

# Scholarship studies at The University of Fudan – Final report

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I was studying at the University of Fudan in Shanghai for the academic year 2016–2017 with the help of Helsingin Sanomien säätiö scholarship for journalists. At Fudan I did not study journalism but Chinese Politics and Diplomacy at the School of International Relations and Public Policy. The scholarship was an amazing opportunity to live in China and study Chinese society and China's international relations. I wish I get to continue my China-studies one way or another in Helsinki.

I chose to study at the Chinese Politics and Diplomacy -program as I felt it was good continuation to my previous studies: I studied international politics as my minor at the University of Tampere and in addition did a special minor of Asia studies at the University of Turku. Also my master thesis was related to China.

At the School of International Relations and Public Policy it was possible to study both international relations and Chinese society. I was happy about that because during my scholarship year I wanted to learn more about China's foreign policy but also about Chinese society.

During the fall semester I was concentrating on international relations and enrolled to courses that were dealing with China-EU relations, China-U.S. relations, Regional politics of East Asia and Chinese politics. At the spring semester I took more courses related to China's internal issues like Political development in Contemporary China, Chinese society, Modern Chinese Diplomacy and an Introduction to Contemporary Chinese Newspapers. In addition I was studying Chinese language twice weekly.

The level, style and requirements of the courses varied a lot. Some courses were informal and based on free conversation about the days readings. In some courses the professors downloaded the readings online and then made students to give presentations on each class. I felt in these classes the professors were really not doing their job, but luckily almost all of my student colleagues had already specialized to China in their previous studies and thus the level of the classes was always high.

Luckily most of the professors were good and their classes better organized. Most of the professors teaching at the School of International Relations and Public Policy had done their Ph.D. in U.S and they were well aware of the academic debates and conversations in East and West.

For each course it was required to do weekly readings which usually meant about 100 pages of academic articles related to the topic of the week. These articles were then discussed on the classes. The attendance to these discussions was an important part of the grading. To pass the course, we had to write essays and research papers – there were no exams at Fudan. But I felt that these essays and research papers were excellent way to gain deeper knowledge on specific topics. During my year at Fudan, I wrote about the rule of law development in China and the law cooperation China has with Finland, 16+1 cooperation between China and CEE countries, the differences between Chinese and Japanese development aid in Africa, the ways China is controlling domestic and foreign journalists and young Shanghainese's attitudes towards traditional son-preference.

The most important thing I learned during my scholarship studies in Fudan was that China should not be explained by a single narrative. I feel that social scientists often perceive

China as bad and business people see only the good things. During my year in China I got numerous reminders that at the same time there is happening positive and negative development in China. The same government is doing good and bad things. Thus there is no simple answers when it comes to China.

In addition to studying at Fudan, also living in Shanghai was an amazing experience. Shanghai is a beautiful, modern, still traditional, poor and rich city, which taught me a lot about China.