Korean-American Business Center Study Tour

May 15, 2012

The first Korea study tour left Atlanta this May with 23 GSU students guided by professors J.P. Shim and Mike Gallivan from the Department of Computer Information Systems. Professor Shim, who is heading up the newly formed Korean-American Business Center, organized the tour. He has led more than 170 student trips to Korea and Asia over the course of his career. In addition to South Korea, the tour made a stopover in Hong Kong allowing time for a variety of activities.

“The tour provides undergraduate and graduate students in GSU's Robinson College of Business with valuable insights into one of the world’s fastest growing regions,” said Dr. Ephraim McLean, chair of the Department of Computer Information Systems. Recent studies have shown that Korea is currently leading the world in every segment of the tele-communications market, ranging from broadband growth, to mobile applications, Internet growth and cellular TV.

South Korea's 5,000-year history is embedded with cultural richness, and its population of 50 million marks it as one of the world's highest population densities. Over the past several decades, Korea has achieved a remarkably high level of economic growth, which has allowed the country to rise from the rubble of the Korean War into the ranks of being the seventh-largest trading partner of the United States and the 15th largest economy in the world.

“In a global society with constantly changing technology, we need future leaders to have a global perspective to inspire others with a strong vision, information and communication technology skills, combined with cross-cultural understanding,” remarked Dr. Shim.

After a late-night layover in Incheon, South Korea, students arrived in Hong Kong for lunch at the Hong Kong (HK) stock exchange, Asia’s third-largest stock exchange behind the Tokyo
Stock Exchange and the Shanghai Stock Exchange. The HK exchange is the fifth largest in the world. After hotel check-in, students took advantage of the opportunity to freely explore and experience Hong Kong culture. After dinner, students rode the Hong Kong Star Ferry crossing Victoria Harbour and discovered the Peak Tram, taking them to the top of Victoria Peak for a dazzling nighttime view of the city. The tram has been in operation for more than 100 years.

The next day, students visited the City University of Hong Kong for information technology (IT), trade and business information sessions. After lunch, students went to the UPS Hong Kong Airport hub for an in-depth facility tour, a review of UPS processes, and an introduction to UPS IT tools to learn how the company delivers value within the supply chain of UPS customers. The tour was scheduled with the assistance of UPS’s world headquarters chief operating officer in Atlanta and the president of UPS North Asia District.

On May 5, students had the better part of the day for exploring Hong Kong. They left the following morning for a full day of travel back to Incheon, South Korea. Day one in Korea included an immersion into Korean culture with cultural hands-on experiences delivered by the Korean Tourism Organization. Afterwards, they visited the Seoul Tower, a communication and observation tower located on Namsan Mountain in central Seoul. The tower, built in 1969 at a cost of approximately $2.5 million, was opened to the public in 1980 and is a landmark of Seoul providing a spectacular view of the city.

Departing from the tower, a subway stop to Yongsan metro station brought the students to the Yongsan electronics market. The market, actually closer to a large complex, comprises 20 buildings and hosts more than 5,000 independent shops selling electronics, appliances, telephones, software, etc. Today, Korea is a major manufacturer and innovator in the world of high technology electronics and computing. This market gave students insight into the gadgets we will see in the near future.

After lunch, the students visited Kia Motors headquarters and Samsung’s main showroom. Kia Motors prepared an exclusive presentation for Robinson’s students delivering an overview of their strategy - something rarely done for outsiders according to Dr. Shim. Amid expanding global demand for automobiles in 2010, Kia Motor stood out as having the highest growth rate among all the world’s automakers. Kia’s first-ever U.S. automobile manufacturing plant is located in West Point, Georgia. The 2.2 million-square-foot automobile manufacturing plant is situated on more than 2,200 acres of land and is capable of producing 300,000 cars annually for the North American and global markets. The plant is a $1.1 billion investment by Kia Motors Corporation.

Samsung provided a tour of their latest products and technologies. From its inception as a small export business 70 years ago, Samsung has grown to become one of the world’s leading electronics companies, specializing in digital appliances and media, semiconductors, memory and system integration. Samsung enjoys the highest global market share for 13 of its products, including semiconductors, TFT-LCDs, monitors and CDMA mobile phones. Their advances in research and development of semiconductors, flash memory and non-memory, custom semiconductors, DRAM and SRAM, LCDs, mobile phones and digital appliances are seen in products worldwide. While Samsung Electronics is best known in the United States, Samsung also has businesses in finance, construction, chemicals, hotels, machinery and heavy industry, security, and medical.

On May 8, students visited the locality of Gangnam Gu in Seoul. On March 6 of 2009, the Gwinnett County government in Georgia passed a motion that confirmed a sister-community
relationship with the Gangnam district of Seoul, South Korea’s capital. Government officials from Gangnam briefed students about business, economy, trade, and their health park and information technology systems. Afterwards, students went to Seoul National University (SNU) where GSU students and SNU students discussed the use of social media. The final activity of the day was a visit to the Songdo Global University Campus. This is an ambitious project located in the Incheon Free Economy Zone that will become a hub for education and R&D.

The following day, the group was exposed to the Korean government’s four rivers restoration project. This is a multi-purpose green growth project focusing on the Han River, Nakdong River, Geum River and Yeongsan River in South Korea. The project was spearheaded by South Korean president Lee Myung-bak and was declared complete on October 21, 2011. The government estimated its full investment and funding totaled 22.2 trillion won (approximately 17.3 billion USD). The overall project was broken into three project sets: revitalizing the four rivers, projects on their 14 tributaries and refurbishment for other smaller-sized streams. The project had five key objectives as well: securing abundant water resources to combat water scarcity; implementing comprehensive flood control measures; improving water quality and restoring river ecosystems; creating multipurpose spaces for local residents; and regional development centered on the rivers.

In the afternoon, students started their one-week Korean immersion experience guided by two leading Korean Universities. One set of students joined KyungPook National University in Daegu and another set was paired with Daejeon University. Through specially organized programs at these institutions, students found themselves participating in classes to learn the following: Korean language, culture, food and cooking, economics, information technology, taekwondo, calligraphy and other activities. Special field trips were arranged throughout the week to visit local historic sites, hospitals, and the national research institute. During the week, students had the opportunity to experience a homestay where the student spent part of the week living with a Korean family and/or Korean students.

After the two week trip ended, the students returned to Atlanta.

**Media Coverage**

Atlanta-based *Chosun Daily News* covers the 2012 GSU Korea Study Tour
The South Korea and Hong Kong study tour provided me with a unique opportunity to visit Asia for the very first time. What makes this excursion an exceptionally exclusive experience is that the itinerary was carefully designed by a well-connected proud son of South Korea: Dr Shim, who accompanied the group to ensure that we were in the best conditions, and that we all had an unforgettable time.

In South Korea, or in Hong Kong, we didn’t feel as mere tourists, but more as expected guests; VIP guests even. Thanks to Dr Shim’s connections, our group was provided with access to prestigious companies like KIA, and affluent political figures such as the government officials leading the four rivers restoration project, or the educators in some of the top universities in Hong Kong and South Korea.

Our first phase of the trip was the visit to Hong Kong. Hong Kong at night-- with its illuminated, massive skyscrapers-- was a breathtaking spectacle! Another highlight of the stay in Hong Kong was my visit to the Hong Kong Museum of art: I had the opportunity to enjoy a guided tour of its Chinese calligraphy collection. The rich history behind the art of calligraphy is incredibly fascinating.

I am still surprised at the fact that we efficiently managed to squeeze, in addition, major companies visits, antique market shopping, authentic Chinese restaurant dining, one university visit and many individual outings (including a visit to Macau for some) in only 3 fun days in Hong Kong.

The experience in South Korea surpassed our wildest hopes. Seoul is one of the most beautiful and elegant cities I have ever visited. The hospitality and friendliness of South Korean was pleasantly shocking… The first night out on the town, we discovered how chic the Korean people are: young men and women have a very fine sense of fashion. Close to a whole week so far in Asia, we were becoming more and more adventurous with the street vendor foods; and rarely got disappointed.

The day after our arrival in Seoul, we started our busy schedule with a tour of the beautiful Cheonggye Cheon Creek, before stopping by the Korea Tourism Organization building, where we were treated like ROYALTY…. Literally… At least I was: we got outfitted in traditional clothing, and our hosts carefully selected the traditional outfit of a South Korean King for me! Let’s just say, with all modesty, that no one else that day could have fitted the royal garments more handsomely than I: the local press photos prove this fact. Yes, we were featured in the local news… Not for the last time either…

We then proceeded to the number 1 university in South Korea (Seoul National University) for an exchange with SNU MBA students. The same day we visited KIA and got the privilege to hear about their strategy on gaining more market shares globally by upgrading their brand, and adding value for their customers. Korea is committed to the “green” philosophy, a recurring theme throughout the Korean portion of the study tour. Companies such as Kia are aggressive in that pursuit: for instance, the hosts at Kia unveiled for us a sample of the company “green flagship” with the most stylish designs in the automotive industry. I honestly gained a whole new respect for KIA as a company.
Another major illustration of South Korea pursuit of sustainability is the $17 billion four rivers restoration project that aims at the remediation of risks of floods as well as drought in the region, while reviving the “four rivers” area, by building infrastructures to attract visitors.

