

# China Field Study Program 2015



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## Executive Summary

From May 4 to June 3, 2015, 22 Langara students participated in **the first China Field Study Program**, led by instructors Kenneth Wong (School of Management) and Li Yu (Asian Studies). After two weeks of class at the Langara campus, students spent 18 days in China and gained valuable first-hand experience on the business and historical cultures of China through an **extensive program custom-designed for Langara by Shenzhen Polytechnic**.

**The program successfully met or exceeded the objectives set**, including *interdisciplinary studies, affordability, age mix, and self-funding*. One other goal was to *turn the City of Shenzhen into a classroom*, meaning, instead of limiting classes to those held on campus at Shenzhen Polytechnic, students were encouraged to take full advantage of the technical visits and local tours, outings with local students, and free time allotted on weekends and evenings. While business lectures provided the foundation and background on the Chinese economy, visits to local businesses brought together the classroom and applied learning, where students had the opportunity to interact directly with staff members of these businesses. The cultural experiences proved to be a “hit” among the students. In addition, the language lessons prompted much participation from all the students.

**Students’ rating of “Overall Satisfaction” was 9.03 out of 10, while “Recommend to Others” scored 9.9**. This validates the success of the program, and future prospects for similar ones. Time spent outside of the classroom was highly rated by the students, confirming the value of **experiential learning** provided by such field study programs that **cannot be replicated in Vancouver**.

From this meticulously executed program, it is apparent that **Shenzhen Polytechnic fully intends to build strong, long-term relationship with Langara College**. Ideas and suggestions on potential **future programs, including another field study program in 2016, as well as exchange programs, were discussed with their management team**.

The China Field Study Program 2015 would not have been possible without the leadership of the senior management, and the full backing of at least twelve departments from the Langara community. We take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to all the key stakeholders at Langara for their support.

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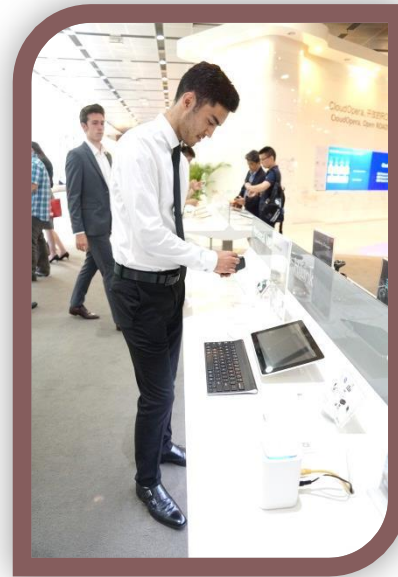
## Introduction

After two weeks of class at the Langara campus, 22 Langara students, led by instructors Kenneth Wong from the School of Management (LSM) and Li Yu of the Department of Asian Studies, departed on May 15, 2015, for City of Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China, for Langara's first China Field Study Program, and Langara's first program to promote interdisciplinary studies through offering two courses from different departments. Namely, INTB 3100 Management Issues in International Business; and ASIA 1225 Contemporary China.

On this 18-day trip, students gained valuable first-hand experience on the business and historical cultures of China through an extensive program custom-designed for Langara by Shenzhen Polytechnic. Lectures on business and culture, along with language lessons, were complemented by a variety of activities including technical visits, city tours, trade fair, and meetings with local students.

From the onset of the program, the objectives as narrated by the senior management of Langara College include:

- **Interdisciplinary Studies**
  - Initially, this was achieved by offering courses from two different department – School of Management and Asian Studies. However, the program eventually attracted students from a wide variety of disciplines, some of which included Computer Science, Modern Languages, Fine Arts, General Arts and Sciences, among others.
- **Affordability**
  - At \$1,638, the program fee was by far the lowest among all the field study programs offered by Langara – and other schools, for that matter. Subsidization from the college, along with generous scholarships, further supported many participants financially.
- **Age mix**
  - There was a 10-year gap between the youngest and the eldest participants, and the average age was 23.5. The camaraderie built during the program among the students proved that this age gap was no obstacle whatsoever.
- **Self-funding**
  - With breakeven achieved at 15 participants, the full registration of 22 students allowed us to declare this program a financially viable project.





