weeks, every day was like living the life of a "special forces soldier." Rich cultural visits and late-night lesson preparation together introduced me to another world. Mainland China's learning and work environment is evidently more competitive than Taiwan's. Stability and collective welfare within a team carry more significance than personal honor and performance. These characteristics contribute to an efficient team.



Culturally, even Taiwan has its North-South cultural differences, while the disparities between regions on both sides of the strait are even greater. Nevertheless, through Sunshine Teaching, we entered this large team, where we extend our utmost goodwill for harmonious communication. As such, we have ample time to adjust our speech content, achieve smooth communication, and ultimately become kind-hearted friends.

Most notably, we were interviewed by news media this time, and the Suizhou team's activities were covered by multiple media outlets, including Suizhou Daily, Suizhou Comprehensive News, Civilization Suizhou, and the Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan Office of Central China Normal University.



Philip and his classmates

My Department



Philip Benedikt Pare /
International Master's Program of Learning and Instruction

Hello from Taiwan! I am Philip from Germany, and currently, I am studying for a master's degree in the Department of "Learning and Instruction" at NTUE (Master of Education). I have already stayed in Taiwan for about seven years, and I even received my bachelor's degree in Taiwan. I know quite a few universities here in Taipei, so why did I choose NTUE to pursue my master's degree? I will explain in the following paragraphs, so sit tight.

First, I want to begin with some general information about this university. NTUE is already about one hundred years old and is a widely respected university in the field of education, so I was certain that they can provide me, as an educator, with the necessary professional skills. Furthermore, Taiwan's government announced the goal to be bilingual in 2030, which makes me more confident that NTUE is the right university for me since I am planning to stay in Taiwan long-term and start my career as an international educator. At the time of my application, I was already in Taiwan, so I was able to visit the university in person and talk to the Office of International Affairs (OIA) as well as a professor from our department. That was not only very helpful to gain more information, but also allowed me to take a look at the university atmosphere, and the way everything works in NTUE.

Everyone welcomed me very warmly and did their best to answer all of my questions. They even made sure to give me a campus tour, introduced me to one of the professors, and gave me the chance to get to know one of the current students at that time. This was all very helpful for me to feel welcomed, and to convince me that NTUE is the right university for my needs.

If location is important to you, I can assure you that the university is right in the center of Taipei. It is just a short three-minute walk from an MRT station. You can also easily reach it by several bus lines, and of course, we have a docking station for city bikes (YouBike) right in front of the main gate. Around the university, you can find a large variety of restaurants, beverage shops, and big supermarkets. The university itself has modern equipment inside the classrooms as well as in the library. On campus is a small gym that is free to use, a running track, and an indoor swimming pool. There's also a cafeteria with several restaurants and a 7-eleven. If you decide to live in a university dorm, I can only tell you that they are just a few meters from our department. I have never stayed inside the dorm because I already had my own little apartment before I started my application process for NTUE.

All of the above-mentioned things influenced my decision-making process before I started my student life at NTUE. Now, I'd like to share a little bit about my experiences as a student here. First, it is important to mention that both the Office of International Affairs (OIA) as well as the administrative staff of our department continue to be very friendly and helpful. Whenever I have a question, they make sure to help me out as soon as possible. And don't worry, all of them speak English.

As for the class sizes in our department, they are usually around ten people, which is great for having lively discussions and getting to know each of my classmates. My classmates are mostly international from all parts of the world, but we also have a few Taiwanese students. I'm well aware that the student selection process in our department made sure to pick a diverse group of students, which I really appreciate. It makes it more fun to share our individual views on education, because not every country has similar approaches. Some of my classmates are aiming to be a teacher, others are more interested in being a researcher. Our department offers suitable courses for both directions.

Every semester, you can choose your courses from a good selection that covers interesting parts of educational knowledge as well as courses that help you in the process to write your master's thesis. As an example, you could choose the course "Academic Writing" in case you need additional support to get started with your paper. Those who would like to do an internship in a Taiwanese school and practice their teaching skills can choose the course "Practicum".

This was my little overview of what you can expect from our university and the courses. I hope it helped to get you a clearer picture, and answered some of your questions. So... see you soon?

