

# Study Abroad with G-MEO

# A Parent's Guide



# Letter to Parents

Dear Parent,

Thank you for supporting your child's decision to study abroad with G-MEO. We understand that you may be apprehensive about sending your child to an unfamiliar place, especially if he/she has not been abroad before. We can assure you that your child's **health, safety, and comfort** are our top priorities at all times. This guide will address many of your questions and give you the information you need to support your child throughout the process. Together, we can ensure that your child has an amazing experience.

Sincerely,

G-MEO Staff and Support



# Broaden Your Horizons

## Why China?

You may be surprised that your child wants to study in China, but there are so many great reasons to choose this country:



- *Language* - Mandarin has more native speakers than any other language (**873 million!**)
- *Business* - China is an economic power and major US trade partner, so it's likely your child's future employers will have ties to this country
- *Adventure* - You can explore the wonders of the ancient past while enjoying the perks of modern city life
- *Affordability* - G-MEO makes it easy to fund your trip with scholarships and grants

## Fast Facts

Studies show that students who study abroad:

- Saw greater improvement in GPA post study abroad than students who did not study abroad\*
- Are **more likely** to graduate than students who do not study abroad
- Are **more likely** to find employment within 12 months of graduation
- Are likely to obtain higher starting salaries than students who do not study abroad
- Have an easier time choosing a career field that suits them

\*Statistics published in American Institute for Foreign Study report

# About G-MEO

## A Leader in International Education

Our organization, Global Maximum Educational Opportunities, Inc. (G-MEO), is a **Study and Internship Abroad provider** with programs located throughout China. Inspired by Obama's 100K Strong initiative, Dr. David Chang, former President and Chancellor of NYU Tandon School, began the organization with the idea of promoting international education for students around the world. Our primary program is at the Chengdu American Center for Study Abroad is located at Sichuan University campus in Chengdu, China, and we also maintain partnerships with Xian-Jiaotong Liverpool University, Yuan Ze University, UESTC-Glasgow Joint School, and Shanghai Finance Institute. Since Fall 2013, we have enrolled 10 cohorts (totaling over 200 students) from 20 different U.S. universities.

## Dr. David Chang, Founder and CEO



David Chang was named president of Polytechnic University, now known as NYU Tandon School of Engineering, in 1994 and became Chancellor in 2005. Prior to this post, he was Dean of the College of Engineering and Applied Science at Arizona State University and Chairman of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at University of Colorado.

# The G-MEO Difference

## Program Highlights

Click here to visit the [g-MEO website](#) and find out more about our China programs!

- **Transferrable courses** for all majors that keep your child on track for graduation
- **Amazing locations** in Chengdu, Shanghai, Suzhou, and Taiwan
- **Exciting excursions** led by G-MEO staff (included in program fee)
- **Internships** in various fields for international work experience and resume building (for summer internship program only)
- **Quality housing** that meets international standards
- **Scholarships and grants** available to all applicants (see [Scholarships page](#) for more information)



# 1

# Pre-Departure

## Talking About Pre-Departure

Click here to read the [Pre-Departure Guide](#) on the g-MEO website and get a detailed review of the process.

As your child prepares to embark on a journey to China, we understand that you may have feelings of uncertainty and concern. You might wonder about the quality of food and housing in China, access to medical services, or issues with language and withdrawing money while overseas. We encourage you to ask questions about these topics and talk regularly with your child about preparation and planning.

Keep in mind that you can be a part of the conversation without limiting your child's independence. With help from you and experienced G-MEO professionals, your child can navigate the pre-departure process and get ready for the experience of a lifetime.



# 1.1

## Conversation Starters

### Financial Aid

“Have you checked with your Financial Aid Office at your university to see if your aid is transferrable to G-MEO programs?”

### Scholarships

“Have you checked the G-MEO website to see a full list of scholarships? Have you figured out which ones you’re eligible to receive?”

### Travel Documents

“Do you have a valid passport? Does it need to be renewed? Have you received a visa application package from G-MEO?”

### Health

“Have you activated your account on the GeoBlue website and checked to see if your prescriptions are available in China? If not, do you have enough of your prescriptions to last the full duration of your time abroad?”

### Medical Records

“Have you contacted your physician to complete all medical forms and get a copy of your immunization records? Have you uploaded the forms to the Online Application Portal?”

### Accessing Money

“Have you contacted your debit/credit card company to inform them that you will be abroad? Did they give your information about ATMs, withdrawal fees, and card function overseas?”

### Travel and Packing

“Did you enter your flight information (all legs) on the Online Application Portal? Did you contact an airline representative for information about baggage?”

### Cell Phone

“Did you unlock your phone? If you’re buying a local phone, do you know where to get a SIM card?”

# 1.2

## Meet the New York Staff

### Our Team is Here to Help

The G-MEO NY Team is made up of trained professionals who are committed to helping students navigate the pre-departure process. Before going to China, each student is required to complete a pre-departure orientation session with a Student Affairs staff member via phone or Skype. These meetings cover all aspects of the program and prepare students for a safe and fun experience. Check out the profiles below to get to know the NY Team.



