China offers a vast learning experience for students

By Kaleh Sampson

Studying abroad in China provides students with a great opportunity to see the world from a new and different perspective and to experience how students from other countries and different cultures live.

Study abroad programs, such as UNCP's summer faculty-led study abroad program in China, allow students to absorb another country's history and culture. Instead of skimming through pages of textbooks and gazing at pictures and postcards of new and exciting places in the world, students are able to physically touch famous monuments and buildings in history have walked on before us.

Google Maps says China is one country that offers students opportunities to study Chinese history and culture first hand. China is full of architecture, artifacts and relics that date back to ancient times and brings China's 5,000 plus years of history to life.

In Beijing, the Great Wall, Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City all offer a vast insight into Chinese history and culture. The Summer Palace, dating back to the Qing Dynasty, is also an historic attraction in Beijing.

The Twin Pagoda Temple, located in Taiyuan, also dates back to the Ming Dynasty. The two 53-meter tall pagodas each have 13 stories made completely of brick and stone. Inside the pagodas, wishes and prayers of people who have visited the temples are carved into the bricks.

Not only does the rich history of China make the country a significant study abroad site for students, but the differences in Chinese lifestyle also make the country eye opening for American student to experience. In a country where the government has blocked popular social media websites including Facebook and Twitter, students experience first-hand the control of the Chinese government and impact that the Chinese Communist Party has on daily living.

In 2009, President Barack Obama announced the “100,000 Strong Initiative” urging American students to strengthen U.S-China ties by studying in China and becoming more knowledgeable of cultural similarities than differences, and you strive to practice humility, tolerance and self-criticism.”

Editor’s note: Pine Needle layout editor Kaleh Sampson traveled to China over spring break.

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Media

The Shanghai World Finance Center (left) is the world's third tallest building in the world. The Jin Mao Tower (right) is the 10th tallest building in the world. The Twin Pagoda Temple is a popular tourist attraction in Taiyuan City. The towers each have 13 stories and bricks are carved with the wishes of visitors.

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