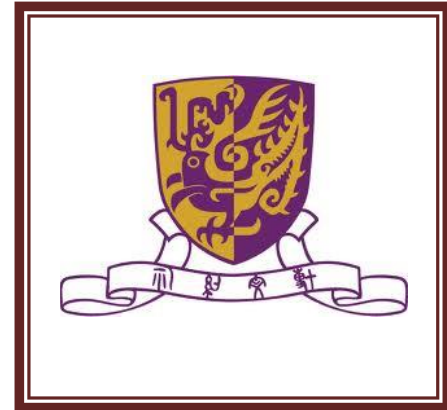


My exchange program to CUHK:

CUHK as my preferred school:

It was in summer of 2012, when I got my acceptance letter to Chinese University of Hong Kong exchange term. It was great news for me as CUHK MBA is one of the top ranking partner schools with IMBA exchange partnership. The Chinese University of Hong Kong (Abbreviation: CUHK or Chinese University) is the second oldest university in Hong Kong. CUHK Global MBA has been constantly ranked top 30 GMBA's across the world in financial times. Choosing Hong Kong was a very strategic decision for me considering school ranking, distance from Taiwan, expenditure, learning more about Chinese way of doing business.



Interaction with CUHK staff and pre arrival formalities:

CUHK staff told me that they will send me a copy of visa since Hong Kong is a special administrative region and needs a special visa, which only school can arrange for us. Which made my life much easier and process was relatively seamless. All I had to do was to pay them 600 HKD online. I received my Visa in month of January 2013.

Meanwhile, School sends me an email in month of October 2012, asking about the housing option. They indicated if I wish to stay outside the campus then I should inform them. Staying in dorm was my first priority because housing in Hong Kong could be really expensive and other troubles associated with finding one. With this email I took for granted that, CUHK will provide me with on campus housing just like NCCU does to all incoming exchange student. To my surprise, it did not happen and I receive an email in the end of January that any incoming exchange

students will not be provided with any on campus housing facility since there are no available rooms for term 3. I felt that this was not the right thing to do from the schools part. I wrote back to them about my concerns about housing and why I wanted to stay on campus and not off campus. They could not help me much other than providing some contacts who were ready to rent me room for approx. 5000 HKG \$, Which is approximately equal to 20,000 NTD per month. I was not happy with expensive options like this and started doing my own research, where I could find something for half of this price with the help of web site called www.easyroommate.com. It is relatively easy to find accommodation in Hong Kong compared to Taipei and almost all the landlords' speak English, so language is also not a barrier. I reserved my room in Queens road west , Hong Kong island , which was supposed to be 20 minutes by tram from CUHK MBA town Centre building in Hong Kong Island. I was really happy with the location and pricing. I had a kitchen in the apartment, a library opposite to the building and lots of eateries around, which made my stay quiet comfortable.

The other surprise I got was when the school did not inform me when exactly my session start and also that I could opt 2 different terms from 2 different semesters. In order to avoid last minute expensive ticket price, I did my ticket a little earlier than 1st march 2013 and when I got my final schedule, I realized the session starts on 18th march. So I had to go there 20 days in advance. I spent that time, settling down and traveling a bit around Hong Kong.

As an exchange student, I can opt for 2 different terms in 2 different semesters. For example, if I want to do term B from semester 2 and term A from semester 3, I am allowed to do that. If I had known this in advance, I could have saved my 1 and 1/2 month and could have started my exchange program in first week of February itself, instead of waiting until March 18th.