The final phase of the trip was the trip to Daegu to complete the global leadership program at Kyungpook National University. We participated in diverse activities designed by the university. We deepened our understanding of the culture through (to name a few) classes on Korean culture in the business world and beyond, the Korean alphabet, the martial art of Tae Kwon Do (hands on), and even a home stay in a Korean host family. My home stay was such a pleasant experience: I was completely spoiled by my host family.

The memories are way too numerous to contain them in an essay of reasonable length. We had so much fun that we all wish that the trip could be extended. It seems to be the case for every delegation of students that Dr Shim takes with him to South Korea. The opportunity that was provided was a unique chance with a price tag of only $x,xxx (plane ticket included). On that trip, I personally spent less than an additional $xxx, including food, souvenirs, personal transportation etc… just to illustrate how affordable --compared to similar study abroad programs-- the total cost is to embark on the South Korea/Hong Kong Study tour. I feel very fortunate for having enjoyed a taste of Hong Kong and especially South Korea; and I’m so hungry for more…
As I embarked into the journey of college, I was determined to study abroad and learn from different cultures. However, I never imagined that I was going to have the opportunity to visit Hong Kong and South Korea during my freshman year in Georgia State University. This experience has changed my view about the corporate world and about the opportunities that are offered to students, just like me, that want to take their talent to different countries around the globe.

We had the chance to visit Hong Kong first and the few days we spent there were truly unforgettable. As soon as we arrived to that magnificent island and main land, we were immediately appalled by the incredible infrastructure of the city. The magnitude of business and corporations with headquarters in Hong Kong was more than what I was expecting. The city is an authentic epicenter for world trading and businesses. The best view of the city was definitely at Victoria Peak. This mountain was one of the high lights of Hong Kong in my opinion. The view from the top of the peak was majestic and weather was perfect there.

Another highlight of Hong Kong was definitely the gastronomy. The food we were able to sample throughout the time we were there was exquisite and definitely one of the best Oriental foods I have ever had. The combination of décor and taste made the gastronomic experience a complete novelty for me.

Even though Hong Kong was an unforgettable trip, my favorite part was our visit to South Korea. My initial thought of the city was that it was a very rural place with a lot of vegetation and beautiful scenery. However, as we arrived to the city of Seoul I discovered the magnificence of the beautiful buildings and commercial center of the urban area. The first night we walked through the downtown area of Seoul, I was shocked to see the amount of commerce in the streets and to see how economically profitable that small area is.

We also had the chance to visit the U-Health Park, which is a complete outdoors fitness center. Due to my interest in the healthcare field I was very excited to see the initiative to promote good health and exercise in the city of Gangnam. It was great to see that the citizens are dedicated to decrease the overweight rates that are slowly rising. On the other hand, I also greatly enjoyed our visit to the Tourist Center in Seoul. We were able to learn numerous things such as the customary attire for holidays and different forms of crafts that are native to Korea.

Another highlight of the trip was the visit to the Rivers Restoration Project. The effort and investment that has been put into the project reflects the importance of managing and controlling the distribution of water throughout the country. The project has a massive structure that combines efficiency and beauty. The bicycle trails located at the site of the project are both striking and extensive. The trails allow the visitors to see the true image of the rivers restorations and it also allowed them to appreciate the amount of thought that has been put into the project.

The last part of the trip consisted on a week-long visit to two different universities in South Korea. I was fortunate to attend Kyoungpook National University along with
fifteen other classmates from my group. We resided in a guest house located in Downtown Dageou, which in my opinion was a great way to allow us to truly get to know each other and share unique memories that we will never forget. It was great to able to share ideas, cultures, and goals that each of us has.

While we attended KNU, we learned Tai Kwon Do, Korean language, Korean cooking, and most importantly, Korean culture. I cannot accurately describe the level of satisfaction I obtained from learning from such a rich and different culture. It was enlightening to see that even though Oriental and Western cultures are so different, at the end of the day we have more similarities than differences. The students at the universities treated us like their own classmates and like lifelong friends. I have not been able to find more friendlier and polite people than the professors and students we meet throughout the time we were in Korea.

The Hong Kong and Korea Study Tour has changed my perspective about the world and about what I want to do with my career in the future. I can honestly say that this is the best experience of my life so far and that I will definitely try to go back next summer for the exchange program at KNU. At the beginning of the trip, I boarded an airplane with complete strangers, yet, by the time I came back, I was able to make amazing friends, both in Georgia and in Korea. After this trip, I feel like a more experience and mature person than I was when I boarded the plane heading to Incheon.
Claiborne Darden  
MA in Political Science, Economics

Study Abroad in South Korea and Hong Kong

The experience of traveling abroad to new places is always a coalescence of fear of mixed with excitement of the new and unknown nature of a foreign land. The study abroad the South Korea and Hong Kong was no exception to this providing ample excitement after which any fear we may have had, was assuaged with knowledge of a new culture. From our stay in Hong Kong, to the various locations in South Korean, the trip was arranged perfectly, exposing our group to every level of those cultures and societies.

Starting the trip in Hong Kong was an excellent, and gentle, introduction for those who had never been to Asia before. Its history as a British colony provided a historically western culture within a still very Asian society. Our tours of various businesses and universities there illuminated the business and teaching methods of another culture, and we were exposed to all of the similarities as well as the differences. The amount of time we spent there was perfect, just enough to fully take in a lot of what the city had to offer, but not so much that it became overwhelming.

South Korea provided a much deeper exposure to Asian culture through our various expeditions throughout the country. I really enjoyed the dichotomy of the culture in that it is a very modern society but still is firmly rooted in its traditions. Seoul represented the South Korea's embrace of the modern world, Songdo certainly has its focus on the future with its ambitious growth plan, and the cities of Daejeon and Okcheon offer a glimpse to traditional Korean culture. Every day offered a different perspective and a new opinion formed in our minds. From the sprawling, teeming isolation of Seoul's enormity to the intimate hospitality of the families who opened their homes to us, it is hard to find the words to express the experience that was our time in South Korea.
Alexandria Davis  
Journalism  

My experience in South Korea and Hong Kong was phenomenal. I had a few life changing experiences and met great people that I will stay in contact with. When I first arrived in Hong Kong I didn’t know what to expect but knew I had to be open to trying new things. One unexpected experience was when we first ate lunch and the food was served all at once on the table. In America when food is all served at once it is usually a holiday. So that experience gave me a feeling of home and I felt that my GSU peers and I were all family. Hong Kong reminded me a lot of New York and people were always on the way somewhere. The Chinese made and sold food on the street so there was never a hungry moment for me!

My time in Hong Kong came to an end after 3 days and then next was Seoul, South Korea. Seoul was a lot more modern than Hong Kong and it is also a place where I see myself living. It also was fast paced. After my stay at the hostel I went to Daejon, South Korea and met my host family, the Shin family. My partner was Sang Eun Shin and she lived with her mother and little sister. They were amazing and showed me great hospitality. They taught me how to play Korean games and also a little language.

What I noticed most about the Korean culture was that the immaturity level of their young adults was a lot below the level of young adult Americans. We do things a lot more sooner than they do. They also are able to hang out without worrying much about crime. Although crime occurs all over the world, Seoul was a pretty safe place. When my time came to an end in Daejon I gave my host family gifts and thanked them for allowing me to live with them. My host mother and I cried when we exchanged our goodbyes. Since I’ve been home I’ve been really missing South Korea and would love to go back. I’ve been cooking Korean food and learning their language. Meanwhile, I am patiently waiting for my return back to South Korea.
Jessica Diaz  
Journalism, Business  
Summer 2012

Hong Kong & Korea Study Tour Essay

The Global Leadership Program met every one of my academic, personal and professional expectations plus more. I believe that offering this two-week program to Asia is absolutely genius for several reasons.

A major selling point of the trip was the actual duration of the trip, because any longer than this would have been difficult to receive approval from our employer. The Asian population is rapidly growing in the United States, and more specifically the Korean community is rapidly growing here in Georgia therefore the cultural exposure on the study tour is invaluable. The trip was also affordable and open to students outside of the CIS program and/or Robinson College of Business. And, for someone like me who is interested in pursuing a career in Asia the trip was even more beneficial. Thanks to Dr. Shim and the structure of the program I was able to connect with UPS, Kia Motors, university professors along with additional organizations. Having the opportunity to meet professionals in Asia was a major highlight for me, but I also did not feel short of having the opportunity to site see and learn from the two cultures.

Another highlight of the trip was the time I spent with my homestay family. Here in the U.S. a week usually goes by pretty quick, but thankfully enough the week I spent with my homestay family went by rather slowly. I will never underestimate how close you can grow with a group of people in a matter of week. The Daejon students went above and beyond to make sure we were all satisfied throughout the week. Most of us were not looking forward to our last day together. Some of us even cried when we had to say our good byes. I do think it was helpful to have a Korean American join the homestay group and would suggest this for the year's to come.

