

Travel Report: Global Exchange Program in Shanghai Jiaotong University (Spring 2017)

I had the opportunity to study a semester away at Shanghai Jiaotong University. It was an mind-opening experience as I was able to take some really interesting courses and made friends with students from many other countries at the same time. I would like to recap and review my experience in Shanghai for students who are interested in participating in this exchange program.

I spent my Spring 2017 semester in Shanghai, and there were only a handful of exchange students in my courses there because most students select to study abroad in the Fall. Therefore, in all of the courses that I took, there were only at most ten people in each class. They offered 6 courses in total, 2 credits (32 hours) each. All courses were taught in English, most by Chinese professors, and only one course called Global Governance was taught by a Belgian professor. Although the Chinese professors are fairly fluent in using English, they do speak with accents that some of my European classmates found hard to follow. Nevertheless, I was able to follow their lectures quite well since all of them used slides.

Since Koguan Law School only offered 5-6 courses a semester, I did not have much choices in selecting the course. However, I found all the courses that I was able to take pretty interesting. I studied Administrative Law, Foreign Trade Law, Environmental Law, Law and Development and Global Governance: China and Conflict. Through all of these classes, I was able to explore and understand the legal culture in China, which is completely different from US legal culture. Chinese legal system as well as the principles it operates on are greatly influenced by Confucianism. I also have a much better understanding of China's role and behaviors in the international community. Regardless of domestic or international affair, the notion of relationship plays a big role in Chinese legal culture. Overall, I have acquired very useful knowledge that I believe would definitely serve me well when I start practicing as an international lawyer. However, unlike our doctrinal courses at Hastings, which also incorporate application of the doctrines, most Chinese law courses at Koguan focus more on the law on the book rather than the law in practice. Thus, I did not really learn any legal application or legal reasoning in these courses.

As for grading, none of the courses I took had tests. For grade purpose, I had to do presentations and final research papers for all of the courses. Be prepared to write very long papers (about 20 pages at the minimum each) at the end of the semester; the professors are quite strict about the minimum requirement. I took 5 courses, so for the last month of the semester, writing research papers was all I was doing. These papers are more like academic research writing than legal writing, and they took me quite a while to research and write the minimum length. It was pretty easy during the semester because most professors did not require the students to read textbooks and prepare for in-class discussion before lecture. However, things started to get hectic when it was time to prepare for the final papers. Unlike in our regular classes at Hastings, the professors at Koguan do not facilitate open discussions about application of the law or legal issues as much. They also did not call on students to answer questions. It was all lecture with the professors talking most of the time. It might also be due to the fact that there were only 10 students or so in a course when I was there. Nevertheless, the way courses are taught in China is very different from what I am used to in our law school. For those who like open discussion, they may find the lectures a bit boring.

Beside studying Chinese laws, I also had a great time learning Chinese cultures and daily lives during my time in Shanghai. Koguan law school is in Xuhui District campus, which is pretty close to Huangpu and Pudong, where all the fun is. Also, there are shopping malls, restaurants, movie theaters and supermarkets, so the location of the campus is super convenient. I was lucky enough to be able to register for a dorm room on-campus. In Xuhui campus, there are three housing buildings for international and exchange students: Dorm no.9, Taoliyuan and Lian Xing. I was staying at Dorm no.9, which can be a bit inconvenient for some because there are only shared bathrooms. Dorm no.9 is also old compared to the other buildings. However, Taoliyuan and Lian Xing are great, but getting in might be a bit difficult since a lot of students signed up. The manager and security guards of the dorm do not speak English. In fact, many Chinese people in Shanghai do not speak English, so it is helpful to know a little Chinese. I am not fluent in Chinese but I can still speak and understand some, enough to communicate with the locals when I went out. Also, a lot of useful Chinese apps are entirely in Chinese characters, so being able to recognize some common Chinese characters would make living there much easier. Jiaotong University also offers free elementary Chinese courses for exchange students.

What I love about Jiaotong University is its diversity. Jiaotong has a lot of exchange programs with foreign universities all over the world, so when I was there, I lived, studied and made friends with students from European countries, China, South Korea, Japan, Argentina, etc. I also had a chance to talk to my fellow law students about the law in their countries and learn something about different legal cultures. Not only that I expanded my network my making friends from all over the world. This is one of the reasons why I wanted to study abroad.

