TIANJIN, CHINA

SAMUEL ROSIEJKA

Samuel's Major: Management and Human Resources

Program: UW Intensive Chinese Language, Summer

Academic Life: I took second year Chinese (EA 201, 202) while abroad. The classroom was in a building about a two minute walk from where our hotel was located which was very convenient. The students in the classroom were all English speaking and the majority were other UW-Madison students. The teachers were all native Chinese speakers. The work load is quite heavy each day but you have most of the day to work on school work and almost always have time to still explore the city and spend time with friends. Although the class work is intense, it is very rewarding and improves your speaking by studying Chinese where the language is almost always spoken (few people on the streets and in restaurants in China knew English well).

What Samuel Learned About Himself: I learned to be comfortable repeating myself in a foreign language and how to deal with a situation where I cannot get my point across. Before going to China, I was nervous speaking Chinese to native speakers because I feared I would have a terrible accent and be completely misunderstood. After going, I know that I can speak to native speakers and that often they are very impressed and happy that you are trying to learn their language.

Advice for Someone Considering this Program: I would tell them not to be afraid to approach someone on the street if you are lost or simply would like to talk. Almost every Chinese person I met in China would go out of their way to help you if you asked and would love to talk to you in Chinese. I would also recommend taking a sleeper train at some point because my friends and I were able to spend a good deal of time talking and getting to know numerous Chinese families which is something you are not able to do in the classroom.

“My initial impression of China was awe at the architecture.”