FREEMAN–ASIA AWARD

Freeman Asia

Becky Lang
Hong Kong
Fall 2019

Spring 2020
MY TIME IN HONG KONG

about me

I’m Becky, a Cognitive Science major and East Asian Languages and Culture minor (Chinese). I studied abroad for the first semester of my junior year in Hong Kong, at the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK). I’d always planned to study abroad in Asia, and I saw that USC offered an exchange with the psychology department at CUHK, allowing me to make progress on my degree while abroad!

campus life

One big adjustment for me was that classes at CUHK only meet once a week! Although that meant they usually met for 2-3 hours at a time, it also made it easier to arrange your classes to have an extra day off, allowing more time for exploring.

I lived in a dorm with a mix of international students, exchange students, and local students, making it a great way to meet new people! Although our dorm also had a kitchen, I ate mostly at on-campus canteens; the food was pretty cheap, really delicious, and I didn’t have to do any cleanup!

CUHK’s staff sponsored a lot of cultural activities for the exchange students, from sightseeing trips to cooking classes to holiday celebrations. I took part in a lot of these activities, as well as those put on by my residential college. One of my favorites was English table, a bi-monthly dinner where native and non-native English speakers came together to enjoy traditional Hong Kong cuisine and talk about their lives!

Exploring Hong Kong was quite convenient with the highly developed metro line that could take you all over quickly and reliably (CUHK even had its own stop!)

hong kong protests

The Hong Kong protests that began in the summer continued into the fall as I arrived in the country. However, because CUHK is in the New Territories of Hong Kong (about a 45-minute ride on the metro from the main island), the exchange program was set to continue. For most the semester, there were no problems with this; at campus there were some peaceful protests, posters, and slogans painted on the walls, but nothing major.

However, in mid-November, there was an intense clash between protestors and police at the CUHK campus, making it impossible for students and staff to continue holding classes. I evacuated the campus safely, and returned home to finish the semester online.

why study abroad?

Although my time abroad was cut short by a few weeks, it is, without a doubt, one of the highlights of my college experience. This trip was my first time travelling to Asia, and along with Hong Kong, I also got to visit South Korea, Singapore, and Thailand. Thanks to the Freeman-ASIA award, some of the financial burden was alleviated, making this unforgettable time attainable at all.
AWARD OVERVIEW

eligibility

- U.S. citizen or permanent resident at time of application
- Receiving need-based financial aid, as demonstrated by Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) figure from FAFSA, along with the statement of financial need
- Undergraduate student pursuing first bachelor’s degree with at least a 2.8 GPA
- Apply through USC, with at least one term remaining after study abroad period
- Little to no prior experience in country within the last five years (summer: no more than 4 weeks; semester/academic term: no more than 6 weeks
- Applied or been accepted to program in Asia (see left for specific countries) by time of award application
- Study abroad program must grant academic credit through USC
- Summer term: minimum 8 weeks in country; semester term: minimum 12 weeks
- Not a previous recipient of the award

eligible countries

- Cambodia
- China
- Hong Kong
- Indonesia
- Japan
- Korea
- Laos
- Macao
- Malaysia
- Mongolia
- Philippines
- Singapore
- Taiwan
- Thailand
- Vietnam
- Multi-country programs: must spend at least 8 weeks in one of the countries above with intensive language study

service project

- A Freeman-ASIA Award recipient must fulfill a service requirement that involves encouraging and educating others about study abroad opportunities in Asia.
- Prompt: Propose and describe a service project that will promote study abroad interest in Asia by sharing your experience with students and others in your school and community upon your return to the U.S. Consider your project goals, target audience(s), medium(s) through which you will conduct your project, and any student/community organizations or campus departments with which you will work.
- Examples: presentations, books, informational movies...
- You can read essay samples in the Academic Honors and Fellowships office (STU 300)

when you return

- Submit online Freeman-ASIA Student Impact Survey within one month of return to the U.S.
- Implement service project
- Submit Freeman-ASIA Final Service Report by the end of the term following return to the U.S.
**components**

- Pre-screening page of the application
- Statement of Purpose
- Service Project Proposal
- Study Abroad Adviser Certification
  - They will verify program information is correct
  - Only send to them when your part is complete
- Financial Aid Adviser Certification
  - One option on the application from USC
  - You don’t need to meet individually
- Transcript(s) from USC, as well any prior institutions
- Financial documents:
  - Latest Student Aid Report
  - Current academic year financial aid award letter
  - Current academic year cost of attendance at USC

*All materials submitted online only!

**timeline**

- Student application usually due early April
- Adviser certification due one week after
  - *Due at 5PM Eastern time*
- Notification for summer programs: May
- Notification for semester/academic year: June/July

**links**

Freeman-Asia: [https://www.iie.org/en/Programs/Freeman-ASIA](https://www.iie.org/en/Programs/Freeman-ASIA)

USC Academic Honors and Fellowships: [https://ahf.usc.edu/](https://ahf.usc.edu/)

**contact me!**

I am happy to talk more about Hong Kong or the Freeman-ASIA award at any time!

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