

Tianjin, China

Owen Brown



Program: Intensive Chinese Language, Summer 2018

Majors: Chinese and Film and Media Arts

Earning the Language Immersion Badge:



Earning the language immersion badge was a highly rewarding experience. The best way to improve your language skills is to dive right in to an environment where the language is necessary for every interaction. Communicating with native speakers will give you a better understanding of the language and its real

world usage. You have to be unafraid to speak incorrectly and go with the flow but by constant practice, you will undoubtedly improve. If you put yourself in a position where you have no other choice but to use the language then you'll be predisposed to gain new insights with the language you study. I was nervous at first to use my Chinese with some native speakers but quickly learned the Chinese are very kind and understanding; they are excited to know that you're making an effort to learn their language. I'd assume most countries are this way. Similarly, locals are often very eager to practice their English on you, I've had many interactions where I talked to the person in Chinese and they responded in English. Everyone is excited to use their language skills and everyone is understanding of your desire to improve.



Transferable Skills:



I've definitely improved my communication skills. Having to explain things in a language I'm mostly unfamiliar with made me learn better ways to communicate both verbally and non-verbally. Furthermore I've gained new insights into Asian culture that I believe makes me more equipped to understand the

Chinese people and their country. This also applies to politics. Sometimes Americans think of China very antagonistically in the political sense but they don't understand how the Chinese people feel, or how their government operates. Being in China really opened my eyes to the culture of China.

“Learning abroad is the best decision I've made in college. Regardless of what you choose to do with your education traveling abroad and exposing yourself to foreign cultures and customs will make you grow as a person and develop a newfound sense of open-mindedness.”