## Highlights

One of the main goals of the China Field Study Program was to turn the City of Shenzhen into a classroom, meaning, instead of limiting classes to those held on campus at Shenzhen Polytechnic, students were encouraged to take full advantage of the technical visits and local tours, outings with local students, and free time allotted on weekends and evenings.

## Business Components

While business lectures provided the foundation and background on the Chinese economy, visits to Huawei Technologies, the Port of Qian Hai, China Merchants Bonded Logistics, and Mindray Medical brought together the classroom and applied learning, where students had the opportunity to interact directly with staff members of these businesses.

Taking Mindray as an example, students were immediately greeted upon arrival by the company's marketing team representatives, who started with a brief tour of the head office building's surroundings, which impressively included a walkway duplicating that of the Summer Palace in Beijing, complete with a traditional pavilion at the front entrance. Following a group photo in the entrance hall, students visited the corporate show room, which displays all the top of the line products produced by Mindray, the largest developer of medical devices and solutions in China. Using fluent English, our guides took the time to describe their products and services, and fielded questions from the inquisitive group. At the end of the one-hour session, each student was presented with an information kit, complete with the group photo taken at the beginning of the tour!





Front entrance of Mindray Medical



Company tour and Mindray's products



\* \* \* \* \*

During their personal shopping trips, many students made observations of the local businesses. In particular, some learned quick lessons on bargaining, albeit hard ones for some. Others marveled at how counterfeit goods make a thriving business; while many made comparisons between the differing service levels in China and Canada.



## Cultural Components

While the business components of the program, including the lectures and site visits, were the drivers of the field study program, the cultural experiences proved to be a “hit” among the students. They included dumpling making, martial arts, and tea ceremony. In addition, the language lessons prompted much participation from all the students.

The **dumpling making class**, being scheduled near the beginning of the program, turned out to be an effective bonding exercise in a relaxed and fun environment. Students in teams greatly impressed the instructors by enthusiastically making their own batch of tasty dumplings. A large number of instructors and managers also dropped in and rolled up their sleeves to help our students.



The **martial arts class**, with Wushu and Taichi lessons taught by a female national champion, was so well-received that the students asked for a second class to continue the exercise. In addition to learning the basics, many students enjoyed meeting students studying martial arts, as well as handling some of the weapons demonstrated. Unfortunately, and reluctantly, the request for an additional class was declined due to limited schedule.

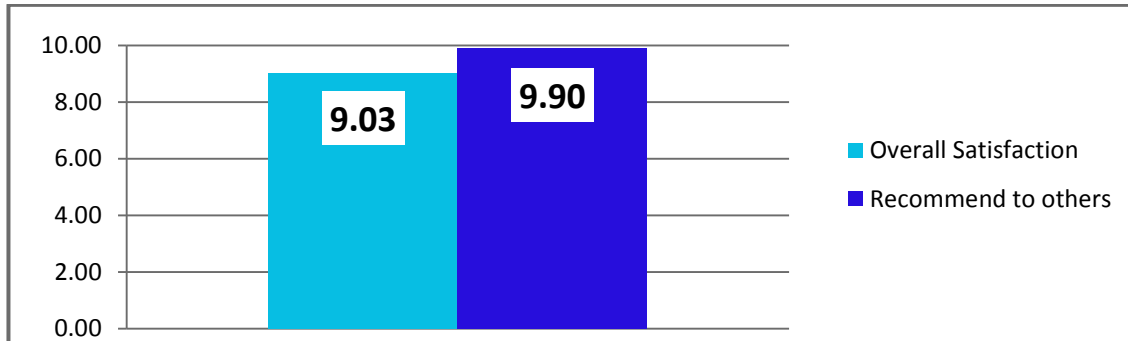
The **tea ceremony class** was held in a classroom complete with authentic tea sets on classic wooden Chinese tables. Students were introduced to basic types of Chinese tea, and allowed to personally prepare their own teas by working with local students. It evidently provided them with a refreshed appreciation of the tea culture.



Lastly, the **Mandarin Chinese lessons** were extremely well participated by all. Many students who were never exposed to the language, were able to muster basic phrases by the end of the four lessons. Actual proof was eagerly provided by the students during the outings, where some can be seen bargaining effectively in Chinese!

