

# beijing china

Dickinson College / 2015



cīee

program handbook

## Part I: The CIEE Program in Beijing

---

### WELCOME TO YOUR ADVENTURE IN CHINA

Regardless of your previous travel experience, a summer, semester or year studying, experiencing, and engaging China will certainly be an experience of a lifetime!

This vast nation of over 1.4 billion people, and claiming a history of over 5,000 years, has been struggling to become a major global player while maintaining its own political ideology. Modernization of Chinese society is evident in today's contemporary social behavior, dress, the types of consumer products that are now available, and the towering skyscrapers that adorn the skyline of the larger cities.

Experiencing China as it moves quickly into the 21<sup>st</sup> century is truly exciting. You will witness first-hand the continuing transformation of this important and vibrant country, as well as the many emerging contradictions and challenges that China faces.

Preparing yourself to go to China is not easy. All of you are coming from a variety of backgrounds and each of you has different reasons for wanting to study abroad in China.

To help make your stay more valuable, you may want to do the following: Follow and be aware of current events as they relate to China. Study, read and watch movies in order to equip yourself with an understanding of the contemporary Chinese scene, and as well as brush up on your language skills!

As for preparing yourself for what to expect, while almost sounding cliché, our best advice is to expect the unexpected. You are going to China to absorb and enjoy the realities of the country first hand, not to confirm the impressions of others. Try to leave behind any preconceived notions, which you might have about life in China.

Your experience will be what you make of it. If you keep an open mind and maintain your sense of humor, they will both serve you well and take you far.

#### Participants say...

When I first applied to come to China, I had a lot of concerns on my mind...but the minute I walked into the dorm room, I was very impressed, and it was nothing like I had expected. Follow your instinct and just do it!

## DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL

### How do I get there?

The cost of transportation to and from the program is not included in the CIEE program fee. Students should make their flight reservation to arrive on the date and time indicated in the link titled *Program Dates, Details & Arrival Information* which is posted on your on-line checklist. All students are required to attend orientation and should plan on arriving on the set arrival date. Those students whose arrival coincides with the stated arrival times will be greeted by CIEE resident staff at the Peking International airport in Beijing. Students will see CIEE staff holding a CIEE pennant waiting in the arrivals hall.

If you arrange your own transportation, you must time your arrival so you can meet the other program participants at your dorm on the arrival date.

### What should I know before I reserve my airfare?

You can book your flight to arrive on this date. When it comes to purchasing your airfare, the best advice anyone can give you is to do your research before purchasing your ticket. One website is not enough and oftentimes the cheapest ticket is not the one that is right for you. The key thing to remember is that you cannot arrive after the official program arrival date.

Past participants have found great rates on non-refundable tickets with the following companies [www.kayak.com](http://www.kayak.com), [www.travelocity.com](http://www.travelocity.com), and [www.orbitz.com](http://www.orbitz.com). Others have gotten creative when making their travel plans by purchasing their domestic tickets separately from their international tickets.

Some participants prefer to arrive a day or two early. Participants who arrive early will need to make their own reservations for the extra nights they are in the host city, and they must get from the airport to their hotel, and then from the hotel to the study center on their own on the official arrival date.

One challenge some may face when booking tickets is that airlines typically will not let you make a return reservation nine months in advance. If you are studying abroad for the fall and spring semester, odds are that you will not be able to book your return ticket for the actual program departure date. Instead, you will have to look at purchasing a ticket that allows you to change your return ticket with little to no additional fees.

### **A NOTE FROM CIEE REGARDING INDEPENDENT TRAVEL PRIOR TO THE START OF OUR PROGRAMS:**

CIEE requires all students to be in possession of the proper visa documentation in order to participate in our program. For more information on visas please see the Visa Information document located in your checklist. If you have plans to travel to China prior to the program start date, please contact your CIEE study abroad advisor to discuss visa implications (importantly, that early entry means the visa may not be valid long enough for the student to finish the program without an extension). Please be aware that the visa application process for China may require students to surrender their passport several weeks prior to the start of the CIEE study abroad program. These consular requirements may impact independent travel plans. Visa requirements should be investigated and considered by all applicants prior to planning independent travel.

### **A NOTE FROM CIEE REGARDING INDEPENDENT TRAVEL AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF OUR PROGRAMS:**

For students traveling after the end date of the program, please note that CIEE is only able to sponsor your visa for the duration of the program. If you choose to travel independently or stay in the country after the program end date, you will be responsible for organizing and funding your own travel plans including your visa, housing, transportation, meals, etc. The end date of the program is the date all CIEE sponsored accommodations will end, including visa sponsorship and housing. Please make sure to be proactive and check the expiration date of your visa and to organize housing, etc, for the duration of your travels after the program ends.

### **Discount on Airfare**

As a part of your program fees you will receive an iNext travel insurance that allows a \$15.00 discount on flights costing \$100.01 to \$249.99 and a \$25.00 discount on flights costing \$250.00 or more when you purchase your airfare through Student Universe ([www.studentuniverse.com](http://www.studentuniverse.com)). Student Universe is a travel agency that offers plane tickets at a reduced student rate. Type iNext into the Promo Code text box when you finalize your reservation. Aside from Student Universe's already discounted student fares and the iNext discount, most Student Universe tickets allow changes to the ticket for as little as \$50. If you have one of these tickets, you can make your

plans to travel independently even after you have already arrived on-site. Your iNext code can be applied towards any two airfares purchased while you are covered by iNext.

### **What happens when I arrive?**

Upon arrival, please email or call your parents to let them know you had a safe flight and that everything is going well. A brief message call will relieve them of their worries. At this time you can also pass along exact information on how they may reach you.

CIEE staff members will be at the Beijing Capital International Airport on the scheduled arrival date to meet participants and one or two buses for group transportation will be provided in the afternoon.

Usually students should exchange around \$200 USD (1000-1500 RMB) cash on hand during the first week. You can exchange currencies at the airport or withdraw RMB from an ATM. Student passports will be collected during the orientation week for registration with the local Public Security Bureau and will be returned about one to two business days later—please note that you will be unable to conduct any transactions at a bank counter without your passport.

### **What if I arrive prior to the program arrival date?**

As mentioned above, if you are arriving on a day before the official arrival date, you should plan on arriving independently at your dorm on the designated student arrival date. All students who arrive in Beijing prior to the official program arrival date (as stated in the link titled *Program Dates, Details & Arrival Information*) will need to arrange and pay for their own accommodations. Peking University will not allow students to move into the accommodations prior to the official start of the program. For hotel and hostel recommendations, CIEE suggests that students purchase a copy of Lonely Planet's China guide book. You may also check the website <http://hostelworld.com>.

CIEE will provide details on how to take a cab to our study center in an e-mail called the *Final Mailing*. The Final Mailing is e-mailed to students approximately 30-days prior to the program arrival date.

**Tip: Contact home**

Upon arrival, it is a good idea to email or call your parents. A brief message telling them that you have arrived and are fine will relieve them of their worries. At this time you can also pass along exact information on how they may reach you.

**What happens on the scheduled departure date?**

A shuttle trip to the airport will be provided to accommodate the biggest group of students leaving at the same time on this day. If you decide to stay in Beijing after the departure date, you will be responsible for any fees incurred.

**ONLINE PREDEPARTURE ORIENTATION (OPDO)**

Students begin their study abroad experience in Beijing before even leaving home—by participating in a CIEE Online Pre-Departure Orientation. Meeting with students online, the Resident Director shares information about the program and site, highlighting issues that alumni have said are important, and giving students time to ask any questions before leaving home. The CIEE goal for the pre-departure orientation is to help students understand more about the program, staff, and host school, so that they arrive well-informed and prepared to engage their experience in the program.

**ORIENTATION**

**All students must arrive on-site by the arrival date and before the start of orientation. Late arrival is not permitted.** Students are required to attend all orientation activities and should not plan to arrive after the official program arrival date (as stated in the link titled *Program Dates, Details & Arrival Information*). If you are delayed en route to the orientation site, you must leave a message with the CIEE home office.

During orientation, CIEE resident staff will provide a structured introduction to the country, the culture, and the academic program. They will also give you lots of practical information about living in Beijing, including:

- A review of emergency procedures.
- Detailed information on health, well-being, and safety issues.
- Academic information relating to the program and the universities.
- Local tours and guided visits in order to help with adjustment.

