



EXCHANGE REPORT

STJU 2019 FALL

ABSTRACT

This report introduces the exchange experience we had in SJTU and provides some insights to students who would like to apply for this program.

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Introduction

Yun:

I am an immigrant that came to Vancouver 13 years ago from China. I did my undergraduate study in UBC and graduated at 2012. Then, I went back China and worked as a R&D engineer in my family business in my hometown – Wuhan, for a few years. Later, I decided to go back UBC and do an MBA program.

My reason of deciding to go on exchange to SJTU is quite simple, as my career goal is to go back to my family business after I finish my MBA program. (The business is Hydro-power and industry automation related, and the target market is mostly in China right now.) Also, doing this exchange program can help me to make some connections with the people from business schools of some of the best Chinese universities – as it will bring huge mutual benefit for me and all the connections that I may be able to make there. We can share our resources in China, and some of us may even become business partners.

There is no specific reason for me to choose SJTU over other exchange options in Shanghai, such as Fudan and CEIBS.

Sarah:

China has been grown to the center of the world, which attracts me to visit and learn. After settled down in Canada for 10 years, I keep hearing from friends and families how big the changes have occurred in China, particularly in the perspective of technologies, as well as lifestyle benefits from technologies. I was also told that there are huge business opportunities growing with the development of technologies, which

is appealing to me. Shanghai and Beijing are for sure the most developed cities in China, that is why I chose to go for an exchange to enhance my global learning during my MBA program.

Orientation

Since both of us have no language barrier in Shanghai, we did not ask for any kind of help when we arrived at the airport. However, we did have a dedicated Wechat group for all the exchange students. In the chat group, we can ask for any help if needed. The orientation happened three days before the first day of school, and it is a mix of both orientation events and on-campus registration. Except that the registration took too much time due to the large volume of exchange students, the orientation day experience was very smooth. We had a welcome meeting in the afternoon and a student-hosted welcome party in the evening. We truly felt like being welcomed.

For the buddy program, we did not apply for, however, it is available for students who wish to have a buddy.

Courses & Registration

It took about two months for SJTU to send us the course information package after being nominated – a bit longer than we expected. However, the course information was quite detailed, and we both were able to enroll in all the courses that we wanted. The online registration system was a bit complicated, but the coordinator from SJTU was very nice and helpful. The entire registration process experience was smooth and effective.

One advice to next year's students is that you need to be quick when the online course registration opens, as some courses have limited seats and the popular courses will be filled up very quickly. We were able to get all the courses I wanted only because we did the registration immediately after it opens. And one side note is that all students are welcome to take any part-time MBA courses taught in Chinese as long as they have no problem in the language.

For the course content and difficulty level, it is at about the same level as courses offered in UBC MBA program – but with less workload. There are also groupworks and homework, but not as much as they were in UBC courses. Also, unlike courses in UBC, most MBA courses offered in SJTU do not have final exams. 7 courses in total we have taken have none final exams but final projects.

The academic focus of SJTU Antai college is in finance. Antai college was ranked top by Financial Times in “Top MBAs for women” in 2018, as shown in the chart below.

Financial Times ranking of top MBAs for women in 2018

Rank	School	Salary today (\$US)	FT MBA 2018 rank
1	Shanghai Jiao Tong University: Antai (China)	122,170	34
2	Stanford Graduate School of Business (US)	197,791	1
3	University of California at Berkeley: Haas (US)	179,930	10
4	Washington University: Olin (US)	121,949	50
5	Harvard Business School (US)	171,587	5
6	University of Hong Kong (China)	126,078	33
7	Dartmouth College: Tuck (US)	155,205	16
8	Renmin University of China School of Business (China)	83,991	39
9	University of Pennsylvania: Wharton (US)	172,489	3
10	Nanyang Business School (Singapore)	115,810	22

See the full ranking of 50 schools on [ft.com/work-careers](https://www.ft.com/work-careers)

Source: FT data

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Teaching

The style of teaching is vastly different from each teacher; it is hard to summarize whether it is different from UBC or not. However, the course design is totally different in SJTU. We have courses(of same credit) of very different schedules – from one-week course to 6-week course. Due to the huge difference in course schedule, the pace, depth, and volume are hardly comparable to the courses offered in UBC.

