Student Ambassadors hold Chinese Course Program

From March 2nd to the 16th, the Student Ambassadors (SA) from National Chengchi University (NCCU) held a series of Chinese courses for exchange students interested in the Chinese culture. Every Wednesday, SA provided a unique program that is different from the regular programs at the Chinese Language Center.

“I think it’s more causal, but more lively than the normal course, and I think I can learn more from this about adapting to the daily life in Taiwan,” said one of the exchange students. The regular Chinese course provided by the language center is usually taught in a more rigid context and concentrates on Chinese grammar and literature. However, the Chinese course by SA focused on something more practical like how to make a reservation or ask for directions on the bus.

After each lecture, SAs held a brainstorming session, discussions, and role plays to further practice what was taught previously. The learning atmosphere was very active and the exchange students also got a chance to better understand Chinese culture while making friends with our local SA.

Each week there was a special activity that ended off the course. In the first week, SA invited senior students to teach Chinese calligraphy; one of the characters introduced in this activity was the “Yong” (永) character which consists of all the strokes in Chinesecalligraphy. “I think it’s like drawing with a quill,” said one foreign student, who praised the skill it took to master calligraphy.

In the second week, there were two members from the Taiji (太極) association who taught Chinese martial arts like “Tiger, Dragon, Crane, Snake” which is said to help increase your physical balance with nature.

Last but not least, the exchange students learned how to make a cute and lovely sachet for the upcoming Dragon Boat Festival.

Besides the calligraphy, martial arts, and the sachet making, the exchange students experienced the fun and complexity of Chinese culture, while our local students also learned a new found respect for their own traditions.
Popular screenwriter, Kao, reveals secrets behind the scenes

Kao says the tough training to be an assistant producer makes her learn to solve problems with creativity.

“\textit{You will face unfair treatment as a freshman},” Kao said. She added that she was taught to carry the phone on a tray when delivering it to the director.

Kao said handling who got what meal also required a certain amount of skill; the cheapest food was for the producer due to the limited budget, while the director liked eating more expensive things.

Later Kao became a screenwriter. When she was a new hand, she wasn’t paid because she trusted her boss and didn’t sign the contract. The tough experiences helped Kao quickly gain more maturity.

positive way, Kao said the more failures you have; the closer you are to success. “\textit{Persistence itself is a kind of success},” Kao said.

Kao said she showed the darkest of her experiences, because she wanted to let students feel “even facing frustrations, they won’t be worse than mine.”

\textit{As a writer, Kao studied and wrote all through college. Majoring both in advertising and public finance, Kao was too busy to hang out with her friends.}

“\textit{How can we balance schoolwork and extracurricular activities with such a busy schedule?” asked Emily Hsu (徐偉榕), a student from the Department of Accounting.}

Kao said she studied too hard. “\textit{I regret it now, if I could do it over again, I wouldn’t take so many credits}.”

Friends are the most valuable. Kao asked students to make more friends who cherish the same ideals as possible. She said after graduating, people usually consider about self-interests as the first priority.

\textit{Meanwhile, Kao encouraged students to cherish what they learned in class, because the theories that appear in the textbooks are not useless. “The concepts in the books and the opportunity to learn by ourselves are very beneficial when you start working,” she said.}
The wind is howling past your ears, you’re barefoot on a beach facing the immense Pacific Ocean, with the tallest mountains in North East Asia looming over you. The spectacular gorges of the Taroko National Park lie waiting to engulf you in their immenseness. How great would it be to be able to share all these experiences with friends from around the world?

With a hope of introducing Taiwan’s famous scenery to its visiting foreign students, the Student Ambassadors (SA) held a two-day field trip to Hualien on March 19 and 20.

“We chose Hualien as our destination because it really speaks of Taiwan’s uniqueness—its geographical diversity and rich cultures,” said Cindy Lai (賴伊柔), one of the coordinators for the trip. According to Lai, three out of four of the participants are not locals, “this is probably because Hualien is relatively inaccessible for international students,” Lai explains.

During the trip, they appreciated the natural beauty of carved gorges, explored the Sgadan Trail (砂卡礑步道), and visited the Changchun Shrine (長春祠). Magnus Mårtensson, an international student from Sweden, said the gorge landscape in the Taroko National Park looked totally different from the U-shaped glacial trough in Northern Europe. In the evening, they enjoyed the tranquility of Cisingtan Beach (七星潭). At night, they experienced the Taiwanese night market culture with their stomachs full and their hearts warm. Besides the natural beauty, all participants had a cultural adventure as well.

