



Centrale
Nantes

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Double Degree

Master of Management Science and Engineering

Ecole Centrale de Nantes, France

Shanghai Jiaotong University, China

2010/2014

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Why did you choose to do a double degree program?

I took Chinese as a second language at Centrale Nantes with the solid intention of reaching the highest level of fluency possible. With this goal in mind I chose this program to stay long enough in China to develop strong links with the country and the people.

What did you think about the education system in China?

The education system in China resembles the French one on many points: the grades obtained at final exams are more important than a sense of involvement in the course or interactivity with the teacher. The PowerPoints are often crammed with information. However, most of Shanghai Jiaotong's professors have studied abroad and some manage to give a positive energy to their teaching. I also found the English workbooks very interesting.

And life on campus?

Students in the Economics and Management Department live on a smaller campus, located in the city center. There is a racing track and facilities to play football, basketball, badminton and tennis. The campus being smaller there isn't as many associations as on the main campus. However I enjoyed free calligraphy, martial arts and Chinese lessons.

What about your language skills? Did you study Chinese before leaving? In which language were your classes?

I started studying Chinese at Centrale Nantes as it is a condition for applying to the DD program. Indeed, except if you study Financial Engineering in the Finance Department (SAIF), some of your courses will be taught in Chinese. For my Masters, I had at least 50% of courses taught in Chinese, among which most had presentations written in English.

What do you do now?

I am about to start working as an IT consultant for an international company in Paris.

Do you think that your experience abroad helped you get this position?

I certainly do! Everyone knows China is a great world power. Even though China has many issues to deal with other than economic growth, it will remain a powerful player in the years to come. For international firms or companies who wish to expand their horizon, an understanding of Asian culture is a huge asset.

What do you think is the best thing you've learned through this experience?

Living abroad and trying to live as the locals do is the best way to analyze your own country, especially when the culture and living conditions are significantly different. I learned I was very lucky to be born in France, despite what we are used to complain about.

What is your best memory at Shanghai Jiaotong University?

Many memories come to mind. I'll always remember when I sang a song in Chinese for a school contest. My classmates were very warm and encouraging. I also remember a night walk with one of my classmates when we talked freely of a number of subjects like death penalty and so on. I was always very happy to chat with my Chinese friends.

According to you, why are firms keen on recruiting students who experienced life in a foreign country?

If you made the effort of changing your life habits and successfully established links with the locals, then it shows you have a great adaptability. It is valuable in all sorts of circumstances, including professional ones.

Anything else you'd like to add?

Feel free to explore my blog (in French) at <http://shanghai1214.weebly.com> and I wish you the best of luck on any trip you undertake!