

Top 4 Study Abroad Myths

1. It's a waste of time. Some people think studying abroad is just touring and playing. This immersion program is different. Students live as a citizen of Beijing and gain a close look at teen life, academic demands, teaching methods, as well as the learning that takes place outside of the classroom. More and more, international companies are looking for employees who are culturally aware and can work collaboratively with people of different backgrounds. Any former exchange participant, when asked, will say that any concerns before departure vanish upon arrival, and that the time spent in China was well worth it.

2. It costs too much. The major expense is airfare and visa with minimal program fees. Since exchange participants live with host families, living expenses are all covered either by the host family or the host school. To ensure that the program is available to all students, some needs-based scholarships may become available.

3. I can't speak the language. Participants do not need to speak Mandarin. There is a short, intensive language program in the summer before departure that will give you some basic understanding of the language. Participants will study once a week with the Chinese exchange teacher and/or coordinator during the two months the Chinese exchange group is in Wayland, and then continue Mandarin classes in China. Also, the Chinese exchange students all speak English, and since you will be hosted by them, you have a host sibling as your guide.

4. The food is too foreign. The scorpions, silk pupa, and millipedes are all optional for tourists. Your host family and the school will accommodate any food preferences to the best of their ability, and you will find that everyday dishes do not contain "foreign" items. Although we encourage you to expand your palate, noodles, dumplings, vegetarian, steak or hamburgers, are all options that are readily available.

Why study abroad? Everyone benefits, regardless of gender, background or interests. There are so many facets to an immersion program that what you learn personally will benefit you academically and, later, professionally. The benefits gained from a full immersion program will have a far greater impact than you can imagine.