Administration Building ►



About Recreation

Philip Benedikt Pare /

International Master's Program of Learning and Instruction



Hello from Taiwan! I am Philip from Germany, and currently, I am studying for a master's degree in "Learning and Instruction" at NTUE. As of now, I have already stayed in Taiwan for about seven years, so I know Taipei and Taiwan pretty well. Living in Taipei or Taiwan in general brings you a wide range of recreation possibilities. One reason why I like it here so much is that you can choose between many activities in nature, or if you're more of a city person, you can also do many things in Taipei itself. The following article will introduce some of the many possibilities you can choose from.

If you are a beach person, you can find a few beaches not that far from Taipei City. They are accessible by bus or train. If you prefer being active over just chilling at the beach, you can rent a surfboard or try out stand-up-paddling (SUP). One popular spot is Wai-ao Beach (外澳沙灘) in Yilan County, on the east coast. The bus stop to start your ride is actually pretty close to our university. Around Wai-ao Beach you can find surf schools and board rentals. They also have some nice coffee shops and beach bars. The most famous beach is in Kenting, which is at the south end of Taiwan. You can easily find more information about this tourist spot online, so I prefer to focus on lesser known beaches, closer to Taipei.

If you enjoy going to the mountains more than chilling on beaches, you can find an endless amount of great hiking routes. Some of them are very easy, others more challenging or adventurous, and include rope climbing sections. In Taiwan, you can find hiking routes from anything starting from 20 minutes up to several days. If you want to find one of the many waterfalls around Taiwan, you can join river tracing activities or simply go with your friends.

Did you know that Taipei is surrounded by four mountains that are called 'the four beasts'? The trail for one of these mountains basically starts in the middle of Taipei City. It's called Elephant Mountain (象山), and it's a short (15-30min) but steep hike with lots of stairs. When you reach the top, you'll find one of the best spots to enjoy the night view of Taipei and especially the signature building Taipei 101. I recommend you to go at least once because it's definitely worth the trip. The other beasts are Tiger Mountain, Lion Mountain, and Leopard Mountain. Tiger Mountain is also a popular place for outdoor parties.

Another great place to go is Maokong, which can be reached by taking the Maokong Gondola from Taipei Zoo MRT station. Up there you can enjoy the view while having a cup of tea. From Maokong you can reach the Yinhe Cave Hiking Trail (pictured below) which brings you to a small shrine that is embedded in a cliff, as well as a small waterfall. It's a very popular Instagram spot among Taiwanese, so don't wonder if some girls show up there in heels and fancy dresses.

The next recommendation is easily accessible via MRT. The last stop on the Red line brings you to Tamsui Old Street. Here, you can enjoy a very old night market, an old fort, and most importantly the Pier. It's very nice to watch the sunset. You can also take a ferry to Fisherman's wharf or to Bali (no, it's not the Bali in Indonesia). Instead of taking the MRT, you can also take a city bike (YouBike) from Taipei city and cycle along the riverside. By the way, you can find riverside parks and trails on most sides of Taipei City. It's great to escape the city noises and take a walk, ride a YouBike or go for a run. You can see there are endless options to enjoy the nature around Taipei.

If you enjoy being active, Taipei offers lots of bike trails, running tracks, and gyms (public and private). Many riverside parks even have outdoor gym areas. Some of the other options are playing laser tag, paintball, bouldering, rock climbing, and many more.

Last but not least, I want to mention the nightlife in Taipei. The city offers dozens of nightclubs for any kind of music taste. You can literally find thousands of bars that include anything from western style bars to Japanese style. Taiwan also has several music festivals, but you should find out more about them on your own. During the daytime, you can go on a hunt for the best coffee shops. Besides big international and local chain stores, you can find tiny coffee shops everywhere. Taiwanese truly love their coffee shops.

I hope this article sparked your interest in living in Taiwan. So, maybe see you soon at NTUE?!



A Secret Coffee Shop



I Gained 10 kgs Within 7 Months in Taiwan!

Tiffany Nathalia /
Department of Arts and Design



Hello everyone! My name is Tiffany Nathalia and I'm a proud NTUE international student. I came all the way from Jakarta, Indonesia to pursue my higher studies. I'm currently in my second year, majoring in Arts and Design (design program). With that being said, I've been living in Taiwan for roughly over a year now.