Individual orientation continues throughout the program.

**THE CIEE PROGRAM****CIEE Office**

The program office is located in the Shao Yuan #2 building at Peking University. The office is comprised of a small library, computers, and wireless Internet access, all of which are available for student use. CIEE also has small classrooms for tutorial sessions, the Language and Culture Practicum, and independent study

Typical Office hours are 8:30am-5:30pm.

**CIEE Program Staff**

The Resident Director and other CIEE Staff are available and are happy to advise and help students with academic, administrative, and personal matters during regular office hours and in cases of emergency.

**About the Resident Director****W. Chad Futrell**

W. Chad Futrell has spent over fifteen years working, studying, and conducting research in China and South Korea, splitting his time between study abroad and environmental advocacy. For the last five years Chad has worked with IES Beijing where he was recently named "Instructor of the Year" by IES Abroad for his courses on China's development and environmental challenges, international relations, government, and society. Chad has also led numerous customized study abroad programs throughout China, including for CIEE.

Chad first became interested in East Asia while getting a B.A. in Religious Studies at UNC-Chapel Hill. After a transformative year of studying abroad at the University of Sussex, he began focusing completely on Northeast Asia, first by studying Buddhism in South Korea's Songgwangsa Temple. Leaving the monastery emboldened if not enlightened, Chad moved to Seoul where he helped run the country's largest language institute and volunteered for environmental and social justice NGOs, eventually becoming a member of KFEM-Friends of the Earth Korea's International Advisory Board. Chad attended graduate school at Cornell University, where he earned Certificates in Environmental Management and Asian Studies, and an M.S. and Ph.D. (ABD) in Development Sociology. During graduate school

Chad also earned a Certificate in Advanced Chinese from IUP-Tsinghua University.

Chad has consulted and worked for over twenty NGOs on projects related to biodiversity, desertification, and climate change, including Friends of Nature, the International Crane Foundation, and The Nature Conservancy. An outdoor enthusiast, Chad has climbed to dozens of remote mountain temples and loves biking around the alleys of Beijing. He looks forward to the day that he can go camping on the Great Wall with his wife and baby daughter.

Participants say...

Don't stay with the CIEE group all the time. Try to meet people outside of the program.

Make Chinese friends through shared interests such as sports or hobbies. Do this as soon as possible!

Ask other students who have already stayed longer for ideas and places to go.

*CIEE has good relations with the university so it provided the support that I needed.*

## HOUSING AND MEALS

Housing is included in the program fee, but meals are not. Students live in either the Zhongguanyuan Global Village dormitory, or with a Chinese host family as part of a long-term or short-term homestay (see below). Students in the homestay accommodation will be provided two (2) meals per week

Students may not live in accommodations outside CIEE-arranged housing facilities for the program.

### When will I learn my housing assignment?

Students sign up for their housing preference before arrival, and all final housing assignments are announced on-site once the program begins.

### What is Zhongguanyuan Global Village Like?

Zhongguanyuan Global Village is a nine-building complex was built to house international students visiting faculty & scholars local Chinese post graduates and post PhD students. Completed in 2007, the Zhongguanyuan Global Village or 中关村新园 in Chinese is called "the Global Village", for short. CIEE students are typically housed in buildings 2, 4 and 6 in suite style housing. Buildings 2, 4 and 6 are interconnected through a series of skyways. Therefore, most of the places listed below do not require students to go outside

Living conditions in the Global Village are comfortable and inviting. Rooms for CIEE students are all suite-style. Students will be housed two or three to a suite, with each student getting his or her own bedroom. Each bedroom comes with a twin-sized bed (with sheets and pillows), desk, bookshelf, armoire, and wired Internet access. The suite features a shared bathroom (with shower) and living room. Public kitchens are available for student use on almost every floor as are washers and dryers

**Location:** The Global Village is a five minute walk to the University's Southeast Gate. There is also a conveniently placed pedestrian bridge that bypasses the bustling Zhongguancun North Road separating the complex's block from the University. It is located within five minutes from Beijing's extensive bus and subway system.

### Student Room:

**Living Room-**The main living room comes with a television, a table and two chairs.

**Bedroom-**Students will get their own private bedroom. Each room contains an air conditioner, standard twin-sized bed, an armoire, and a desk with an overhead shelving unit. The armoire has lockable external doors as well as a lockable internal drawer. The desk has a lockable drawer and cabinet.

**Bathrooms-** Each bathroom has one sink, a western-style toilet, and a shower with curtain. Inside each shower is one small shelf to place shampoo and soap.

Maids will clean the public areas everyday i.e. hallway, kitchens. If needed, students can request a second set of sheets from the building #4 service desk. Students will need to wash sheets themselves. Maids will clean the living room every day and clean the bathroom every week.

**Entry Card & Mailboxes:** Students are issued an entry card that enables him or her access to the building's entrance and to their room. Each room has mailboxes next to each door. Each student will have his or her own mailbox, accessible by key.

**Utilities:** Each room is allotted a free monthly quota for electricity and water. If student's use exceeds this limit, they will have to pay for any additional consumption. The quota is set

assuming normal daily electricity and water usage.

**Water-** Hot and Cold water are available 24 hours per day. In each room, there is a meter that tracks water consumption for that specific room. Charged per unit, hot water is more expensive than cold water. Students can recharge water like they recharge electricity at the Service Center. Tap water is not drinkable. Each room is furnished with an electric kettle that students can use to boil water. After boiling, the water is safe to drink.

**Internet:** Each room is fitted with a wired broadband connection. There is no public wireless. Students can use PKU internet access.

**Telephone:** Each room is equipped with a telephone. Students can call other telephones on campus for free. To call outside of campus or to place international calls, students must purchase a phone card at the Service Center in building #4 or at other convenience stores.

**Public Facilities & Laundry:** Each building has a washer and dryer and kitchenette on approximately every other floor. However, each building is different. The kitchenette features a hot plate, sink, microwave, washing machines and dryers. For washing machines and dryers, both require coins that can be purchased at the Service Center.

**Study Rooms:** Building #2 has a study room on the 11<sup>th</sup> floor, Building #3 on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor and Building #4 has study rooms on the third, fourth, and fifth floors.  
Hours: 8:30am-11:30pm.

**Service Center:** Located in the lobby of Building #4, students can come here to check in, pay for water, electricity, or to report a lost or stolen card and repairing. It is open 24 hours.

**Business Center:** Located in the south part of Building #1, students can send faxes, print, photocopy, use the Internet, and buy plane and train tickets.

**Shops/Café:** Across from the entrance of building #6 there are two small shops that sell basic necessities, soda, tea, crackers/snacks and other items. They are open from 7:00-midnight daily. There is also the A'bla Café in Building #5 where students can buy food, coffee, and tea.

**Post Office:** Located in Building #9, students can send letters, packages, and express mail.

**Recreation Center:** Right outside building #4. One must take the stairs down to this newly opened subterranean recreational facility. The facilities include a gym with standard aerobic and exercise equipment. It also features badminton, bowling, handball and basketball courts as well as rooms for karaoke. Currently, there is no pricing plan. Admission for students is 30 RMB per use, and as of yet there is no membership plan. Hours: 4:00pm-11:00pm

**Cafeterias:** Located in the basement of Building #6, it serves western and Chinese food. Hours: 11:30am-2:30pm and 5:00pm-9:00pm.

**Coffee House:** Breakfast only. Located in the basement of building #9, one can purchase a meal ticket at the front desk at Building #9 for 30 RMB. Hours: 7:00am-9:00am.

### Long-Term Homestay Option

Students can select a semester-long homestay with a Chinese family in Beijing.

CIEE interviews and selects homestay families during the pre-departure process. However, final placements are made in the days leading up to the participants' arrival. The families go through a rigorous inspection process conducted by CIEE staff and the Resident Director.

All families have been through an orientation process which prepares them for living with a young person is not a Chinese national. They have been briefed on the amenities that they need to provide for students: bed, study furniture, bathroom facilities, air conditioning, hot running water, etc. Since each host family varies considerably, a detailed explanation of how to use the facilities will be given after moving into the host families.

Homestays are located up to 45 minutes from PKU via public transportation. All students requesting homestays go through required CIEE homestay orientation once in Beijing. Why homestays are a very exciting and meaningful option, students should carefully consider their own level of commitment, personal flexibility, and goals before selecting a homestay.

