Here, There, & Everywhere

Now that we have gotten settled in Minhang and are finally getting into our groove, many of us are taking time to venture throughout China either during our break in the middle of the week or on the weekends. Although for most trips we only have two or three days to get where we are going and back, we have become masters of making the most of our travel time. Homework and studies are compressed into our travel time either on trains, planes, or busses. That way, when we get to our destinations we can do nothing but fully take in everything we are surrounded by. And believe me, there is a lot to soak in. Whether it is the most beautiful of sunrises in the mountains or history filled cities, traveling in China never ceases to disappoint. Some popular destinations in recent weeks have been Beijing, Nanjing, Xi’an, Huashan, Huangshan, and many other short day trips in the Shanghai area. It’s really quite amazing to see how comfortable we all have become using public transportation since we arrived over 80 days ago. Planning trips has boiled down to simply going to the bus or train station the day of departure and hoping for the best. Sometimes it works out and sometimes unplanned adventures come to be. Just last week, a group was packed...
and ready to go hike the Yellow Mountains right after class and ended up in Nanjing instead. Living on a whim? Maybe. But there is something to be said for embracing the fullness of our youth by burning both ends of the candle and sleeping in a different hostel bed every night.

By: Kevin Girardi

**A Taste of the Old**

One location that almost every member of our study abroad group has been to in recent weeks is Beijing. Shanghai is the future of China, the glitzy lights and modern skyscrapers. But Beijing holds the roots of China. The history present there is on a scale many magnitudes higher than that of Shanghai. That is exactly why it has been such a popular destination for us. Every location in Beijing was simply breathtaking. From the Great Wall, to the Forbidden City, and Tiananmen Square, every location was meaningful. When hiking the wall, one feels the vastness of the country, when standing within the Forbidden City, the power that once was and still is shines through, and when within Tiananmen Square, one feels a connection to the full history of China.

![Wangfujing Cathedral](image)

Some other great experiences while in Beijing included walking through the Temple of Heaven (one of the city’s largest gardens) at sunset and waiting for the lights to illuminate every path, enjoying some authentic Beijing duck, touring the beautiful Summer Palace, attending Easter services at Wangfujing Cathedral, and Passover services at a local Chabad.

![Huashan Plank Walk](image)

What made many of the trips to the capital even more special was that many got to experience it with their families. In recent weeks, many parents and siblings have made the journey to China. Many got the opportunity to show off their new language skills to their families and share some amazing experiences with them as they toured around the country. Regardless of whom we experienced Beijing with, everyone checked off some major items on their China lists and made even more wonderful friends in the process.

By: Kevin Girardi
Quotes
“Flying kites lets us slow down and appreciate the beauty of the here and now.”
-Sameer Saiya

“With the improvement of the weather, all the outdoor activities are very enjoyable. Today it was over 80 degrees!”
-Abhi Ravishankar

“I found a bug in my food and I’m not sure if it was part of the dish or not. I kept eating anyways. It was delicious.”
-Caelan Castilloux

“Beijing couldn’t have been better. The Great Wall, Temple of Heaven, and Forbidden City made it a must visit location in China.”
-Mohammed Alrob

“The sunrise in Huangshan was absolutely breathtaking!”
-Trevor Tschosik

“Our unplanned trip to Nanjing was full of culturally rich history. It was one of my favorite adventures so far.”
-Katie Desmond

“Nothing compares to waking up on top of a mountain and breathing that fresh China air.”
—Kevin Girardi

“I joined a Kong-Fu club on campus just for kicks…”
-William VanBuskirk

“It was moving to see thousands of years of Chinese history stretch out over the mountains as far as the eye can see.”
-Brendan Michaelson