## Student Feedback

At the end of the program, all 22 students were invited to provide feedback. “Overall Satisfaction” was 9.03 out of 10, while “Recommend to Others” scored 9.9. From this, it is clear that this was a successful first attempt at such field study programs; and the chance of students joining future ones is good with such high recommendation from the participants.



Time spent outside of the classroom was highly rated by the students, confirming the value of experiential learning provided by such field study programs that cannot be replicated in Vancouver. Individual components including the lectures, cultural experiences, business visits, field trips, and accommodation were all rated very high. There were suggestions on specific areas, including where to add more time, and which activities to consider fine-tuning. Suffice to say, the overall positive response is extremely encouraging.

## Shenzhen Polytechnic – the future

From this meticulously executed program, it is apparent that Shenzhen Polytechnic fully intends to build strong, long-term relationship with Langara College. Throughout the program, staff members and managers attended to every need of our students. They demonstrated strong commitments by providing the most appropriate accommodation, classrooms, transportation, and even a full-time manager devoted to our program. Vice President WEN Xi Dong graciously hosted a welcoming luncheon, and took the time to chat with our students. The senior management of the International Office dropped in often to observe, and/or directly participate in a number of activities. Ideas and suggestions on potential future programs, including another field study program in 2016, as well as exchange programs, were discussed with their management team.

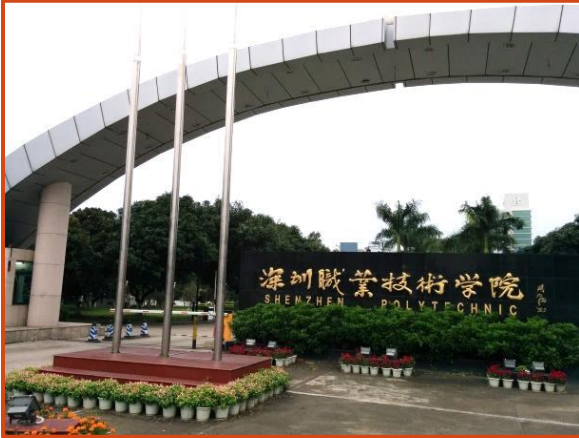
## Conclusion

The China Field Study Program 2015 proved to be most successful in many ways. All the goals set were either met or exceeded. The students gained much understanding of contemporary China and businesses management in a Chinese social and cultural context - better than what they might have achieved if they were in a classroom environment only. This would not have been possible without the leadership of the senior management, and the full support of at least twelve departments from the Langara community. We take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to all the key stakeholders at Langara for their support.



## Photo Gallery

### Campus



Entrance to campus



Lake view from bedroom



Main Campus



Mango trees on campus



Classroom of most sessions



Cafeteria





## Welcoming Reception and Luncheon



Senior Management from Shenzhen Polytechnic



Speeches at the reception



Luncheon with VP



Group photo in main building entrance hall



Luncheon with VP





## Lectures



Open discussion with local students



"Chinese Consumers" by Professor CHEN



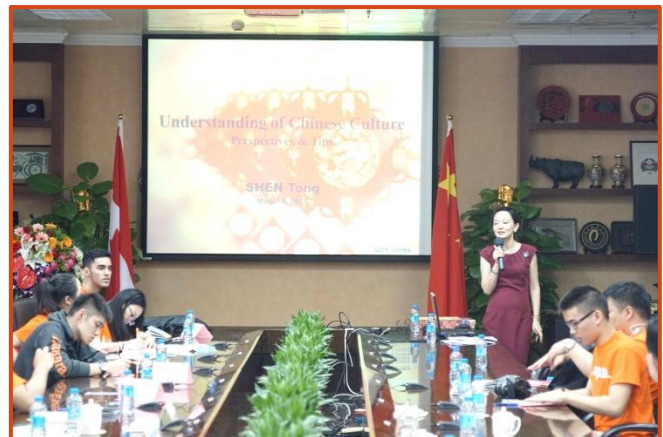
Chinese language lessons



"Green Logistics in China" by Professor XU



Language instructor LIU practising with students



"Understanding Chinese Culture" by Ms SHEN Tong



## Cultural Experiences



Dumpling making by Chef FENG



Students making dumpling from scratch



Student thanking Master TIAN on behalf of class



"Role play"



Tea Ceremony coupled with students



Students steeping their own tea with artistic touch





### City tours



Dapeng Fortress



Yuexiu Park, Guangzhou



Students join impromptu "line dance"