### Short-Term Homestay Experience

Students may take part in an optional short-term homestay experience for three weeks. This



allows CIEE students to meet a family and experience the Chinese family living environment while in Beijing. Living conditions are the same as for the long-term homestay. You can only register for this during onsite orientation, but space is very limited. Therefore, availability will vary by semester and is not guaranteed. Students with high interest in a homestay should select the long-term homestay option to insure availability.

### **Will I have Internet access?**

There is Internet access in the PKU library, computer center, the CIEE Office, nearby coffee shops and restaurants, and cyber-cafes. Students can also access the Internet from their dormitory rooms (by Ethernet cable). Currently, wireless is not available in the Global Village. Some buildings in PKU have Wi-Fi, but Internet access can be quite erratic and slow. Each homestay will have Internet access for students. However, availability of Wi-Fi varies by homestay, as do connection speeds

*Warning: many Internet websites are permanently or temporarily blocked in China by the government Internet filtration system, including some U.S. government sites and some sites popular with students, such as Facebook and YouTube. The most reliable means is to (VPN) or access a VPN through your home university. If they do not offer one, then there are many paid VPN-services, such as vpninja.net and astrill.com.*

NOTE: CIEE neither officially endorses any VPN's nor can CIEE be held responsible for any legal consequences or data loss caused by student VPN use.

### **What about meals?**

Meals are not included in the program fee and are the responsibility of the student. Students usually eat at the student cafeterias or at the wide range of restaurants in and around campus.

### **What if I follow a special diet?**

Vegetarians will not find it too difficult to stick to their dietary regimen

as most restaurants provide many excellent non-meat selections, and good protein substitutes like tofu and peanuts. People with pork restrictions can find many other meat options.

## **Part II: Before You Leave Home**

---

### **A LOT TO LEARN**

Preparing for study abroad entails a lot more than just packing a suitcase. In fact, the thought and effort you put into preparing yourself will largely determine the success of the program you are embarking upon. At CIEE, we will do everything we can to provide you with the essential information prior to departure, but there is only so much we can do. Thus, it is important for you to recognize your own responsibilities, which include:

- Thoroughly discussing your study and travel plans with your financial aid office, study abroad office, and academic advisor, as well as your parents.
- Making any necessary arrangements for the following academic year, including housing, registration, and graduate school application. If you are a senior, be sure to make necessary arrangements for graduation.
- Reading all of the materials that CIEE has provided to you, including this handbook. Many of the questions that students ask are answered in these materials.
- Doing additional reading about the region/country you will be visiting and the customs of the host culture. Even reading [China's Wikipedia page](#) is a good place to start! While you couldn't possibly be prepared for every new experience that awaits you, reading about the host country will give you a base of knowledge that will serve you well in the early weeks of the program. (Refer to the Reading List at the back of this handout for recommended reading.)

In addition to these required steps, there is a lot more we recommend you do to inform yourself before you go.

### **Get a Good Guidebook**

Students recommend that you purchase a good guidebook and read a lot of it before you go! The **Lonely Planet** series is useful, and you can buy individual chapters as pdf files from Lonely Planet's website as well. There are numerous other guidebooks available. Pay particular attention to sections on obtaining maps and other information from tourist offices, customs of the host country, currency exchange, calling

home, safety, transportation, and general travel advice.

## Tap Other Resources

Other good ways to learn about your new home:

- Check your college or university study abroad office for useful services and information.
- Seek out Chinese nationals through cultural organizations, international student organizations, and Chinese language or Asia area studies departments or centers at your university.
- Stay informed of current events by reading international news and China-related blogs and websites.
- Consult the list of past program participants at on your “Program Details” sheet. They have agreed to be contacted about their experience. Some of their comments are interspersed throughout this book.
- Arriving at the program site with an open mind, a sense of adventure, and a positive attitude toward what lies ahead.

## Brush Up On Your Chinese

It is a good idea to sharpen your Chinese skills before departing. Listening to Chinese recordings, watching films, reading newspapers, and talking to native speakers or fellow students are excellent ways to do this. The Chinese version of YouTube, called Youku (youku.com) contains literally tens of thousands of hours of videos covering any imaginable topic.

Frequently, students who have studied Chinese for several years are surprised to find that they have difficulty understanding the language as spoken by native speakers. This is quite normal. In your language class at home, you can quickly catch your instructor's accent and other personal speech characteristics. However, this may not be possible once you go abroad and are surrounded by speakers with different accents. Don't worry: it gets easier as times goes on!

## Check Travel Advisories

The U.S. government issues travel advisories and consular information sheets for most countries. To receive updated information or advisories for China or other countries you may be traveling to, call (202) 647-5225 or visit the following website: <https://travel.state.gov>.

## Be Informed about Home too

It is important that you be well informed about your own country, region, and hometown. New friends and acquaintances in your host country will be just as curious about you as you are about them. Be prepared to discuss your home political system, culture, traditions, history, holidays, geography, and social structures.

### Participants say...

Bring the Lonely Planet's China guidebook. It's full of practical information and gives you a starting point, but realize that it's not always accurate!

Don't plan everything to the last detail. Have more fun with whatever happens.

## ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS

When preparing to travel and live abroad, it is essential that you obtain all the proper documents prior to your departure. CIEE cannot accept responsibility, financial or otherwise, for a student who travels without the proper documents.

## Passports

You are responsible for obtaining a passport prior to the start of your program, and in the case where a visa must be secured, prior to the visa application deadline. You must have a signed passport, valid for a minimum of six months after the date you enter China or for the duration of your program plus any travel, whichever is longer.

If you do not have a passport, apply for one **immediately** because the expedited process can take a month and regular processing can take around three months. If you already have a passport, be sure that it is valid for the required period.

### **Trap: Passport pitfalls**

Under no circumstances should your passport be altered. Guard it carefully against loss or theft. Do not forget to sign your passport. Never pack your passport in luggage while traveling; it should be easily accessible at all times.

## Where and how do I apply for a passport?

U.S. citizens applying for their first passports must apply in person at a passport agency or at one of the several thousand federal or state courts or U.S. post offices authorized to accept passport applications.

Detailed information, including passport issuing office locations, may be found at <http://travel.state.gov/passport/>



**Tip: Take a lost passport kit**

It happens. So save yourself a major headache, and prepare, you can:

- Scan your passport and birth certificate and take electronic copies with you, or store them on your email account so that you can download them as needed, or
- Take with you two U.S.-produced passport photos, a certified copy of your birth certificate (which you can shrink to wallet size), and a photocopy of the face page of your passport. Keep this "lost passport kit" separate from your actual passport. Leave one copy of the passport face page with your parents or guardian and give another copy to CIEE staff at the host site.

**Immunization Records**

No immunizations are required for China, but CIEE recommends that you consult the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website for recommended vaccinations and talk to your doctor. Please see recommended immunizations in the Health section below. If you enter other countries where immunizations are required, you must present a record of vaccinations. The most widely recognized document for this purpose is the yellow World Health Organization booklet, International Certificates of Vaccination, which is available from most doctors and health centers.

**HEALTH****What health-related steps should I take before I leave?**

You are required to submit both a medical questionnaire and the CIEE Physician's Medical report form in order to participate in a CIEE program; please be sure you indicate any allergies you have, in particular to medications.. In addition, we strongly urge you to have a complete physical and dental checkup before departing. Any required dental work should be done at home.

There are no vaccines required to enter China. However, the following are recommended by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) for those preparing to go to China. <http://cdc.gov>

Moreover, you are encouraged to get a travel health consultation specifically for your stay in China that will alert you to the possible diseases and health hazards you may encounter while in China.

**Hepatitis:** The prevalence of hepatitis is a genuine danger. One of the best ways to protect against illness is to eat thoroughly-cooked foods, and take care in what you eat, especially in the local food markets, and use the disposable

chopsticks when eating out. The CDC recommends that students get a vaccine to protect against Hepatitis A.

**Tetanus and Polio:** The CDC also recommends booster doses of tetanus (Td) and polio (eIPV) vaccines.

**Normal "childhood" vaccines:** The CDC recommends that these should be up-to-date: Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR Vaccine), Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (DTP Vaccine), and Polio.

