

# Hangzhou, China Handbook

## Introduction

This guide is meant to be a practical one. It is meant to help prepare you for China and to help give you an idea about how Zhejiang University differs from the University of Rhode Island. This guide will hopefully serve as a base to work from in dealing with these differences. Everyone will have a different experience in China and as with any school year it will have its ups and downs. Just work hard, stay healthy, and have a fun learning experience. Do your best to talk to people who have been to China before you go, and to go with an open mind. Go with patience and flexibility (you will need it!). Your time in China is meant to be a time of discovery - a time to discover a new language and culture and a time to learn more about yourself.

When you arrive, go out on your own and just observe. Observe how people interact with friends, workers, family. Observe how sales transactions are made. Observe how one orders food in a restaurant. Observe mannerisms. Observe a religious service. Observe a class. Observe how university students live and work. It also helps to take a friend who has lived in China along because they know the most interesting places to do these things.

All of this observation will allow you to better adapt to the culture, so that you may make the most of your experience. Think about what you have observed and how it is different from the life to which you are accustomed. Think about why it is different. Talk to people about it. Ask for their opinions. Keep a journal or a blog.

The China study abroad crew of 2009-10 who helped put this together:  
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## Hangzhou

Hangzhou is the capital of Zhejiang Province located in southeast China just 115 miles southwest of Shanghai. Considered by the Chinese to be a small city, it has a population of around 7 million! It lies at the southern end of the Grand Canal, which was constructed beginning in the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. and which links the city with Beijing. The meshing of old and new can truly be seen throughout the city. Hangzhou has a very modern downtown with new high-rise, luxury apartment buildings going up everywhere you look, but there are still areas that look like “old China.” The gap between rich and poor is expansive and growing. Although Hangzhou is one of the wealthiest cities in China, the median income is still only about \$100 (or 800 RMB) per month.



Hangzhou is considered by the Chinese to be “heaven on earth.” There is a Chinese saying stating, “In heaven there is paradise. On earth there are Hangzhou and Suzhou.” Its West Lake (*Xihu*) is a popular destination of tourists and locals



alike. When the weather is nice, it seems everyone in the city is at *Xihu*. In spring the willow trees, plum trees and flowers surrounding the lake are in bloom. Many people take a picnic and spend the day in one of the many parks around the lake. With the hills to the south and west of the lake and the city to the north and east, it is a very beautiful place to stroll and relax.

The city itself is a great place to live with a lot to offer, and it has won an International Award for Liveable Communities. There is a nice downtown with many shops, restaurants, and tea houses. Hefang Street (Hefang Jie) is an old Chinese street with many touristy shops and tasty snacks. Nanshan Road, which runs along the east side of *Xihu* has many bars and some clubs that are popular with foreigners and some older students. There are many hiking trails in the hills near West Lake, including some you can access from the Zhejiang University campus.

Some popular spots you should not miss are Lingyin Temple, Wushan Square and Hefang Street, Lei Feng Pagoda, Liu He Pagoda, Longjing or Meijiawu tea villages (especially in spring), and more. Pick up tourist information on Hangzhou from the reception desk in the International Center for specific spots of interest around West Lake.

### **Check out Hangzhou on the Web:**

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hangzhou>

<http://www.travelchinaguide.com/cityguides/hangzhou.htm>

### **China News and Information:**

<http://www.china.org.cn/english/index.htm>

## **Introduction to China's Provinces and Autonomous Regions:**

<http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/ProvinceView/156519.htm>

## **Visa**

### **Do I need a visa to travel to China?**

Yes, you will need a visa to study and work in China. The IEP will advise on this. It will cost around \$160 plus processing fees and must be obtained through the Chinese Consulate in New York City. In order to obtain your visa, you will need:

- a valid passport
- a China Visa Application form for a Student X Visa
- 2 passport photos
- an approved Foreign Student Application Form (JW101 or JW202) issued by the Chinese unit, and an enrollment letter from the Chinese school (the latter two will be sent to the IEP Office from Zhejiang University.)

There are visa services, such as Travisa, that will send your application to the consulate for you for a fee, saving you the trip to NYC.

\*\*Make sure that your passport will be valid until 6 months after your planned return from China.

\*\*Note: If family or friends plan to travel to China to visit you, they will need a tourist visa, so plan accordingly. It is possible to obtain a visa within two weeks, but you should allow a month or two to be safe.

## **Money**

### **How do I access Chinese money?**

The most efficient and economical way to acquire Chinese Renminbi (RMB) is with an ATM card that can be used overseas. Check with your bank before departing for China to be sure yours can be used in Hangzhou. Most students have success with Bank of China, ICBC, and China Construction Bank ATMs. For those of you with Citizen Bank ATM card, Bank of China ATMs are the most reliable. Using an ATM to withdraw money gives the legal exchange rate but typically bank and ATM fees eat into the total withdrawal amount.

To really save money with transaction fees you can use a Bank of America ATM card at any China Construction Bank ATM. Currently they have a partnership with CCB and there are no conversion or withdraw fees. Opening a student checking account is very simple and free for four years as long as a parent has a Bank of America account.

As a backup plan request a second ATM card from your bank before you leave for China in case you lose one. Getting a replacement can be close to impossible especially while using a non-international bank.

\*\*Be sure to ask your bank before you depart for Hangzhou about fees and surcharges in China and about minimum/maximum withdrawal amounts and to ensure they don't deactivate your card thinking it has been stolen.

\*\*Beware: ATM machines at other banks in China have been known to eat ATM cards and have OS failures.

### **Where can I exchange U.S. dollars?**

It would be easiest to do this before departing for China (order from your bank) or at the airport immediately after arriving in China. The only common bank in China that will exchange foreign currency for non-Chinese is the Bank of China; this can only be done at the main branch in Hangzhou. Sometimes you will need a Chinese friend to accompany you.