Shanghai is an international city where Eastern values meet with Western modernity. The city is vibrant and yet still reflects Chinese traditional principles. Moreover, Shanghai is often known as the “social laboratory” of China due to the fact that new policies are usually implemented in Shanghai first to test their effectiveness and compatibility before the central government decides to expand them nationwide. Therefore, Shanghai is more open and progressive than other cities/provinces in China. Also, it is an ideal place to study Chinese legal reform progress. Life in Shanghai is also full of excitement. There are many affordable pubs and bars for students to mingle. Plus, the food in Shanghai is absolutely great and incredibly cheap, so it was one of the perks of studying abroad in Shanghai. The city is very high-tech as a smartphone full of necessary apps is all a person need to survive. One can do almost anything from her phone, from paying the bills to shopping online and booking all types of tickets. Getting around in Shanghai is also very easy. The subway system is the most convenient, but I love riding those colorful rent-on-app bikes on the street. Taxi is relatively cheap, and people can call them through an app that is just like Uber.

Being able to live among Chinese people also helped me to understand their culture and mindset, which in turn help me to better understand Chinese legal culture and politics. Given that China is emerging as a economic and political world power, I personally think that it is important for future lawyers who want to practice internationally like me to gain some understanding of Chinese legal system and legal culture. Moreover, I have made really good friends during my time there. I have gained some valuable experiences in Shanghai, and I can say that it was one of my best decisions to study abroad. I highly recommend studying abroad for a semester in Shanghai.

1/23/2017

Shanghai Jiao Tong University Study Abroad Assessment

Overall, it was a once in a lifetime experience and I am so thrilled that I went. Shanghai is an amazing city and it is a perfect introduction city for those who are new to China and do not have experience with the language. There are more traditionally Chinese areas and those that are incredibly international and cultured. Also, China overall is incredibly cheap currently which allows a lot of opportunity to experience the country through travel. That being said there would be some advice that I would pass down to those who are thinking about doing the program and most involve the law school experience there.

The most important is not to expect the classes to be on the Hastings level at all. While all of my professors were professional and familiar with their subject matter, some had very little English language skills. As a result, lectures were difficult to understand and some shied away from class involvement. In terms of the school itself, it was disorganized and it was difficult to get any actual answers from the staff there. Our main point of contact could not speak English well at all and would visibly dodge answering questions. It was very frustrating at times. Last minute changes to the schedule, often without notice at all, and questions surrounding it would go unanswered.

For example, we had a professor who got a last minute appointment to work in Beijing. While I completely understand this outside of the scope of the University's ability to control there was little communication about when the classes would resume. We got one email at the beginning explaining why that class would not be starting with the others. Later, there was another to say, the day before the actual class, that there would be one mandatory introductory class. We found out that there would be an intensive, twice a day for three hours a day, week of class the day before that week was supposed to start.

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It was difficult not to get frustrated with this system especially since I paid the same amount of tuition as I would here at Hastings. While the classes were interesting and I learned a lot about China and Chinese law, the teaching and learning were not of the same caliber as Hastings. However, I would still encourage people to go! I would just caution them of what to expect and that things will often not be set in stone or fall into place until the last minute and that individual will just have to go with the flow.

The fact that the semester is on a different schedule is difficult to deal with as well. The semester there did not end until January 17, 2017 making it impossible for me to take the university offered language classes because they ended a week into my Hastings semester. Instead I was fortunate enough to be able to take private tutoring classes, but this may not be an option for others. Especially in China, having a grasp on the language made an enormous difference in my experience.

It was also impossible to find on campus housing. The link would not work very well and by the time I was able to access the system, the dorms had filled up. I found my apartment through Airbnb which was an easy way to go. However, it is much, much more expensive through that site than it would be via other means. I had a few friends who were able to find an apartment or a room through independent means, mostly Facebook or an independent realtor service. If I were to do it again, I would try to find an apartment this way.

One positive of the Koguan Law School, and Jiao Tong overall, is that they made a big effort of integrating the exchange students with the Chinese students. Chinese students were able to audit our classes and attend them. There were a number of school sponsored cultural events centering on Golden Week and the Mid-Autumn festival. There were also meet and greets that were organized monthly. The professors also made a point to encourage group projects that

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included exchange students and Chinese students. These efforts really enriched the exchange experience and I feel I benefited a lot from having their perspectives in my classes.

Not related to the school, China is an incredibly overwhelming place. The sheer size of the city and amount of people was a lot to get used to. I have lived overseas before, in what I thought were crowded places, but they did not compare to China at all. The culture is completely different from ours. They have no concept of personal space, push and shove to get on public transportation, or even to take a picture in a national park. The pollution is also problematic. I was sick fairly often and I expect that the culprit was the air quality. Shanghai is not even the worst, but it did have some bad days. The food can also be hard to get used to. While I personally did not have any problems, and thought that it was quite delicious, some of my classmates from Europe had difficulties acclimating to the food. No one I knew ever got food poisoning though, and no one starved either. There are also a large number of Western food stores in China that provided much needed relief for some of my peers.