The only thing I would change about the program is the dates. For example I think it would be best for the program to begin after the GSU graduation, and even though I chose the Global Leadership Program over my graduation ceremony it would be nice for future students to not have to miss their ceremony.

My brother is attending GSU in the fall, and I am already selling the Global Leadership program to him! I hope to see the program grow even bigger next year, and I am thrilled to now be an ambassador for the program after seeing first hand how beneficial this program is. A special thanks to Dr. Shim for coordinating such a magnificent trip for students that allows them the opportunity to explore Asia. I will never forget the GSU and Daejon friendships that developed in the summer of 2012!
Timothy (T.J.) Ertley  
M.S. Finance and MBA (International Business)

The South Korea-Hong Kong Study tour was one of the most valuable experiences I have had in my life. I am nearing the end of my graduate studies, and although I had traveled quite extensively, I had never been on any kind of study trip. Additionally, I had never been to Asia, so entering the trip I did not know what to expect.

What really struck me was the hospitality of the Korean people. From my preconceived notions of what Asian cultures were like, I imagined large cities where people would have no time to pay attention to the people around them. Being born and raised in the Southeastern United States, it was very much akin to the “southern hospitality” we are used to. This was true in our pre-arranged home stays, in our interactions with KNU students, and in my guesthouse stays in both Daegu and Seoul. Two of our homestay hosts took another study tour student and me out for Samgyeopsal (a traditional pork belly dish) and soju (a traditional Korean drink). Furthermore, when we woke up the next morning, our “mother” had a feast ready that, although consisting of foods very much culturally different from this part of the United States, made us feel like we were truly at home. We also had the pleasure of meeting Suk at our Daegu guesthouse, and the memories will last a lifetime.

I was also surprised by impromptu meetings with young Koreans wishing to practice their English. Wandering around Gyeongbokgung Palace, I ran into large groups of schoolchildren telling me “hello”. Early morning at Incheon Airport, I spoke with a young man from Busan who was traveling to Cairns, Australia to continue his studies in English. He graciously shared coffee and food with me as we talked about our trips, our studies, and our careers. It was a welcome, fitting end to my trip, and I would like to thank the people of Korea for their generosity.

All of the hospitality aside, I was also impressed by all the frenetic business activity happening around the country. After visiting the Korean War Museum and hearing all of the stories, it is amazing that in such a short time this resilient nation has risen from the ashes of the Korean War to become home to such notable global companies such as Kia Motors, LG, Samsung, and Doosan. Our group was able to visit Kia Motors, Seoul National University, and the future campus at Songdo; which all provided good insights into Korean business and academic culture. In addition, the pace of innovation, as evidenced by South Korea’s wireless and IT infrastructures, is astounding. While traveling in South Korea, one is always reminded of that fact.
In addition to the tour of Korea, it was also a valuable experience to travel to Hong Kong. On the drive from the airport, it is amazing to see the sprawling container port that more than rivals Long Beach or Savannah. It did not really hit me how astounding the area is until we were at the City University of Hong Kong where we learned that there are 4 or 5 more ports just as impressive as that one in the Pearl River Delta. It is hard to wrap ones mind around the fact that Shenzhen, a town of 300,000 in the 1970’s, is now above 10 million in population. We were also reminded of the Atlanta connection in our visit to the bustling UPS air cargo terminal.

Due to my good experience in the region, I do believe I will eventually return. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Georgia State University and in particular Dr. Shim for arranging this amazing trip. I will now always be mindful of opportunities in the region. There are certainly a number of connections to the state of Georgia (UPS, Kia West Point, etc.) and new connections to be made with the implementation of the new free trade agreement with South Korea.
Yushan Gong  
Accounting  
BBA, May 2013  

GSU GLP Korea and Hong Kong Study Tour 2012

As a person who have never been traveled oversea before, this trip will be a truly unforgettable event in my life. The fifteen days of oversea staying opened my eyes and gave me a better understanding of Korea and Hong Kong.

When we first arrival at Hong Kong, it was really exciting for me to see those places’ names and things I saw on the TV turned into reality (I love to watch Hong Kong TV dramas). On top of that, those Chinese characters and Chinese faces on the street made me feel I’m home. So when we arrival at Hong Kong, even though I was physically exhausted I was still exciting about the new and familiar environment.

During our three days of stay in Hong Kong, I was pleased to visit the UPS hub, stock exchange market, City University of Hong Kong and many other interesting places. Even though they were a little different than I thought before but it was still a good experience. On the other hand, along with three other people we went to the Disneyland in Hong Kong, which is the smallest Disneyland Park in the world. Overall we had a good time in Hong Kong but there were lots places that I want to go but didn’t have a chance to see.

Then we came to Korea, there were lots walking and climbing during the entire trip, which is good for a couch potato like me. The streets were very clean and there were high technology everywhere. We visited numerous places and have been to many different cities in Korea. I was surprised to learn the close connection between Korean and American. Many Korean speak relatively good English and many of them have lived in the U.S., attended school in the U.S. or done a study abroad in the U.S. before.

Of course, the most memorable part was the hospitality of Korean. Either the students and teachers from KNU or the homestead family I have been assigned to or the staff members at the hostel, they all tried their best to sever us and want to make us feel like home. Certainly they have achieved that goal and left us an unforgettable good memory for Korea and Korean.

In the end, I just want to suggest a little area that needed to be improved, which is the shortage of bathroom in the hostel we stay last. 16 people were just too much for only 2 bathrooms, especially while we have 7 girls in the group. Otherwise this is a perfect trip for me and thanks to Dr. Shim and all other staff members that made this trip happened. Also thanks to all the staffs and students in Korea that all make us feel like home in Korea.
Lessons from Global Leadership Study Tour 2012

Traveling to Hong Kong and South Korea with Georgia State University was one of the most surreal traveling experiences I’ve had in my life. Learning about Asian cultures, their global business presence, and the value placed on education exceeded my expectations. From beginning to end the study tour was educational, enlightening, and filled with exciting adventures.

Korea’s innovation in using technology reignited my passion for the field with how there doesn’t seem to be any limits to their use of technology. Free Wi-Fi was available in a majority of the public places we visited. Smartphones were used by adults and children. I can only imagine how this allows Asian children to be innovative and think big with being able to use these devices in the same capacity as adults. Gangnam’s U-Health park was the epitome of merging health, wellness, and technology in an urban setting. RFID sensors are used for sustainability through kiosks and readers to track residents’ physical activity and progress. The walking path and various workout stations in the health park give an ideal setting to promote a healthy lifestyle. The Songdo Global University Campus represented a great concept of integrating technology, nature, and being a true example of what an international campus looks like. No cars are allowed on the green campus. Solar panels light underground parking and provide a non-carbon environment for students, faculty, and staff. The visit to Hyundai Motors Headquarters was very educational. Transitioning business from mass producing bicycles to having a state of the art eco-technology research institute revealed their dedication to becoming a major auto-manufacturer competitor in the near future.

Asian food was one of the highlights of the visit for me. On our first flight I had the chance to taste Bibimbap for the first time. Mixing the vegetables, rice and chili pepper paste together was a delightful eating experience. While in Hong Kong I tasted authentic Chinese dumplings. On first sight it looked like a pastry, but the hot vegetables and ground meat wrapped in a thin piece of dough was filling. In America I only use chopsticks when dining at a sushi restaurant. Using chopsticks for breakfast, lunch, and dinner helped me
perfect using them. We also made shabu shabu, which I never heard of before this trip. We placed the slices of beef in a pot of boiling soup and placed different vegetables into the mixture. Once done, a table of 4 people shared shabu shabu, eating from the hot pot with our chopsticks. Beyond the types of food I ate on this trip, the one thing I will take away from this experience is how they eat seafood, kimchee (pickled cabbage), and steamed rice at every meal. During my homestay experience in Daejeon, I ate mackerel, anchovies, and kimchee pizza for breakfast. We did not drink water or tea with our meal, but waited until we were done eating. At Daejeon University I got the chance to make and taste Kimbap, Korean sushi, that has bulgogi (beef), rice, kim (seaweed wrap), sesame oil, carrots, cucumbers, and eggs. It was delicious! I tried to make it when I returned to America, but it didn’t taste as good. I’ll try again soon. Comparing this experience to how we eat in America made me realize how much food is consumed when placed on a large plate, rather than sharing several healthy foods across a table and having a smaller plate helps with portion control. One cool fact I learned is in Korea it is a tradition for friends and family to enjoy seaweed soup to celebrate a birthday, rather than America’s tradition of eating cake.

During my homestay in Daejeon, I was fortunate to experience the warm hospitality of a Korean family. I knew Buddhism was practiced in South Korea, but was surprised to discover many Korean families are Christians. Youth have a sincere respect and reverence for elders. Shoes are not worn in the house, but are left by the front door. The bath towels used were a third the size of an American towel. Each time I asked how far a place we were visiting would be from us, my homestay student would estimate a longer time than the actual time it took to get there. I later discovered her estimate included if there was bad traffic or delays, not if traffic flowed smoothly. I’ve used this method since being back home and it works extremely well, especially if you tend to be tardy sometimes. The family I stayed with was beyond kind to me, even in my moment of being homesick. They have officially become my extended family and I look forward to them visiting America soon.

