



Tips on Studying Abroad at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore

Want to know what it's like to study abroad? Want to know what your peers think? Your fellow Georgia Tech students who have previously gone on this exchange program gave their opinions so that future participants have the inside scoop on their host institution and host country.

Preparation & Getting Started

- Getting courses approved is always a tricky process, but as long as you write emails, call the correct academic advisors, and stay on top of things you can receive credit for all the classes you want – but do this early!



Classes

- Registering for classes at NTU was somewhat complicated because I had to learn a new registration system and acquaint myself with the course structure. However, the academic staff was incredibly helpful and I was granted over-ride status for all the classes I wanted.
- Class size is similar to Georgia Tech: 150-200 for lectures and 20-25 for electives.
 - The professors and students are from a wide varieties of backgrounds: Malaysia, India, China, Singapore, Taiwan, Indonesia, Europe, and Australia.
 - Classes are harder than at Georgia Tech because of the bell-curve grading system.



Housing

- The housing application process is very straightforward and detailed in the application packet.
- The campus is beautiful, but it is located on the far end of Singapore. There is a military training base next door so you often hear automatic gunfire and artillery.
- The bathrooms are looked after daily. Trust me, Singapore is CLEAN.



Cultural Differences

- A memorable moment was when I started eating foods I never would have imagined I would be eating.
- The biggest cultural difference from my own culture is that people don't question the status quo.
- I was stereotyped as an ang-moh ("red head", or foreigner).
- Don't be shy and share a laugh with people.



- Most classes consisted of a mid-semester quiz and a final exam, which accounted for roughly 80% of the grade. Thus, the emphasis is entirely on testing. No homework was graded for my courses (although there were always optional tutorials that I strongly advise completing on a timely basis). Testing in Asia comes down to working quickly and never giving up – you can always add more. The professors admit the tests aren't meant to be solvable (I thought the same was true at Tech, but trust me things are different in Asia), but they want to see how much you know.

Food

- GREAT FOOD. Singapore offers food from all over southeast Asia, and it is all CHEAP! Hawker Stalls are the way to go, and campus offers plenty of 'canteens' (roughly 20 to choose from).
- I bought ramen noodles at the beginning of the semester, but I never used them. Food is simply too cheap and there are always people to go out with. Singaporeans LOVE good food, as will you after this semester.



Transportation & Travel

- Use studentuniverse.com if you are flying from America.
- I used hkaero.com which offers cheap flights (from HK).
- Local transportation is excellent – it's Singapore!
- I traveled to a variety of places (Sumatra, Java, Bali, Malaysia, Borneo, Brunei, and the Philippines).
- Singapore is a transportation hub so things are cheap.
- I suggest hopping over to Johor Bahru for cheaper flights, though.
- I suggest being careful in Indonesia and Malaysia. Singaporeans always preach about how dangerous these countries are, but it is because Singapore is simply so SAFE.
- Please email Brett or refer to his webpage for must-see spots.



Lifestyle

- Singaporeans tend to stick to their groups (men serve 2 years of national service before entering university, so they have a strong core of friends), but as long as you are outgoing and genuinely friendly people will love you!
- I did play football (soccer to those who think in Fahrenheit) regularly with the international students, and we would go out on the town together.
- There are plenty of campus activities to choose from. GET INVOLVED.
- Singapore has 4 official languages (English, Mandarin, Malay, and Tamil), although Hokkien (Fujian province) is spoken very commonly. Singaporeans speak very quickly, and often mix 2-3 languages in a single sentence.

Finances

- USE DEBIT CARDS. I know so many people who are afraid to do so and they are crazy. It is 100x easier than travelers checks, and you can withdraw money anywhere for around 1% service charge. This is less than the bus fare to find a bank willing to change your traveler's checks!
- I believe I spent less than I would have in America.

Packing

- Deodorant
- Warm weather clothes (It's hot!)
- Sandals (no one wears sneakers)
- UK adaptors

Communication

- Use Skype rather than cell phones or phone cards.
- The rooms have internet access and an Ethernet cable is provided.

Participant Profiles

Please see information of contributing students below. If a blog or website is listed, feel free to take a look! Also, if an e-mail address is listed, you may contact that student if you have any questions about their study abroad experience.

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*These comments do not reflect the views of GT's Office of International Education. They are based on students' individual opinions and are, therefore, not necessarily representative of all student experiences.