None of these reasons were enough to deter me from going or ruined my experience in any way. These are just slight pitfalls of going to Koguan Law School in Shanghai, China that I would want someone who is considering going to be aware of. I am happy to be a resource for other students who are considering going and am happy to answer any questions they may have.

I spent my 3L Fall semester studying at Jiao Tong University in Shanghai, China. Summarizing any study abroad experience can be a difficult endeavor. In an attempt to be helpful for future students, this paper will focus on things that I wish I would have known before studying and living in Shanghai.

The University & Classes

To begin, Shanghai Jiao Tong University (SJTU for short) has two campuses, Mingham and Xuhui. The main campus, called Mingham, is a significant distance away from the central of Shanghai. The law school, however, is located on the smaller of the campuses, called Xuhui. Koguan Law School is in Xuhui District, which is a very desirable part on Shanghai. Xuhui in part of a larger area in Shanghai called the Former French Concession or FFC. This area is famous for having a large expatriate population. Law school exchange students generally do not need to go to the main campus except for the first week for orientation.

In general, the university is very unorganized compared to U.S. institutions. The exchange program is less than 10 years old and they are still figuring out some basic logistical issues. As an exchange student, it is very important to get used to things being very unclear, otherwise many students will become very frustrated. It is a good rule of thumb to remember that many things in the big Chinese cities are very new and have changed dramatically in the last 15-20 years.

Koguan Law School offers around a dozen courses in English. The courses differ each semester but feature a wide array of topics. Some of my personal favorites were Chinese Securities Law and Chinese Constitutional Law. The majority of the professors had U.S. law degrees and/or have spent time teaching abroad as a visiting professor. The quality of teaching varied, but overall the classes were both interesting and provided a great supplemental learning opportunity to the out-of-classroom experience.

The Fall semester at Jiao Tong technically does not end until the end of January (or early February) before the start of the Chinese New Year. However, many of the English classes end in early December. Classes generally do not meet for the entire semester but instead certain weeks. For example, Chinese Contracts may only meet for Weeks 7 - 15. But it is entirely possible (if not, required) to finish all of your classes before Christmas and be back to the U.S. in time for the beginning of Spring semester.

Living in Shanghai

Living in Shanghai can be very difficult at times, but can also be easier in comparison to living in other foreign countries. Because of the large ex-pat population working for foreign companies, and the difficulty of Chinese language, there are many services designed exclusively to help foreigners living in Shanghai. For example, there is a mobile application and website called Smart Shanghai, which

delivers a tremendous amount of information ranging from restaurants to shipping services to help ex-pats navigate Shanghai. Smart Shanghai is a great resource to stay up to date on the events and news happenings in Shanghai. Another service to note, is called Sherpa, which will deliver food from many of the great restaurants in Shanghai.

Transportation is generally very easy. The underground metro system is one of the largest and most advance in the world. All of the stops / stations are marked and announced to both Chinese and English. Many of metro stations are very large and therefore it is extremely important to know which "numbered exit" to enter and exit. Uber is also very reliable and helpful. Even though the metro makes the city very accessible. The distances can be deceiving; therefore, it is important to live within a couple stops of the University. Some exchange students live on campus in the international dorm—I however rented an apartment using AirBnb. Smart Shanghai can also be a good resource to find housing.

Other Random Advice

If studying over the Fall semester, August and September are some of the best months in terms of weather—so, if you can, go early. Also, I was particularly surprised about how much it rained during October and November. The air pollution comes and goes, but it can get very bad. Checking the Air Quality Index (AQI) and knowing when to stay inside becomes an important precaution. Overall, living / traveling in

China is difficult but is also a very rewarding experience. It is unlike anywhere else in the world. Shanghai, in particular, is a modern and wonderful city—with lots to offer.

INTRODUCTION

As a 2L who studied abroad in Shanghai during the fall semester, I would highly recommend this program for all law students, both 2Ls and 3Ls. Despite the inevitable discomforts that are confronted when studying abroad in any foreign country, studying in Shanghai is an exceptional opportunity for students to learn about Chinese law and society, to immerse themselves in Eastern culture, and to explore other diverse areas of the world.