In terms of teaching style, most courses taught there were a mixture of lecture and case study, with a few focuses primarily on lecture. No matter what kind of teaching style a course is, there are always a sizable proportion of the learning are associated with in-class participation and homework.

As for the quality of teaching, it varied even more significantly. We experienced both the worst and the best course that we thought for the entire MBA program. The quality of the course is almost entirely depended on the professor.

Language Courses

While I do not need to take any language courses, I do know that SJTU offers a few language courses of different levels. From what I have heard from other classmates who took the language courses, they are quite beneficial. However, as Chinese language is one among the hardest languages to learn, I would suggest any non-native speaker who plan to do this exchange at least start getting him or herself familiar with the language before visiting. After they arrived, they can take the courses offered by

the university or ask for further advise.

Campus Facilities

SJTU Antai College is located in the Changning district of Shanghai. It is the smaller one of the two SJTU campus and it is mainly for graduate school. Thus, comparing to UBC's Vancouver campus, the campus Antai College's at dose not have as many facilities. However, there are multiple libraries and study spaces for all students to use. There are also computers provided for students, but with limited quantity. Bringing your own laptop is highly recommended.

In terms of safety, I do not believe there is any concern associated with it; it feels absolutely safe in campus, or anywhere in Shanghai.

The information of available student services may not be easily found online, but you can simply ask the coordinator or any local student; they are very friendly.

International Students

There is an international office devoted to helping international and exchange students. A booklet was provided to all the exchange students upon their registration, which includes the information of various help offered, covers every detail of study and life in SJTU. MBA office and the program coordinator are very helpful and always accessible to students, which are highly recommended to students if need help.

Housing Facilities

Dormitory was provided by the school; however, with very limited quantity. In order to get a dormitory room, you need to login the system, find a room you want, and press confirm as fast as possible. For our exchange students, there are a couple different types of dormitory provided by the school – single bedroom or double bedroom. It is much harder to get a single bedroom dorm than a double bedroom one – even with all the preparation work, whether you can get a dorm is mostly depended on luck due to the high demand and low supply. Thus, if sharing a dorm with another person is not a problem, I would suggest aiming for a double bedroom dorm in the first place. In the dormitory, cooking and laundry facilities are provided. Although the sound isolation of the rooms is not particularly good, it is relatively quiet at most of the times. There is no meal plan provided at the housing facility, but there is a huge cafeteria in the center of the campus. The food in the cafeteria is not excellent, but they are much cheaper than what you will find anywhere outside the campus.

Life would be much easier for exchange students if they can successfully get a dormitory room, which 2/3 of our exchange group did, as there will be no transit to school involved and safety is highly guaranteed, and mostly, much less expensive than renting outside. I was able to get a room registered.

If you cannot get a dorm you like (such as me), then you need to locate your own accommodation. There are usually four ways to find your own accommodation: find a cheap hotel, get a rental agency, find a landlord yourself, or find someone on Airbnb who allows long-term(3-4 months) contract. Getting in a hotel is the easily way of all, as all you need is to register in a local police office as a temporary foreign resident

when you landed before you go to any hotel. The obvious problem with this option is the cost – any decent hotel can easily cost you over 1,500 CAD per month. The second option – contact a rental agency may also not be your best choice. The rental agency in China usually charges you one-month equivalent rental fee as their service fee. Thus, it does not worth it for a short-term (3-4 months) contract unless you can find a really good deal. The third option is the best one in terms of cost; however, it can be extremely to find a landlord yourself if you do not have any local friend and you cannot speak Chinese. The last option, using a “long-term” Airbnb can be a very good choice. It is also what I did for my exchange study. But since most homeowner on Airbnb does not allow a multi-months long stay, I moved once throughout my exchange study period – from one room listed in Airbnb to another one. They each costed me about 900 to 1,000 CAD per month. Both of the two accommodations I stayed are within the walking distant to the campus and to the metro station. Also, there a numerous supermarket, grocery shops, and restaurants of different price ranges near the school. Living near school or on campus is super convenient.

One suggestion I have for all the future exchange student would be to talk with your exchange classmates as soon as possible, as some of them usually have resources and chat groups that can help you to find a good accommodation.