### **Can I use Travelers' Cheques?**

It is not advisable to rely on Travelers' Cheques to acquire RMB while in China. Only specific banks accept them and you will probably need to take a friend along to translate, as most bank tellers do not speak English.

### **Are credit cards accepted in many locations?**

Most shopping will be done at small stores or street vendors, so cash is essential. Do not rely on your credit card in China. Credit cards are **not** accepted in most stores in Hangzhou. They are accepted in some hotels and perhaps in the larger, international stores in Shanghai, but it is not advisable to rely on them. It would be wise, however, to carry one credit card with you for emergencies, preferably a Visa or MasterCard, as these are the most widely accepted cards.

If you end up in trouble health-wise, Sir Run Run Hospital in Hangzhou accepts major credit cards.

## **Communication**

### **How do I call home from China?**

For making international phone calls there are a few options. The simplest way to call home is to use an online-based program such as Skype or Google based G-talk.

In order to make international calls from your room, you will need to buy an "IP Card." These phone cards are available at many stands on the street. This may sound confusing,

but you will need to ask for a 100 RMB IP Card. This card will only cost you between 25 and 35 RMB. It should last about 40 minutes when calling internationally.

To call out from a single dorm phone in the International College at Zhejiang University you will need two cards. You can get both from most of the stores in the strip of shops between the two printing shops across from the International College. It is also possible to buy this secondary IP card in the shop on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the International College building.

To call out from a double room you only need the single 100 RMB phone card.

All of the directions for dialing are in Chinese so it is best to ask the women at the front desk for help and ask them to write an instruction sheet for the next time.

### **Will I need a cell phone?**

Having a cell phone will make having a social life much easier while in China. Most university students and professionals have them and use them constantly.

### **Can I use the cell phone I already have?**

If you have a SIM card in your phone and it is a tri-band phone, then you will be able to use it in China provided you purchase a new SIM card when you arrive there. SIM cards can be purchased from street vendors for about 100 RMB (includes 50 RMB of talk/text time and is rechargeable.)

It is best to buy a phone once you get there because you will most likely want to send and receive character text messages with your Chinese friends.

### **What kind of internet connection will I have in the dorm at Zhejiang University?**

Each room is connected to a proxy server based broadband connection. The connection fee is 80 RMB and the monthly usage costs about 50 RMB. Be forewarned, Facebook, Twitter, blog spot, Google sites, My Space, and Youtube are just some of the many websites blocked in China. Many foreigners either pay a secondary proxy server to hide your IP address or cycle through lists of free proxy servers to gain some access to these websites.

After you pay for your internet at ZJU ask for help immediately. They will send someone to your room, hopefully the next day. The proxy set-up is not easy for a first timer but you can find instructions by following links from the ZJU unconnected start-up page. You will have to use Chinese to get to the page where they finally have English instructions.

## Time Zone

### **What is the time difference between RI and China?**

From April until October China is 12 hours ahead of RI, but when RI falls back in October, China does not. So from October until April there is a 13 hour time difference. All of China officially runs on Beijing time and does not observe daylight savings time. Fortunately, Hangzhou is in the Beijing time zone which means daylight and time hours will feel normal.

## Weather

### **What is the weather like in Hangzhou?**

Spring and Fall are beautiful in Hangzhou with low humidity and temperatures in the 70s. June is the rainiest month, but also the beginning of summer. Summer in

Hangzhou lasts from June-September and is hot and **VERY** humid with average temperatures in the 90s. Many places do not

have A/C, although businesses downtown and foreign student dorms do have it.

Winters are not as cold as in Rhode Island, but are humid creating a cold to the bone feeling. It does snow occasionally. A typical snowfall leaves about an inch on the ground, which draws thousands of students out of their dorms to build snowmen and throw a few snowballs around. The snow then melts a few hours later. This does not sound so bad until you imagine that

buildings do not typically have heat – no escape from the cold! Most buildings Hangzhou, including the international dormitories do not have insulation so keeping warm or cool can be tough. Take a walk through the university library in February or March and you will find students bundled up in down jackets, scarves and warm hats poring over class notes.

After a February snowfall at Zhejiang University City College



## Clothing

### **What should I wear?**

Most students tend to wear jeans and a T-shirt or a sweater to class, but some wear skirts, fashionable tops and nice shoes or boots. Do not be shocked to see your Chinese friends and teachers wearing the same clothing for multiple days in a row.

This part is more for the girls as male clothing is pretty much the same as in the U.S. with less Dolce and sparkles. In general the Chinese dress more conservatively than Americans do, but young girls very commonly wear very short skirts and shorts. During summer months, young women do begin wearing tank tops. Just keep in mind that your skin-tone will already draw attention to you. Wearing skimpy clothing could draw even more (and possible negative) attention. If you find that you need/want more clothes while you are in China, the shopping is good and can be very cheap. Although, available sizes are much smaller than in the U.S., making it difficult for people of average size in the U.S. or larger to find clothing at a wide variety of locations. The average sized female chest fits tightly in XLs and one size fits all clothing. Most stores do not let you try on clothing so you might want to get a cloth tape measure and be familiar with your sizes in order to help figure out your chances in fitting. Yiwu about 1.5 hours (by train) west of Hangzhou is where most everything from China moves out of. If you get stuck for clothing you can find western clothes at the Yiwu night market.

Most shoe stores max out at women's size 40 shoe (8 ½ U.S.) and men's size 42 although the majority of shoes are smaller with these larger sizes being in the less attractive styles. The women's shoe capital of the world is Wenzhou, which is only a few hours south of Hangzhou.

## **Packing**

### **What should I pack?**

Try to leave as much free space as possible in your luggage. Almost anything needed for daily life can be found in stores there. Most personal care brands that we know in the U.S. can be found here also, i.e. Pantene, Clean& Clear, Herbal Essences, Crest, but flavors and product formulations are different.