STUDYING AT JIAO TONG UNIVERSITY

At Shanghai's Jiaotong KoGuan Law School, the professors are extremely well-educated and studying there provides an excellent learning opportunity. As a foreigner, there are many social and societal differences that pervade Chinese culture. The classes at KoGuan law school were beneficial because they not only taught about Chinese law, but also about Chinese society, culture, and history, which made the experience of living in Shanghai even better. For future students interested in studying in Shanghai, I would recommend taking the following courses if available: Chinese Constitutional Law, Anti-monopoly law, Chinese Law & Society, Chinese Criminal Law & Procedure, and Securities law.

The classroom experience in Shanghai is very different from what we are used to in American law schools. Most professors at KoGuan law school provided a power point presentation and lecture for three hours per class, involving very little student participation, such as calling on students to answer questions or creating a seminar-like classroom discussion. While most American law schools test students primarily through one final examination at the end of the semester, in Shanghai, students are additionally tested on the material throughout the course of the semester by writing research papers and providing presentations to the class. This aspect provided a unique classroom experience because most students were from different countries and therefore offered various and interesting perspectives on the material we learned in class in addition to how the legal system operates in their home countries.

Another difference between KoGuan law school and typical American law schools deals with dissemination of information and administrative support. At UC Hastings, for example, the faculty and administration provide high-level support and coordination for all students, such as providing a thorough orientation process and adequate access to information regarding the school, courses, San Francisco, public safety, etc. At Jiaotong, however, students must seek all information on their own which can at times be difficult. In light of this, it is important to know that Jiaotong has two locations: the Minhang campus (its main campus) and the Xuhui campus (where the KoGuan law school is located). Exchanged students must attend orientation registration at the Minhang campus, and this is required. The most convenient way of traveling to Minhang is by bus from the Xuhui campus, which Jiaotong University provides. The bus runs twice daily: once in the morning and once during the evening, and the schedule varies so it is important for students to contact the school confirm the bus schedule. Alternatively, students can travel to Minhang by metro, which takes approximately 2 hours each way.

LIVING IN SHANGHAI

Jiaotong University offers student housing for exchanged students, which are conveniently located on campus, and is where many exchanged students choose to live. Alternatively, students can live off-campus in other areas of Shanghai. I lived in an Airbnb located in Xuhui District (the same district KoGuan Law school is located) in a neighborhood called the Former French Concession. My apartment was a 10-minute walk to Jiaotong's Xuhui campus. Based on my experience, living off-campus provides students with a better opportunity to immerse themselves in Shanghai culture.

The Former French Concession is a beautiful and charming neighborhood, has a high expat population, and has many diverse restaurants located on every block. Students should also take advantage of tasting all the wonderful food that is in Shanghai. In addition, living in Shanghai is extremely safe. There is little to no petty crime in Shanghai and it is not uncommon for people of all ages to be walking

around the streets in the middle of the night. That being said, students should always be aware of their surroundings and it is possible for tourists to become victims of scams when visiting any country.

Nonetheless, Shanghai is safer than most places and I would highly recommend that students live off-campus in the Former French Concession because it provides a better opportunity to experience Chinese culture while also being located in close proximity to school.

It is possible to live in Shanghai without knowing how to speak mandarin; however, I think it is important to try and learn some basics of the language to get the best out of the experience. Various methods of learning mandarin include language courses offered by Jiao Tong, Rosetta Stone, and an app called “My Chinese Friend” that I used very often to help me learn basic Mandarin.

Students living in Shanghai should download the app “Smart Shanghai” and also become familiar with the website. This app/website is run by expats who have lived in Shanghai for several years and offer invaluable insight for newcomers. For students living on campus, there is no need to purchase a Virtual Private Network (VPN) before arriving since Jiao Tong’s internet already includes a VPN. For students living off-campus, however, a VPN is highly recommended in order to access websites such as Gmail, N.Y. Times, Facebook, etc. For reference, I used “Express VPN” during my stay in Shanghai and found it to be relatively reliable.

Traveling within Shanghai is extremely easy. Shanghai’s metro system is efficient and can take students almost anywhere in the city. Upon arrival in Shanghai, students should go to any metro station and purchase a “Shanghai Public Transportation Card.” I recommend starting with 100 CNY on the card. Furthermore, traveling outside Shanghai to other areas of China is just as easy. The high-speed railway is the most efficient mode of transportation and is typically the cheapest option. During my stay in Shanghai I traveled to Beijing, Xi’an, Wuzhen, and Hangzhou. I highly recommend traveling around China.

Lastly, my experience in Shanghai was enhanced by my Chinese friends. There are many students at Jiao Tong who have already studied at Hastings or who plan on studying there. Making friends with local Chinese students is a great way to learn even more about Shanghai and Chinese culture.

