

Central College's China Program

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In Spring 1990, the first group of Central College students spent a semester studying at Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, China as part of Central College's Study-Abroad program. Central also maintains programs in Carmarthen (Wales), Colchester and London (England), Granada (Spain), Leiden (Netherlands), Merida (Mexico), Paris (France), and Vienna (Austria).

Central's China program is held to the same high academic standard for undergraduate study-abroad programs that Central has maintained since 1965. In Hangzhou students study at one of the five highest-ranking universities in China, Zhejiang University, which was founded in 1897. With a yearly enrollment of over 2,000 students from all over the world, the faculty of Zhejiang University has had a great deal of experience in teaching international students. This is especially true of those teaching in the International College of "Zhe Da" (as the university is referred to locally), where most of the programs devoted to international students are concentrated. Students are required to take between 12-17 semester hours, six of which are in Chinese language study and one is the *China Seminar* taught by Central's resident director. Chinese language courses are available at every level, from beginning to advanced, so no previous coursework in Chinese language is required. Those who choose to continue an intensive language study may complete an additional six credits in language. Other options available include studio arts (Chinese painting and calligraphy), physical science (Tai Chi and Gong Fu), and a *Teaching ESL* internship. For students who express other specific interests, the Office of International Education at Central College is ready to work with the resident director in Hangzhou to arrange independent study courses over a variety of academic disciplines, as well as 2 or 3 credit internships in a number of fields.

Orientation begins before the regular semester starts in Hangzhou, during which time students learn about Chinese customs, values, and history through a series of presen-

tations, discussions, and excursions. Practical skills (shopping, using public transportation, banking, etc.) are also addressed in the initial orientation. Orientation continues throughout the semester in the *China Seminar* course and includes excursions both within Hangzhou and to other important sites. Central College students also are introduced to a Chinese friend. This friend is a local student who has volunteered to help the Central student deal with cultural issues while he or she gains the opportunity to speak English. Both students benefit from this cultural and linguistic exchange, which begins by email before the start of the program and develops more fully in the first days of orientation.

Zhejiang University's location in Hangzhou provides a structured environment that allows students to explore independently. Students live in the International Student Residence on the main Zhejiang University campus. A beautiful setting, one of Zhe Da's several campuses, Zheliang is surrounded by hills on one side and West Lake on the other, with nearby shops and public transportation. Meal stipends are included in the program fees. The city of Hangzhou, known as "heaven on earth," is located near the East China Sea on the Qiantang River, and is surrounded by many traditional and historical towns. The area is rich in the history and culture of many emperors, painters, and poets because it was one of the seven ancient capitals of China. Zhejiang Province is prosperous, famous for its tea and silk production. The region, approximately 100 miles south of Shanghai, provides easy access to rail, bus, and airline routes.

Cultural activities and excursions are included in the program fee. Students are given the opportunity to attend concerts, theater and museum visits, and acrobatic performances. Excursions include visits to the surrounding area, as well as a three-day visit to Shanghai (visiting the Shanghai Museum, the Oriental Pearl TV Tower, the traditional Cheng Huang Temple, and the modern, bustling Nanjing Road), and a five-day trip to Beijing (visiting the Great Wall, Forbidden City, Summer Palace, the Ming Tombs, and more).

The *Teaching ESL* internship is a special component of the Central College China program. Along with other Chinese students at Zhe Da, all study abroad students are strongly encouraged to enroll in the *Teaching ESL* internship. Each Central student in the internship works with a Chinese faculty member who teaches English to non-majors. Valuable cultural insights and friendships are gained through this experience. For those interested in working with children, ESL teaching opportunities at the elementary level are also available. No previous training in ESL is necessary and students may earn up to two semester hours of credit.

In addition to the spring semester program, Central College Abroad offers a Summer TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) Internship program from mid-July to mid-August. This program includes visits to Beijing (four nights) and Shanghai (three nights). The focus of this program is an intensive three-week experience teaching English to Chinese elementary and middle school students. This program, located on the newest campus of

Zhejiang University (Zi Jin Gang), allows students with an interest in K-12 education and/or teaching ESL to gain practical experience in the field while learning about China. Since this program requires student teachers to be responsible for a classroom of 20-25 Chinese students, as well as to create appropriate materials and activities, preference is shown for students who have successfully completed the *Teaching ESL* internship during the regular, spring semester in Hangzhou or those who have background in teaching ESL (e.g., course work in TESOL, teaching/tutoring experience, course work in elementary/secondary education, etc.).

The fees for the TESOL Summer Internship Program (TBA for 2005/\$1,800 for summer of 2004) include on-site orientation, tuition for six semester hours of credit in "ENGL 397: *Internship in Teaching English as a Second*

Language, on-site advising and oversight with Central College faculty, airfare stipend, room and board, excursions to Beijing and Shanghai, and an International Student Identification Card.

For further information about Central College Abroad programs, please call 1-800-831-3629, or write to studyabroad@central.edu or visit <http://www.central.edu/abroad>. Applicants and their parents and advisors are also encouraged to contact Brian Zylstra, Director of the International Education Office at 641-628-5641 or at zylstrab@central.edu and Dr. David Purnell, the faculty liaison for the Central College China Program, at 641-628-5210 or purnelld@central.edu.



Central College Students and Faculty
at Zhejiang University