I asked the father what words of advice does he give his children for school, success and life, and he replied: Do well in school, eat well, enjoy your leisure time, and be happy. Sometimes life can seem so complicated, but I brought his words of wisdom home for myself and to my daughter. Those words sum up my experience from this adventure. I learned so much about Asian culture and have come to have a fond appreciation and respect for it. During the two week period there was never a moment where I was hungry. All of the food was fresh, healthy, and delicious. Our leisure time consisted of so many great memories: Peak Tram, bike riding by the river, attending a food festival, watching a 4D and 5D movie experience, as well as visiting the North Seoul Tower to see the locks of love display. Last, applying for this study tour gave me one of the happiest experiences I could have ever imagined that will stay with me forever. I look forward to returning someday and maintaining ties to my homestay family for a very long time.
Brian Hoffman  
Computer Information Systems  
Korean Study Tour GSU 2012

There are few things that stand out when I reflect on my time in Korea. One of those is the staff at KNU. They did a great job of showing us sights in Korea and teaching us about the Korean culture. The most important thing I learned was about the hospitably of our host at KNU.

The best event for me at KNU was the when where taught to cook by Jang Kyung Hee at the department store. She taught us how to make bulgogi. Since I have returned home I have cooked bulgogi with the recipe I learned. We were also taught how to make shrimp cakes. I enjoyed learning to cook Korean food. I have bought a Korean food cook book and want to learn how to prepare more Korean style dishes. The cooking lesson from Jang Kyung Hee and KNU is directly responsible from my interest in learning to cook more dishes because I have learned how simple some of dishes are.

The taekwondo demonstration and lesson was a great time. I enjoyed this lesson and the demonstration. They did a great job of providing a full experience for us. They gave us uniforms to wear. The whole event was fun. From the starting stretches, to showing us kicks and punches. The best part was watching some of my fellow GSU students sparing. I would also like to note that all the place and restraints they took us were great.

The other event was seeing the 4 Rivers Project. The scale of what the country of Korea put together to solve several problems with one giant national project. The project is designed to effect flooding and dry seasons. What I find intersecting is that the country found a way to fix both problem with one project. Additionally they have made wonderful green space out of the land around the rivers and water control stations. Around the river are trails and walk ways. This creates a nice play to go and enjoy the river.

I truly enjoyed my time in Korea. I would love a chance to study their or do an internship in the future. I know I can recommend the study trip to anyone for next year. Thank you, Dr. Shim for making the trip possible.
From the greatness of technology and the complexities of the cities to the waves of green mountain ranges, time-honored fish market, and intricacies of ancient temples, Hong Kong and South Korea provide an amazing contrast of the old and new that somehow manage to work harmoniously to preserve the traditional and provide the advanced. As part of the J. Mack Robinson College of Business of Georgia State University, a select group of 23 of us were fortunate enough to participate in the Global Leadership Program to these two locations, unaware that we would return with a priceless experience in culture and a heightened understanding of the current and potential business processes in effect on the other side of the globe.

After a surprisingly pleasant flight, we got straight down to business in visiting the Hong Kong Stock Market where we found some basic commonalities such as the specialized Bloomberg computer systems we provide in our GSU libraries. In our visit to City University of Hong Kong, we learnt that while it’s relatively easy to live and work there as a foreigner, it’s quite a challenge to be a young local pursuing an education of choice because of the way the scholastic system is set up.

We had more revelations of sights as we took the Peak Tram up to observation trail overlooking Victoria Bay for a cloudy, but still breathtaking view as the skyline overlay of the buildings along the Hong Kong and Kowloon shores. We later had the opportunity to view the Laser lights show in which the skyscrapers participate nightly, reflecting Hong Kong’s consistency in applying the old to the new in a colorful collaboration to invite the new to the old. This was further evidence in our treks into the older markets in our free time. We got to engage in the old-time markets which are kept alive through the generations and through the tearing down of the worn and the high-rising of the needed. Between the bird, the flower, and the antique markets, we would see the latest of cars on cobblestone streets, old English brick houses at the base of earthquake-proof high-rises, and among it all, and incredible diversification of culture, product and people.

The infrastructure there is quite elaborate and impressive with both bridge systems and underground “human highways” to cater to the incredible amount of pedestrians. Getting around is easy in downtown thanks to the preservation of English street names and the advanced underground railway system that allows the integration of both monks and businessmen to their destinations of choice. The bustling of these markets and more offered a glimpse of what an older life enriched with culture and tradition would be like even within high walls made of glass skyscrapers.

Our visit to South Korea was much longer, and much more elaborate, enveloping everything from a touristic adventure to an educational enhancement. Everywhere we went both had an element of beauty and some sort of knowledge was bestowed unto us. We were more than welcomed at the Korea Tourism Organization where they hosted us with a cultural atmosphere of traditional arts, dress, and snacks. It was exciting to be part of a group that was eager to learn, willing to try new things, and give its full participation efforts for an extremely rewarding experience.
The Cheonggye Cheon Creek, one of our first stops, is located amongst downtown business structures, providing a quick escape to a serene and appealing getaway within walking distance. Lined with sculpture and writing, a walk along the creek showed how Seoul makes an effort to host a colorful and international mindset. Both creativity and strategy were demonstrated in a more tangible manner at the board meeting in KIA Auto Motors where we were welcomed and introduced to the upcoming K9 series. It was particularly interesting to see KIA-Hyundai’s market share even within Seoul itself; even if we had not been told KIA had what could be considered a monopolistic dominance locally, it was plain to see out the windows of our bus as we drove through the cities. Other large scales of greatness included the Seoul Tower, the Yongsan Electronics Market, and the Songdo Global Campus, which all demonstrated the potential for the future in terms of love of life, the power of electronics, and the value of a solid education.

It is no surprise that innovation is cultured here so easily, when the mind and body of the local workforce is provided for; Samsung has quickly become an international force in the technological industry and even the wireless infrastructure of Korea itself is phenomenal. We had the opportunity to spend some time in a local Samsung d’light center, which showcases some of the latest creations to interact with. Anything from interactive cameras, to social media venues, to body-recognition commands, and more was available to anyone who wanted to try it out and marvel at its incredible capabilities and potential. The fact that the most popular crowd was teenagers promises a future workforce who can conceptualize advanced technologies, putting strides in the Korea’s worldwide tech leadership.

A personal favorite visit was to GangNam-Gu, where we toured the U-Health Park, an incredible system of a clinic and exercise pathways, all among open fields in the middle of the city. Not only is the concept of promoting health to the local community an admirable one, but the technicalities of the system are extremely impressive, especially from a technological standpoint; each and every participant has their own account, and all their information is logged using a keycard, no matter where they are. The sensors and satellites that pick up and relay the information has been strategically integrated into the paths and attached to pre-existing infrastructures, which allows for decreased costs for the administration and a massive geographical scope for the clients. Another project of admirable proportions is the Four Major Rivers Restoration Project which aimed at improving the South Korean rivers so that they are less damaging during flood season as well as renovating the surrounding areas into extensive exercise havens for the local communities. As business students, we study the elements and complications of project management and its dynamics. The technicalities of the Four Rivers project are astounding, especially covering the massive scope of both content and geography, and still being able to come in on time and around the set budget, all while working on the rivers concurrently, and considering the input of all provinces involved.

At Seoul National University, as well as Kyungpook National University later, interacting with local students showed a great attraction between us despite our differences and there was a curiosity that kept a lively conversation, and a genuine interest that will keep the relationships alive. In our move to Deagu, we found new home very quickly between our KNU hosts and our hostel hostess. The culture of relationships immediately surfaced as one of servitude, acceptance, and true fun. I believe it rubbed off on us as we went around our activities starting with Taekwondo where we learnt
discipline, form, and practice is not only good for oneself, but can equip you to defend unwanted outside forces. Our lesson in Hangul was welcomed and we embraced the challenge of seeing things in a different light. Busan confirmed the beauty of the country with an open horizon for a harmonious blend of business and the arts. The various temples across the country each provided a reminder of both history and humanity, where tradition and dedication were honored. After all we had seen and learnt, we were finally released to truly relish life in Korea; I was personally humbled by the lengths to which my host family went to ensure I enjoyed my time in Yangsan, and in leaving, I was lucky to be able to keep the friendships I made in those two days, as well as take a peace I recognized in their way of life that will always serve as a refreshing memory.