**What medical supplies should I take with me?**

If you take prescription drugs, take a sufficient supply with you for your time abroad. (Be sure to take these in their original packages and with the original prescription.) Students who wear glasses or contact lenses should be sure to take an extra pair as well as a copy of their prescription. If you have a chronic illness that needs medical attention, have your doctor write a clinical report that can be given to a specialist in China if necessary. To refill prescription drugs, you will have to make an appointment and have a consultation before you can purchase medicine, especially western medication. If you use contraceptives, please take an adequate supply with you.

Be prepared for the common cold and for stomach and intestinal disorders often caused by changes in diet and drinking water. It might be wise to take along small amounts of medications in case these problems arise; your doctor may suggest which drugs to consider. Remember, however, to be careful about treating yourself, and be sure to seek professional help when necessary.

**What other precautions should I take?**

Inform the resident staff of any existing health problems, including mental health, or any potential problems you anticipate arising throughout the course of the program. **This includes allergies to any medications.** CIEE staff will use this information to ensure that appropriate accommodations are made. Please inform the resident staff if you become ill during the program.

**Water:** Remember that tap water is not drinkable in China. Be sure to boil water before drinking or buy bottled water, which is readily available.

**HIV/AIDS:** The HIV virus is now pandemic, meaning it is present everywhere, including Asia. Take the appropriate precautions. Many U.S. doctors are concerned about needle re-use in some parts of the world. Should you need an injection while in China, make sure the needle comes sealed in a special package and is torn open in front of you. This is normally done in the clinics you would go to in Beijing. Students who are HIV-positive might not be allowed to enter China, and should check for the latest policy.

## Smoking

Note that smoking is much more common in China and in Asia in general than it is in the U.S. The anti-smoking regulations that are common in the U.S. and elsewhere are not common in Asia and are not enforced in China. Therefore, if you are allergic to or easily bothered by smoke, be aware that it will be more difficult to avoid in China than it is in the United States.

## CDC Recommendations

Included in this documentation are recommendations by the CDC (Centers for Disease Control) for those preparing to go to China. If you plan to travel after the program to other countries, you may want to consult the CDC information specific to these countries. The CDC website is [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

## INSURANCE

If you are covered by a personal or parental insurance plan, CIEE recommends that you continue this coverage while abroad. Prior to departure, you should contact your current insurance carrier concerning coverage for accidents, illnesses and liability cases that occur outside the United States. Check your policy's limitations before making any assumptions about coverage. Most U.S.-based insurance companies will not cover property lost or stolen overseas. If you are studying through your university's study abroad office, they usually offer travel insurance.

### Accident and Sickness Insurance

Each participant is covered by the iNext Platinum Plan designed to help cover the cost of unforeseen illnesses or accidents that occur while abroad. Additionally, the policy offers Emergency Medical Evacuation coverage, together with 24-hour Emergency Assistance Services. The policy also offers coverage for travel document replacement and limited travel delay and lost/stolen personal effects coverage.

Coverage begins two weeks before the program start date and continues for 364 days.

A complete description of the iNext Platinum Plan is in the online checklist accessed via MY CIEE. It is important that you read the plan carefully and note exactly what coverage it provides, and note items that are excluded from coverage.

The iNext Insurance is designed as a supplemental or secondary plan only, and does not cover liability. It also does not include routine physical, dental examinations or preventive medicine. Students are not covered for injuries resulting from acts of war or other political unrest such as riots and demonstrations.

Please note that CIEE does not cover medical expenses on-site. Students pay for any medical costs incurred and then file a claim directly with their insurance company for reimbursement. CIEE cannot act as an intermediary between participants and any insurance company.

You will receive a welcome email from [inext@ciee.org](mailto:inext@ciee.org) which will ask you to complete the set up your profile and request your iNext insurance card. You can have this sent to your home, or if you like, you can email [inext@ciee.org](mailto:inext@ciee.org) to request that your card is sent to the CIEE study center in Beijing.

### Primary Insurance Plan Brokers

If you do not have a primary insurance plan, you may wish to enroll in one. The following brokers have individual insurance plans available:

HTH Worldwide  
[www.hthworldwide.com](http://www.hthworldwide.com)  
Tel: 877-424-4325

Wallach & Company, Inc.  
[www.Wallach.com](http://www.Wallach.com)  
Tel: 800-237-6615

## PERSONAL FINANCES

### Cost of Living

The exchange rate is not constant. The *New York Times* and similar publications publish exchange rates daily. You may also reference [www.x-rates.com](http://www.x-rates.com) or [www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com) for up to the minute exchange rates. You should keep abreast of how a rate fluctuates leading up to departure.

## What costs are covered by my CIEE fee?

CIEE Study Center fees include pre-departure information and services, on-site support services, tuition, orientation, housing, cultural activities, local excursions and field trips and sickness insurance.

## What expenses should I budget for?

You will need money for meals, entertainment, cultural activities, local transportation, school supplies, toiletries, a bicycle, cosmetics and gifts, as well as medical expenses and independent travel.

### • **Tip: Passport and credit card numbers**

Remember to leave a copy of your passport and a list of credit card numbers at home.

Besides inflation and currency exchange rates, another variable that will affect your spending abroad is your individual taste requirements. When creating a budget, it may be helpful to consider how much you normally spend in a semester and inflate it a bit. Although the cost of living for a student in China is less than that of a student in the U.S., the added cost of independent travel along with the impulse to splurge makes **careful budgeting** imperative. We suggest you take extra money, if possible, for unforeseeable expenses.

For a semester abroad, students typically bring about \$2,500 in spending cash with them (\$5,000 for an academic year student).

## FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

You will need to make arrangements regarding traveler's checks, credit cards and bankcards before leaving home. See the section Money and Banking in Part III for details.

Participants say...

Be sure to save money for your last few weeks. It's easy to spend a lot in the beginning.

When bargaining, do it with a sense of humor. Never antagonize people. A couple of jokes will get you further than screams.

## PACKING AND BAGGAGE

Try to organize and pack a day or two prior to departure so that you can judge if you'll be able to carry your bags (you must be able to do this). Some students have even practiced by carrying their bags around the block! Also, by packing early you'll have time to rest before the long trip.

## What are the baggage limits?

Limits vary. Read the weight limitation and baggage allowance information provided by your international airline carrier. Starting in late 2011, flights overseas often only permit one piece of checked baggage and one carry-on piece. Each checked bag must weigh less than 50 pounds. Total dimensions (length + width + height) of the first piece must be less than 62 inches, and the second piece less than 52 inches. Total dimensions of the carry-on must not exceed 45 inches and must be able to fit below the seat in front of you or in the overhead compartment. If your baggage exceeds any of these standards you may be charged for excess baggage. Check with your airline regarding any items that are oversized.

## What should I pack?

For a complete list of what to take, please see the **Suggested Packing Checklist** at the end of this handbook. Experienced travelers agree: take as little as possible. Don't forget that nothing ruins traveling abroad more than having too much luggage, especially when you have to carry it yourself.

## Linen & Pillows

In the dormitory, linen is provided as follows: one pillow, a pillow case, a bottom sheet, and a quilt-like blanket. As previously mentioned, students will be expected to wash their own sheets and linens. Students can also purchase additional bedding fairly cheaply at stores on and near campus. Therefore, you do not need to bring bedding to China.

Towels are *not* provided. While you can bring your own towel, they can be easily purchased at on-campus convenience stores.

## Climate and clothing

Beijing experiences a range of weather. Fall and spring are the best times to be there, with daytime temperatures ranging from 68 – 86F. Winter is November through March, with temperatures hovering between 0 – 32F; it is very cold. Summer is May through August with temperatures rising to about 100F and 100% humidity. July and August also mark the rainy season.

A limited but comfortable wardrobe will be the most practical. Take washable, easy-to-care-for clothing that you can layer and mix and match. Remember that you will probably be washing your clothes in local brand washing machines,

which might not be as sophisticated as the ones that you use back at home. Also, it is not customary for people to use dryers in China, so please be prepared to hang-dry your clothes. Dark colored clothing is sturdier and will keep clean longer, so you might want to keep that in mind.

Dress is casual (but not sloppy). You can dress as you do on your home campus although you may want to leave your ripped jeans at home. It is also advised that you do not wear sweat pants to class. You should bring one or two nice outfits to wear to the welcome and farewell banquets. Men do not need a suit but should bring a tie. Women do not need formal wear, but should bring a dress, skirt or a nice pants outfit.