Razors are also not the most pleasant things to buy, for girls and you may have to buy a men's razor. Most of the Chinese population rarely if ever shaves so the selection is small and pricing is high.

\*\*\*While they do have the usual mouth care brands in China you may want to take your own supply of toothpaste.\*\*\* Most Chinese toothpaste is thick sugar water or very gritty and abrasive, many students complain about tooth sensitivity. If you already have problems state side you should really consider this.

### **Necessities in Packing**

**Renminbi** – At least 2000RMB should be brought with you. You need money for the bus to Hangzhou and any cab you may also take. Once you arrive you must give the International College front desk your room deposit. This deposit is necessary before you can even move your bags to the room. In Fall 2009 this was 980RMB. The desk also

expects you to pay per night, so another 50RMB for the first night. You can go to an ATM the next day and pay for more time but if you plan on buying shampoo, food, etc. be careful of your daily ATM card withdraw limits.

**Socks and Undies (lots)** – The quality and sizing make these staples a bit difficult to find and be comfortable with.

**Specific Personal Care Products** - ANTI-PERSPIRANT!, dental floss, and tampons(if you want them).

**Photos (passport size)** – Bring about a dozen. You will need these for your student ID, your residency permit application (required), sometimes for hospital registration, entry/exit bureau ID booklet. Computer systems including the National Registration system is not very good, especially when tens of thousands of people share the same name, the only reliable trustworthy solution to this is to require photos for everything official, be prepared. You can get them there but since you should be taking some with you, you might as well take enough to last (picture printing is \*not\* cheaper in China).

**Medications, Vitamins, etc.** – Many prescriptions (even basic ones) are not available in China so take enough to last. Over the counter medications including an anti-diarrheal should also be part of your luggage and will be helpful to have on hand when you wake-up with a cold.

**A Laptop** – The ZJU proxy server works fine with Windows Vista, XP, and most of the time for Win 7 (proxy set-up should be the same as for Vista).

**Copies of your transcripts (electronic copied and pasted is fine too)** – This may sound ridiculous but China randomly blocks seemingly innocent websites. For about 2 months the ZJU proxy blocked e-campus so if you are worried about class sign-ups in the spring be prepared and have a list of all the classes you have taken on hand.

**Take any and all electronics you need** – Planning on buying an external hard drive in China? You will save yourself a great deal of money buying in the States. The same goes for flash drives, memory cards, and digital cameras. Other hardware is cheap such as laptop fans and mice, while software (pirated) is incredibly cheap but doesn't always work. Computer hot and making an awful whirling noise? If you have a problem 60 kuai and an hour will get you a cleaned laptop, extra RAM, and a replacement cooling fan installed (so don't get ripped off).

**Stuff from home for bad/sick days** – Nothing will make you feel better than a mug of hot cocoa or chicken broth that tastes like it is from home.

**American Trinkets as Gifts** – These should be small and make wonderful gifts for new friends and maybe a nicer thing or two for your boss at your internship.

**A Towel** – Chinese people are small, so are the towels they use. There are some that are big enough but all towels regardless are very thin and not very absorbent. If this bothers you be forewarned.

## **Transportation**

### **How do I get from Shanghai Pudong Airport to Hangzhou?**

Once you get your luggage look for the pictures of a bus on the signs. You will leave the populated area, pass the bullet train station and down a long hall. Follow more signs and take an elevator down to the parking lot. There is a small concrete building go there and ask for tickets, then wait and get on the bus when you hear HANGZHOU yelled.

There is a bus that leaves from the arrivals terminal and goes directly to the Yellow Dragon Sports Center (黄龙中心 – Huanglong Zhongxin) in Hangzhou. A one-way ticket costs about 100 RMB with an extra 10RMB for each piece of luggage. From there you will need walk or take a taxi to campus (10RMB cab ride plus 1RMB tax, not a kuai more! There will be hawkers trying to charge 40RMB for a 2 minute ride). See appendix for a list of instructions for the cab driver. Any group travel from URI to Hangzhou will have an arranged bus for pick-ups.

There is another bus terminal on Tiyuchang road it is near Wulin road but you will definitely need a cab for the ride to campus.

These routes work both ways and the schedules can be found in the back of MORE Hangzhou magazine.

### **How do I get from Hangzhou Xiaoshan Airport to Hangzhou?**

Take the bus to the Tiyuchang Road (体育场路) bus terminal. A one-way ticket costs about 15 RMB. From there you will need to take a taxi to campus. See appendix for a list of instructions for the cab driver.

Again, these routes work both ways and the schedules can be found in the back of MORE Hangzhou magazine.

### **What means of transportation can I use to get around Hangzhou?**

Public transportation in Hangzhou is convenient and reliable. Public buses generally run from 6 AM until 8 PM, with some exceptions. There are also a few night bus routes. Buses cost between one and three RMB depending on the type of bus. Air-conditioned buses cost two RMB and tourist-route buses usually cost three RMB with the Xihu tour bus costing 5RMB but with your ticket for that day you can get on and off as often as you wish. Be sure to bring exact change, as bus drivers will not give change. \*The easiest

way to get around using the buses is to purchase a bus route map from the student super market across the street from the International College Building\*

Taxis are also fairly inexpensive and are available anytime of day. The base rate in 2010 was 10 RMB for the first 3 km, plus a 1RMB fuel surcharge. Drivers do not often speak any English and sometimes cannot read Chinese characters, so see the appendix for a list of handy instructions/phrases to learn and show cab drivers during your first few weeks.

Bicycles can be purchased, brand-new, for less than \$30 USD. This is a great way to get around and to see the city. There are bike racks everywhere, but be sure to purchase a lock or two as well. Bikes do get stolen including e-bikes! Also, people do not wear helmets. Do not be surprised to see a parent with three kids piled on a bike in rush-hour traffic!

