

Post-Enrichment Report: Cinema, Culture, and History in South Korea

Cinema, Culture, and History in South Korea was a study abroad program that allowed me and several other CSU students to attend Ewha University in the heart of Seoul and study the history of South Korea in conjunction with Korean cinema. I had lots of opportunities to explore and learn about the culture of Korea as well as watch many interesting films I wouldn't have been able to otherwise. In Korea, I met some really wonderful friends and had some truly amazing experiences. For class, I was required to write a short paragraph every week about what I was doing. Those weekly entries are below:

Week 1 (6/28)

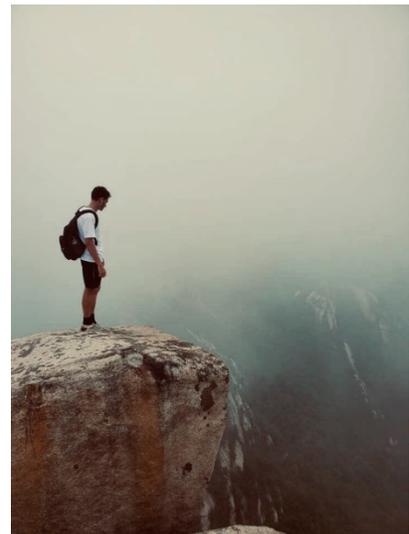
This is day four of being in Korea and it is finally setting in that I am really in Korea and will be for some time. I have loved the freedom, the environment, and the adventure of every day that I have spent here. The Korea Film Archives is like my dream and other attractions like Insadong and the Gyeongbokgung Palace have been spectacular as well. Now that I am becoming more acquainted with the dining areas on campus, I feel ready to explore more and try to find more exotic and adventurous foods. I really want to try spicy snail. I am busy making plans and I cannot wait to see what kind of surprises next week's excursions will bring me.

Week 2 (7/8)

It seems like everything is flying by so fast. We are already halfway done with this trip and I have so much more to do. The House of Sharing was a really unique and moving experience and it was really cool that we got to meet one of the 95-year old comfort women. Renting traditional *hanboks* at the palace and visiting a raccoon café were really fun experiences as well. Now that my presentation is over, I have a lot of exciting plans soon including an overnight Buddhist temple stay and hiking in Bukhansan National Park.

Week 3 (7/14)

This week I had unique opportunities to hike in Bukhansan National Park and stay at a traditional Buddhist temple overnight. We hiked up to Baegundae Peak, the highest peak in Seoul, hoping to get an amazing view of the city. While we did see that amazing view on the way up, the peak was so high it



was in the clouds and we could not see more than a few dozen meters in front of us by the end. Still, the hike was challenging, and super fun and I am so glad I did it. Also, I got to stay overnight at the Myogaksa temple. A traditional priest taught us rituals of prostration, meditation, prayer, and tea-making. I even was allowed to ring the enormous bell to begin the day. It was a very immersive and rewarding experience and it taught me a lot about Buddhism that I did not already know.

Week 4 (7/22)

My last week here has been wild trying to do everything that I want to still do here and prepare for the final paper at the same time. Visiting the DMZ and the Korean War Memorial and Museum were very cool experiences and getting to see a lot of really good films recently has been very rewarding as well. This week, I'm going to get to visit the Leeum-Samsung Art Museum and Seoraksan National Park, and then I leave for China on Thursday! Ultimately, my time in Seoul was amazing and I'm glad that I had the opportunity and initiative to visit so many cool places and have so many cool experiences!

I chose to visit Korea because I wanted to go somewhere that no one in my family had visited before. I wanted to go somewhere different, out-of-the-ordinary, and unlike anywhere else I had gone before. Korea lived up to all those expectations and more and I thank the Honors program for helping me to get there!

