Report for an Exchange semester at Peking University, Guanghua School of Management

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Study program: MMT
Semester abroad: SS2018

In SS2018 I spent a semester at Peking University, Guanghua School of Management via TUM SoM faculty program. This report might be helpful for those who hold a Chinese passport and planning to go to Guanghua SoM. For international passport holders, a different application process at Guanghua SoM will be applied and a look into reports from other exchange students will be recommended.
Part I Application

I started my application at TUM in late December 2016/early January 2017. A reminder for international students at TUM SoM: for assessment at TUM SoM, you may apply for any schools (including those from your home country) no matter which country’s passport you are holding. But for the application at host universities, sometimes their international office will check your nationality and accept only those who hold foreign passports. Please check this issue with host university’s international office in advance. In my case, Chinese passport holders (including Hongkong, Macau, Taiwan) will be accepted, but the application processes are slightly different from those of foreign passport holders. Guanghua SoM international office will give out separate information for different groups of students, so you just have to follow the instructions.
For the application for Guanghua SoM you need to hand in your transcripts from TUM, a motivation letter, and the recommendation letter from TUM, which you will get from our international office. As far as I know Guanghua SoM does not reject any students as long as you hand in all the documents required.

The Guanghua SoM mailed out the letter of acceptance rather late, around in December 2017, and the spring semester starts
in mid-February, usually after the Chinese Spring Festival. As a Chinese I did not apply for a visa to enter the country. For visa application procedures a look in other reports might be helpful. And also there is no scholarship for Chinese passport holders who go exchange to China, but there are plenty of offerings for international students. Just step in the international office of TUM and you will get good advices.

**Part II Orientation**

Guanghua SoM organised an orientation program a couple of days earlier before semester starts. The orientation is mandatory, where you can pick up your student card, buy your SIM card for phone and buy health insurance. However, the health insurance is not mandatory for Chinese passport holders. At the orientation you will be assigned to a group of 15 exchange students, and a tutor will show you the campus around and take you to different canteens for lunch. Also you may apply for the buddy program at Guanghua SoM. Each two exchange students will get two buddies from the faculty and form a group of four. As Guanghua SoM is one of the best faculties of Peking University, the buddy program is a very good chance to get in touch with top local students from the faculty. They will give out very useful information on picking courses offered by good professors, and it really helps!
Spring at PKU

Part III Study at Guanghua SoM

I study at master level, therefore I am only allowed to take courses within MBA program. Guanghua SoM also has regular master programs, for example Master of Finance, which have very good courses and professors, but unfortunately those are not open to MBA students. The students from Guanghua MBA program are usually white-collars or young entrepreneurs, and the courses are structured differently from regular programs. At Guanghua SoM MBA program, for each course you can earn 2 credits, and in each semester you can pick 18 credits at
maximum. I took 7 courses in total, mostly in Chinese:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Professor</th>
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<tr>
<td>Corporate Merger and Acquisition (企业重组与并购)</td>
<td>Tang Guozheng</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asset Pricing and Equity Valuation (资产定价及股权估值)</td>
<td>Liu Xiaolei</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis and Prediction of Applied Business Data (实用商务数据分析与预测)</td>
<td>Wang Hansheng</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial Statement Analysis (财务报表分析)</td>
<td>Lu Zhengfei</td>
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<td>Corporate Finance (高公司财务)</td>
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<td>Valuationa and Financial Statement Analysis</td>
<td>Paul Gillis and Jeffery Towson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internet and Big Data (互联网+大数据)</td>
<td>Industrial block course</td>
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For those who are fluent in Chinese I highly recommend the course *Corporate Merger and Acquisition* by Prof. Tang Guozheng. This is a course full of interesting cases and discussion. It was also very demanding because you have to do case analysis and prepare for class presentation almost every week within a group of six. *Asset Pricing and Equity Valuation* was also very good. Prof. Liu Xiaolei offers courses in English as well. Prof. Liu is also an expert in block chain. Good chance to follow the latest research! *Analysis and Prediction of Applied Business Data* is also one of my favourite courses. Prof. Wang leads a very interactive and inspiring course, and with a tutorium one can get practical basic R language skills as well. *Valuationa and Financial Statement Analysis* is taught in English. The courses offered by Prof. Gouglas were said to be very good. Unfortunately the courses could not fit in my schedule so I missed it. If you ever had chance, definitely take a look into it. I also audited the *Economic Law* by Prof. Cai Shutao. Very good-structured contents. Recommended.
Almost all the courses require the students to work in a team. You have to find a team yourself. Most of the MBA students know each other already. So if you have difficulties finding a group, do not hesitate to ask the tutor in the class for help. And before the class starts you have to sign up for your attendance. Otherwise
a few points will be deducted from your final exam scores.