**\*\*Please take care when riding or walking anywhere in China, as road safety is very different than in the U.S. Pedestrians never have the right-of-way, even in a cross walk or on a sidewalk, so it is advisable to exercise caution at all times.**

### **How do I travel between cities?**

Travel between cities can be done by train or by bus. Train travel is generally cheaper than bus travel, but buses tend to be more comfortable and quicker (depending on traffic).

There are four bus stations in Hangzhou, the North, South, West, and East Bus Stations. Buses to cities north of Hangzhou, Shanghai (上海) for example, leave from the North Bus Station (杭州长--汽车, Hangzhou long distance bus station), while cities to the south of Hangzhou such as Wenzhou leave from the South bus station(汽车南站 – qiche nanzhan). Just make sure you specify bus or train because there are south stations for both.

You can buy bus tickets at the actual station \*and\* surprisingly, at the Post Office. There is a China Post on Yugu lu between the middle gate and main gate of the Yuquan campus and is about a 15 minute walk from the dorms.

Train tickets can be bought at the station or at a ticket office. There is one on wen'er lu and one on Yugu Lu. The wen'er lu office is found by walking to Yugu lu taking a left and going straight, eventually you will find it on the right side of the street. The Yugu Lu station is easier, take a right on Yugu Lu walk past the intersection with ZheDa Lu and it will be on the left side of the street. Both Train and Bus tickets can be bought one week in advance.

For holidays students get 50% off a ticket home, this does not apply to foreigners though.

\*NOTE\* You can only buy one way train and bus tickets. The best way to handle this is to buy your return ticket once you arrive at your destination, then grab a bus/cab to your

hotel. Often tickets sell out well in advance (especially for trains) so make sure you don't get stuck Sunday night without a ticket and no hotel.

### **Are there rail passes or student rates for travel?**

No, the communication infrastructure is lacking and so such pass currently exists.

### **Where can I stay when visiting other cities?**

There are hostels, which are very cheap (sometimes around \$6/night) or you can stay in hotels, which will cost probably \$15 or so per person per night. Hostelling International has hostels in major cities in China, including Hangzhou and some smaller cities. Their rates will be equal for all nationalities. Some Chinese hostels and hotels have two different rates, one for Chinese citizens and one for foreigners. Be sure to ask about this when booking a room. Some hotels only cater to Chinese residents. For hotels, [www.sinohotel.com](http://www.sinohotel.com) and [www.ctrip.com](http://www.ctrip.com) are good sites.

## **Living**

### **What is considered a typical meal in Hangzhou?**

Breakfast often consists of a couple of dumplings: *baozi* 包子 (stuffed, steamed bread) or *jiaozi* 饺子 (thin dough, steamed and stuffed) followed by tea or a yogurt drink. Another typical breakfast item is rice porridge. Lunch and dinner are similar, and typically are shared with a group of friends or family members either at home or out. A number of dishes are ordered making sure to include vegetables and meats and a variety of tastes – sweet, sour, bitter, etc. Some people eat these dishes with rice, and some prefer to eat rice at the end of the meal. In any case, steamed white rice is a staple in the Chinese diet. In traditional Chinese cooking the watery soup serves as the beverage with tea typically tea following the meal. Currently, most people choose to drink soda or alcohol during the meal.



IEP Students ordering their morning *baozi* at a village in the Yellow Mountains

### **Will I have access to a kitchen?**

You will not have access to a kitchen in the International Student Dormitory. However, there are refrigerators available on some floors and microwaves in the No.31 student building.

### **Is there a cafeteria close to the International Student Dorm?**

There is a cafeteria on the first floor of the International Student Dorm. Although they serve only Chinese dishes, there are ample selections that foreigners typically enjoy. You will have to order from the counter and then hand your receipt to a waitress when you sit down, so that she knows where to deliver your food. They have menu picture cards available and a menu with Pinyin and an English translation to help you in your first few weeks. You can eat for about \$2-4 per day.

### **Will I be able to find Western food in Hangzhou?**

There are many Western restaurants in Hangzhou, and as the city is developing very rapidly, there will be new ones opening everyday. The typical chains are located in Hangzhou – McDonalds, Pizza Hut, Kentucky Fried Chicken, etc. There are also many sit-down restaurants serving Italian, Brazilian, Argentinean, American, and other international foods. Larger supermarkets, including Carrefour and Metro, carry a limited selection of imported foods.

## **Entertainment**

### **What do Chinese university students do for fun?**

University social life is very different in China than it is in America. Drinking is not a part of university culture. Most students are living by themselves for the first time, and enjoying new social experiences. Although the university has many rules and regulations, students feel a huge sense of independence and freedom at the university. Many students enjoy going to karaoke, or KTV, which is different than in the U.S. In China, renting private rooms (4-30people) is the norm, with rentals lasting a few hours to the full night. Other popular activities among students are shopping, playing computer games, hiking, and watching movies.

### **How do I make contact with Chinese students?**

Chinese students are very eager to talk to anyone who comes from outside of China. They will approach you, or you can approach them. Feel free to stop anyone and ask questions. Students will be very friendly and may invite you for a meal or a game of basketball.

### **What sports are popular?**

Basketball, soccer, table tennis, and badminton are the most popular sports. Men and women play table tennis and badminton and consider them physical fitness. But sports which demand more of the cardiovascular system, such as soccer and basketball, tend to be male-dominated. Many of my students thought I was like a bionic woman because I would regularly run 8 laps or more around the track.

### **Are there athletic facilities on campus?**

There are soccer fields, basketball courts, and a gymnasium with table tennis and badminton courts, as well as a weight room that charges 1RMB as an entrance fee. Equipment at the school gym can be a bit rusty and is not as modern as the equipment at URI.

