



Experiencing China

Tsinghua Summer Program 2016



Program Overview

August 1 2016, the opening ceremony of Tsinghua University's inaugural "Experiencing China" Summer Program was launched in the Main Hall. This ground-breaking university-level program aimed to further strengthen Tsinghua as a key link between China and the world, promote mutual understanding between Chinese and international students, and provide students with a comprehensive platform to explore key aspects of China.

During the two-week experiential learning program, 141 participants from 26 countries and regions explored interconnected challenges and opportunities facing China and the world - economics, environment, education, politics, society and culture. They took part in keynote lectures, field-trips, cultural experiences, and exchanged views during group discussions. With a series of formal presentations, insightful posters, poems and creative human sculptures, participants encapsulated their experiences and understanding of China within the context of the various topics of their groups in the "Global Young Leaders Forum & Expo," the graduation ceremony of the program. (To see a video of Experiencing China Summer Program 2016 at Tsinghua University Youtube channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9svo4Tx_Q0o)



**EXPERIENCING
CHINA 2016**



"Exchanges between Chinese and young foreign students marks a significant influence on building China's global image. Encouraging international students to experience China and further promote the understanding of China and Chinese culture in their home countries is not only a responsibility for Tsinghua, but should also be an obligation for more Chinese universities"

– Prof **Shi Yigong**
Vice President, Tsinghua University



Prominent Scholars,
7 keynote lectures,
to know more about China and Tsinghua



China and Outside World

Prof **Bochang LI**

School of Humanities, Tsinghua University



Government of China: Policy and Case Study

Prof **Lan XUE**

School of Public Policy and Management, Tsinghua University



Intellectual History of China

Prof **Hui WANG**

School of Humanities, Tsinghua University



Economy of China: Achievements and Challenges

Prof **Jinliang LI**

School of Economics & Management,

Dean of Office of International Cooperation and Exchange, Tsinghua University



Diplomatic Strategy and Policy of China

Prof **Canrong JIN**

School of International Studies, Renmin University of China



Education in China under the Context of Globalization

Prof **Jinghuan SHI**

Executive Dean of Institute of Education, Tsinghua University



Air Pollution in China

Prof **Kebin HE**

School of Environment, Tsinghua University



Focus Groups and their respective field-trips

Architecture Group

Group members paid visits to multiple historical and modern architectural sites, including Confucian Temple, Forbidden City, the Great Wall, Summer Palace, and learned about the traditional style of Chinese architecture and culture. They were expected to gain insights by comparing and contrasting their discoveries.



Education Group

With a close look at Confucian Temple and Beijing Imperial Academy, group members explored traditional Chinese intellectual education, and learned development of education in China in the past one century during visiting National Library and Confucius Institute. The final field trip site was Jusfoun Big Data Group, where students focused on the surging online education industry and gained insights relating to technology's influence on education.





Economy Group

Group members aimed to explore the forefront of Chinese industry and enterprise. They paid visits to Mercedes-Benz Beijing, a mobile phone software design company, a computer vision research center and “Zhongguancun Inno Way”. Group members described, designed and challenged business models of the respective enterprises.



Environment Group

To gain a better understanding of weather, water and energy issues, group members visited Beijing Olympic Park, China Meteorological Administration, Gaobeidian Wastewater Treatment Plant and Global Energy Interconnection Research Center. They were able to have face-to-face conversations with experts in their respective fields and experience how weather forecasts are recorded.





Women's development Group

Group members paid visits to the All-China Women's Federation, China National Museum of Women and Children, China Women's University, Capital Normal University and 798 Art District. Group members extensively discussed hot topics like the connection between gender and Confucianism, mental health under the scope of gender issues, and the concept of "Leftover Woman".

City Group

Through the lenses of cardboard VR glasses and insta360 cameras, group members discovered the unique beauty of Beijing. They were separated into 5 teams that each team paid visits to creative space, bookstores, youth hostels, museums and galleries respectively.



Learning and outcome



On August 12, the Closing Ceremony and the Graduation Youth Forum was held. Jessie Thornton from the UK and Geert Groeneveld from the Netherlands spoke as student representatives. "Thanks to Tsinghua and thanks to Tsinghua's teachers, the 'Experiencing China' program has had a profound impact on our thinking, life and social life," Jessie said, proudly displaying her fluent Chinese which she had learnt during the program.

The education group presented the development history and differences between the education models of the East and the West. They presented an analysis of the characteristics, similarities and differences between the Chinese and Western students in the process of entrance examination, curriculum, campus life and graduation.

The participants in the environmental group summed up the environmental issues of water resources, atmosphere, energy and biodiversity that China is facing in the five major elements of traditional Chinese culture: wood, fire, earth, metal and water. Through field research during the group's various field trips, the students recognized the Chinese government's efforts in environmental protection and had confidence in China's environmental governance.





The Women's Development group recorded the related issues by means of photographs, calligraphy, and origami. In their presentation, they detailed their understanding of "leftover women," "online celebrities" and other social phenomena that reflect the problems of women's development.

The human body sculpture presentation was lively, interesting and colorful. The environment group employed the shape of coins, square inside and circle outside, to indicate that the environment should be both constrained and tolerant just like the shape of square and circle; the architectural group built the model of Forbidden City, showing the history of Chinese architecture and its ever-lasting culture; the education group adopted the model of Thousand-Hand Kwan-yin, expressing their belief that with the contribution of everyone's efforts, we are able to create a miracle; the city group gathered hand in hand in a large reunion shape to demonstrate their different perspectives and different cultural backgrounds; the women's group vividly presented the spirit of equality between the sexes by women's shouldering the men; the economy group's automobile sculpture reflected the rapid development of China's economy.





After the presentations, Prof Shi Yigong, Vice President of Tsinghua University, made a concluding speech and delivered a closing remark for Tsinghua University's "Experiencing China" Summer Program. Prof Shi Yigong gave a high appraisal of the students' exhibition results. He said that the group's reports gave him a deep impression, and used six words to sum up the presentations and performances: insightful, comprehensive, fascinating, interesting; in-depth, and scholarly.

During his closing speech, Prof Shi said "I was very impressed by the forward-thinking of the 'Experiencing China' program. I hope that this program allowed you to experience China, explore China, study China, gain a better understanding of China's role in the world, and recognize your ability and potential to play your part in it."

"When you return to your hometown, I hope you can remember Tsinghua University, remember these friends, and remember this unforgettable experience," Prof Shi Yigong said.



Quotes from students

"I always have great passion for China and its culture, and hope that I can have a chance to interact with Chinese students face to face. This program provided me a great opportunity to know about China."

"I got to know many friends across the world through the "Experiencing China" program, we could exchange our thoughts and ideas about China, also get to know all aspects of Chinese politics, economy and culture."

---- **Sybrand Heeres**

Delft University of Technology

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