Costs and Expenses

The consumption level in Shanghai is as high as in Vancouver, if not higher. Here is a list of estimated cost in different area when doing exchange study in SJTU in Shanghai:

- a. Accommodation

Dormitory: 400 to 600 CAD per month depends on type.

Hotel: 1,500 CAD per month for the cheapest safe and comfortable hotels near campus.

Rental: 600 to 1500 CAD per month (single room) depends various aspects such as location, condition of the building, and space of the room.

Airbnb: around 1,000 CAD per month for rooms near campus.

b. Textbooks: free

c. Local Transportation

Bus and metro: 0.50 to 2.00 CAD per trip for most short to mid distant trips without transfer

d. Food: about the same cost as in Vancouver but with higher upper boundary

e. Groceries: about 1/5 to two times of what would cost you in Vancouver, depends on what you buy. Imported goods are usually (but not always) much more expensive than local goods.

f. Social and travel: there are social and travel expenses that differs on individual.

Student Health Services

There is a school hospital on campus but with limited functionality. All student can use the hospital with minimum cost. Health care insurance are recommended for students to cover the entire exchange trip.

Social Events

There are various social activities both organized officially by faculty or by students. For occasions like Chinese holidays, there are Chinese culture related activities organized by faculty such as Chinese Knot Knitting, Dumplings Making etc... There are also more activities organized by students themselves, such as dinner gathering, day trips and drinking...It is easy to make friends as long as you don't lock yourself in the room, both host school students and exchange students. For students who registered full time courses, you will spend more time together with the classmates.

Career Services

There are specific Career Services in SJTU for exchange students, you can book appointment to meet with the career advisors to talk about your career plans, the career opportunities, visa and work permit issues, and also there are companies visit available and some career summits available.

Both of us did not get help from the career center that not much experience about their service. But as we know, it is always good if you can ask for help and people there are very helpful.

Sports & Recreation

There are one soccer court, a dozen basketball courts, and six tennis courts on the campus. They are all free and accessible, but sometimes they can also be popular and hard to get. For sports outside the campus, you can almost find anything other than

football and hockey court. Equipment are often provided in each sport center for users to rent. Thus, there is no need to bring any sports gears other than maybe clothes and gloves.

Study Tours & Field Trips

There are a few optional field trips you can do; there are mostly there for exchange students to learn the Chinese culture. The cost of these field trips is usually between 20 to 60 CAD per student, and most of the trips takes about a half to a full day.

What to Bring

As you can almost buy anything in Shanghai online and get it delivered same-day or within a couple days, there are not many things that you have to bring with. But of course, the passport, documents, credit card, and cellphone are the must.

General Impressions

Yun:

For me, the SJTU exchange program is amazing. Comparing to exchange programs from other universities/colleges in Shanghai – namely Fudan and CEIBS, there is a huge benefit for me since I can choose courses from both international MBA program taught in English and part-time MBA program taught in Chinese. I have left China for almost 14 years, taking courses with local Chinese part-time students let me gain a lot

knowledge for the business in China in general. And I also learned a lot of interesting cases of Chinese firms.

My most valuable experience during my study, as I mentioned, is the knowledge I gained for the business in China in general – including very successful unicorns, thought-provoking failures, unique business cases, and the entire business environment in China in general.

My impression of the lecturers is very different from one to one. While some of the professors obviously lack teaching skills and experience, some other are among the best that I have ever seen. For example, the professor Xia of the course Business Model and Innovation is truly a charming lecturer. For the very limited time (3 full days of class, by the time I write this report, we have just had one day), he is able to control the pace perfectly and he seems know simply everything that is in the business realm. Moreover, he can very effectively deliver his knowledge to us, with humor and enthusiasm.

My biggest disappointment, as I mentioned above, is that a couple courses are a bit weak, due to inexperienced lecturers (mostly foreign professors). I would highly suggest future exchange students do a bit more research on every instructors before choosing any course.

Sarah:

The program was amazing and very well organized. People there are very helpful.

I have experience most of the changes happened in big cities in China, which I believe helped me learn a lot about the current technology development and business

development trends.

I would like to thank UBC to provide us such great opportunities to go abroad and learn, at the same time I would also like to thank my host school-SJTU to welcome me as the local students.

Generally speaking, I was satisfied with my experience in this exchange term, it will for sure help me build my career path stronger with the vision I enlarged, with the network I enriched.