

by northwest7

on November 28, 2018

under Campus Life,

Opinion, Outside the

Bubble

tagged International

Education Week, study

abroad

Permalink

COMMENTARY: INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION W ABROAD

SATIRE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NG



Photo and story by Gyuri Kim

Northwest University celebrated International Education Week November 5-9, with a variety of events for students to experience. After International Education Week, have you become interested in studying abroad?

I am an exchange student from South Korea who came NU to study English and experience new culture. I had an opportunity to experience American culture in Canada when I was young, which made me eager to come to the U.S.

Even though I am only studying at NU for a semester, I already enjoy and love the life here, and can tell that the Northwest community is a friendly and welcoming community. After Screaming Eagles Week, I feel like I am now a part of the NU family. What I like about studying at NU is that I can experience things I wouldn't get to experience in South Korea. Monday night Pursuit events, where students get wild and meet God in worship, going out to interview students as part of my Media Writing class, and hanging out with floor-mates were all new experiences to me which I wouldn't have experienced without coming to NU. It is great to learn what the differences between Korean and American cultures are, and to meet people from other cultures.

Of course, there are difficulties that come with studying in another country. Although I studied English since I was kindergarten, the first difficulty is the language. Cultural differences are also hard. I was afraid of making a mistake by asking inappropriate and impolite questions due to differences in culture and language.

These difficulties are not unique to students coming to the US to study however. Student Gerson Barrientos, is looking forward to studying in Japan next year, but expressed similar concerns about engaging with a different culture, particularly social interactions.

"I am afraid of people not talking to me," Barrientos said.

He also expressed concern about his ability to navigate Japan's train system, as that is the main means of transportation in the country.

You could have difficulties like these in your own studies abroad, and will likely be worried about it, but if you are afraid of making mistakes and don't move forward, you will miss the benefits of discovering new cultures. Don't be afraid, because mistakes will only make you stronger.

It has been really great to be a part of a culture other than mine and study with a different language, but do American students in Northwest University go abroad studying?

International Admissions Counselor Nick Greenlee, who works advising students in NU's international department, said that very few

American students take advantage of university's study abroad programs, even though some programs don't require more money than traditional undergraduate studies.

Have you ever thought of yourself going out of this country to study? If you have, why are you hesitating?

"To go to another country or at least talking to people who came from different countries makes us step back and see our culture with a different perspective. It expands your experience, changes your structure, it gives you the depth of your thinking," Greenlee said. "I would highly encourage anyone who is thinking about studying abroad, to go beyond just thinking and actually take the steps to do it."

The international department used to oversee all the incoming and outgoing students, but that has changed this year. Dr. Autumn Witt, in the International Communication department, now oversees all of the study abroad options for students who are going out.

For more information about Study Abroad options, Go to the [Study Abroad page on Eagle](#), or email Dr. Witt at autumn.witt@northwestu.edu.