#### **Wen Wang – Assistant Director of Student Affairs and Business Administration**

Originally from Beijing, Wen obtained a B.A. in English from Beijing International Studies University and an M.A. at Steinhardt School of NYU. Before joining G-MEO, she worked for various international organizations, including the Institute of International Education and UNICEF.

#### **Kejia Hu – Manager of Program Enrollment**

Kejia graduated from Beloit College with double majors in Economics and Mathematics, with a Minor in Anthropology.

Kejia loves to connect with people from different cultural background to grow her cultural intelligence. Thinking education is essential in developing global citizens, Kejia had years of experience in international education and non-profit organizations.



#### **Rebecca Slotkin – Program Coordinator**

Rebecca graduate from Lafayette College with a degree in International Affairs. During her junior year, she spent three semesters abroad in China, split between Beijing and Kunming, as well as extensively traveling the credibly diverse country. After finishing school, she returned to Kunming to work as a Program and Resident Advisor for a study abroad program.



# 1.3

## Budget

### Estimated Expenses

	1 Course	2 Courses	3 Courses
Tuition	\$3500	\$4400	\$4900
Food	\$300	\$300	\$300
Books	\$50	\$100	\$150
Airfare	\$800-\$1200 (Roundtrip)	\$1200	\$1200
Visa	\$200	\$200	\$200
New Passport	\$200	\$200	\$200
Housing	Session I: \$470 Session II: \$380	Session I: \$470 Session II: \$380	Session I: \$470
Health Insurance	Session I: \$99 Session II: \$83	Session I: \$99 Session II: \$83	Session I: \$99
Misc. (Transportation, Cell Phone, Bedding, etc.)	\$120	\$120	\$120

\*All non-Chinese nationals will receive the Chengdu Mayor's Scholarship for **RMB 5,000** (about \$730) after successfully completing the program

\*\*Students with a GPA > 3.3 can apply for the **G-MEO Merit Scholarship** of \$600

\*\*\*Figures in the chart do not reflect the **Early Bird Discount**, which deducts 10% from the final tuition fee if student completes the application by Mar. 1

### What's Included in the Program Fee

- Tuition and Fees
- Housing and Utilities
- Internship Placement (Summer Internship Program only)
- Cultural Activities and Events
- Medical and Evacuation Insurance
- Pre-Departure and Onsite Orientation
- One Official Transcript
- Airport Pickup and Dropoff
- Welcome and Farewell Ceremonies
- Certificate of Ambassadorship from Chengdu Municipal Government for (non-Chinese nationals)

# 1.4

## Checklist

### What to Remember

- **Pre-Departure Forms**
  - Health Clearance
  - Health History
  - Immunization
  - Assumption of Risk
- **Travel Documents**
  - Passport
  - Visa
- **Payment**
  - Pay any remaining balance on account
- **Flight**
  - Book Tickets and Update Flight Information
  - Contact Airline for Luggage Policy
- **Medical**
  - Obtain Prescription
  - Check Availability in China
- **Cell Phone**
  - Unlock your phone
- **Finances**
  - Notify Bank of Travel
  - Pack Credit/Debit Cards
- **Packing**
  - China has almost everything you need, but be sure to pack special preferences
- **Study Abroad Office**
  - Check with home institution to make sure you completed all necessary paperwork

# 2

# Onsite

## Adjustment and Change

Click here to read the [Health and Safety Guide](#) on the g-MEO website and get more detailed information on our policy.

After your child arrives in China, he/she will go through a period of rapid change and adjustment. As they get used to the new housing, make new friends, and become accustomed to Chinese language and culture, professional G-MEO staff will be there to provide support and assistance at all times.

Keep in mind that you may not be in constant communication with your child at this time. Try to have a positive attitude and trust in the G-MEO team to be there for your child as he/she gets used to the new environment. When you reach out, remember to take into account different time zones and levels of Internet access. It's important to be flexible and find a method of communication that works for both of you.



# 2.1

## Overview

### Health Insurance

All G-MEO students are enrolled in GeoBlue health insurance, which includes accident and sickness insurance, emergency medical evacuations, accidental death and dismemberment insurance, and 24-hour international emergency assistance.

### Emergencies

G-MEO has developed its own Crisis Management Plan in case of an emergency situation. The 24/7 emergency hotline is **718-496-3450** for NY and **+86-158-8214-0864** for Chengdu.

### Orientation

Onsite orientation with Chengdu staff members takes place at the beginning of the program and lasts 3 days. This way, students are taken care of from day 1 and learn almost everything they need to know right from the start.

### Airport Pickup

Onsite staff members arrange airport pickup and transportation to university housing after students arrive at Chengdu International Airport. Students must enter their flight information on the Online Application Portal.

### Housing

Students live in standard double-occupancy rooms for international students on Sichuan University campus. Rooms are newly furnished and offer private bathrooms and Wi-Fi access.

### Weather

Weather in China varies significantly by region and season. Chengdu has an overall mild climate and four distinct seasons, including warm, humid summers and chilly winters.