Student demonstrating horsemanship at Splendid China



Students accustomed to using sun umbrella





## Business visits to Huawei Technologies and the Port of Qian Hai



Huawei Technologies Headquarters



Representative, China Merchants Bonded Logistics



Students viewing Huawei products in showroom



Explanation of port infrastructure



Students interaction during business visit



Viewing model of the port complex



## Closing Ceremony



VP Wen Xi Dong shares a laughter



Senior Management in full force at the ceremony



Students present a song in gratitude



Student-elected valedictorian Arghavan Ahmadi



Students receiving graduation certificate



### Senior Management and Lecturers



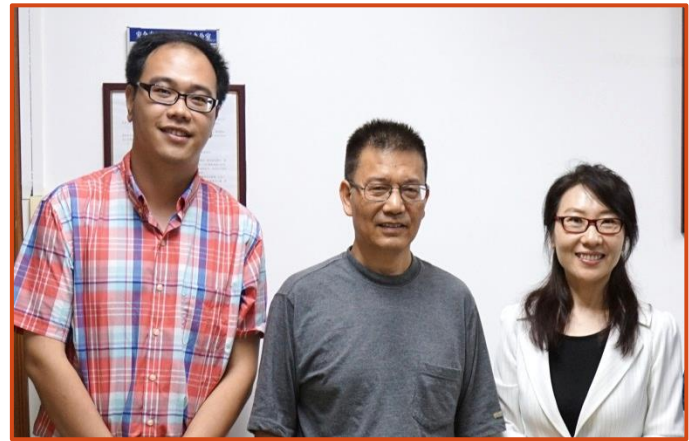
VP WEN Xi Dong



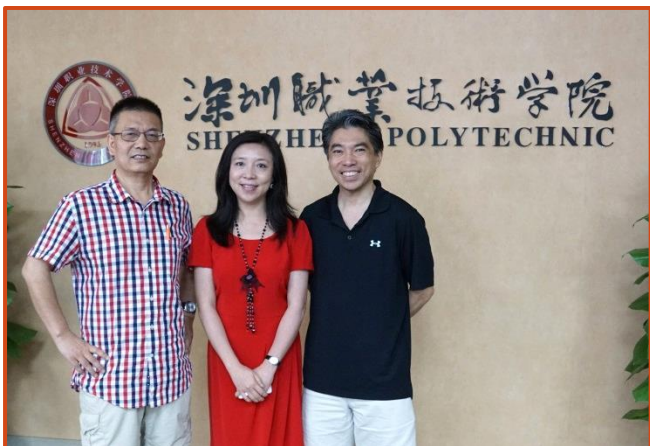
Director ZHAO, International Office



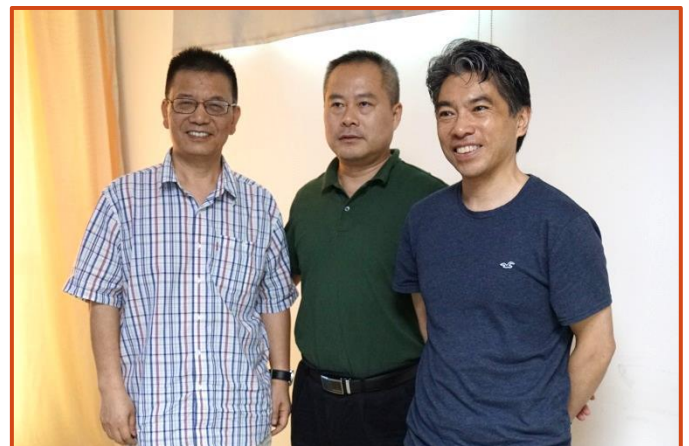
SHEN Tong, Coordinator, International Office



Staff member Martin and Lecturer WANG Xue



SHI Zhi Yang, Lecturer, Film Study



MU Chao, Lecturer, Port of Qian Hai





## Cityscapes



Students exploring the neighbourhood



Same spot at night



Typical residential multi-complex in Shenzhen



Nearby shopping mall



Food stalls



Street performer



## Candids



Students proudly displaying their dumplings



Friendly basketball game with local students



Lunch during weekend city tour



Relaxing on campus



Riding on the tour bus in Guangzhou



Selfie time, of course!