Bring a good supply of underwear, socks and shirts, plus at least two pairs of sturdy, comfortable shoes. Good hiking shoes are also recommended. If you plan to participate in some of our hiking and rural activities, sturdy hiking shoes are strongly recommended or required.

If you are very tall or have a large build, it may be difficult to buy clothing while in China. Large shoe sizes can be very difficult or impossible to find as can extra-large shirts.

### Toiletries

Unless you are fond of a particular brand, it is not necessary to bring a few months' supply of soap, toothpaste, cosmetics, or sanitary supplies. Chinese department stores are now carrying an increasing supply of American brands, and there certainly is no shortage of Asian brands from Japan or Hong Kong.

**Note for female students:** Tampon use in China is not very common. Therefore, we encourage you to bring an ample supply of feminine hygiene products for the duration of your time in Beijing, as getting them in China, even in a city as big as Beijing, may be a challenge.

### Electrical Appliances

Electric current in China is 220 volts, not 110 volts, as in the U.S. Do not plug an appliance set for 110v into a 220v outlet or you will burn out your equipment. Many new appliances (including laptops and camera chargers) now work on "universal" or "world power" and can be used in both the U.S. and China without worry. Check your appliance (or its manual) carefully for its voltage requirements.

The increasing availability of electrical appliances means that you can buy them once you arrive in China. This is especially true of hair dryers and hair straighteners, as they usually do not have universal plugs. Therefore, it is recommended you buy them once you arrive on-site to avoid burning out your favorite hair dryer or straightener.

The following website provides helpful information concerning electrical outlets and voltage compatibility:

<http://users.telenet.be/worldstandards/electricity.htm>

### Books

Books and dictionaries are easy to buy in China. There are many foreign language bookstores that will stock both Chinese language and English language books. Cheaper copies of novels are often available for purchase from street vendors. Purchase them there instead of at home so you do not increase the weight of your luggage. We also encourage you to buy Chinese books and dive into some Chinese literature!

### Prescriptions

If you take prescription drugs, ask your doctor to give you a copy of the prescription **with the name of the generic drug, not a brand name, as your brand may not be available in China.**

**Note:** Many physicians recommend bringing Cipro as a good precaution in the event of a serious stomach disorder. Cipro is a non-addictive prescription medicine used to treat a wide range of bacteria that may cause pneumonia, diarrhea, skin and soft tissue infections and bone infections. As with all prescriptions, please ask your physician about all aspects of the drug and any side effects it may have.

### Gifts

After a semester spent with your teachers and new friends, you may want to present them with small gifts in appreciation of a challenging class or a special friendship. Small items, which reflect your personal character or background such as postcards, stamps, photographs, picture books, T-shirts or college paraphernalia are examples of gifts that your new friends would appreciate. Keep in mind that you will probably receive small gifts from your Chinese friends.

Participants say...

Pack light because you can get most things you need fairly easily in Beijing.

Don't bring too much. Try not to buy too much. Most of the experience here can't be bought.

## PREPARING FOR CULTURAL ADAPTATION

Although cultural adaptation is highly individual, research indicates that most people go through similar stages in adapting to a new environment. Any travel you have done abroad, and perhaps even within your own country, has exposed you to culture shock. But if you have never had to overcome culture shock, you might want to read about it before you depart. You'll find books relating to culture adaptation and culture shock on the recommended reading list at the back of this handbook.

During your on-site orientation, the resident staff will discuss details about culture shock and give strategies for adapting to your new surroundings.

Participants say...

Come with an open mind and a lot of patience. Leave your American/Western ideals at home. Meet locals.

Keep in mind that the Chinese concept of personal space, customer service, and everyday courtesy are much different from that of many western countries.

Watch and observe others and see what works.

Accept the fact that everybody goes through culture shock, whether you think you will or not.

If you haven't been to China before you will most likely be a little freaked out. This is normal. Enjoy it.

## Part III: Living in Beijing

China is a country claiming 5,000 years of history, with its own distinct culture. There may be times when you feel frustrated with the Chinese way and think that your way is superior. In order for you to persevere constructively, don't apply your personal "usual" perspectives to the situations you encounter. Try to see situations that may arise from a "Chinese" perspective as much as possible. In the long run, you will gain a lot from this attitude. Keeping an open mind and a sense of humor will take you far.

The Resident Staff will offer an optional lecture that on intercultural communication that will go more in-depth than the general orientation and will provide insights into the local culture's view of women and suggest ways to reduce anxiety and to ensure personal safety.

## Meeting Chinese

Just as it is impossible to define a typical person of your own nationality, it is equally impossible to define a typical Chinese person. You will meet many types of people in China who have different opinions, attitudes, and habits. The more you interact with Chinese, the better chance you'll have of forming relationships and understanding the culture. During these interactions use common sense, intelligence and a sense of objectivity. Be prepared to discuss your views freely and openly, and try to listen with an open mind.

You may arrive in China with some preconceptions about Chinese people and may encounter some Chinese people with preconceptions about foreigners. Try to put aside stereotypes and make judgments based on real experiences and interactions. If you are confronted with what you feel is a false stereotype about your home country, be frank and truthful, yet tactful in your response. Avoid refuting arguments with odious comparisons to China. This type of response will only create bad feelings. A positive and serious response from you will help dispel myths about your own home country.

## Special Note to Women

Some past participants have found that Chinese people they had met had a distorted and stereotyped image of U.S. or western women (often acquired through advertising, television, and movies). Many Chinese do not understand that the western-style friendly familiarity with strangers is merely a gesture of friendliness. Outgoing behavior may sometimes be misconstrued as something more.

## Special Note to Special Groups

Students who are members of ethnic minorities, students with disabilities, gay and lesbian students, or exceptionally tall, and overweight students may stand out and be noticed in China. Chinese society, especially in large cities, is very homogeneous, and Chinese people may stare at people who look different. They may also stare at foreigner of Asian heritage who are with a group of foreigners and may not understand why you can't speak perfect Chinese.

## SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

The health and safety of program participants abroad is understandably an important issue for all concerned. CIEE was a founding member of



the Inter-Organization Task Force on Safety and Responsibility in Study Abroad. The following website contains information about the Task Force and study abroad safety issues – <http://nafsa.org/regulatoryinformation/default.aspx?id=6775&terms=Health+safety>.

The CIEE approach to safety is threefold. First, we conduct a careful safety evaluation of every program we run on a yearly basis. Next, when the students arrive on site, we conduct an orientation that includes tips on reducing risk and handling difficult situations should they arise. Finally, program staff continuously monitor local conditions in order to provide guidance to participants throughout their stay.

Experience has shown that the single most important factor in assuring a safe study abroad experience is the sensible and cautious behavior of the participants themselves. When traveling abroad, you should exercise additional caution until you become familiar with your new surroundings. Always remain alert to what is going on around you, especially in crowded tourist areas and on public transportation.

The crime rate has increased in China in recent years as a result of the country's rapid economic development. Larger cities such as Beijing, Nanjing, and Shanghai keep good social order and are relatively safe. However, you should take the same precautions as you would in any major U.S. city. Purse snatching, pick pocketing, and other forms of theft occur frequently. More violent crime occurs less frequently but be careful and avoid questionable areas. Remain alert in crowded tourist areas and on public transportation, especially on the buses. As a Westerner, you will be a natural target for a pickpocket. Leave tempting electronic equipment, flashy clothes, jewelry or anything else you would not like to part with, at home. If you are the victim of a pickpocket, or if something is stolen, contact the police to file a report. Contact CIEE staff if you need assistance.

Avoid carrying your passport if you can. If you need to take it with you, keep it safely out of reach in a travel pouch. If you must carry it in a purse, use one that can be slung diagonally across your chest and that has a sturdy strap that cannot be easily ripped. Again, keep a photocopy of your passport in another place. This will speed up the process of replacing your documents should they be lost or stolen.

**Dorm security:** In addition to ensuring safety on the street or while traveling, you must also

protect your valuables in the dormitory. While there have been only a few minor incidents of theft in the past, the dorms in China are not unlike college dormitories in the U.S. Be certain to lock your room whenever you leave even for a quick to trip to the convenience store. If you notice something missing, notify dormitory administrators and CIEE staff. Your rooms in the Global Village are equipped with lockable drawers in the armoire and desk. Therefore, if you bring valuable items, such as expensive cameras, computers, etc., lock them in these drawers or your suitcase. Be advised that most U.S.-based insurance companies will **not** cover property lost or stolen overseas. Doors are only accessible by key card, and if you see suspicious people standing outside the doors, please tell the guards in Building #4 or the CIEE staff.