## 2.2

# Meet the Chengdu Staff

## Your Child is in Good Hands

In addition to administering onsite orientation, the Chengdu American Center staff members are available 24/7 to provide students with guidance and support. Our team has worked with students for years and understands that everybody wants to have fun when they go abroad. Nonetheless, they always emphasize the importance of personal safety and give the students the tools to explore their new cultural environment in a safe way. **Students at program locations other than Chengdu can contact these staff members at +86-158-8214-0846**



### **Jingyu Wang, Director**

Jingyu earned an M.A. in Teaching Chinese as a Second Language at Beijing Normal University. She worked in the field of education throughout her career, including positions as Chinese lecturer at Princeton University and East Asian Studies Research Associate at University of Notre Dame.



### **Sara Luo, Office Manager**

Sara earned a M.A. in English at Sichuan Normal University and holds a certificate of Chinese-English translation. Before joining the G-MEO team, Sara worked as a sales trainer and an English teacher at Sichuan Tianyi College.

### **Mandy Li, Student Life Coordination**

Mandy graduated from Sichuan Normal University with a M.A. in English Language and Literature. While in school, she worked as an English tutor and since then she has worked as a teaching assistant for several international education programs.



## 2.3

# Staying in Touch

## Connect to Your Child Overseas

After your child lands in China, we understand that you may want to reach out and make sure that everything is going okay. International calls can be expensive, so we recommend that you consider email or downloading a messaging app on your phone. Just remember that your child is in a different time zone with varying levels of Internet availability, so try to be patient and understanding if you don't get an immediate response. G-MEO staff members are always on hand to help out, and they are your child's best resource when he/she has questions or concerns.

## Easy Ways to Stay in Touch

- **Popular messaging apps:**
  - WhatsApp
  - WeChat (including video calls and voice chat)
- **Video calls to chat face to face:**
  - Skype
  - Google Hangout
  - Facetime

## 2.4

# Student Testimonials

## Making the Most of China



Salma Hbaich truly felt Chengdu is “the home away from home. “The thing I will probably miss the most about China is constantly meeting new people – both international and Chinese. We all had to learn how to communicate and get around the city without knowing our surroundings. This undertaking was vital to our personal growth and independence, but initially we had a lot of help from the incredible staff and interns at the G-MEO Center.”



Jonathan Cruz completed an internship at Equity Law firm in Chengdu. “Equity Law Firm has a friendly college environment, which means that everyone is around the same age... Another advantage is that at Equity Law the bosses give me the opportunity for ‘hands on’ experience. An example of that would be the ‘mock trial’ that we as interns were participants.”

# 3

## Returning Home

### Back to “Normal” Life

Students returning home from study abroad often find that what was once familiar has become unfamiliar. This phase, called reverse culture shock, often causes students to experience feelings of frustration, irritability, and loneliness. In this period of transition, we encourage you to be patient and look for ways to help your child gradually settle back into life at home. G-MEO will send a welcome home package with more information about reverse culture shock and suggestions for helping your child settle in.

You can encourage conversation by asking to see photos and hear stories about life overseas. You can also help your child find ways to stay connected to China, like joining a Chinese language circle or looking for China-related jobs and internships.





## 3.1

# Careers and the Future

## What's the Next Step?

Studying abroad is more than just an academic and cultural experience. After returning home, your child can translate his/her time abroad into **professional opportunities**. Try talking with your child about their professional interests and think of ways that G-MEO and China fit into a career track.

## Conversation Starters

### Update Resume

“Have you listed your G-MEO education on your resume? Have you highlighted any coursework, independent research, or internships that may stand out to employers?”

### Writing Cover Letters

“Have you thought about specific skills that you gained from studying abroad? Can you draw explain how these are important when you apply to jobs?”

### Job Search

“Have you considered seeking employment in China? Does your university Career Office have any resources that could help you locate jobs there?”

### Campus Ambassador

“Would you consider being a G-MEO Campus Ambassador? How could this boost your resume and credentials?”

## 3.2

# Student Testimonials

## The G-MEO Impact



While studying at the Chengdu American Center, Taylor Dortona completed an internship with the Chengdu Disabled Person Federation and continued to work in this field after returning home. “I am now an Ambassador for the 100K Strong Foundation and as such, I was invited to attend a cocktail reception and dinner at the White House Historic Society to hear The Deputy Secretary of State speak about US China relations...”



Austin Harris, who also studied at CAC in Spring 2015, told us about his plans to work in China after finishing the program. “I will be heading to Hong Kong to start a full-time position at the Lingnan University, as a Visiting English Tutor in the English Language Support Centre.”

## 3.3

# Stay Connected

## The G-MEO Network

Feel free to contact our team and share your future experiences. We're always excited to hear about the success of our alumni.

Don't forget to follow G-MEO on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#)! We're always happy to see students and alumni on social media.

### U.S.

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## Become a Campus Ambassador

Alumni can build their resumes and stay connected to G-MEO by becoming Campus Ambassadors for our organization. These positions give students a chance to talk about their experience with their peers and gain skills in event planning and community outreach. Campus Ambassadors also receive a salary for their efforts.