



PEKING
UNIVERSITY

הפקולטה לניהול
אוניברסיטת תל-אביב



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Part one – objective overview.

PKU (Peking University) is the most famous university in China for many reasons but the decision to go or not to go to this university is not at all trivial because of many reasons. This testimonial is about my second time in the huge capital of China – Beijing. In the next few pages I will try to help you to make a good decision about whether to go there or not. If the answer will be yes I will write every tip I can in order to help you get by in this immense city. If you will still have any questions about this trip feel free to e-mail me and ask me. Let's go!

Why China?

If you are reading this document you probably heard that China is the future. I think this is **wrong** since China is the **present** and if you were never there you are already late! Going to a semester in China will do wonders to your Chinese and if you still don't know any it will be a superb place to start. If a culture is a house then the language is the door, but what are you going to do when you pass that door? The most important thing you can get from going to this program is meeting the Chinese people and learning how to communicate with them on a more personal level and understand them better.

Why Beijing?

The capital of China is unbelievable and is nothing like you have ever seen but so is Hong Kong and Shanghai. If you intend to learn Chinese you should do it in Beijing since they only speak mandarin (the official language in China) and their dialect is the most correct. If you ever go to Hong Kong you will have to use Cantonese which is not the official language in China.

Why PKU? Why Guanghua?

Guanghua is PKU's school of management and this is where you might spend 4 months if you choose to. While Guanghua's international rating may vary, it will always be one of the top institutions in China. (It is always good to check what will be this school's ranking in the world. By the time you will be reading this the ranking will change at least dozen times) The School is so well known that everywhere you go with the school's jacket you will be respected and people will immediately assume you are smart. I was even spotted in Israel with the school's symbol and people respected me.

Why not China?

When you are outside of the university (and many times when you are in it), people will not understand you if you don't know the local dialect (Mandarin or Cantonese) what makes traveling very difficult when you are trying to get off the beaten track. Not knowing the local language will make everything difficult. If you are going to China and expecting to buy cheap products and overall not to spend a lot of money – it will not happen. China is becoming more expensive every day and this trip will cost you more than you think. If you are planning on coming to China without clothes and buying everything you need there, you are going to have a nasty and pricy surprise.

Why not Guanghua?

If you have already decided to go to China I must tell you that Beijing is hard. The pollution is terrible, the winters are cold and the summers are humid and hot. If you are just trying to have some fun, this is not the place for you. Out of the four months you will spend in Beijing you will not see the sun for probably 3 months (you will see a yellow smudge in a grey sky).

Part two – my experience in Guanghua school of management.

- ❖ Visa – In order to get a student's visa you will have to take the paperwork you get from PKU to the embassy. The process is very simple and will cost you 100 NIS and a passport picture. It takes about a week to get your passport back.
- ❖ Accommodation – This part is the biggest problem you are going to encounter during your stay in Beijing. Since PKU will not offer exchange students any dorms, you will have to do it by yourself. While I was lucky to find a roommate that is already living in Beijing and just needed to go to the apartment you might find it tricky to find a place to stay. The price I paid per month was 2000 NIS for a room in shabby apartment. Finding an apartment by yourself is done by going to thebeijinger.com. The owners are going to try to cheat you and make you agree to ridiculous terms. What you should do to avoid this is to ask the students union for help and they will send someone to go with you while searching for an apartment. If you need to find a place to stay you should land in Beijing a week before school starts and stay at a hostel. Finding an apartment while studying might be very uncomfortable.
- ❖ Money – The local currency is RMB and it is very easy to find a bank to withdraw money. Most of the local shops will not accept international credit cards so always take some cash with you.
- ❖ Communication
 - Cellphone – You should buy a local sim so you will be able to do other things like renting an apartment or get a transportation card.
 - Internet – Using Google and all of the company's products are strictly forbidden. If you try to use one of them it won't work. When you get an apartment make sure you have a working Wi-Fi in your apartment.

- ❖ Transportation – You can buy a new bicycle for 200 RMB. There are bus stations and subway stations everywhere. Taking a bus or a subway will be much cheaper and easier if you have a transportation card so try to get one after you have a local cellphone number. Transportation is very cheap but it might be a lot quicker by bicycle. Do not buy an electric scooter unless you want to break something. You have been warned.
- ❖ Pollution – The air is going to be bad and I suggest buying masks to wear when you are outside. You should buy an air purifier for your own room. I didn't do it and I was really sorry I didn't when the air was unbreathable. Purchasing these items should be done online with the help of a local person or your buddy. (I will talk about the buddy issue in the GISA section)
- ❖ Food – The food in China is amazing and there are so many amazing thing you could taste for mere 14 RMB you won't believe it. Usually the cheaper food is more tasty because it is less complicated. I suggest you will try everything that is cooked properly. You might have a case of diarrhea in the beginning but it is only because your body needs some time to get used to the food. I suggest eating more western food like "Subway" than Chinese food in the first two weeks. Before ordering always say "bu yao la jiao" (I don't want chili pepper), the Chinese food can be very spicy and even if you like spicy food I suggest avoiding the hard core Chinese spicy food in the beginning.