**Bicycle security:** In a country where bikes are still the most common form of transportation, it makes sense that bike stealing, especially in the case of new bikes, is a common crime. If you choose to buy a bike to get around, always lock it.

When riding your bike throughout the city, exercise special caution since the road rules are not clearly defined. Use the bell on your bike as much as you can in an effort to alert others that you are near or approaching, and always ride defensively!

**Alcoholic beverages:** There is no set drinking age, and alcoholic beverages are relatively inexpensive. As guests in a foreign country, you'll want to exercise extra discretion when drinking and be aware of your actions while doing so. After having a few drinks, people are more likely to provoke and to be provoked. It is best to avoid confrontation if possible. Please also be aware that you are far more likely to be a victim of crime if you have been drinking alcohol.

**Illegal Drugs:** Penalties for drug violations in China are often harsher than in the U.S. If you use illegal drugs, you may be expelled from the study program, and the local police may prosecute you as a criminal. Remember that you are subject to Chinese laws. You are not protected by your own country's laws. The U.S. and other governments can only seek to ensure that their citizens are not discriminated against; that is, that they receive the same treatment as do citizens of the country in which they are arrested who are charged with the same offense.



## Dismissal from the Program

You must comply with any regulations established by your home university as well as those of Peking University. The CIEE resident staff may establish additional requirements that they consider essential either to achieving your educational goals or to continuing good relations with the university or community. Resident Staff may dismiss from the program any student who does not comply with the regulations and requirements as outlined in the Release, which all students must sign before being allowed to participate in the program.

If your Resident Director warns you that you are not complying with program regulations, you must take responsibility for changing your behavior as requested, or risk early dismissal and consequent loss of time, money, and academic credit. CIEE does not refund program fees to students who are dismissed from their programs.



### **Trap: Letting down your guard**

When visiting a foreign country, you may well be enchanted by your surroundings and engage in behavior that is not typical of you. This may cause you to let your guard down and be susceptible to crime. Practice common sense and exercise good judgment.

## TELEPHONE AND MAIL

### Local and incoming calls:

Each dorm room will have a phone with which you can receive and make calls to other campus phones for free. You can buy calling cards at the convenience stores near Global Village Building #6 for calls off campus.

### Cell Phones:

In China, cell phone service is very reliable and is recommended that students purchase a Chinese cell phone rather than using ones from their home countries. Often times, the cell phones cannot handle the Chinese characters or must be unlocked by the cell phone providers. An inexpensive new cell phone can start around 250-300 RMB. In addition, a SIM card must also be purchased for approximately 100 RMB. To use, Chinese cell phones must be pre-paid with the purchase of a 50 or 100 RMB phone card. These phone cards are available at most convenience stores and shops or where cell phones are sold. They come in 50 and 100 RMB increments. You will need to purchase the brand of phone card that is relates to your cell phone service provider. For example, if you use China

Mobile, you cannot recharge your cell phone using China Unicom recharge cards.

### Long Distance Calls:

You can make phone calls from your room using U.S. calling cards or Chinese pre-paid calling cards. The easiest and cheapest way is to use IP cards, where you can buy at almost any campus store. This card is type of prepaid phone card, simply follow the directions on the back. There are several kinds of cards, *Yidong*, *Liantong*, *Tietong* and *Wangtong*. They are all good for any international calls but only valid for calling certain cities in China. Further instructions about making international calls will be provided at orientation. Moreover, services like Skype and Google Voice offer cheap international calling, varying by country. This will require adding money to one's account. For more info on how to use Google Voice, check out its website: <http://voice.google.com>

### Time Zone Note

Remind your callers that all of China, including Beijing, is in one time zone, which during the spring and summer is 12 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time. When it is 8 p.m. in Beijing, it is 8 a.m. in New York. In the winter, China is 13 hours ahead of U.S. Standard Eastern time. China does not observe Daylight Saving Time.

### Post Office and Mailing Procedures

Delivery of mail from North America generally takes 7 – 10 days. The normal letter will cost around 10 RMB. Sending packages to or from North America can be very expensive and may take a long time to clear customs.

## PROGRAM MAILING ADDRESS

*Student's Name*

CIEE Students

Shao Yuan 2-110

Peking University

Beijing 100871, China

## MONEY AND BANKING

For a semester abroad, students typically bring or use about \$2,500 USD in spending cash in Beijing (\$5,000 USD for an academic year student). You will need to be able to convert your funds to the local currency, the *renminbi* (also called *kuai*, *yuan* or RMB), in order to use them.

## ATM/Debit Cards

Using an ATM/Debit Card from a U.S.-based bank is the most efficient means of obtaining Chinese currency (RMB). Most major bank branches have ATM machines where students may use their ATM or Debit or credit cards from home to withdraw money from overseas accounts. In order for either card to work, it has to be supported by Visa or MasterCard and the back of the card must have a Cirrus, Maestro, NYCE or STAR logo. ATMs in China are not networked in the same fashion as ATMs in the U.S. Major banks such as Bank of China, Agricultural Bank of China, and ICBC are in the ATM networks mentioned above, so pay attention to the symbols of the networks listed on the ATMs.

It is always best to check with your current US bank to see if they have any "sister" or "partner" banks in China. For instance, Bank of America's sister bank is the Chinese Construction Bank. There, you can use your BOA bank card to withdraw money from the ATM machines and only incur a 1% International Withdrawal fee, but no International ATM fees. Additionally, CITI Bank has an ATM south of campus and others scattered through Beijing. Note that there is a limit of how much can be withdrawn each day, just as there is a limit at US ATM's. It usually varies between 2500-3000 RMB varying by bank.

China is a cash-based society and you typically cannot charge items to your ATM/Debit or Credit Card unless shopping at large malls or eating at upscale or international restaurants. It's always best to ask if places will take your foreign card before you attempt to make a purchase. Most participants use their ATM/Debit card to withdraw Chinese RMB from an ATM. Credit Cards charge a higher daily Annual Percentage Rate (APR) when it is used to withdraw cash from an ATM.

It is important to understand that although you will most likely be able to use your ATM/Debit card in Beijing, it is still important to bring some American Express Traveler's Checks for emergencies. If your ATM/Debit card is ever lost or stolen, the traveler's checks will be a life saver! Most areas outside of Beijing either do not have an ATM machine or it will only accept cards from specific Chinese banks.

## Traveler's Checks

Traveler's checks are getting harder to exchange each year, yet for emergencies it is still wise to have some on hand. You may be

required to use CITIC, Bank of China (main branch) or other designated places (i.e. large hotels) in order to exchange traveler's checks (or US cash), and there may be limits on how much you can exchange. CIEE would recommend that you bring \$300 - \$400 in traveler's checks as a backup means of obtaining funds.

- ✓ As long as you have a record of your traveler's check numbers, you can recover stolen or lost amounts. Be sure to buy your traveler's checks before you depart the United States. You will need your passport to cash them.

## Credit Cards

You should plan to bring one credit card with you particularly for emergency purposes. International hospitals and many of the larger hotels and shops accept this as a form of payment.

Visa and American Express credit cards can be used to obtain cash advances but there may be a daily limit and a service charge. MasterCard and Discover are also accepted at many locations.

## Bank Account

Some students may want to open a bank account at a local Chinese bank, which would also provide you with a local bankcard usable at local ATMS. Funds can be wired to your account from overseas. If you would like to open an account, ask the CIEE staff for details.

## MEDICAL FACILITIES

Students with strong Chinese language skills regularly use the Peking University clinic that is right on the campus for minor illnesses. There are also excellent international hospitals in Beijing, many with staff who speak English or other languages. More information will be provided at the on-site orientation after you arrive. You can also find out a list of hospitals at the U.S. Embassy's website: <http://photos.state.gov/libraries/china/197340/PDF/Hospitals.pdf>.

## GETTING AROUND

### Local Transportation

Many students purchase a bike to ride around campus as well as explore Beijing. Other modes of transportation that you will use include the bus system, taxis, and the subway system.