There are several gyms within walking distance of the campus. One is located at the Yellow Dragon Sport Center and it is similar to gyms found in the U.S. and costs about \$35 per month. Another modern gym is located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floors above Coco club, off of WanTang street. It is a bit cheaper at 650RMB for a year and includes free fitness classes in karate, kick boxing, yoga, and spinning. There is also a pool at the Yellow Dragon Sport Center which charges between 15 and 30 RMB per session. The pool staff may also check your heart and eyes before allowing you into the pool.

### **Where can I find out about events and nightlife?**

Get a copy of *Hangzhou More* ([www.morehz.com](http://www.morehz.com)) and *Zhejiang Intouch* ([www.intouchzj.com](http://www.intouchzj.com)) at the beginning of each month. These are free English language magazines with articles on places to visit and current events and are a great resource. In addition to listing events and nightlife, they list important information including bus stations, train stations and schedules, restaurants, health clubs, hotels, etc.

## **Shopping**

### **Are there fixed prices or is it appropriate to bargain?**

In department stores, restraints, and grocery stores they do not bargain. If you try and it isn't okay they will usually say something and shake their head.

Otherwise, bargain! Bargaining is expected in small shops and at street vendors. Vendors *\*will\** offer you a very high price when they see that you are a foreigner, so your counter-offer should be much lower. In fact it is much better to *\*not\** make a counter offer and you should ask them what they think is fair, when it is too high do it again until it is reasonable. This works out much better because being willing to pay \$2 for something doesn't mean it didn't cost 50cents to make. Letting the shop keeper pick their own price means they are thinking about how much they paid and an amount they would be willing to and expected to make off of it.

You should definitely observe some locals to learn more bargaining tactics. Foreigners are often much more intense with bargaining than young Chinese but you *\*do\** need to be.

**\*\*Bargaining etiquette\*\*** If you give your final price and they agree to it, you must buy the item.

## Attitude towards Americans

### **What is the general feeling towards Americans in China?**

Americans (and other Westerners) receive a lot of attention in China. People there are very curious and anxious to talk to Americans. For many this is more of a chance to practice speaking English than a genuine interest in learning more about America, but for others there is genuine interest in knowing what Americans are like and how they think and act. Hangzhou is a fairly large city, but away from West Lake you might not cross paths with another non-Chinese person for days. Expect to be stopped by complete strangers and asked to be in a photo. Expect to hear strangers stare and say “Hello!” or point and say “*lao wai!*” (*Lao wai* is Chinese for foreigner, but is not considered derogatory.) My suggestion would be to either say hello or *ni hao* back to the people, or just ignore them. Do not take offense.

## Language

### **Do they speak Mandarin in Hangzhou?**

The local people speak Hangzhou dialect (*Hangzhou hua* 杭州话), but most will understand Mandarin. It is difficult for Chinese people from other areas to understand the Hangzhou dialect, so do not get discouraged. Education is conducted in the Mandarin dialect, so students and professionals will speak Mandarin, but taxi drivers, salespeople, and especially waitstaff may only speak Hangzhou’s or their own home town dialects.

### **How fast should I expect my language skills to progress?**

Expect to feel a little lost for the first few weeks. Your language classes will be very intensive though, so progress should be very noticeable provided you go out and practice with native speakers regularly. It would be a good idea to find a language exchange partner, someone with whom you agree to meet regularly and with whom you spend, for example, an hour speaking Chinese and then an hour speaking English.

Friday afternoon at the International Center

## Zhejiang University

### **What is the International Center?**

The International Center functions as an international student dormitory and also houses administrative offices and classrooms for the Chinese as a Foreign Language program and a dining hall. This is most likely where you will live and study Chinese while at Zhejiang University.



## **Who are the students?**

Students living and studying in the International Center come from all over the world, but the largest percentage come from Korea, Japan, and Mexico.

## **What services or programs are offered?**

Chinese language and culture courses are offered through the International Center depending on your Chinese Language level. Part way through the semester you can choose to enroll in Chinese cultural courses, such as Tai Chi, Chinese Calligraphy, Gong-fu, Business Chinese Conversation, Chinese Painting, etc. These are typically once a week. For more courses offered, go to, <http://www.zju.edu.cn/english/admissions/oversea/>.

The International Center plans one trip each semester and \*may\* arrange a trip for winter vacation.

## **The Dorms**

The dorms for International students living on the Yuquan campus are in the International College Building and in the No. 31 Student Building. They have beds, showers, bathrooms, desks, dressers, and an AC/Heating system.

If you ask for a single you will be in the International College Building. If you had a double during the summer, the singles are nothing like it. The fuwuyuan will not clean your room or change your sheets and towels. You can have these done for a fee. For 20 RMB they will clean your room once and change your sheets/towels. Your other option is to exchange your sheets and towels. To do this, take your sheets and towels to the fuwuyuan desk on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of tower 1 in the International College Building. The fuwuyan there will look at your items decide how dirty they are and then give you a receipt. Take this down to the main desk, pay, then return to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor desk and they will give you new towels and sheets. Sheets and pillow cases are about 5 RMB and if you are changing towels it comes out to about 7RMB(the same price as a load of laundry but you don't have to wait or worry about lines).

Doing laundry yourself is 7RMB with 3RMB for a washer ticket and 4RMB for a dryer ticket. You buy these on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor in the food shop. If you get pressed for time (as there is usually a huge line) go down at 10-11PM with your tickets. Write your name and room number on them, slowly dump detergent in a washer (in one spot you don't want to bleach your clothes), then toss in your clothes, put down the lid and put your tickets and clothing container on top of the washer. Come back the next day and they should be done.

Living in a single means you get 60RMB of electricity per month. You need to claim it at the front desk or they won't add it to your meter. If you don't claim it that month you

can't go and claim two months worth past the 1<sup>st</sup> of the next month, so keep on it. Otherwise you will probably run out and have to pay much more money than you should.