More than just new cuisines, and cultural mannerisms, the Global Leadership Program to Hong Kong and South Korea brought on a new level of awareness to the group. By the end of our two weeks together and with our local hosts, we had adopted that same servant attitude as we poured drinks for others before ourselves; we had learned to abandon that fostered sense of independence and become cognizant of the power of community. As evidenced by the government’s efforts to provide enriched and well balanced amenities for its people’s lifestyle, there is a sense of basic generosity that has been forgotten but is proven to go a long way. Beyond that, we have been exposed to the technological and economic forces that we can expect from that region in the future, and we have been educated on how to make the connection needed to collaborate and contribute successfully over cultural barriers so that we can all benefit from our different strengths in our ever expanding and global world.
How culture and need affected technology

Study abroad to Hong Kong and South Korea

Kenny Hooper
MBA

The definition of technology is the application of scientific knowledge for practical purpose. While traveling to Hong Kong and to South Korea I had the opportunity to see and understand what that truly meant. In Hong Kong we had a chance to understand that the culture of a British run community mixed with the lack of land and the history and tradition of the Chinese culture blended together to create technological advances that would be conceptualized through this melding of things. In Korea I had the opportunity to see what type of technology would arise when you are surrounded by a culture that cares for each other and when the people of that community want to take action because of an agricultural need as well as a business necessity.

Hong Kong
Hong Kong reminded me a lot of New York but on a larger scale. This part of China was not very large in terms of geographic region but it was built to continue to grow. Hong Kong was very interesting because it created different advances based on the “Waste not Want not principles”, meaning that because they could not expand outwards they were continuing to upgrade everything that they already had to continue to make thing more efficient and better.

Hong Kong, originally known throughout the world because of the British settlers coming in and making it one of the largest shipping places on earth and the entrance to China, has not changed its focus on it being the entrance and exit of China but has used its technology to continue to produce ways of receiving and exporting shipments in and out of their country to the surrounding areas.

Nothing was more prevalent to that than when I entered into the UPS hub. In the Hong Kong hub they taught my classmates and I, about the different things that they had to take into consideration when shipping and the different laws and countries that we as Americans do not have to think about. Hong Kongs location makes it a great place to intercept all of the main land China shipping and help with its export but it also creates a logistical nightmare when trying to check each item to make sure that all things coming in and out are allowed by the governments that they come in contact. Some shipments can not go through because of hot cities that are close to the Hong Kong hub but they continue to keep up with the trends in their shipments and what they are shipping as well as continue to make advances on the systems used to continue to push the pace of the shipments.
Korea
While traveling with Georgia State in South Korea, I was able to see the four rivers project. This project was massive in size and demographic but was able to affect people all over Korea. The project took four different rivers in South Korea that would normally be a major water way and dam them and use over flow valves to stop the rivers from flooding and drowning people and produce in the area.

The project took these major river ways and created flood lands on the sides of them so that when the rain season started the water ways could be controlled and guided to help the agriculture of the area instead of flooding the near by areas and creating a health concern for the people by flood of by destroying their crops. The irrigation ways would flow the rivers water to specific flood regions when the people wanted to create a place where it would be a run off into the farm lands and not a flood.

Aside from being just a major advancement for the people in agriculture it also created many jobs through out all of South Korea, allowing the government to not only feed but Also employ hundreds of thousands of people that can now afford to buy the food that they are planning and helping. This creates a reciprocal effect that then helps the government run by more people paying taxes. America has wanted to have a project like this but we have not had the necessary need to build something and we do not think about everyone in our community and how helping some people can be a pay off for the government in the end. This project truly was great.

Around the four rivers project the community was building a medical center. This medical center was advanced in RFID but in a way that America and most other countries have not thought of yet and that was tracking and monitoring the health of the users.

Around the four rivers project in Seoul they have set up a health care center that is not massive in size but has made up with its technology. This area has a track and a bike path that keep track of tie traveled and speed. The RFID also monitors that amount of times the track is used by the person keeping track of the amount of exercise that the person is getting. On the inside there can be health screenings as well as different diagnostic test that they can run on the person to make sure that the person is health and in good condition.

The four rivers project not only protects the people from flooding but it also promotes a healthy lifestyle. This could only come from a culture that cares about those in the community and those that are trying to make the country grow and thrive in the long term.

The experience to see and experience Hong Kong and China was a once in a life time opportunity and if I ever had another change I would go again. I have continued to tell those around me about the advances that we would not understand because we do not have the need nor the culture to make those changes and I hope that as we continue to grow as a culture to create our rich history like those of South Korea and Hong Kong that we as Americans continue to see the need for this growth of technology and how it affects and can be effected by our culture and other cultures that we share.
When I heard first heard about this trip I thought it was a good way to broaden my horizons on global business practices and experiences different cultures of Hong Kong and S. Korea. Also seeing the beautiful sites in Hong Kong and S. Korea was beautiful. Now I get to share my journey and experiences with my fellow classmates and to everyone I meet.

I want to start with Hong Kong first, because that is where we traveled first. Hong Kong is amazing city, although it is over populated. I enjoyed the variety of foods we got to eat in Hong Kong; especially dim sum, which happened to be one of my favorite foods. There was a dish that I liked and that was xiao long bao. It is dumpling that has pork and has soup inside of it. I recommend that dish to anyone who tries dim sum.

Going past the food now, I want to talk about our trip to the Hong Kong Stock Market. Now the stock market in Hong Kong is similar to our stock market in the U.S. We both trade stocks that are domestic. Also I had a good history lesson on how the Hong Kong Stock Mart was created to how the market is doing now. We also visited the logistics facility of UPS, which I learned much about the operations and logistics of UPS in Hong Kong.

Next I want to mention the sites we saw in Hong Kong. We took the Peak Tram, to a mountain that you can overlook the city of Hong Kong, which the city is beautiful. At night we went out and saw the light and laser show which some of the buildings in Hong Kong participated in. I was amazed on how much time and effort they put into to create a fascinating show to the people of Hong Kong and the tourist there. Next I want to talk about my trip to Disney Land in Hong Kong.

A couple of students and I took a day trip to Disney Land, which was another great experience. We had a student that previously worked for Disney World and was very resourceful in all the attractions and the shows that the theme park had to offer. I was shocked to see so many Asians in one theme park, but we are in Asia. Since the park was in Hong Kong, the shows that we seen was spoken to us in English and Chinese. In which the park has to satisfy most of the tourist that go there are Chinese. After a wonder three days in Hong Kong, we traveled next to Korea.

Korea and Hong Kong Study Tour 2012
After landing in Korea, I was really excited to get off the plane and see the land of my heritage. We visited the headquarters of KIA in Seoul, S. Korea. I learned that KIA is a brother company of Hondai, and that the CEO of Hondai and CEO of KIA are father and son (respectively). I also found out that KIA is doing extremely well financially and has a higher Earnings Per Share ratio, which shows the earnings per share of KIA. Overlooking the facts provided by KIA, there cars resell more than all of the competitors, they have factories and facilities all around the world, which they get most of the materials from sources that are either owned by KIA or directly work for KIA. Their business model and plan is solid. They want to target people that are young at heart. You can be a teenager to an adult, which you can be young and young at heart. They want to focus on creating premium cars rather than luxury cars, because they would lose a large portion of the market share, which are between the ages of 16-65. Bottom line is KIA is a well-established company, and I want to have some work experience with KIA, in the accounting department. I want to focus on my homestay at Daejeon, S. Korea.

Six students including myself went to Daejeon University to stay with six other students from Daejeon. I myself had a great experience learning the culture and more of the language. Since I can speak Korean just enough to get by, my host Ho Jin Kang and the rest of the Daejeon students taught me more Korean and the GSU students and I taught them more English. I suggested and the rest of the students at GSU should experience the homestay and that, we should have a class on basic Korean for the people doing homestay.

All in all, I enjoyed this the study tour and I am very blessed to come on this wonderful trip. I really learned a lot in different aspects of culture in Hong Kong and Korea. And also different ways businesses operate in Hong Kong and Korea. I experienced along with the other GSU students new foods and life styles that we are not accustomed to. I want to end this by saying, I enjoyed Korea more than I enjoyed Hong Kong. The first reason is that Hong Kong was too crowded. Also I am Korean so I can relate to Korea better than I can for Hong Kong. The one of the down sides of Korea is that there are far too many cars in Seoul, but the public transportation makes up for it. Korea has one of the best public transportations I have ever seen. The buses and trains are efficient to satisfy the populated areas in Korea. Also there is another train called the KTX, which is also called the bullet train. One of the fastest trains in Asia, it can take you from Seoul to Daejeon (200km) in less than an hour.
Richard Jackson
2012 First Year GSU GLP Program Participant
Computer Information Systems major

The first year Georgia State University Global Leadership Program has been a wonderful opportunity. I would like to begin by saying that I didn’t have any expectations for the food or the trip in general. I want to share my thoughts about my experience with the food, the culture and my overall satisfaction with the trip.

First, I’ll begin with the food. I had no idea that there were so many ways to prepare rice. I believe that I have seen about 10 different ways to prepare rice between all the meals I had on the trip. I also didn’t know that the serving sizes were so large and that all of it is expected to be eaten. Also, the frequency of the meals was a shocker. How can one eat so much within such a short time? Despite my rant, I must say that the food was the healthiest food I have had in my whole life. Every meal was accompanied by, if not already in the dish, at least one fruit or vegetable. Coffee or tea is usually served before or after the meal and water, soju or beer is always present. As an American I had always focused on how food tastes or smelled instead of being open to trying something different, but this trip forced me to be open-minded and try things that normally would have been left on the table. As it turns out I really enjoyed the food by the latter of the trip. I can truly say my taste has become accustomed to the flavors and textures of Asian cuisine.