My arrival into Hong Kong and life after that:

After my arrival in Hong Kong, I stayed with my Taiwanese friend for a day, who lives in Hong Kong and works for Cathay Pacific airlines. Next evening, we spoke to the land lady and she asked us to meet her at the apartment at 6 pm in the evening. Meanwhile my friend helped me to buy a pre-paid SIM card which is easily available over any convenient stores just like 7/11. The interesting thing about Hong Kong mobile service is that it is charged both for incoming and outgoing calls. I chose a company called Network 3 because of cheap tariffs. Finding my new house was easy, as it was located right opposite KFC in Sai Wan area. My land lady showed us the room and took rent for one month after when I agreed for my stay. There was not any contract and she did not insist on any security deposit. My friend helped me settling down in my new accommodation and once he left, I decided to walk around a bit to familiarize myself with the area. After I came back I was greeted by my roommate, who is a Canadian national and was doing internship in Hong Kong at that time. He is a great guy and he offered me all the help he could for my settlement in new city. We quickly became good friends and started hanging around in the city on weekends or would exchange meals at times. I spent most of the time in library opposite to my building, working on my thesis until the classes started on 18th March 2013. Meanwhile, the MBA program organized a luncheon for 4 of the incoming exchange students, where I got opportunity to meet rest of them. The luncheon was a traditional Chinese food and was quite nice. We were accompanied by programs vice president Ms. Veronica, who is indeed quite a charming lady and others like Sandra and Heidi Tam, who are exchange co-coordinators. They gave us a traditional Chinese jacket as a welcome gift and that was a nice gesture on their part. My other fellow exchange students were Kevin Saimon, a Japanese guy studying in Yongse Korea, Elfin

Wang, a Chinese girl from Fudan and Phoebe Chang, another Chinese girl studying in Brisbane Australia.

We had regular dinner parties' organized by MBA students. Worth mentioning was Indian dinner party and Korean BBQ party. In my end few days there, I was invited to be part of Soccer tournament organized by Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. They invited all the Business Schools around the area and the event was very well organized.

My second last day in Hong Kong was spent being part of the annual 7th CSR conference organized by CUHK MBA students. I worked as a volunteer and that waived off my registration charges. I was impressed with the organization capabilities of the students. We all went to a lavish dinner after that, and they all bid me farewell good bye. I made lots of good connections and life time friends in my short stay in Hong Kong. But never the less, I was missing my favorite Taipei and couldn't wait to be back.

Academics:

Next day it was my first class of my course called Management of technology in China and I was surprised to see the class profile, which mostly had majority as Asian students. After digging more into students background, I realized that most of the students are either from Hong Kong, China, Taiwan and India. There are very few westerners, almost negligible. This was very different from what I am used to NCCU, where we get to see people from all over the world. Never the less,

students were friendly and it did not take long for me to get introduced to them and become part of them. Partly because of my own extroverted personality and partly



because there were very few exchange students in the class which did not restrict us to form groups among exchange students which is mostly the case in NCCU and we could easily assimilate.

Since the whole semester is divided in two terms (Term A and B). Most of the subjects get over in 6 weeks each, spread intensively over one term and few other subjects spread around over the whole semester. As an exchange student we are allowed to take any classes with MBA including core courses.

I initially opted for 6 classes spread around both the terms but then, I realized that the classes in term B will be redundant as I have taken similar courses in NCCU. Also, if I continue to term B that would also drag my graduation to one more semester. So I decided to finish my remaining credits in term A and then go back to Taipei to finish my thesis and graduate in time. So eventually, I stick to term A only with 3 classes. The schedule got really intensive as I had classes almost every day and off days will be consumed finishing my assignments. The final courses after add and drop remained with me were **Management of technology in China, Operations Management and Sales and Salesmanship management**. Out of these three courses which were to last for six weeks each simultaneously, Operations Management by a Greek American professor was my favorite class and I learnt a lot from that class. He was really passionate in what he was teaching and he could involve the entire class in the subject. The class was really intensive and he made us read a 350 pages novel in the first week itself. He made us play a simulation game called little field simulations which kept us on our toes for 2 weeks. That wasn't it; we also had to hand over regular skill building exercise and case reports. The professor used lots of business cases and would discuss them in detail. He made a very difficult course very simple and enjoyable. He was very strict about name tags (students are supposed to carry their name tags on their own,

unlike NCCU) and did not allow anyone to use computers or eat in the class room. The class ended with final exam with 4 serious problems to solve.