Overall, studying and living in Shanghai was an excellent opportunity that I highly recommend. During my experience, I learned so much about international law, Shanghai society, and Chinese culture that I think are invaluable for all law students, and not just those interested in international law.

Of course, I am more than happy to speak with any student who might be interested in studying in Shanghai. Please feel free to email me.

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Shanghai Jiao Tong University Fall 2014

Half a year in Shanghai can be difficult to encapsulate in a few pages and words. Shanghai is distinctively different from the rest of China and is a mixture of many different cosmopolitan cities in the world. Historically, Shanghai has always been an international hub in an otherwise closed continent and thus has a mixture of influences that's probably hard to find anywhere else in the world. Because of uniqueness of living in Asia, let alone Shanghai, it would be important to describe the experience from both an academic and a lifestyle perspective.

Academically, my experience at Jiao Tong University was a very positive one, notwithstanding a few roller coaster rides. You'll immediately realize that China moves at a different level of responsiveness than what we're used to in the American legal community. Administrators might not return your emails and may not return your calls, but you mustn't take this as a sign of incompetence. The people working in the offices do try very hard to address your issues, but they won't take time out of their day to deal with it. Generally, there aren't big enough issues where this is a problem, but I would caution that you need to be demonstrative when you need something to be taken care of administratively. This may be my only gripe with the program.

The positives of my education Jiao Tong are numerous. From a more political and social perspective, Shanghai is very progressive and liberal as a city, especially compared with other Chinese cities like Beijing. This is heavily reflective in the academic teachings, as the professors are extremely open and critical of their own

government. This may come as a surprise to many westerners, but the professors all seemed genuinely interested in challenging the government and changing the status quo. Your education will not be filled with mistruths and convoluted facts; they're very serious about teaching you about the flaws of the Chinese government and very serious about your perspective. This is something to cherish in an otherwise rather secretive government.

From a social and lifestyle perspective, Shanghai will be either really easy to handle or shocking, but for all the best reasons. You'll quickly realize this is probably the most developed cosmopolitan in the world. Technological advances in public transportation and even mobile infrastructure are unmatched. The level of implementation of new apps and services are beyond what we experience in the United States. People like new things and they like it fast.

You'll also really quickly realize that certain things are quite cheap, and others are simply not. Food ranges from the very affordable local Chinese eats to the very unaffordable Michelin restaurants. H&M will be expensive there. However, other things are incredibly affordable. Customized prescription sunglasses, tailored suits, custom print canvas photos can all be had for maybe 20% of the US price if not less. The city is full of surprises, and you'll find everything from the cheapest foods and goods to the most luxurious and expensive products available anywhere. The contrast can be shocking.

The most interesting aspect of life in Shanghai is the freedom. The society is based off of thousands of years of Confucian principles, and the one you'll likely notice the most is that people care about their inner circle more than anything else.

This directly translates into very safe streets and very little violent crime. You'll also notice that people really don't care about what you're doing, so long as you're not bothering anyone else. There's very little interference with police and their presence is different than what you would feel in America. I think this aspect of life was very liberating in Shanghai and I hope others can realize this as well.

Fall 2013: Studying Chinese Law at Shanghai Jiaotong University

Studying abroad in Shanghai was one of the best decisions I have ever made. During the fall of 2013, I attended Shanghai Jiaotong University as an exchange student. Although I was born in Beijing and had been to China multiple times, I had never been to Shanghai—the much larger “New York of Asia.” The trip to Shanghai fulfilled my expectations both intellectually and experientially.

Shanghai Jiaotong University (“SJTU”) is considered one of the best universities in China and among the top two universities in Shanghai. SJTU has five campuses spread across Shanghai and its suburb, Minhang. Fortunately, SJTU relocated its law school “Koguan Law School” from the suburban Minhang campus to its Xuhui campus in downtown Shanghai this year. Not only that, the Koguan Law School occupies a beautiful building with brand-new facilities. Koguan is located in a very central location in Shanghai and it is close to multiple subway lines. The transportation is highly accessible. I was lucky to attend school in such a prime location. From my understanding, the year before attended class in the Minhang campus, which is a 40 minute bus ride away from the metropolitan part of Shanghai. The location was also one of their major complaints. For future classes, the location of the school will no longer be an issue but an asset.

The classes I took at SJTU were pre-selected—Chinese Constitutional Law, Chinese Administrative Law, Chinese Competition Law, Chinese Human Rights and Labor Law, Chinese International Law, and Chinese Contract Law. These were the classes offered to the LLM and SJD students and the instruction was taught in English. Having had no prior knowledge on Chinese law, I learned a tremendously amount through the classes. The professors are all very nice and very approachable. However, I think Hastings has a much better quality of teaching.