Spring is Here
Spring is in the air here at Minhang. This past week we experienced some unseasonably warm days… it even got up into the 80s. With the warm weather, we are spending more time outside. Some of our outdoor activities include tennis, kite flying, football, basketball, soccer, and running. We are very fortunate here on campus since there are many outdoor facilities in which to partake in outdoor recreation. Additionally, there are some beautiful parks on campus. Personally, this is one of my favorite ways to kill an hour on campus. I just walk around and enjoy the surroundings. The parks are never too crowded. They have ponds, bridges, sculptures, and many stone paths to follow around. From inside the park, it is hard to see any campus buildings so it really feels like you got away for an afternoon. My favorite one is located across from one of our dining courts. After I eat lunch or dinner, I will take a nice walk around the park. Since it is Spring, everything is beginning to bloom. The colors of the flowers on some of the trees are breathtaking. I also like the new leaves appearing on the weeping willow trees. When this weather starts to come around at Purdue, it is hard to pay attention in classes. It is only going to be harder to focus on school since we are in China and there is so much to explore. I am very excited about the coming weeks and I cannot believe it is already April!
By: Abigail Lebowitz

Let’s Go Fly A Kite
At the Minhang campus, we were all given a buddy. This buddy is a Chinese student who is part of the International Student Council (ISC). They are there to grab lunch or help us get around campus. They also organize activities for us to do together. Just a week ago we all met up on a nice spring day to fly kites. There is a large field in front of the
mechanical engineering building that we used. They also provided snacks for the afternoon. For many of us Purdue students, it had been a while since we had flown a kite. On the contrary, kite flying is somewhat common here and people pass the time with it. You could definitely tell the experienced from the inexperienced. A group of us tried to attach a go-pro to a kite; it didn’t work too well but we did get it a bit up into the air. This was a nice way to spend a Wednesday afternoon and we are happy that we joined our peers in this experience.

By: Abigail Lebowitz

Getting Involved: Campus Activities

A few of us students have had the opportunity to do a little teaching while in China. William VanBuskirk and Josh Moore, an Industrial Engineering major from Purdue studying here until July, have been teaching native Chinese speakers how to improve their English. Josh had this to say about his experience, “The past few weeks, I’ve had the opportunity to tutor several groups of Chinese children at a local library. I have read books to them, taught them English games, and led them in singing songs from America. I’ve really enjoyed the experience of teaching English to children of a different culture and it’s been an absolute blast spending time with the students each week.” William has also spoke highly of his experience. They will both continue meeting with their students during the week until they return home to the U.S. Opportunities like this are what make this program special and are great examples of the learning and growth each of us experience outside the classroom while we are here in China.

A lot of us have been getting involved on campus over the last 6 weeks here in Minhang. Some of the popular activities include swimming, running, basketball, soccer, pool, working out, tennis, football, dancing and Kung Fu. It is easy to join clubs here and the Chinese students are always welcoming and happy to
teach each of us anything we aren’t accustomed to. This is how many of us have made great new friends and learned a lot about the lives of typical Chinese college students. Many of us have even made friends that will last beyond the length of this program. As seen in the photo of the dance team, Nikko Sadural and Sarah Lyons have been practicing with the dance team for the last few weeks and really enjoy the opportunity to get involved and campus as well as meet new people in a fun and exciting way. Kung Fu club has also drawn the attention of William VanBuskirk. He said, “I joined Kung Fu club just for kicks!” It is quite the unique opportunity. Kung Fu club meets once a week and focuses on building core strength as well as mastering the art of respect. Many of the students involved in Kung Fu club have practiced the art their entire lives. William also leads the bible study group, which has been meeting after class every Tuesday since the first week of classes in Minhang. It is a great opportunity for members of the program or anyone interested in attending to learn about the Bible and the Christian faith. Students from many religious backgrounds have attended and everyone that has participated has really enjoyed sharing the experience with everyone else. The last activity of note is the SJTU Lions football team. Josh Moore, a former high school quarterback, and Mike McBride have been helping to lead practices and prepare the team for games each week against other nearby Shanghai schools. This Saturday, they will be playing on the field with the Lions for a big rivalry game along with Brendan Michaelson, Trevor Tchosik and Ben Steskal. Check back in the next edition of the Shanghai Times to see the result of the game as well as pictures of the team.

By: Mike McBride