The other course I took was Management of technology in China by Prof. Robert Lee. This class was very enriching in terms of China business scenario. Prof. Lee is highly regarded leader in business community and has experience of running companies in greater China. Initially I was reluctant to take this class but I still decided to audit the class and to my surprise, I found this class much better than my expectations. The course turned out to be a pleasant surprise, with covering vast topics on how to start a business in China. Prof. had unmatched experience and knowledge about the business models In China and elsewhere. His passion in teaching the subject was intriguing and he talked lot about his own experience. He use to show us little video clips about leadership and called them magic movie moment. We had to make a business plan by the end of class, topic related to China entry business. My team did a good job; we constructed a business plan around domain business and we all learnt a lot.

My third class was Sales and Salesmanship and I had huge expectations from this course, since I am interested in sales career, but ironically I was disappointed from the class and did not like it much. I did not opt from the class because I needed to finish my credits in time. Personally wasn't very impressed with the course. There is nothing much I learnt from it and I do not recommend any one taking that class. Professor had a very one sided delivery of lecture and did not like people asking questions. He was talking general things most for the time and I believe NCCU has better leadership courses than CUHK.

Recommendations

Hong Kong is one of the most expensive cities in the world and eating out and renting rooms is generally four times more expensive than Taipei and quality of life is not as good and comfortable as Taiwan. Hong Kong is a very different place when you go as a tourist and you see the skyscrapers, shopping malls, harbors and nature. Everything looks too good to be true. But when you start living there, the city unfolds its true colors of a fast paced materialistic metropolitan. It is not a homogeneous society as Taiwan and is a melting pot of so many different nationalities that play specific role in the society.

The apartments are too small and overcrowded for the kind of price you pay for living there. The city is super crowded and noisy. But at the same time, there is lot to do and experience in the city. You could go hiking to Victoria peak or to the beach in Stanley or partying on lan kwai fang doesn't hurt.

This is for sure, that university will not provide on campus accommodation to any exchange student and you end up looking for your own in the end. But the good news is, they are very easy to find but a bit price though. Looking for accommodation in Hong Kong Island is always a better idea, since most of the good elective courses happen in their city campus located in Bank of America building, which is located next to Admiralty MTR station and tram line. So finding accommodation around tram line on the Hong Kong Island is a good idea.

Grocery is comparatively cheap and there are super markets everywhere. Welcome super market is one of the cheapest and easily available. The cheapest food you can find in the local restaurant would be around 30 HKD. My favorite eating outlet was Maxims, which serves breakfast, lunch, High tea and dinner with variety of dishes.

Octopus card is the substitute of Easy card in Taipei and students under 25 years of age can apply for student discount card on which you get 20% discount on travel. Traveling on trams is much cheaper than other mode of transports.

The office is not as informative and helping like NCCU international exchange department, and they do not keep things ready for you to pick up. You might have to walk around for making your ID card and other stuff. And do not forget to carry your passport and insurance card the first day you visit university to collect your student id card and name tag.

The meetings rooms are generally available to study in the town Centre and close down at 10 pm and weekends. The town center staff is really friendly and helping. Printing pages cost 50 cents per paper in town center and is much more expensive elsewhere. Most of the reading material is already printed by teaching assistants and kept ready for students to pick up during the class. You have to carry your name tags for every class and some professors really appreciate when you do so.

The students are generally sharp with strong GMAT scores and most of them are at same level of competency. Most of them have high IQ and good leadership skills and there is lots of opportunity to learn from them. I realized this during the CSR conference and my team assignments. Most of the students are working in financial institutions and have very high knowledge of finance world.

School has a dedicated career center and as an exchange student you have access to it. You can personally meet the career counselor and they can help you find a job or internship, if you are interested in working in Hong Kong and lucky enough.

I will highly recommend any one to choose CUHK as a preferred destination for their exchange term.

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