Next is the culture. What surprised me about this trip is how much I learned about my own culture just by observing what is what isn’t acceptable. The seminar on Ugly American, Ugly Korean taught me that there are a lot of things that Americans do that are rude or inappropriate in Korean culture. I was thankful for this because it helped me to keep bad habits in check. Another thing was the dress. I noticed that south korean woman and men take careful consideration on what they wear. I didn’t see anyone dress in comfort clothes such as sweat pants or basketball shorts unless they were actually going to the gym. I also learned that the parents take good care of their children sometimes to the point of debt. If the child wants something, like a new phone for example, the parent will not hesitate to get it. Education is of the utmost importance. Students spend most of their time studying and only use the weekends for free time. Parents fully support their children with school expenses loans are rarely used.
Overall, I had the time of my life. I got the chance to experience a culture totally different from my own, yet I was able to find the commonalities between us. I also learned a lot about myself and my own culture. My homestay family was the most hospitable people I’ve ever encountered. They took care of me as if I was their own. They were also very interested in my culture and attempted to speak English on several occasions even though they only knew a few words. I was just as interested in Korean culture and asked them tons of questions. I really feel like a part of the family and they will be dearly missed. I also would like to mention how hospitable our host (Suk) was at the backpackers hostel in Daegu. She was a great help in taking care of 15 cranky Americans from different backgrounds and attitudes. She was also kind enough to translate things for us and show us how to get places in the city. Last but not least, I would like to give a special thanks to our Kyungpook National University support team was there for us every step of the way. They did a great job taking care of us and showing us the importance of diversity. This trip was a life changing experience that I will never forget. It has given me valuable knowledge and irreplaceable memories. I would recommend this trip for anyone who is looking to study abroad or is just close-minded about cultures other than their own. Yes it is far from home but that is the meaning of study ABROAD is to BROADen your knowledge of a culture you are not used to while finishing your coursework in Another country.
As a Korean-American student, I was more than simply inclined to attend this study tour because I had not visited my mother’s home country since I turned 2 years old. I actually had intentions to go to Korea before learning about this trip, so my plans became more convenient after signing up.

With Georgia State, our first stop was in Hong Kong. Though the city was uncomfortably humid, the tour itself was very enjoyable. The Peak Tram tour, Star Ferry and UPS Hub tour were all activities I’ll never forget in my life because they offered a unique view into culture of Hong Kong and the way the city conducts its business. I also enjoyed that there was one whole free day for students to do as they pleased.

Seoul, South Korea, has now become my new favorite city. The city itself is fast-paced yet the locals were still quite friendly, and their cultural norm and values were evident in their hospitality and willingness to help tourists. I also enjoyed that the city had an international mindset, many young people were able to speak English and they try to interact with people outside of Korea.

I was also very pleased to know that we were visiting my father’s alma mater, Seoul National University. I knew prior to this trip, that this particular university is considered to be the best in the country, and it was an honor to meet both alumni and current students. The Korea Tourism Organization was also a delight, and I thoroughly enjoyed seeing my classmates donning “hanbok,” or, Korean traditional clothing, and taking part in Korean crafts. Our group also had the chance to visit the Four Major Rivers Restoration project site, and we rode bicycles along the newly paved paths and enjoyed the beautiful scenery that Korea had to offer.

My most memorable and favorite moments of the trip was when our group stayed at Kyungpook National University in Daegu, South Korea, where we had the chance to meet many Korean college students that were like ourselves. This was a nice way for us to immerse into the culture further. The university had us partake in Tae Kwon Do lessons, Korean language and alphabet lessons, and we had a temple visit (that I failed to attend due to illness). They also gave us a field trip to Busan, my grandfather’s home town. It was truly an amazing experience, between hiking up to the APEC site, going to Haeundae beach, and visiting the Jagalchi fish market, Busan became my absolute favorite place in South Korea. Brian Hoffman and I even had the courage to dine upon some live octopus at a local eatery.

My only complaint about this trip, was the small hostel we stayed while in Daegu. Though the hostel manager tried her best to make us comfortable, sharing two bathrooms amongst 16 people was not an easy nor enjoyable part of the trip. Overall I would highly recommend this study tour to anyone who would inquire about it, and as I was very sad to leave, it was still very nice to come back home.

However, after this trip, I am now considering the idea of living in Korea for about a year or two, simply to enhance my Korean speaking ability and to reap what this beautiful nation has to offer.
Jared Ledgister  
Computer Information Systems  

"Lessons from Korea Study Tour (including Hong Kong Tour)"

Participating in the CIS Korea (Hong Kong) Tour was a dream of mine since I was a little kid. I always desired to travel to an Asian country to see what the culture was like. Therefore, having the privilege to be apart of this trip to Korea was an unforgettable experience for me. I met so many wonderful people and new friends on the trip. When we landed, we didn’t waste any time experiencing the Asian culture. From the first day in Hong Kong, we ate different Chinese cuisines and did some sight seeing of attractions Hong Kong had to offer.

The highlight of Hong Kong for me was going to the City University of Hong Kong to hear Prof. Doug Vogel (also the President of Association for Information Systems) speak to us about the technological advancement in China. In addition, touring the UPS Hub and listening in on the Logistics & IT Seminar was great. I loved the fact that I was able to learn how technology is being implemented in a different region of the world.

South Korea was amazing! I was captivated by how modern the country was, yet they still preserve and honor their past. Participating in the home stay allowed me the opportunity to learn the Korean culture and traditions. Even though I struggled to use chop sticks, I enjoyed trying different Korean dishes, from bibimbap to shabu shabu. My favorite dish was Samgyeopsal with white rice.

I was in awe at how technologically advanced the country was. I learned from the Social Media seminar at SNU that 81.1 percent of Korea has internet. In addition, Korea as well as Japan lead the way in mobile penetration. Majority of the people that I walked by on the street or stood next to on the bus had a smartphone.

The homes in South Korea really impressed me. Gadgets such as videophones and passcode activated doors blew me away because I did not know this type of technology was readily available to the average person.

All in all, I am grateful and appreciative for the opportunity to be apart of the CIS Korea Study Tour. The Tour was an incredible experience for me. I was able to visit the facilities of some of the world’s most popular companies. In addition, I met so many wonderful people (like Ricky and Suk) and bonded with new friends. Thank you Prof. Shim for all you did for us, it was through your connections (famous friends and family members) that allowed us to gain access to so many facilities. As a result of this trip, I have a greater understanding and increased knowledge of how different companies around the world implement information technology. In addition, it made me a better asset to whichever firm I will work for in the future because I have firsthand insight about IT implementation in the Asian community.
When I first saw the announcement for the Global Leadership Program, Korea Study Tour, spearheaded by Dr. JP Shim, I could not contain my excitement. For me, this would be a once in a lifetime opportunity. The fourteen hour flight was just a small inconvenient price to pay for such an experience. As we landed in Incheon, S. Korea the excitement kept building as we waited to get to our first destination, Hong Kong, China.

Four days and three nights in Hong Kong was not enough time to experience the true world of Hong Kong but it did give us a glimpse into the city and lifestyles of the people. With our planned excursions to the Hong Kong Star Ferry, Hong Kong Stock Exchange, the Peak Tram to Victoria Peak, the City University of Hong Kong and the UPS HK logistics hub, we were kept on our toes the majority of the time. As we left Hong Kong we could only imagine what lay ahead of us in Seoul, S. Korea for the next eleven days.

After settling in at the Youth Hostel we were off to one of the best meals I have ever had, at a nice little restaurant in the heart of the shopping district. A favorite of Dr. Shim’s, it became a favorite of mine. What a way to begin the S. Korean portion of our tour. Our first stop was the Korean Tourism Organization where participants were able to dress in Korean cultural garments, typically worn by Kings, Queens, and High Officials. The next stop was the infamous Seoul Tower which provided breath taking views of the city. A visit to Kia Motors headquarters was quite exciting due to the exhibit of the new K9 automobile; just an awesome car and we were given a wonderful presentation. Then it was off to Samsung to see at the new items upgrading and improving technology. The Gangnam district of Seoul, Seoul National University (SNU) and the Songdo Global University Campus were our next stops. This led up to the big day.

The time had finally arrived to visit Four Rivers Restoration Project, a project of which Dr. Shim is very proud. We were introduced to some artwork surrounding the project and taken on a bicycle tour. Then it was time to head to Danin Backpackers for the remainder of our stay. We were paired with KyungPook National University in Daegu. Each day we would go to the University or taken on tour but we would learn something new. We were introduced to English speaking Korean students who were our tour guides while there. They helped make the tour fun and exciting while we learned how to write and speak Korean, took taekwondo lessons, visit the mall where we were taught how to make authentic Korean cuisine like Bim bim bop. We even enjoyed a wonderful pizza party. But the fun and excitement did not stop there.

