

Wong Tit-shing Student Exchange Scholarship Exchange Learning Report



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Department: BME

Country: USA

Host Institution: University of Pennsylvania (UPenn)

Exchange Period: 22 Aug 2022 – 22 Dec 2022

I. Learning experience on this trip

I registered four courses, which were Self Assembly of Soft Materials, Fluid Mechanics, Structure of the Nervous System, and American History (1754-1804). The first three courses are related to my major, and they provided me with fundamentals for my future research. I have learned properties of soft materials (polymers, colloidal particles, amphiphiles), Reynolds number, Navier-Stokes equations, the brain divisions, and major tracts in the nervous system. The history course guided me to look back at the old times and learn some views of the Americans. I saw the colonies, revolutionary war, ratification of the Constitution, manumission, separation of the powers (legislation, judiciary, execution), the origin of the two-party system, elections, and the daily life in the early US.

There were more interactions between students and professors at UPenn than PolyU. Students proactively ask and answer questions, and they are really willing to find the professors in the office hours. On the other hand, some professors let students vote to decide the course content and exam rules, trying to accommodate students' needs. In addition, I found that people are encouraged to share their opinions, and different comments are highly respected. These creates a more relaxing and democratic learning atmosphere.

II. Career aspiration

Living in the US for one semester also improved my language competence, which is of vital importance to my career. I become more confident in using English and more willing to chat with people from another cultural group.

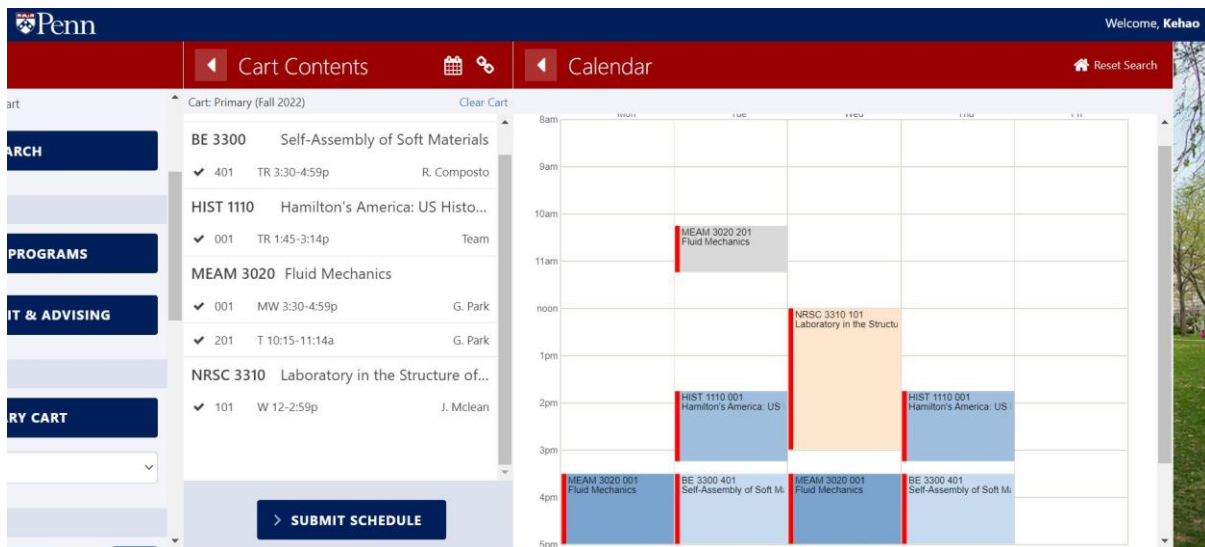
I plan to be a professor in the future, and I met several professors who are excellent in teaching. They inspired me on how to interact with students (invite students to share, remember students' names) and how to make the lectures more efficient (passion in teaching, appropriate speed, guest lectures, episodes from popular recreational resources, supplementary documents, snacks).

III. Views on other culture

The exchange offered me the very first chance to visit the US and glimpse a new cultural environment. Besides Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Indian, and African cultures (which are also able to feel in Hong Kong), the US has exhibitions and festival celebrations for native American, Latin American, and Jewish groups (which are seldomly encountered in Hong Kong).

I also explored several major cities: Philadelphia, Orlando, Boston, New York, and Atlanta. Some unforgettable cultural expeditions include Halloween celebration in the East State Penitentiary, Thanksgiving parade, Christmas village, my very first time to visit Walt Disney World, listening to Boston Symphony Orchestra, visiting Harvard and MIT, standing on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty, entering the Metropolitan Museum of Art, animal shows at Georgia Aquarium, and learning the stories of the former president Jimmy Carter.

IV. Detailed study schedule in the exchange-out institution



V. Summary

My exchange at UPenn holistically developed my qualities. I overcame many difficulties such as living in a new country and dealing with multiple tasks. Compare the current me with the past me, I have been more independent in solving problems, more inclusive towards different perspectives, and more skilled in time management. I also made friends with people around the world, and some of these relationships can be lifelong.

Lastly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to PolyU and UPenn for organizing the programme. Also, I really appreciate Ir Dr Wong Tit-shing for his donation!

Photo Sharing 1 (Life at UPenn and in Philadelphia):

Left Top: Lauder College House

Left Middle: Orientation at Philadelphia Museum of Art

Right Top: Independence Hall

Bottom: Hiking at Wissahickon Park



Photo Sharing 2 (Travelling in the USA):

Top Left: Magic Kingdom, Walt Disney World, Orlando, FL

Top Right: Georgia Aquarium, Atlanta, GA

Bottom Left: Symphony Hall, Boston, MA

Bottom Right: Statue of Liberty, New York, NY