- ❖ Bureaucracy – This issue can be a big problem every ware but in China it is much worse. Always keep every paper that you get. Go to the police station in the first week you get to China to write yourself down. Track every important transaction that you do and try not to get into the system if you don't have to: Get your own premium health insurance don't use the schools insurance.
- ❖ Learning Chinese – PKU offers 3 courses in Chinese. First one is for people who don't even know one word in Chinese. The second level is for readers, the third level is difficult and most of the student in this class are actually Chinese who live in other countries. Even if you fit into one of the categories there will be 20 other students in the class. I suggest taking private tutors or going to private schools such as BC college which is not far away from PKU.

- ❖ PKU – The University itself is amazing. The staff is very helpful and nice. When the skies are clear you can see beautiful mountains surrounding the area. The campus has a nice lake in it and a big park you can walk in. The classes are amazing and the buildings are new and comfortable.



- ❖ Courses – Overall, the courses are very interesting and the students that I met were usually very happy with them. The teachers of the courses in English were foreign and it is possible to take courses in Chinese if you want to (and able to).
 - Foreign entrepreneurship in China.

As an entrepreneur that works with Chinese people I must say this is the most enlightening course I have ever taken in my life. In this course the teacher brings outstandingly successful entrepreneurs that have worked wonders in many fields: negotiation on nuclear plants, startups, sex toys, restaurants and many others. The teacher, Richard Robinson, is a seasoned entrepreneur that sold a company for 40,000,000\$. Every lecture he gives is full of superb advice and amazing life experience. He also teaches many important soft skills. In the course students are graded for three slideshows they must present.
 - Managing the MNCs in China.

This course is a course that teaches about the many difficulties Multi National Companies experience in China. The course uses case studies that should be solved every week as homework. In the end, every student has to find a top manager from an MNC to interview. I went and interviewed Brent Young, the director of China corporate strategy office in Intel. I had to write 5000 words on the difficulties Intel experienced in China as a final paper for this course. The professor also took us to see a humongous diesel engine plant.



- Doing business in China.
This course was a big failure and every student was very disappointed from it. The course gave us some tools to use for entrepreneurship but we spent most of the time listening to pathetic excuse for entrepreneurs talking about their failures. The final assignment was a business plan for a real business but the entrepreneurs who were supposed to use our business plan and the slideshow we made and presented were so underqualified to run a business that if they will use the business plans for their terrible Idea even god won't be able make it work.
 - Luxury brand management.
Professor Morisset not only explains why other people love luxury brands but also turns every student into a luxury enthusiast. The course examines the history of luxury and the basics of selling people products they do not need. If you ever wondered why people spend a lot of money on brands, this is the place to get the answers for it. The final assignments are a slideshow without presentation and a group presentation with a slideshow.
 - Current topics in Chinese strategy and investing.
This course teaches the strategy China uses to promote itself. Every class teaches a different topic such as city planning, innovation, and architecture. The course is very interesting and very important to anybody who wants so understand how China works on the macro level. Since China is one of the most important forces in the world today this course is relevant to everybody. The only assignment in the course is a long paper that can be done in groups. The paper is very difficult and the subject is chosen by the student.
- ❖ Going out /partying /eating – every exchange program has parties and get together. There are a few tips that you should follow that will make your trip much better.

- GISA organizes many trips and activities for foreign students. Not all of them are fun but most of them are a big success and you will be able to meet up with many Chinese students and become friends with them.



- The music in the clubs is bad except from the Dada club. You should go there at least once.
- Go and explore the city. The museums, Tiananmen Square, the hutongs and everything else is amazing. Ask one of the local students where to go next. You won't regret it.



- ❖ Police – If someone fights next to you run away as fast as possible. One of the exchange students went to the Chinese Jail for 6 months!!!! Just because he was next to a fight. Do not break the law or the law will break you.
- ❖ GISA – This organization is your friend. GISA is a part of the student's union that deals only with foreign exchange. They will help you with any task and invite you to many activities. The best project they have is the buddy system. Every exchange

student is teamed up with a buddy that will be his help in times of need. Besides finding the best restaurants and sending mail these guys can be your help when you get into trouble. Make sure you and your buddy become best friends.

- ❖ My general experience – My semester was stressful because I took many Chinese courses in a private school. My Chinese became much better and I still managed to have a lot of fun. The pollution was harsh and I became sick because of it. The only mistake I did is not buying an air purifier for my room. I had tons of fun and made many new friends.
- ❖ Suit up – Bring a suit and a tie. There are many formal occasions such as the orientation day, meeting with ambassadors and many more occasions.



I hope my testimonial helped you, it took me some time to get it done but I think I covered everything I wanted. If you still have some questions you are more than welcome to mail me – [Zoharfurman85@gmail](mailto:Zoharfurman85@gmail.com) or call me – 0545502581.