The type and amount of assignments required depended entirely on the professor. For one class, the professor organized a simulated international commercial arbitration project. Other professors required in class presentations, papers, or some combination thereof. In addition to teaching pure Chinese Law, the professors encouraged the international students to introduce comparative aspects of law from our home countries. So, in a way, the courses broadened my understanding of multiple legal systems—including that of Germany, Saudi Arabia, Finland and Israel. While it was wonderful to have the opportunity to be a part of an international exchange class, I felt that we did not have much opportunity to meet and acquaint with the native Chinese law students from SJTU. Towards the end of the semester, the international students association at SJTU organized a Thanksgiving-themed social to bring together the SJTU students and the exchange students. That was the only event which allowed the two groups of students to meet and mingle. In addition, there were not too many school events that the exchange students could attend because the majority of them were conducted in Chinese.

One of the best things about living in Shanghai is that one can navigate the city without knowing much Chinese. Shanghai has a history of foreign influences and has always been hailed as the most international city in China. Today, Shanghai also hosts the highest number of expats in China. It is easy to find anything “foreign” in Shanghai and there are many American chain stores—even Wal-marts! All of the transportation and subways had English translations and English announcements. While having some Chinese language skills is definitely useful, many of my classmates had minimal knowledge of the language and enjoyed the semester without much trouble. For people who have never been to China before, there will be some initial culture shock. Although Shanghai is very modern and international, it is still an old city that stems from an entirely different culture and set of customs. I think it will be helpful to read about the Chinese customs prior to attending school in Shanghai. Furthermore, people who have never been to China before should be wary of the food and water sanitation. Several of my

classmates had multiple cases of food poisoning. The street food is often times questionable and the water should either be boiled or consumed from bottles. I recommend people to really exercise their street smarts.

In sum, my semester in Shanghai was fulfilling and eye-opening. I learned about a new body of law and experienced an entirely different culture. I am also really glad to have chosen SJTU. I would wholeheartedly recommend studying abroad in Shanghai.

I studied abroad at Shanghai Jiao Tong University, KoGuan Law School, during the fall semester of 2013. The newly-constructed law school building is located on the Xuhui campus in central Shanghai. I lived off-campus near Shanghai Stadium. I'll summarize the law classes I took, the "extra" classes that are available to international students, my living arrangements, and any other tips I have.

Law classes

I took 7 law-related classes at Shanghai Jiao Tong University. Some continued for the entire duration of the semester, while others ended roughly halfway through the semester. Classes were small (roughly 20 students) and typically taught in a seminar format. Grades were usually based on a mixture of in-class participation and a paper, and deviations from this general rule are noted below. The class was composed of students from all over the world.

<u>Class</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Administrative Law	This class focused on the various administrative organs that operate in China's judicial and political spheres. Special emphasis was placed on the emerging concept of <i>proportionality</i> , or ensuring that administratively-determined judgments must be proportional to the problem they are remedying.
Competition Law	This class focused on competition law, a rapidly-growing area of law in China. China is remarkably similar to the EU in regards to written competition law, though enforcement is lagging behind. The grade in this class was partially based on a 3-hour hand-written examination.
Constitutional Law	China's constitution has no supremacy, and China's Supreme People's Court has no authority to interpret the constitution. However, constitutionalism is gradually becoming a prominent school of thought, and the constitution (and national laws) do have some practical effect. This class was very interesting. One note—the professor talked very quietly in this class, so make sure to sit near the front if you have trouble hearing.
Contract Law	Contract Law is generally uniform across the world, but the important differences are highlighted in this class (such as the more prominent role of "good faith" in China). A moot court exercise kept this class interactive and interesting.
Criminal Procedure Law	This class focuses on how the criminal legal system operates in China. It was a relatively short class, ending after roughly 6 weeks.
Human Rights and Labor Issues	This class focuses on human rights, labor relations, and discrimination in China. This class ties in with Constitutional Law, as many of China's anti-discrimination clauses (both constitutional and statute-based) cannot be cited by the courts in decisions. However, public sentiment has been pushing for more equality and increased rule of law in recent years.
Practice of International Law	Each week, this class would focus on discussing a new area of international law of interest to China. Examples include the Taiwan issue, maritime disputes in the East China Sea (with

Japan and South Korea) or the South China Sea (see the “9-Dashed Line”), or administration of China’s Autonomous Regions. Class discussion was very valuable, as the professor and students expressed and understood many different viewpoints. Unfortunately, this professor retired after this semester.