## Independent Travel

You will no doubt want to explore Beijing, particularly on weekends. But few places outside Beijing are close enough for weekend travel. On the one long travel weekend during the program, you can plan to visit another city. Due to visa restrictions imposed by the Chinese government and Peking University's policy, participants are not able to travel independently outside of mainland China. Any other extensive traveling around China should be done at the completion of the program.

• **Tip: Wherever you go...**

You must inform the CIEE Staff and the Resident Director of any travel involving an overnight stay outside Beijing. Failure to do this may result in your dismissal from the program.

## VOTING WHILE ABROAD

U.S. citizens who expect to be away from home on Election Day may request absentee ballots in person or by mail from their local election offices. Procedures vary by state but are usually quite simple if you have already registered to vote. Before leaving, you can register at your local municipality to vote in all local and federal elections while abroad.

For more information on voting abroad, see the website of the Federal Voting Assistance Program:

<http://www.fvap.gov/>

• **Tip: Notarize your ballot**

FPCA forms used to register or obtain a ballot must be notarized. If you believe you have been wrongfully denied the right to vote, you may contact the U.S. Department of Justice: <http://www.justice.gov/crt/complaint/#nine>

If you are a citizen of another country, consult the authorities governing elections in your own country for similar instructions before you leave.

## Income Tax

Most U.S. citizens and residents must file U.S. income tax returns. Internal Revenue Service income tax information and forms are available at U.S. Embassies and Consulates. Since tax laws change from year to year, direct any questions to the U.S. Consulate.

State requirements vary; contact the appropriate state office.

Non-U.S. citizens should contact the appropriate authorities in their own countries for taxation information.

## EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

In case of an emergency, parents or family can reach you by calling your Chinese cell phone, CIEE resident staff or CIEE headquarters. The

Contact information for CIEE headquarters will be included in an electronic final mailing to both you and the emergency contact designated in your application materials.

## Part IV: Policies and Procedures

Please click on the following link to view CIEE's Policies and Procedures:

<http://www.ciee.org/study-abroad/terms-conditions/>

This website includes:

### General Policies

- Admissions
- Late Arrival and Early Departure
- Exceptions
- Drug and Alcohol Violations
- Alcohol Policy
- Dismissal from the Program

### Academic Policies

- Student Academic Orientation
- Course Loads, Credits, Equivalencies and Grades
- Academic Records
- Attendance
- Pass/Fail and Audit
- Drop/Add Period
- Incompletes
- Withdrawal from a Course
- Academic Honesty
- Appeals

### Program Fees and Payment Policies

- Confirmation of Participation
- Payment of CIEE Program Fees
- Due Dates, Late Fees and Interest
- Exclusion from Participation
- Late Fees and Interest
- Withdrawal and Deferral Policy
- Program Cancellation

Please make sure to review this website. Your signature on the "Program Participant Contract" indicates that you have read and agree to comply with all of the policies provided to you on that website.

## A NOTE FROM CIEE

### Credits and Grades

Most students who choose to go abroad for a term or a year report that the experience has been one of the most powerful and enjoyable parts of their undergraduate education. We are sure that you will have the same reaction. Study abroad can also be a challenging experience, and, for some, a frustrating one. Some of the challenges you will face are part and parcel of the study abroad experience and coming to terms with them is one of the opportunities for growth that study abroad provides.

However, some students encounter another sort of challenge or frustration that is best avoided, if possible. The academic programs that CIEE and other study abroad programs provide are to varying degrees integrated into another culture's academic framework, and are often governed by rules that are unfamiliar to U.S. students. At CIEE we want you to experience the challenges of adapting to a new culture, of accepting different teaching styles, and embracing forms of learning that may be different from what you are used to.

But we are sure you will agree that problems associated with your credits and your grades are problems that should be avoided, not opportunities for growth. We want to help you avoid these problems, and with some careful planning and attention to detail, you can.

The next few paragraphs are rather dry, but taking a few minutes to get ready for the logistical aspects of your academic experience will pay off in the long run.

#### 1. Managing Your Registration.

You are probably going to sign up for five classes during your session overseas. You may have already filled out a preliminary registration form. Although it's surprising, one problem faced by some students when they return, is that the Course Registration Record we have for them doesn't match what the student actually took. You can avoid this. Read on.

#### **Make it your responsibility to keep your Course Registration Record accurate and up to date.**

Students select a preliminary course schedule, either in the U.S. before going abroad or after arrival at the Center. The courses selected constitute your Preliminary Registration, which will be sent to your home or sending school.

There will be an opportunity to change courses during the first week of the regular semester (the "drop-add" period). Once this add-drop period ends, all courses for which you are registered will remain final, and will be permanently listed on your Course Registration Record. These will be the courses that will appear on the credit and grades report that we will send to your home or sending school after the session ends (called the "CIEE Academic Record").

Although CIEE staff, both in the U.S. and at your site will make every effort to ensure that your Course Registration Record is accurate, we cannot do this unless you correctly follow all the formal procedures for making changes. You must fill out a form to drop or add a course. It is not sufficient to tell your professor, the CIEE Resident Director, or another staff person that you are changing courses—you must complete all required paperwork or the change is not official. In some cases you will also be required to obtain permission from your home institution.

To sum up, **make it your responsibility** to ensure that your Course Registration Record is accurate. If at any time you are not sure, ask to see a copy of it.

#### **There's a difference between a DROPPING a course and WITHDRAWING from one.**

As noted above, once the drop-add period is over, all of the courses for which you are registered will remain permanently on your record. However, if you realize *after the end of the drop-add period but before the middle of the session*, that special circumstances will prevent you from completing a course successfully, it is possible to "Withdraw" from the course. However, it is not possible to add a course at this time. In these cases, the course will remain on your CIEE Academic Record with a "W" grade. Permission to withdraw from a course is not automatically granted just because a student is not doing well; it is only granted when there are circumstances that the Resident Director believes *prevented* a student from doing well, and *only before the program's withdrawal deadline*. There is also required paperwork to complete if you are withdrawing from a course.

After the withdrawal deadline, all courses that remain on your Course Registration Record will be posted on your CIEE Academic Record with a letter grade. If you stop going to a course, fail to take the final examination, or fail to turn in required coursework, you will receive an F.

#### 2. Getting Good Grades.

**The time to think about your grades is at the beginning of each course, not at the end.**

Make sure you understand the basis on which the professor will be assessing your work. Practices vary from country to country. Often a single final paper or examination will be the most important (perhaps the only) opportunity to demonstrate what you have learned and/or achieved in the course. In some courses, the basis for grades may have been explained during orientation or during the registration process. An explanation may appear on the course syllabus, and/or the professor may announce grading policies. In some cases, you may not be sure how the professor will be calculating the grade. In this case as well, **make it your responsibility to be sure you understand the basis for grading in each course.** If you're not sure, ask the professor or the CIEE staff.

***How am I doing?***

Although grading differs from country to country, there are general guidelines that we can offer.

In the U.S., a student usually forms an idea of how he/she is doing as the semester progresses based on a self-appraisal of participation in class and a general sense of what the professor cares about. In most overseas situations, this is much more difficult and often not possible at all. Although we ask our teachers to give students ongoing feedback, their own academic cultures are often very different in this regard, and many teachers do not always do this in a way that enables a student to form a reliable opinion of his/her progress. Ask your professor how you are doing, perhaps two weeks after the semester has started and again two or three times during the session. Don't wait until the mid-term to do this.

**“Demanding” doesn’t mean the same thing in most overseas academic cultures.**

U.S. students are accustomed to forming an idea of how demanding a teacher is based on the pressure that is applied on a day-to-day basis. In the U.S., if a professor repeatedly challenges students to show they have read and understood the assignments, and then chastises those who can't answer, students will conclude that this is a demanding teacher. This doesn't always happen overseas. “Demanding” in an overseas context may mean simply that the grades awarded at the end of the course are lower than those awarded by other professors.

Because of these differences, you need to take stock of your situation early and often. If the regular clues are not present, you should ask, “How am I doing?” or if there isn't yet any basis for the professor to answer this question, “What is important in this class? What should I be doing in order to succeed?” Make it your responsibility to actively seek confirmation of how well you are doing in each course.