“Most international students were so impressed with the food served in the aboriginal restaurant. They enjoyed eating outdoors and liked to try anything they haven’t heard about before, such as the grilled wild boar meat and the Roselle sauce,” Lai said, adding that another restaurant shocked them in a totally different way. “We had lunch at a restaurant called ‘Eunuch Chicken.’ The chicken was delicious, but the humor behind the name requires some basic understanding in Chinese to be fully understood,” Lai said.

However, some cultural differences require no further explanation. For example, “during the rafting trip, we taught them the most Chinese way to keep up the morale, and they showed us theirs. It’s so interesting to see the differences in style, and the sparks these differences triggered,” Lai said.

In order to introduce Taiwan to the international students, the SAs made efforts to gather information before the trip, including making sure that they knew how to explain every detail when asked.

“This two-day trip actually helps bring a sense of togetherness and mutual understanding to an extent that is unlikely if we only shake hands or nod heads. For example, I was not aware of the fact that foreign students might not be that into too many ice-breakers or team-building activities before,” Lai said. The field trip has allowed local and international students bond and understand each other in a natural, relaxing, and fun way.

All the students enjoy the exciting white water rafting at the famous spot Siouguluan River in Hualien even under the sizzling sunshine.

http://oic.nccu.edu.tw
Open House Day impresses APAIE Attendees

This is the first time APAIE has been held in Taiwan and NCCU had the privilege of ushering in this new era of cooperation and development. Despite a partnership spanning more than a decade with the BI Norwegian School of Management (BI), Senior Adviser of International Relations Ellen Tobiasson said that this is actually her first visit to NCCU, and she was surprised to see such a huge lush campus surrounded by mountains.

In addition to being overwhelmed by NCCU’s green and natural environment, Tobiasson said that she was impressed by the differences in the teaching styles between the two countries.

Johanna Julin Lilius, the LLP Erasmus Coordinator of Hanken School of Economics also said that after the two-year partnership it was good to have the opportunity to get to know NCCU first hand, as well as have the opportunity to meet the representatives from other participating schools.

As part of the Open House Day, the OIC organized a brief NCCU and Taiwan cultural presentation and campus tour to allow their partner school colleagues to fully understand the extensive resources that NCCU has available; Representatives were most amazed, for example, at the design of the Shun-wen Auditorium where course lectures and speeches are often given.

The International Student Advisor Dira Berman also shared her experiences working with international students at NCCU. “Most international students come to Taiwan without knowing any Chinese and it’s very likely for them to encounter difficulties both in life and studies,” she said.

According to Berman, NCCU and the OIC are very experienced in dealing with these issues and have set up a counseling section to help international students adjust and find a new “comfort zone”.

The Open House Day, finally, was wrapped up with a luncheon at I-House, the international student dormitory, providing every honorable guest with an opportunity to rest and have a chat with each other.

Klotz can’t get enough of NCCU

It is not uncommon to see a visitor come back to a tourist attraction, sometimes simply just to get another look at the scenery, but it is a little uncommon to see a student go to the same school on another term of exchange unless of course there is something really worth exploring about the school or campus.

Philipp Klotz, a business administration graduate student from the University of Innsbruck, chose to once again come back to National Chengchi University (NCCU) after his first exchange in the Spring of 2010.

OIC: What is your impression of NCCU?

Klotz: People here are very kind and helpful toward international students. This really makes foreign visitors have an easy time fitting in. The campus is huge, yet it’s pretty centralized for students to get things done.

OIC: What do you think about the courses here?

Klotz: For the professional courses, I like the way they structure them. Teachers grade students based on their attendance, participation, presentation, assignments and exams. The Chinese classes here are more intensive than those back in my country. The class size is rather small, usually around five to six students, and it’s all taught in Chinese. That indeed helps me to learn a lot.

OIC: What is the class that impresses you the most?

Klotz: I think it’s the “International Aspect of Insurance Regulation”. We do not have similar courses back in Innsbruck since it’s a very specialized field. Besides interesting discussions with strong student participation, the professor would also bring in some insights from Taiwan and Asia in this field.

OIC: What is your expectation for your second academic stay?

Klotz: First of all, of course, I want to pick up more business knowledge from the school. I wish to know more about the island, people and the culture here. I am also working on my application to the International Doctoral Program in Asia-Pacific Studies (IDAS), to continue my studies in the field of Asian economics.
For those who would like to study abroad in Europe, “Erasmus Mundus” could be just the ticket for you.