Our visit to Busan, walking in the footsteps of world leaders where the 2012 Seoul Nuclear Security Summit took place, was awesome. The beach was beautiful and the food was good. Visiting the Temple was also a great experience with the long trails and water running along the river nearby. We then got the opportunity to have an overnight visit with a traditional Korean family. That was a wonderful experience as I was taken to the National Museum of Art where I got to see Korean culture in a different light. From the tools to the clothing the art display was wonderful. My Korean family took very good care of me, making sure I was well fed as Dr. Shim had for our team. The last day was spent with our KNU team who gave us an exceptional farewell.
We left Atlanta, GA with an open mind and came back with hopes, dreams and new friends. Words are not enough to explain the joy of participating in such an extraordinary journey. I believe no college education should be complete without participation in a study abroad program. It provides new understanding of a different culture as well as a new perspective on life in general.
Viktor Opara-Amaechi  
Managerial Science/Film and Video major  
Georgia State University  

_The Journey of a thousand miles begins with this step..._

Picture a place pulled from the recesses of history, rich with thousands of years of a proud heritage. From the architecture, food, and atmosphere, a constant reminder of the past is present while still laced with a flair for the modern. This is what I constantly experienced while on the Global Leadership Program Tour. From the moment I stepped foot on the plane until the last night of the program, I felt a consistent excitement and curiosity stemming from the cultural experiences that were going on around me.

When the group first landed in Hong Kong, my expectations for what I would find were extremely high. Needless to say, those expectations were met and tremendously exceeded. As an admirer of the Hong Kong film market, I had seen a lot of the culture that Hong Kong had to offer, but experiencing it first-hand was completely different. Walking the crowded streets of Tsim Sha Chui almost felt like I was back home in the States! Although the population was very large for such a small city, the need for logistical efficiency and effective coordination has been greatly achieved, as was evidenced by our visits of the UPS HUB in Hong Kong, and the City University of Hong Kong. Due to such an elegant system of operation, I am greatly considering working in the management field in Hong Kong in the near future, something the city would serve particularly well in accommodating me in.

Hong Kong was indeed magnificent, but my Asian continental home away from home was South Korea. Korean Air did a wonderful job in preparing those who are not familiar with Korean culture to the great things in store for them when they landed. The hospitality, honesty, and politeness of the people of South Korea is unlike anything I have experienced anywhere else. It is this openness and display of manners that made me feel as if I were meeting extended relatives for the very first time. This desire for openness must be the same component that has propelled South Korea forward in advanced technology, something the United States could take heed of to make advancements itself. I particularly enjoyed visiting Kia headquarters, and the Four River Restoration Project site, because it combined the pursuit of excellence that Kia exuded with the concern for nature that is seldom found in other countries.

My personal favorite aspect of the trip was visiting Kyungpook National University and being able to stay with a host family. My group got the best of both worlds by living and interacting alongside like-minded individuals that happened to be of the same age group. The home stay was exciting and a refreshing change of pace that gave me a crash course in Korean etiquette that I will never forget. The host family was very kind and patient while I acclimated myself to new surroundings and in so doing I felt like one of the family. The time I spent on this trip with my fellow Georgia State students is one of the many highlights of my college career that I will always treasure. This trip has inspired me to work harder and smarter to achieve my goals, so that one day soon, I will have a chance to come back to these places and offer them all of the things that I have learned. I would like to personally thank Dr. Shim for allowing me to attend such a trip and for all of the arrangements that he made for us to have such an amazing trip. Kamsahamnida!!!
When I first heard about the "Global Leadership Program Korea - Hong Kong Study Tour," I knew that I wanted to go on this trip. Despite living in different countries (Italy, France, U.S.A.), I had never been to Asia before. I definitely wanted to discover this part of the world that I had only heard about in books and from the news. Although I was prepared to embark upon a completely unique experience, I could only imagine how unforgettable it would actually be. The food, the language, the written characters, the way technology is used in daily life, the hospitality... Everything was a surprise!

The very first thing that I noticed after we arrived in Seoul, just by looking at the massive Incheon airport, was how technology is part of people’s daily life. It is very easy to find Wi-Fi internet access everywhere, even on the bus. Also, other forms of advanced technology are present such as 4-D films, an entertainment presentation system that combines a 3-D film with physical effects in movie theatres. In Seoul, we had the opportunity to visit Samsung's D’light Showroom and to see 3-D television, double sided cameras, advanced computers, and other cutting-edge technologies that will probably not be offered in the United States and Europe for at least a few more years. The United States could learn a lot about technology from other countries, and certainly from South Korea.

During this trip, we visited several important sites, such as the Seoul Tower, different kinds of markets, and temples. Indeed, we had the opportunity to experience things that I would have never been able to witness if I had personally organized the trip. For example, we went to the Korea Tourism Organization and they let us try traditional costumes: that was a wonderful experience for me. Also, we had the opportunity to visit the Major River Restoration project’s site. This huge project is aimed to improve water security, flood control, and ecosystem vitality. What I liked most about this part of the trip was the bike tour of the site area: it was wonderful for me to see the beauty of the Korean landscape.

After our stay in Seoul, 15 students and I were assigned to Kyungpook National University (KNU), one of the top Korean universities, in Daegu. The time we spent at KNU was incredible and allowed me to gain a better understanding of the language, the culture, the food, and Korean daily life in general. The language lessons were particularly interesting. By the end of our stay at KNU, I was amazed that I was actually able to read Korean! The KNU staff and its students were incredibly friendly and eager to help us with anything we needed. I liked the time we spent with the students, especially off-campus. They taught us so much about the culture, and they paid attention to also inform us about the dos and don'ts. I would never have understood some peculiarities of Korean culture if it were not for them!
Food was another surprise of this unique experience. Not only were we able to try so many different foods such as bulgogi, samgyetang, kimbap, japchae, kimchi, and bibimbap, but we were also taught how to cook some of these traditional Korean dishes! I do not like spicy food and, before leaving for this trip, I was not aware Korean people's fondness for spicy food. However, I wanted to try everything they served to me because I think that becoming familiar with food is fundamental if one really wants to discover a new culture. At least I can say that I definitely know how to use chopsticks now! Also, I liked the fact that meals are shared with all the other people at one's table. I think this is a way to facilitate conversation and to get people to really enjoy the fact that they are eating together and that they can spend at least a few moments of the day with their loved ones.

During our stay in Daegu, the university provided us with a guesthouse in downtown as accommodation. There, we met Suk, the housekeeper. She was very kind to all of us and, even though the place was really tiny, as all Korean apartments, she did everything she could to make us feel at home. At the end, the atmosphere was so wonderful that I felt part of a big family!

The part of this trip that surprised me the most was the day I spent home-stay with the family of KNU student, Gyeom. The hospitality and the warmth of Korean people were amazing. I have never felt more welcome by a family that I never met before, especially one with a language barrier. Gyeom literally treated me as if we were childhood friends and she organized several activities to do together, such as playing board games with her family and singing at a karaoke room: so much fun! Although her English was not fluent, we did not have problems to understand each other and I could see her determination to improve it. I am originally from Italy and seeing her putting so much effort into speaking a foreign language reminded me of my own experiences of learning English. I am glad I was able to help her with it. The time that I spent at KNU and in Daegu was an amazing experience that I will never forget!

During the "Global Leadership Program Korea – Hong Kong Study Tour 2012" we also spent the first four days in Hong Kong. It was great in my opinion to have the opportunity to see Hong Kong because we could see how this city is different from South Korea. Everything seemed different in Hong Kong, especially food and weather. I also liked seeing the interesting mix of British and Chinese influences throughout the city.

One of the most interesting experiences in Hong Kong was the visit to the UPS hub. This was a great opportunity to actually see how complex the logistics are that they have to manage every day. There was also a funny moment when we found a pallet which had to be sent to Marietta, Georgia (U.S.A.)!

The "Global Leadership Program Korea – Hong Kong Study Tour 2012" was an extraordinary experience. This trip enabled me to expand my professional horizon as well as to understand and truly appreciate the customs and the culture of this part of the world by immersing myself into it. In my opinion it is wonderful for me to have been part of this experience because it provides the opportunity also to know one's own culture better and, by this, to be more respectful regarding different people and their customs. These lessons can never be gained from books. Indeed, for a person so passionate of management like me, this trip was an amazing way to learn a lot about how to do business in and with Asian countries.
To conclude, I would like to extend my most sincere thanks to Dr. J.P. Shim for all the effort he put into organizing this amazing trip. I will never forget this experience and all what I have learned from it.
“Kamsahamnida.” Not only is this the word I used most frequently while in Korea (as it was one of the few I could remember in my limited vocabulary), but it is also one that embodied my experience traveling to South Korea for the first time: thank you. I am so thankful to Georgia State and Dr. J.P. Shim for providing this exciting opportunity to travel to both S. Korea and Hong Kong, but “thank you” is something I kept saying throughout my time there, in hopes of expressing my extreme gratitude at the wonderful thing that is Korean hospitality.

Having traveled to mainland China a couple years ago with another GSU program, it was eye-opening to see some of the contrast of Hong Kong, and yet still I grasped more of the “Chinese-ness” of the former British colony. A magical day trip to Hong Kong Disneyland also provided me with an entertaining cultural excursion, to see how everyday citizens of Hong Kong and nearby areas vacationed with their families.