The way of final exams varies from course to course. For some courses you have to write an exam, and for some other your group project counts. I have not received my transcripts yet. My feeling is that it is hard to fail, but it is difficult to get a high score.

Besides the courses offered by Guanghua SoM you are basically free to go into any lecture (some seminars are not allow to audit). The time and places of all the courses will be published online a couple of days before semester starts. You can just step in any classroom and audit the classes.

**Part IV Living on campus**

For international students you may apply for a dorm called Global Village off the campus. Those who hold a Chinese/Hongkong/Taiwan passport are basically not allow to apply for a dorm in Global Village and have to find a place themselves. Luckily a coordinator from SoM international helped us to get a room in the student dorm on-campus, which only costs 750 RMB (around 100 Euro) for one semester. However, then you have to live with other three local students in a room of 30 square meters, and share the toilets and showers with the whole floor – a very special experience!
Dorm for local students

On campus there are six or more canteens for you to choose, and there are also private restaurants and shops for some diversity. A normal meal costs around 10-20 RMB (2 Euro). Most canteens accept payment with student card only. You can charge your card with cash or per Alipay (download recommended!). Your student card is also to be shown when you enter the campus or library.

There are also hundreds of student clubs on in the university. You can sign up for clubs at a very low cost or even for free. “Club campaign” is a huge club carnival where student clubs do their recruitments at begin of the semester. You can’t miss it!
“Club campaign (百团大战)” at begin of the semester

I joined a reading club and a farming club. In the farming club we farm a field on campus and work on it in turns and share the gains. We also went visit the farm outside the campus, which was an unforgettable memory.
On campus there is also a big hall where you can watch shows and new coming films every week. The tickets are very cheap. Each film costs around 10 to 20 RMB (1.5 Euro), shows might be slightly more expensive. Worth going!
Peking is an amazing city with numerous activities going on every moment. There are hundreds of fascinating museums and galleries to visit, mostly free of charge. There are also many public saloons and lectures to sign up for. Last semester the air pollution was not that serious, so we had some good days. But mask is a must for seriously-polluted days. Don't forget to download an app to get the air quality reports every morning.

Guanghua SoM international center will also organise outdoor activities, such as tour to the Great Wall or Hotpot night. Often the transportation is sponsored. The Forbidden City is something you can not miss. Sometimes there are famous exhibitions in the palace, so you can visit the palace and the exhibition at the same time.

The public transport in Peking is very complicated. Because Peking is such a huge city, it often takes an hour or more to get to the place you wish to be. The subway is very busy during rush hours. Be well-prepared! You can get a prepaid transport card at kiosks in the subway station. One ride costs 5-7 RMB (about 1 Euro). With the transportation care you get 50% off for a ride with bus. Different from Munich, the subway opens only till 23:30 or so in the night. But taxis are always very convenient.

For the internet on campus you have to pay 30 RMB (around 5 Euro) for each month. Although there is Eduroam on campus, it is not open to students.

In some ways I have to admit that China is developing with an unbelievable speed. Mobile payment is so common that you do not need to take any cash with you at all. And there are so many leading trends and technology developments going on. I am sure that take some months in China will definitely change your mind in many ways.

Don't miss the chance to spent a time in this amazingly charming city, get some brand new inspirations in China and get to know the best people from Peking University!