“Extra” classes

Class

Intercultural Communication

Notes

I suggest dropping this class. It does not count towards your credits or GPA, since it is not a law-related course. Class takes an exorbitant amount of time—both in class, and working at home—and the work probably won’t add much to your experience.

Chinese Language

The professor begins teaching very quickly in this class, but don’t feel discouraged. Once a number of students drop, she slows the pace of the class to reasonable levels.

Living arrangements

Shanghai Jiao Tong University offers dorm living for students. If you register for a dorm, make sure that it is on Xuhui campus before paying. Some students were mistakenly assigned to the Minhang campus, which is roughly a 1-hour commute from the Shanghai suburbs.

I chose to make my own arrangements to live off-campus, and I highly recommend it because it is the best way to immerse yourself in the local culture. I found a shared apartment (with Shanghainese people) on smartshanghai.com. A reasonable price to pay for a room in an apartment is 2,500-4,000 RMB (\$400-650 USD). Utilities are cheap (and subsidized by the government), and transportation by Metro or taxi is also cheap. If you choose to live off campus, remember to visit the local police station shortly after you arrive to register and obtain a residence permit.

Other tips

I began taking private Chinese lessons from a tutor, and I found them to be extremely valuable. Contact me if you are thinking about taking lessons and I can put you in touch with my tutor (contact Global Programs).

Some other assorted tips:

- If you take a taxi from the airport, make sure they turn the meter on and calculate your charge based on the meter. Don’t agree to an up-front price, because you will be vastly overcharged.
- If you just made new friends, don’t follow them to tea! It’s a common scam in Shanghai—you will be robbed/coerced into giving up all of your money.
- Do make an effort to visit Hangzhou and Suzhou, which are short day-trips from Shanghai. I also highly enjoyed Guilin, Huangshan (the Yellow Mountains), Moganshan, Beijing, and Nanjing.

Study Abroad Essay

For my fall 2011 semester, I did an exchange program at Shanghai Jiao Tong University (“SJTU”). SJTU is located in Shanghai, China and is one of the oldest and most respected universities in China. I took seven courses in Chinese law as part of the school’s full time exchange program including: Introductory to Chinese Language; Chinese Foreign Investment Law; Advanced Legal Research Workshop; Chinese Criminal and Criminal Procedural Law; Chinese Constitutional & Administrative Law; Chinese and Comparative Contract Law; and Chinese Human Rights and Labor Issues. The curriculum provided a great introductory and bases to various aspects of Chinese law. Furthermore, I volunteered to be an editor for SJTU’s law journal.

Although some of the professors English could be difficult to understand at times, all of the professors were very nice, knowledgeable, understanding, informative and charismatic. Most of the professors held foreign degrees or had studied abroad. They were very interested in comparing the legal systems of the program’s student’s respective foreign countries to China’s legal system. We often had to do presentations on various aspects of our legal systems. Most of the professors were very familiar with American laws and the legal system. I was surprised how similar some of the aspects of China’s legal system and laws are to those of the United States. Before 1979, China was basically ruled by marshal law and did not have much of a legal system, but China has come a long way since it opened its doors to foreign investment. Today, the Chinese legal system is basically a blend of various aspects of the legal systems from Japan, Germany and America.

The LLM/exchange program is only a few years old and I had a very small class, with only seven foreign LLM/exchange students. The class included three students from the US, two students from Sweden, one student from Germany and one from Hungry. Additionally, some of

the classes also included Chinese students that attended SJTU. The small class size made it very easy to get to know everyone in the class. I was really fortunate because everyone in my class was really close and did everything together. It was great to be able to make friends from very different backgrounds.

Towards the end of the semester my class took two field trips. First, we received a tour of the Chinese Provincial Court in Minhang. I was amazed by the extravagance of the Chinese court. In addition, while at the court we got to watch a summary trial. For the second field trip, we visited two different international law firms, which included O'Melveny & Myers and a midsize British IP firm. It was interesting to hear the different perspectives of both expat and Chinese national lawyers on China's legal system. Moreover, my professors often took the class to lunch and we participated in fun traditional Chinese activities such as making dumplings.

SJTU has several different campuses throughout Shanghai. Unfortunately, KoGuan Law School is currently located at the Minhang campus, which is a rural area on the outskirts of Shanghai. Although the campus was very beautiful, life on campus seemed a little dull and the dorms were rundown. So, I rented an apartment in downtown Shanghai and commuted to school, which turned out to be a great decision and luckily for me Shanghai has an amazing subway system. Fortunately for future exchange students KoGuan law school is going to relocate to the Xuhui campus, which is a much more exciting part of Shanghai.