However, as energetic and tropical as Hong Kong was, just as Dr. Shim assured us would happen, we became enamored with South Korea upon even our first night in Seoul. The thought and threat of North Korea (and all the worries and fears of my non-traveling American friends) immediately dissipated, despite being a mere 25 miles from the DMZ. But the vibrancy and youth of South Korea enraptured me, even though I knew there was a shocking contrast in the repressed counterpart to the country mere miles away. Nonetheless, our tour allowed us to fully leap into Korean culture, experiencing the business side (Kia, Samsung), the educational system (Seoul National University and later Daejeon University), along with everyday life – home, work, school and fun – of other students our age during my favorite portion: the homestay, where I seized the opportunity to live with a Korean family temporarily.

Even in only a week, I felt so connected to Song-Mi, my 21-year-old Korean hostess, along with her family and friends. The six GSU students also in homestays and six Daejeon University students hosting them bonded quickly and formed an amusing and lively rapport, as we all immediately meshed well and had a great deal fun with each other while learning, both directly and indirectly, about one another’s cultures. In late-night conversations over strawberry soju, I helped dispel some myths and misconceptions some Korean students had about life in the U.S., just as they explained how little of a constant worry N. Korea was to them, despite our rampant fears and limited knowledge we have in America of what Korean life truly is like.

I so wish all six of those Korean students could and would come travel to the U.S. as a group and get the chance to stay with our families, experiencing daily life in Atlanta, to really complete this awesome cross-cultural exchange. But through great communication platforms like Facebook, I have been able to stay in touch, sharing photos and memories, in the hopes that one day I will be able to see anew my own country through their eyes, and return the wonderful favor Song-Mi and her family, along with all her friends, gave me – the experience of cultural understanding and new, international friends halfway across the world. Only then would I fully be able to say kamsahamnida.
Korea Study Tour

Our visit to Asia was like no other. We saw sites, learned business concepts, practiced arts, interacted with different cultures, and experienced so much more. For me, this was the first time I had been out of the country. It was my goal to do something different and this study tour did just that. The networks made on this trip will last a lifetime.

We started our trip in Hong Kong. At first glance, Hong Kong was a very international city. A majority of the language used was Cantonese and English. Tourists were abundant and familiar name brands were everywhere. It was an easy cultural transition and great place to start our journey. The food was excellent and very healthy overall. There are parts of me that still miss it today compared to American cuisine.

From an education standpoint, we learned a lot. Our trips to the stock market, UPS, and the local university had useful information on how the country operates. You get the feel that the economy is booming once you start walking around the city. Construction is everywhere and consumers like to spend money all over. With my business banking background, it was nice to see an American presence with Citi Bank and HSBC in the local market. This means that opportunities are out there in the West. Our stay in Hong Kong was short but full of memories. The next stop was Korea.

The arrival to Korea placed us into one of the largest airports in the world. Jumping on a bus, we soon headed to Seoul. The capital offered us unique sightseeing opportunities that ranged from towers to electronic markets. Unlike Hong Kong, the presence of city was much more traditional and the international feel was much less apparent in my eyes. The Koreans have a proud history, which allows them to keep things unique, in one language, and customs close nit. It was something to get use too because the culture was so much more different from the States and Hong Kong.

One of my favorite parts of the trip was when we had a bike ride experience at the Water Restoration facility. The 2-3 mile ride really gave us the opportunity to view a side of Korea that was much different compared to the major cities in the country. It was calm and relaxing. There was no presence of traffic or noise much like in Atlanta. The facility was impressive by itself. The way it acts as a park as well amazed me. The technology was well thought out and something to be admired.

The University assignments north of Pusan were the second best part of the trip. My group attended KNU and we did everything from learn the Korean language, to practicing Taekwondo, to making meeting actual students. You get a feeling from talking with the undergraduates that friendships are of the upmost importance and education is the key to success. Being able to attend a University like KNU was an experience that would be hard to replicate if not a GSU student.
Overall, my trip to Korea was fun and memorable. If asked to do it again, there would be no doubt if finances were in order. Many people do not get to have this type of experience in their life, so my hope is that by going there, and seeing it first hand, I can have more of an open mind when talking to colleagues going forth. Thanks again for sponsoring this trip professor and hope to keep in touch with you, as this has been a life changing experience for me.
My Study Tour to Asia

I was very excited when I was selected among 23 students to visit South Korea and Hong Kong for Georgia State University’s study abroad program. Asia was a region I never thought about visiting, at least not in the near future. However, seeing the announcement via a flyer at the CIS department, I decided to apply. I can truly say that going on this trip was one of the best decisions I made in my school life. Traveling to these countries has opened my eyes to a completely different culture from what I was accustomed to in America. There was not an ounce of disappointment in my experiences in both countries. The service on Korean Air was unmatched, and I enjoyed Asia because of the culture, people, and the places we visited.

The Asian culture is different from western cultures. I knew this prior to the visit. However, it was very interesting and enlightening to have experienced these differences first hand. For the most part, Asian people are hospitable as was illustrated in the home stay visit that I had. This was arranged through the Kyungpook National University (KNU) in which Sara, a Korean student, was my home stay host. Sara and her family were very accommodating, way above my expectations. They went out of their way to made sure that Richard, another GSU student, and I were comfortable. It felt like I was part of the family. They made us plenty of delicious food and provided good liquor including Soju, a beer made from rice, and a fine bottle of Australian white wine. The treatment I received was suited for royalty. I was very grateful that Sara and her friend, a Korean girl who was an exchange student in Georgia while in high school, took Richard and me to the local amusement park. We had such an amazing time! In particular, got to experience sky jumping from the park’s tower at a height of 125 km. I had never done anything like this in my life! In addition, we rode several other rides including roller coaster and bumper car; it was like reliving a favorite childhood memory. After the park, we got dinner and then went to karaoke. This was different from karaoke in America because instead of being in a bar with many people, each person or group of persons can occupy a room to have their own karaoke. It was then that I confirmed that I was not a singer!

In addition to experiencing the hospitable side of the culture, I learned that one has to be accepted into a certain social group, or have things in common with people before they interact with you. At first, I thought most people were rude because they do not make eye contact, say sorry when they bumped into me, or refused to converse with me. I learned this the hard way and it was not until Dr. Shim, our professor, explained this aspect of the culture that I was able to understand what was going on. Another aspect of the culture that I enjoyed was the way in which people would rush to the elevators, and how packed they would get after everyone got in. This was very common in the city areas.
Soul is one of the cities we visited that amazed me; it remained me of Manhattan but a lot cleaner. There were many uniquely designed skyscrapers with different shapes and sizes. The progress and development that is taking place in Seoul was hard to miss because of the abundance of international companies that are located there. Kia was one of the companies located in Soul that we had a chance to visit. I felt very privileged to have seated in the executive boardroom listening to some of the leaders of the company revealing some key strategies. Moreover, we got a chance to see the K9, Kia’s premium sedan that was launched recently in South Korea. Daegu, where KNU is located, was another city that we visited. This was your typical college town; filled with excitement and college students. I enjoyed the programs that KNU arranged for us which included learning Tae kwon do, cooking, and learning Korean language. Moreover, I met some wonderful friends whom I still keep in touch with via facebook. In addition to Daegu, we visited Busan, South Korea’s second largest city. I truly enjoyed Busan because it is along the coast and includes a beautiful beach. I was amaze by the fact that there was Wi-Fi on the beach. Everywhere there was the certainty that Wi-Fi was available, even on the public busses.

In addition to having a strong Wi-Fi penetration, healthy living is encouraged and family life promoted. This was evident by the many facilities that were in place by the South Korean government including parks, excellent health facilities, and other projects such as a river restoration project to prevent flooding in the surrounding areas. I was impressed by the fact that bicycles were provided at the restoration center for people to ride and enjoy the scenery.

After visiting these locations and meeting different people, I am convinced that I will return to South Korea in the near future. This was the same feeling I got when we visited Hong Kong. Hong Kong is very diverse in culture because of the fact that many people visit for various reasons. Shopping is great in Hong Kong as I met two shoppers who flew in from Australia. They delightedly expressed how happy they were to have found so much fashionable apparels at great prices. Hong Kong’s population is over eight million and that make it suitable for marketing and commercial activities. We visited numerous markets including the lady’s market, bird market, flowers market, and the antiques markets.

In addition to the markets that we visited in Hong Kong were, the Hong Kong Stock Exchange, City University of Hong Kong that had some amazing facilities, the Peak Tram that offered a spectacular view of the city, the harbor where we rode the Star Ferry across each side, and UPS logistics facility-one of the largest in the region. I enjoyed all the visits because each provided its own unique learning experiences. I got a chance to understand some of the typical operations that takes place at a UPS logistic location, and I was very impressed.

Overall, my visit to Asia was a very successful and exciting one. I enjoyed learning about the different aspects of the culture such as the food, the language, and some of the social norms and practices. The interactions and behaviors of the people helped me to understand the culture even more. Furthermore, all the different places we visited provided a unique experience. As a result, I look forward to the day when I will be able to return to and enjoy the experience again.
Study Tour in South Korea

Photos by Judy Kim (B.A. '13)