

TIANJIN, CHINA

JOHN LEINONEN

Program: UW Intensive Chinese Language, Summer

John's Major: Accounting

Academic Life: The classroom was comparable to classes at UW-Madison with larger lectures and small discussions. However, the total class size was an extremely small portion of a Madison class, and the pace was much faster. The classes were taught by a combination of teachers from Madison and Tianjin citizens, all fluent in Chinese. I was able to complete the entire second semester of Mandarin while abroad.

Housing: I lived in a hotel across a small parking lot from the main school building, so getting to class could not be more convenient. The hotel itself was fine, not five star by any means, but comfortable enough. There was also a convenience store two floors above us for snacks and drinks.

One Tip For Someone Considering Tianjin: Talk! Find natives speakers to talk to because that's where the best experiences happen. This is especially important if you're practicing language.

Most Memorable Experience: During the Tianjin program's week long break my roommate and I traveled to Inner Mongolia where we had tons of great experiences including staying in a yurt, riding horses, and seeing a sky full of stars. My favorite memory was from our night in the grasslands where I went to a celebration with fire crackers, music, and traditional dancing. We were also able to just have conversations with local people and it was incredibly fun.



John (left) with the director, Professor Zhang, at the graduation lunch.

“If you're serious about improving your skill, then there's no other way than to go and speak with native speakers.”