All the CIEE staff, both in the U.S. and at your program site, want you to have an enjoyable and successful session overseas. We are committed to offering top-quality assistance to help you understand the host culture and its constraints. Please do not hesitate to contact any staff member if we can advise you on how best to manage your overseas experience.

**Participants say...**

You gain exactly what you put into the program. Everyone has different aspirations and goals. Decide early on what yours are.

If you want to improve your language skills, you really need to make the effort to separate yourself from the other foreign students. Remember that the experience is what YOU make of it.

**CONCLUSION: THE CHALLENGE IS UP TO YOU**

Your stay abroad may be one of the most vital and rewarding times of your life. Don't worry about what you are going to miss at school by going overseas. You will learn so much abroad! The people you meet and the situations you experience may be invaluable in the years to come.

We hope you will arrive prepared to adjust to a way of living that is different from your own; to a way of thinking that may be, in some cases, more traditional, more conventional, and more conservative than your own. You will also most likely encounter new and different views about the your own country, and your background. Take the opportunity to learn from these and to clarify misconceptions about your own country when you can

Remember that each person you meet will see you as a representative of your home country. If you can accept differences cheerfully and with an open mind rather than attempting to alter the environment around you, you can contribute to a deeper and more positive intercultural understanding between countries.

**CIEE wishes you every success during the coming months.**

Participants say...

Overall my experience abroad is something that I would not trade for anything. Being abroad gave me the opportunity to push myself beyond my comfort zone thus increasing my abilities to deal with more confidence. My only advice to those coming abroad is to constantly push yourself. Venture out on your own and don't let your fears deprive you of the opportunity to try something new.



## Part V: Additional Resources

---

### RECOMMENDED READING

We urge you to read several of these publications to expand your knowledge of China and ease your adjustment to Chinese culture. You can find many of these books at your local bookstore; also, many are available for reference at your campus study abroad office or local library.

- Hessler, Peter, Oracle Bones: A Journey between China's Past and Present. Harper Collins, 2006
- DeWoskin, Rachel, Foreign Babes in Beijing: Behind the Scenes of a New China. W. W. Norton & Company, 2005
- Barne, Geremie, In the Red: on Contemporary Chinese Culture. Columbia University Press, 1999.
- Becker, Jasper, Hungry Ghosts: Mao's Secret Famine. New York: The Free Press, 1998.
- Chang, Jung. Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China. New York: Doubleday, 1991.
- Cohen, Warren I. America's Response to China. Columbia University Press, 2000.
- Gao, Yuan, Born Red: A Chronicle of the Cultural Revolution. Stanford University Press, 1987.
- Hu, Wenzhong and Grove, Cornelius L. Encountering the Chinese: A Guide for Americans. Maine: Intercultural Press, 1999.
- Kristoff, Nicolas and WuDunn Sherry. China Wakes: The Struggle of a Rising Power. New York. Vintage Books. 1994.
- Ping, Wang, ed. New Generation: Poems From China Today. New York: Hanging Loose Press, 1999.
- Spence, Jonathan. The Search for Modern China. New York: W.W. Norton, 1999.
- Starr, John Bryan. Understanding China. Hill and Wang, 2001.

### BOOKS ON CULTURAL ADAPTATION

Adaptation to a new culture can be difficult. The following reading list contains publications that deal specifically with issues of culture shock and the difficulties associated with living overseas:

- Citron, James. Short-Term Study Abroad: Integration, Third Culture Formation and Reentry, NAFSA: Association for International Educators, 1996.
- Kepets, Dawn. Back in the USA: Reflecting on Your Study Abroad Experience, NAFSA: Association for International Educators, 1999.
- Kohls, Robert. Survival Kit for Overseas Living: For Americans Planning to Live and Work Abroad, Intercultural Press, 2001.
- Storti, Craig. The Art of Crossing Cultures (Second Edition), Intercultural Press, 2001.
- Storti, Craig. The Art of Coming Home, Intercultural Press, 2001.
- Wolfgang, Aaron. Everybody's Guide to People Watching, Intercultural Press, 1995.

### SUGGESTED WEBSITES

Website	Description
---------	-------------

<a href="http://www.ciee.org">www.ciee.org</a>	CIEE's web site. If you haven't already, take a look and find out about other CIEE activities around the world.
<a href="http://www.kayak.com">www.kayak.com</a>	For information on tickets, travel gear, and other interesting information for travelers
<a href="http://www.travel.state.gov">www.travel.state.gov</a>	The U.S. State Department Bureau of Consular Affairs home page providing Consular Information Sheets, Travel Warnings, U.S. Passport Information and Application Procedures, U.S. Consulate and Embassy Addresses Abroad, and U.S. Customs Information
<a href="http://www.step.state.gov">www.step.state.gov</a>	The State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program. Students are <i>strongly</i> encouraged to register their semester or year in China with the State Department.
<a href="http://www.usembassy-china.org.cn/">www.usembassy-china.org.cn/</a>	U.S. Embassy in China website
<a href="http://studentsabroad.state.gov">http://studentsabroad.state.gov</a>	Students Abroad: A State Department resource for Students
<a href="http://www.pku.edu.cn">www.pku.edu.cn</a>	Peking University website

**Other useful sites about China:**

[www.chinavista.com](http://www.chinavista.com)

[www.csis.org/pacfor/ccejjournal.html](http://www.csis.org/pacfor/ccejjournal.html) (English language website)

[www.zhongwen.com](http://www.zhongwen.com)

<http://www.thebeijinger.com/>

<http://www.cityweekend.com.cn/beijing/>

## **SUGGESTED PACKING CHECKLIST FOR: CIEE STUDY CENTER IN BEIJING, CHINA**

CIEE students have helped design this list which they feel will help you with packing. Please note that many of the general and optional items can be purchased in China.

### ***Important Documents***

- ☐ Airline ticket (save the return ticket)
- ☐ CIEE Program Handbook and pre-departure information
- ☐ Major Credit card (MasterCard, Visa), phone card, ATM card
- ☐ Home advisor's address, fax, e-mail
- ☐ International Student Identity Card (if purchased)
- ☐ iNext travel insurance card
- ☐ Passport/Photocopy of passport (keep separate from passport)
- ☐ Record of Vaccinations
- ☐ Travelers checks/List of travelers check numbers (keep separate from travelers checks)

### ***Clothing***

- ☐ Tops (Dress: 1-2, Other: 5-6)
- ☐ Casual Pants (jeans, khakis, etc.; 2-4 pairs)
- ☐ Skirts/Dresses (2-3 including one nicer one)
- ☐ Shorts (2-4 pairs)
- ☐ Cotton T-shirts (darker colors)
- ☐ Underwear (10)
- ☐ Bathing suit (bikinis not recommended)
- ☐ Tie
- ☐ Socks (6)
- ☐ Rain gear-poncho
- ☐ Pajamas/nightgown
- ☐ Sweater/Sweatshirt/jacket
- ☐ Coat & gloves for cold weather
- ☐ Sports jacket for men (optional)
- ☐ Dress shoes
- ☐ Walking shoes/hiking boots/sandals

### ***General***

- ☐ Laptop
- ☐ Guidebook
- ☐ Gynecological supplies (Yeast infection medication, etc.; O.B. brand Tampons and Chinese brand sanitary napkins available)
- ☐ Extra pair of glasses or contact lenses/solutions
- ☐ Good pair of sunglasses
- ☐ Money belt or pouch
- ☐ Small medical kit (aspirin, band-aids, Neosporin, anti-diarrhea medication,

cold medicine, sun block, nail clippers/file, prescription medicines and prescriptions—including the original copy)

- ☐ Contraceptives
- ☐ Insect repellent containing DEET
- ☐ Toiletries: toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss, soap, shampoo, deodorant, razors, shaving cream, wax (several of each if you're particular about a brand)
- ☐ Towel (2 that are not too thick, as they will need to drip dry)
- ☐ Travel alarm clock/watch w/alarm

### ***Optional but useful***

- ☐ Small gifts for instructors and friends
- ☐ Journal
- ☐ Robe
- ☐ Sewing Kit
- ☐ iPod or MP3 player

### **The following can usually be purchased in China.**

- ☐ Backpack/Overnight bag for traveling (Highly recommended)
- ☐ Brush/comb
- ☐ Flashlight
- ☐ Journal
- ☐ Umbrella
- ☐ Pocket knife
- ☐ Batteries
- ☐ Speakers