### **Getting Locked Out**

If you are in building no. 31 you will have a scan card and a physical key. If you lock yourself out go down to the main desk and tell them. If it is at night, hope your room mate has their key because you won't be let in by the night guards. If you live in the International College you go down to the desk, sign the book, and they will send a person to go unlock your door. Past 10PM or 11PM or so, the fuwuyuans behind the desk go to bed, if you don't have your key and need to get in your room, you are yet again out of luck. There is a buzzer in case of emergencies but the ladies(who are sleeping in a room behind the desk) will not wakeup or answer the buzzing. In case of a \*real\* emergency the guards will wake the ladies up.

If your card stops working just go down to the desk and say so. Usually they are programmed to work for the period of time you paid for. The front desk does not typically reprogram your card every time you pay and sometimes it will just stop working and needs to get fixed.

### **Classes**

#### **What sort of classes will I take?**

The core courses you will be taking are Chinese language courses. These are typically scheduled at 20 or more hours a week with about four hours of class per day.

There are also hundreds of courses art, tea science, cryogenics, and medicine. You just need to find these classes and then convince the professors teaching them to let you register.

#### **How do I sign-up for classes?**

Coming from URI you should visit with Tang Li on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of Tower 1 in the International College Building to receive your student ID and a ZJU student number that begins with Z. Ensure that your ID number does in fact begin with Z, it means that you are registered as a general student, not just a language student. Having this type of number will allow you to sign-up for courses outside of Chinese language. This number is important to know and remember. Tang Li (upon request) provides you with a second number. In total you will have two numbers to use, your ID number, with the Z, and another ID for first-time course signups. If you plan on enrolling at ZJU for another semester you will need to get a new sign-up number. Within the first few days after receiving your ID you should return to Tang Li's office to get this number and receive instructions for accessing the course sign-up page.

After this point things will get tricky. The sign up system is very difficult to use and even many Chinese students have problems when using it and require help from their own departments. While we were there the office offered very little help beyond the initial meeting and will tell you to find a Chinese student to help you sign-up for classes. This is why it is important to make friends early, students typically arrive during the registration period, 1-2 days before classes start so course sign-up can be troublesome as the window to join is very small. You also need to be on the ZJU internet network (plugged into the wall on a ZJU campus) to access the site. If you can find a student in your own major it will be extremely helpful. As you already know, Chinese characters are not the easiest in the world and even the Chinese do not learn characters that they don't see and use every day. This means that your Chinese friend who is a psychology major may not even be able to help you find the classes for the electrical engineering department let alone tell you what the class is about. Many students find it easier to do one of the English based business or international relations courses which may be transferable as general education credits.

Here is a general guide for dealing with ZJU courses:

- Tang Li from the International College will assign you a registration code which for foreign students is different from your student ID. \*\*\*Get there before the starting time as in before 8AM... the office works VERY slowly and if you show up at 9... you will most likely still be there when Tang Li goes for his lunch break.\*\*\*
  - For those of you staying a full year, Tang will assign you a one semester register code, and any subsequent semesters will require asking the department head of your desired courses for an additional code. Expect to use Chinese with the department head, as their English may not be at a professional level.
- Once you have the ID code, choose classes very carefully. The menu is very difficult to navigate.
  - It is suggested to browse courses using the large database in the menu. It takes forever but it's the best way compared to browsing by section.
    - If you browse by section most courses are listed incorrectly (i.e political science courses are located in economics, etc).
- Following that, international students are required to get teacher signatures during the first week.
  - Your teacher will decide as to whether or not you may participate. If your Chinese is not deemed good enough, the professor will not grade you or allow you to attend the course, even if you meet the pre-requisites. If you wish to challenge this, have the IEP assist you.
- In the past, students have needed help. It is stressed that the International College staff do\*not\* feel that helping you with this is part of their job. As stated above, find a student in your major and have them help you work with your department to get you into and keep you in these classes.

- The drop period for classes is seemingly done at random. The online system will always offer you the option but will rarely actually drop the courses. Sometimes it says it works, but always double check your 'signed up schedule' for confirmation.
  - The online system presents you with 2 schedules, both extremely confusing. One is for all the classes you have 'shown interest in', sort of a planned schedule. You cannot drop from here. The 'real' schedule is located deep within the hidden online treasure trove of secrets. I.E not labeled under "安排."
    - It isn't confirmed, but past accounts hint that your actual schedule can be accessed from your summary page. From there, you click the course and it will take you to a separate screen where you can choose to quit that course.
    - Remember to do it sooner rather than later.
  
- Remember, the most important thing are cell phones numbers. These get you into classes, help you get through classes, and at the end of the course, help you get grades. This is *very* important, many students who took actual ZJU classes were graded lower with poor Chinese as the excuse. If you question whether their grading is fair or not, many teachers will actually hide from you and refuse to open their office doors even when you are standing outside.
  
- The exception being language teachers. Most of the language teachers are very helpful and understanding, they are also slightly more used to working with non-Chinese students who use different educational systems. The more difficult teachers are the actual professors and lecturers at the university.

### **What is the style of teaching in China?**

In your language classes, teachers will interact with students in the form of asking many more questions than is typical in a lecture. The overall feel of a Chinese class is different and often the speed at which you advance through the book is more important than the speed at which you and your classmates will actually learn and comprehend the materials. Often it is necessary to demand a review of materials because even before exams many teachers will not have a review class and will teach material that won't even appear on the tests. There is also a lack of positive feedback from teachers and they have no problem announcing who is the best and who is the worst as a way to try and motivate students. For example, some dictations grades will come back with comments like "study!" or "poor work!" while others come back with no grade because your teacher considered it such poor work.