And no, the title is not an exaggeration. I gained 10 kgs in a span of 7 months living in Taiwan. I haven't been to Taiwan in my 18 years of life. So when I first got here, I was so confused on what food to eat. There were endless choices! In my first year of study, I stayed in the dorm for my accommodation. Figuring out what to eat between classes was one of the most exhausting things to do in my day-to-day life. This is one aspect of living away from your family. Back home, I didn't have to think about what to eat every day since food was always on the table, on time, for breakfast, lunch, and or dinner. Or even if we decided to eat out, it wouldn't be a one-person decision. Adapting to this situation took me quite a long time.

I soon found some foodie *Instagram* accounts that actually promote different types of food to eat in Taiwan. I quickly jumped on the bandwagon. With the help of my Taiwanese friends, I learned what popular and delicious foods were happening in Taiwan. One of my first obsessions was 蛋餅 (*Dan Bing : egg pancake*). At one point I had this for breakfast 3 times a week since I was so into it. Danbings are all around Taipei and so easy to spot in every breakfast restaurant. My favourite is the bacon and cheese combo, always.

I had a quick but short Boba obsession here in Taiwan since there are a bunch of cute and delicious drink shops scattered around Taipei. But I eventually got sick of it since it was everywhere and I lost my emotional attachment towards it. Coffee was the next thing to get me hooked. It came to an unhealthy point where I had to consume caffeine once a day or I wouldn't be able to function properly throughout my day. I found a cheap and convenient coffee shop, Louisa Coffee. I got my coffee consumption here most of the time. But for a quick fix, I'll just quickly mix some instant coffee in my dorm, works just fine, but it's crazy unhealthy with the amount of added sugar in it.

With my busy schedule (design student), my eating schedule got so messed up to the point that I would have the first meal of my day at 5pm, and it would just be a small sandwich and that's it. Or when the only time that I could have my dinner was midnight (happened so often) but all of the restaurants are closed, so I ended up buying 鹽酥雞 (*YanSuJi : Taiwanese popcorn chicken*) from a fried food stand.

This is when I started my biggest obsession, 炸湯圓 (*ZhaTangYuan : fried glutinous rice balls*). This is sold in almost every 鹽酥雞 store, and since they're open until 3 am, they're always a safe choice for a midnight dinner. This messed up my hormone balance and made me gain the most weight. I could crave for these at midnight and eat every day for five days in a row!

My friends who had the same busy schedule just like me, also had this lifestyle. So it didn't seem bad for us at that moment, since this is the dinner that we could manage to find. After eating like this for 7 months, I found that I had gained 10 kgs. It made me lose my confidence and feel bad and disgusted every day. I knew I had to change my lifestyle.

The second year of university quickly came around the corner. I disciplined myself into having a healthier lifestyle and convinced myself that it was possible with the right amount of effort.

I started to get a good amount of sleep, and made an effort to learn more about time management, since that's the heart of the problem. I never liked to eat greens my whole life, but I slowly started to incorporate them into my daily meals. I switched my sweet coffee into Americano since it doesn't contain dairy or sugar, it's a safe choice that still does its job. I understood and listened to my body more. Hunger cues, fullness cues, the whole nine yards. I didn't restrict myself on what to eat, but I stayed smart with my eating choices.

I would still get my 鹽酥雞 (*YanSuJi*) or other delicious Taiwanese snacks when I felt like eating it. Because the whole problem was never just the food, but overeating the food. Being mindful of what I have was really important. My friends and I started to set a proper time to have lunch (13:30 pm) and dinner (18:30 pm). No matter how busy we are, we'd help each other to get our fuel in right on time.

And just by maintaining these new healthy habits, the weight that I gained slowly starts to burn off.

Coming to this point wasn't easy, it took a lot of work, mentally and physically. but I'm so grateful for what a year of adaptation has taught me, and even more grateful for the people that stayed with me the whole time. Really, your closest friends are the ones that have the biggest effect on your diet, so pick your circle wisely.

Taiwan really had me at my lowest, but I'm a work in progress to be the best version of myself here too, Life is all about choices, and every choice we make, makes us. Taiwan has been a great friend to me in this positive journey, and I know for sure that it's going to stick with me through the long run.