Program: Ewha University Exchange, Academic Year

Yolanda’s Major: Fine Arts

Academic Life: I took all art oriented classes, which were taught in English, and one Korean language course. My art classes had a mixture of other exchange students and local Korean students. My classes were taught by professors who were currently professionals in the art field. It was great to learn from experienced faculty. The language barrier was sometimes difficult because many of the Korean students in my classes could not speak English very well, but the professors did a good job at trying to make sure everyone in the class was understood.

Housing: I lived in the Ewha University international student dorms in Seoul. The dorms were really great. They were conveniently located near class buildings, the student union, and the health center. The dorms had some strict policies but they didn’t inhibit your student life. There were no “floor meetings” or curfews, so I really felt I was treated like an adult while living there. The dorms also provided a good meeting spot for the international students!

What Yolanda Learned About Herself: I learned that I am a lot braver than I thought, and I can be resourceful and a quick problem solver. There were many times when I couldn’t do something the easy way, such as buying something I needed. Sometimes I couldn’t ask the shop keeper in English because they didn’t understand so I had to either use the internet to translate or body language to communicate. I am proud that I was successful when facing those challenges.

Advice for Someone Considering this Program: Korea is a great, safe, and fun country to live and study in! There is so much to do and experience. But it was also a very different environment than the U.S. In the beginning it will be hard to get settled because of the language barrier, so if you try to learn some basic Korean before you go, it will be a little more helpful. Otherwise, take advantage of the Buddy program at Ewha and ask your buddy for help!

“I learned how to be more patient and became willing to try new things.”

Yolanda Arellano

Yolanda visiting a rocky beach on the island Jeju off the coast of South Korea.