Feedback may seem discouraging or harsh at times, so try your best and do not hesitate to approach the teacher with any issues. This being said, make sure you ask your teacher for their office number, they may not always give it. Also make sure which campus it is on and try to set up an appointment in advance. Most teachers don't answer emails (even

when they are written in Chinese) but do respond to texts, which are quite appropriate to use with Chinese language teachers. Even when you do make an appointment the teachers often forget multiple times and with a 45minute bus ride to a different campus to see your teacher, having them not show up is very frustrating so it is best you get their cell phone number and call/text them before you head to the meeting.

In an actual ZJU class, you just show up, watch the teachers poorly made power point presentation, maybe discuss a little, and leave.

### **What is the grading system like?**

The grading system is the same number wise as in the U.S. Grades are out of 100 points. The difference is in the interpretation of grades, typically grades in the 60s are celebrated as passing with 70's and 80's being considered very good and grades in the 90's almost impossible. Letter grades are not used. Often around 30% of your total grade comes from attendance and taking finals are restricted to students who have not missed more than one-third of the classes, so the best advice is to go to class. You will have a higher grade if you show up and sleep through class than if you stay in bed.

\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\* ALL Chinese students are allowed to re-take finals! Your teacher \*must\* allow you to do this, although often they consider retesting an international student annoying and will claim that you can't. However they are not allowed to bar you from retaking a final.

\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\* Often your Chinese classmates will skip class, apparently the 30% rule does not seem to apply to them, but your teacher will mark when the only foreigner in class doesn't show up, so go!

### **University Rules**

In China most Universities are very strict about curfews. On the Zijingang campus of ZJU the electricity is cut off at 11PM and the Aiyis (who keep the key for the front door) go to bed. This means students must be in the dormitory building before then or they are going to be spending the night outside. The University hopes that students will go to bed early, but during exam time many of them huddle in the lowly lit bathrooms for extra study time. This curfew means that most of your friends can't have a typical 8 or 9 PM European dinner and still get sleep so you should keep this in mind when inviting them out.

The Yuquan campus is for upper classmen and graduate students so \*most\* of the dormitories do not implement this curfew and operate using scan cards to get in and out. Some dorms have not yet been updated and the curfew still applies.

The most important thing to remember is that **international students living in international study buildings on the Zijingang and Yuquan campuses do not have a curfew** and have electricity in their dorm **24/7**.

### **Handy Phrases**

Please take me to the Yuquan campus back gate on Xixi Lu.

请带我去浙江大学玉泉校区西溪路后门。  
Qǐng dài wǒ qù zhèjiāngdàxué yùquán xiàoqū xīxīlù hòumén.

请带我去浙江大学玉泉校区西溪路北门。  
Qǐng dài wǒ qù zhèjiāngdàxué yùquán xiàoqū xīxīlù běimén.

Some cab drivers only know north gate while others are more comfortable with back gate, both are correct and the same exact place.

Please take me to the train station.

请带我去杭州火车站。  
Qǐng dài wǒ qù hángzhōu huǒchēzhàn.

### **Technicals for a Semester Abroad**

#### **What do I need to do once I arrive?**

First get to the University and move into your room. As soon as the work week starts go to the International College Office (with two photos) and get your student ID. Ask about Police Registration. You will be given a little pamphlet with the police station address.

#### **How do I register with the police?**

Take the police registration packet from ZJU, your passport and at least one photo to the police station. Once you are dropped off at the station (usually in front of the entrance gate) head to the left of the gate. There should be a sign but if not the registration office is the first or second down. There is a glass slider window in front. Go in. On the machine, press your visit type and take a ticket. When you get called up to the desk give them all of your paperwork, etc. and pay. Afterwards they will give you a receipt and tell you to come back in a week. \*Keep this safe\* this is your temporary passport and if you lose it you can't get your real passport back and have to apply for a new one.

When you come back in a week you should take the receipt and the amount of money listed on the sheet. In 2009 it was 400RMB. Once you arrive, go up the stairwell directly to the right of the gate. On the second floor there are 2 doors one on the left and one on the right, head through the one on the left. Go to the second set of help desks and give them the money and receipt. They will then hand over your passport and new residency permit. Regardless of what visa you entered on, your new residency permit will allow

you to enter and exit China as you please. Just keep in mind many Chinese people such as hotel workers do not expect you to have one and will point out that your visa has a big red “CANCELLED” written on it. Flip to the Residency Permit page and say you live in China, it usually fixes the problem.

## **Healthcare**

### **Is there a clinic or hospital nearby?**

There is a clinic next door to the International Center, where international students can get medical service and are typically prescribed IV medications even for colds. Unless you are very good at Chinese you should take a translator although many Chinese people, even those good in English, are not comfortable with medical terms so translating a list of symptoms from nciku or a different site will likely be useful.

For more serious illnesses or injuries and advanced medical treatment, there is Sir Run Run Hospital (which is endorsed by the International College). Compared to most other hospitals in China it has wonderful exams rooms and English speaking doctors, just ensure you visit the International Clinic which is open from M-F until 5PM. Any other time the Number Two Hospital(one of ZJUs research hospitals) is the better choice. Feel free to take a good friend who can translate or ask someone in the International College to accompany you, they can also help to schedule appointments.

### **What is going to the doctors like in China?**

Most Chinese people do not have health insurance so a trip to the doctor is usually a bit hectic, especially when you \*are\* sick and not at the top of your game. A typical visit is as follows:

- Grab a lot of RMB, some kind of bag, a book/homework, your passport and student ID and head to the hospital.
- Register at the hospital and get your medical card and booklet.
- Tell the registration person which type of doctor you need to see.
- Pay for the doctor visit.
- Find the hospital wing with your type of doctor. Look for a large mob of people, this will be an office with a doctor who is currently working. Push your way through and fight for the seat at the doctor’s desk, there are no lines and it can get nasty.
- Give the doctor your pay stub and booklet. Explain what is wrong and try to answer the doctor’s questions as best you can. \*On a cultural note\* Try to be relaxed, you will have to explain everything that is wrong in front of a crowd. It is quite embarrassing but this and the resulting comments of the Chinese people on your illness are inevitable and won’t change.
- Your doctor will give you a paystub with the testing you need done. Take this back to the registration and billing window (leave your booklet with the doctor).
- Pay for the testing.