Erasmus Mundus, initiated in 2004 by the European Commission of Education and Training, aims to integrate European and non-European higher education institutions around the globe. Since the successful collaboration of European Universities under the utilization of the Erasmus Program, Erasmus Mundus has developed more than 150 international masters and doctorates programs for postgraduate students, including:

1. Higher education institutions wishing to implement joint programs at postgraduate level or with inter-institutional cooperative partnerships between universities from European and other third countries.

2. Individual student, researcher or university staff who wish to spend a study, research or teaching period in one of the above mentioned joint programs or cooperation partnerships.

3. Any organization active in the field of higher education wanting to develop projects which aim at enhancing the attractiveness, profile, visibility and image of European higher education worldwide.

With an abundance of scholarships, postgraduate students are flocking towards Erasmus Mundus programs. As of 2010, more than eight Taiwanese students have been granted Erasmus Mundus scholarships. According to the Commission, the scholarship provides students with 24,000 € for masters programs and 60,000 to 130,000 € for doctorates per year with tuition and other institutional fees included. The duration of the scholarship is generally one year, while the maximum is two for the master's and three years for the doctoral programs. The programs are designed for joint degrees; therefore it is possible to earn a joint degree at more than one university.

The minimum collaboration should include at least three higher educational institutions from three different eligible European countries and as well as one higher education institution from a third-country (e.g., Taiwan).

Those who would like to apply for the Erasmus Mundus scholarship may find the following information useful:

1. Check the Erasmus Mundus website (http://ec.europa.eu/education/external-relationship-programmes/doc72_en.htm) for Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses (EMMCs) or Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorates (EMJDs).

2. As a student studying in an institution with an existing partnership with an Erasmus Mundus project, you could apply through your own school or through an exchange program with a partner college.

This is a new opportunity to collaborate with Europe’s leading higher educational institutes. Currently there is only one program “MULTI (Multilingualism and Multiculturalism, Linguistic approaches to Transition and Identity)” through National Taiwan University. National Chengchi University (NCCU) and other institutes will soon have the opportunity of collaborating later this year.

The Ministry of Education has proposed an “Erasmus Mundus Taiwan” scholarship for those on waiting list of the Erasmus Mundus scholarship.

For further information please go to http://www.edu.tw/BICER/content.asp?site_content_sn=8488.
AIESEC to hold workshop series to promote international internship and volunteering

For Kelly Lee (李亭逸), a student from Department of Money and Banking National Chengchi University (NCCU), this winter vacation was totally different from the previous ones. During her winter vacation she chose to leave her comfort zone and went to India as an international volunteer in which she had a challenging yet rewarding new experience. Kelly got the chance through the NCCU office of the International Association of Student in Economics and Management (AIESEC), one of the student clubs at NCCU, which aims to provide more opportunities for local students on campus to go out for international training and volunteering.

As the world’s largest student-driven non-profit international organization, AIESEC spreads over 107 countries across six continents and with over 50,000 members. NCCU is among the fifteen universities in Taiwan participating in this international project for a deeper understanding between different economies, ethnic groups, and cultures. As NCCU expands its influence as a leading academic institution in the international arena, AIESEC will play a significant role in providing local students with a global learning environment.

“We hope to provide NCCU students with an accessible international platform for them to build global networks and learn various skills,” said Jenny Chen (陳昱竹), Vice President of Youth Business Development Department in AIESEC NCCU. According to Chen, over twenty NCCU students found volunteer or intern opportunities to work and stay in a foreign country last year. “Even here in NCCU,” Chen said, “by working with AIESEC, I’ve learned how to properly write an English email, to design a proposal cooperatively through negotiation and persuasive skills, and most importantly not to get stuck, but to see myself in the larger global context.”

Kelly Lee just came back from her volunteer job in India Youth Climate Network (IYCN) this winter vacation. Working as a NGO consulter in the area of environmental protection, she had to work with an international team, which “really helped cultivate communication skills,” Lee said, adding that the experience in India gave her a deeper insight into fundamental cultural differences between India and Taiwan though it’s only 2.5-hour flight away. She also noticed conspicuous differences between university students in Taiwan and other countries. “While European students tend to have relatively broader horizons and global vision, students from China work so hard to stand out from their peers,” Lee explained, adding that this winter’s volunteer experience has really spurred her to improve her ability so as to become more competitive in the global market.

Five other workshops are scheduled this semester, with the first one coming soon on April 6. “We have made our organization more specialized in order to provide more opportunities for NCCU students to go global,” Chen said.

Kelly gets an Indian-style tattoo designed not based on fixed patterns but free artistic expressions.

Kelly gives special cultural gifts to children she met in India by writing their names in Chinese characters.