I enjoyed my life in Shanghai a great deal. I was surprised by the sheer magnitude of Shanghai, which has an estimated 23 million people. The opportunities for students in Shanghai are extensive. Shanghai is an amazing international city, as well as, a key center of finance, commerce, fashion and technology. Life in Shanghai is very fast paced and there are lots of foreigners living there. It was nice because some of my friends from San Francisco moved to

Shanghai for work before I came, so they were able to give me advice on places to visit and show me around the city. Additionally, it was very easy to make new friends. The food in Shanghai is extremely good and cheap. It did not take much money to eat well and enjoy my semester in Shanghai. I was surprised by the amount of “fake” or “counterfeit” goods that are for sale throughout China.

Shanghai is a city that has something for everyone. It has great cultural riches, such as the Shanghai Museum, which contains over 120,000 pieces of art, and the Yu Gardens. Then of course there's The Bund, which is located next to the river and is a great place to take a stroll at night and the French Concession, which has lots of nice shops and restaurants. During my semester, I also traveled to Beijing, Nanjing, Hangzhou and Shenzhen. There were several other places that I wanted to visit; however, I was only granted a one-time entry visa, which prevented me for traveling outside of China, during my semester. Unfortunately, both Hong Kong and Macau are both considered foreign territories. Fortunately for me there is a lot to see throughout mainland China. Overall, I would highly recommend the exchange program at SJTU; it was my best semester of law school to date.

Study Abroad Summary – SJTU

School

This was the first year Hastings did an exchange with SJTU and the second year SJTU had the program. As a result, we did not know what to expect. We did not even know what classes we would be taking until already in China. As a result, I did not have any strong pre-conceived notions of what the semester would be like. The semester ended up being 6 law classes and one Chinese class – all of which were 2 credits. The classes were all taught by Chinese professors. The classes themselves were all very different. In some classes, the professors spoke English very well. For example, the dean received an LL.M. for Harvard and a SJD from Stanford. However, others were almost impossible to understand and to get the information they wanted to present in class we had to read the PowerPoint presentations.

The classes themselves were: Advanced Legal Research, Chinese Human Rights and Labor Law, Chinese Foreign Investment Law, Chinese Contract Law, Chinese Constitutional Law, and Criminal Law and Procedure. Chinese Criminal Law and Procedure was taught as two separate half-semester classes, but graded as one course (we also had two finals). The finals for all but two classes were either take-home exams or papers.

The faculty and administration of the law school were extremely helpful and responsive to any questions. However, future students should know that because things work as more of a bureaucracy in China, it can be difficult to get answers to questions unless you find a person directly involved with what you are inquiring about. Likewise, a syllabus is rare and it is normal not to know what kind of test there will be or how you will be graded until the last week of class. Some things that are simple here can take a lot more time in China but the people are amazingly kind and helpful. One story to illustrate this is getting a copy of my passport.

During registration the school required an additional copy of our passports. I asked where we could get one and they said to go off campus (I'm not sure why because, as I now know, there are many places on campus). My roommate and I ventured out trying to find a place to make copies and were not having any luck. A student was riding by on his bike and my roommate flagged him down and asked in English where we could make copies. The student started to tell us and then said "here, let me show you." He walked us all the way to the print shop, made sure that the copies were good, and then he even tried to pay for the copies for us. The most humbling thing is that situations like this were not uncommon.

Living

The campus was located an hour and a half from the city center near an area commonly referred to as "the village." Of the 7 people in the program, I was the only one that decided to live on campus. All the others decided to live in or near downtown. As a result, I had a completely different experience from the others. For example, I spent most of my time with people from China, other Asian countries, or Africa. I went out several times with local Chinese police and even got invited to North Korea by students at the Christmas party. The experience outside the classroom was more interesting, more fun, and more informational than anything a classroom can provide. This is especially true for China where "relationship" is more important than law.

I only traveled to 2 other cities during the exchange. One was during the Chinese national day vacation. I visited Nanjing because it was one of the old capitals of China and home of several important monuments. For example, the mausoleum of Sun-Yet-Sun, one of the revolutionaries against the Chinese emperor, is located there.

On campus they had different available activities. I signed up for two dance classes and also helped the moot court team as they prepared for competitions in English. I also had a language exchange with a professor where we generally met once a week.



Even though we had regular law classes the value to the exchange was in meeting people, experiencing the culture, and forming new relationships. I did things on this trip I never imagined doing (like eating dog), and I'm grateful for the opportunity.

