

# Casey Nelson – UF in Beijing

**Major:** Marketing

**Blog:** <https://ufinbeijing.wordpress.com/category/casey>

## **I studied abroad because...**

I had never traveled outside of the country before, and I felt like I was missing out on the world. I didn't want to be cradled into it, I wanted a challenge.

## **One of my biggest challenges before studying abroad:**

By far my biggest concern when looking into studying abroad was the price, especially during preliminary research. However, I was fortunate enough to receive Bright Futures funding and the Robert Rose Memorial Scholarship while abroad.

## **A typical meal I had while studying abroad was...**

*Jianbing!* You can buy them from street carts anywhere in China. They use eggs and batter to create a wrap with chicken, veggies, and a special spicy sauce. I had to learn to say "bu la", which means "no spice" in Mandarin because it was too hot for me.

## **My favorite spot in my host city:**

I visited the National Museum of China three times. It was massive, with towering statues of communist leaders and thirty-foot paintings of Chinese villages. I loved it because I'm interested in history, especially mid-twentieth century and there were many exhibits on Mao Zedong and his revolution.

## **One cool event I got to experience while abroad:**

We watched a stunt show where they fit five motorcycles into a spherical cage and drove around in it.

## **The most memorable experience for me while abroad:**

We tried pig brain! My friends and I were eating out and the table next to us ordered some so, naturally, we took a little interest in it. The owners apparently noticed because they gave us an order of it for free. It tasted exactly how you imagine it would.

## **A habit I picked up while abroad:**

In China, internet access is very limited so I had to find other ways to occupy my time. So rather than picking up a new habit I broke a bad old one: spending way too much time on my phone.

## **What I found most challenging while abroad was...**

The language barrier, which made things so difficult to communicate. I joked that every day abroad someone said something I didn't understand at all.

## **What surprised me most about study abroad was...**

The heat! Some days it got up to 105° F.

## **My last bit of advice:**

Studying abroad can seem daunting but it is assuredly worth it. If you go into it with an open mind, you will come out changed for the better.