- Go get your tests done.
- Take your results back to the doctor. The doctor will usually remember you because they get very few foreigners but you will wait less time and sometimes the doctor will clear the seat with you to get you out of the office quickly.
- The doctor will tell you what is wrong and prescribe medications. He will also tell you how to take them. At the end of the conversation he will give you another paystub which you need to take back to the registration/billing window.
- Pay for the medications.
- Go to the pharmacy and pick up them up.
- Take them as directed

\*\*\*In China many people, including doctors do not believe that pills work and will not prescribe pills\*\*\*

The medication regimen may require getting IV medications, if this is the case see below.

- Go to the IV room \*\*\*with your dosage paperwork\*\*\* it is separate from your bill.
  - If your list says you should have 250mg of something and you only have a bottle for 25mg you will be getting a preliminary injection.

\*\*This is especially true when it comes to antibiotics and is to see if you are allergic to one or more of the medications. \*\*\*

\*\*The preliminary injection is done in a separate area and you will be shown, either by being led to it or by following hand gestures from nurses. It is often very difficult to understand medical staff through the medical masks. \*\*\*

- Go to the injection room.
- Give you supplies to a nurse.
- Receive the injection and wait approximately 30 minutes.
- Ask the nurse if you can go and if she says yes, take your paystub back to registration/billing.
- Pay, again.
- Go to the pharmacy, again.
- Then go back to the IV room and follow the directions as follows.
- Give the nurses at the injection window your medications, dosage form, and wait for them to mix up your IV bag.
- Get your IV (typically it will be given in one hand while you hold the bag in the other). Keep the liquid containing bag above the injection point.
- They will give you the unused medications which you should pack in the bag you brought to take home and bring back the next day.
- Pick a seat and hang up your IV pouch. \*If you have issues ask a nurse\*
- When your IV bag/bottle gets very low, go back up to the injection window and get it changed.
- Continue this until the nurse gives you back your dosage sheet, this will be your last IV session for the day (unless your doctor has told you to come over two periods a day).

\*\*\*Put this sheet in a safe place (the bag with meds) \*\*\* and keep it for the next day, you cannot get an IV without this sheet.

- When your last bottle is done, go back up to the window and have your IV removed.
- Keep pressure on the injection site for about a minute and then head home

\*\*\*Especially for your first time, take a Chinese friend or teacher. \*\*\*

### **How do use my health insurance?**

First, choose an insurance policy with a VERY LOW!!! Co-pay, most trips to the doctors cost between \$30-60 and you return every 2-3 days and do the same thing again even if you are receiving medication, they do not give you a week worth even if you need it. If you have a \$50 fee and a \$36 doctors visit you cannot file a claim. This means you are \$36 in the hole. After a couple of visits \$36, \$42, \$27 it adds up to a hunk of change that will come out of your pocket and not the insurance company's.

Most Chinese people do not have health insurance and the hospitals are not equipped to file their own claims. Make sure that you name is spelled correctly on all of the paperwork or your claim might be denied. Keep in mind the time to file deadlines some are as little as 2 days after service. Collect your hospital paperwork, print your claims forms from the website, fill them out, and send them to the insurance company by international fax(this can be done in the International College 2<sup>nd</sup> floor shop for a fee.)

## Health Vocabulary

Sore Throat - 咽喉痛 - yānhóutòng	Flu - 流感 - liúgǎn
Fever - 发烧 - fāshāo	Cold - 感冒 - gǎnmào
Cramp - 抽筋 - chōujīn	Asthma - 哮喘 - xiàochuǎn
To sneeze - 打喷嚏 - dǎpēntì	Allergy - 过敏 - guòmǐn
Headache - 头疼 - tóuténg	Diabetes - 糖尿病 - tángniàobìng
Cough - 咳嗽 - késou	Fracture - 骨折 - gǔzhé
Stomach Ache - 胃痛 - wèitòng - 肚子痛 - dùzi	Strep Throat - 链球菌性咽喉炎 - liànqiújūnxìngyānhóuyán
Nausea - 恶心 - ǎxīn	STD - 性传染病 - xìng chuán rǎn bìng
Nosebleed - 鼻出血 - bíchūxiě	To be pregnant - 怀孕 - huáiyùn
Rash - 皮疹 - pízhěn	bronchitis - 支气管炎 - zhīqǐguǎnyá
Earache - 耳痛 - ěr tòng	pneumonia - 肺炎 - fèiyán
Backache - 背痛 - bèitòng	
Runny Nose - 流鼻涕的 - liú bíu de	
To feel dizzy - 感到头晕 - gǎndào tóuyūn	
To Faint - 昏倒 - hūndǎo	
Redness - 红色 - hóng sè	
Flatulent - 气胀的 - qì zhàng de	
Bloated/Swollen - 肿胀的 - zhǒngzhàng de	
Diarrea - 拉肚子 - lādùzi	
Painful Urination - 疼痛的排尿 - téngtòngdepáiniào	
Discharge - 分泌物 - fēnmìwù	
Itchy - 发痒症 - fāyǎngzhèng	
To burn(eyes, throat, etc) - 灼痛 - zhuótòng	
Chills - 着凉 - zháoliáng	
Exhaustion - 精疲力竭 - jīngpílìjié	
Constipation - 便秘 - biànmì	
To have pain when breathing - 岔气 - chàqì	
Numb - 麻木 - mámù	