

Final Report: Study and Research Stay

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Food wasting Phenomenon at the PKU's canteen

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I take advantage of this great experience in several ways. First, as personal experience as I carried out my first explorative research in a very different cultural environment, through which I could gain an understanding of the Chinese university and research system. Second, it was fruitful for my academic career and personal knowledge, thanks to my participation in several congresses and discussions on environmental issues. Third, it was very useful to complete my M.A. Thesis and to gain valuable information and a deeper insight of the social phenomenon of food wasting in universities' canteen, by means analysis of the questionnaires results, direct observation and interviews. Furthermore, it was a good opportunity to develop my knowledge of the Chinese language and culture and to collect important information and dates on my research's main theme. Finally, it was the perfect occasion to meet a lot of interesting experts, professors and collaborators. In sum, all my personal goals and research expectation were met successfully.

My primary contact persons were Prof. Tong Xin, Urban Geography and Prof. Zhang Shiqiu, School of Environmental Engineering and Development of the PKU. These contacts had been given to me from a professor at my home institution, Prof. Dr. Eva Sternfeld, whose classes, *China Alimentation and Food Security* and *China and Climatic Change*, have raised my interest on sustainability in China.

My stay's biggest achievement has been the collection of important and untapped dates and information from previously conducted research, actual statistics from the university canteen office, as well as the direct consultation of interesting material in the university's library. Additional achievements include the questionnaire's analysis and the final evaluation

report, as well as the oral presentation I gave to the professors and the discussion with other class peers. All of these will build the central focus of my M.A. Master Thesis.

Under the most challenging aspects of my stay in Peking was the organization and the carrying out of research in a new academic and scholar system. It was an overall interesting experience since it gave me the possibility to take part in several meetings and experts' discussions on sustainability and environmental issues. In addition, it provided the possibility to collaborate with other master students and the host university, as well as the possibility to experience a different country.

I could take part at a weekly discussion on different environmental issues or Chinese governmental policies each held by an expert. I could also take part in a Chinese Masters class on Urban Geography and a student's group project with my own same research question: How could we evaluate the "Wasting food phenomenon" at the PKU's canteens and which is the best solution to mitigate this problem. This last point has turned out to be useful for my research, since I could organize a student research group to gain further information and statistics, and to be able to collect quantitative dates. Furthermore, I could take part in a weekly language course in order to improve my Chinese knowledge and take the final examination, which could be recognized as an interdisciplinary credit by my home university.

Thanks to the several discussions and meetings, I could develop my interests and knowledge about climate change, the urban trash recycling system, urban channeling system, plastic waste management, non-profit organizations in China, solar panel development, political environmental policies and environmental issues within "One belt one road" project.

The research stay has helped me to improve my overall knowledge and first-hand experience in the research field, in collecting data, distributing questionnaires, conducting interviews, organizing work group, holding discussions and presenting my research's evaluation. From my personal experience, I would warmly recommend this opportunity to any interested.