

Mark Edward – UF in Beijing

Major: Marketing | **Minors:** Retail & Leadership

Blog: <https://ufinbeijing.wordpress.com/category/mark>

I studied abroad because...

I wanted to intern abroad to visit the country of my dreams, to give myself a professional competitive advantage, and to make meaningful global connections.

One of my biggest challenges before studying abroad was...

receiving the necessary funds for the experience. This almost kept me from going, but thanks to Heavener International Programs, I received enough funding to take part in the global opportunity!

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

"Jian Bing." It was a fabulously simple meal composed of a tortilla cooked with an egg, cilantro and lettuce, spicy sauce, and a large fried cracker all wrapped together. *Jian Bing* was available at almost every street vendor at any time of day!

My favorite spot in my host city was...

Makato's Pizza, a local pizza place that was a two minute walk from our accommodation. Interns from around the world would meet there and hang out, connect, and watch the World Cup games. I made so many friends and memories at Makato's!

One cool event I got to experience while abroad was...

an awesome acrobatics show during my first week in Beijing. All of the UF interns went to the show together, and we were all blown away by the mind-boggling performances!

The most memorable experience for me while abroad was...

being invited to my boss's parent's home for a casual dinner. The food was amazing, and we all had a great time together, even though his parents didn't speak any English. I was the first American they ever had over for dinner!

A habit I picked up while abroad:

I wrote in a journal extensively during my time abroad. I would often write at home on the weekends and during my daily commute to work.

What I found most challenging while abroad was...

getting around the city. There were so many buildings that it threw off my directional sense. As a result, I often traveled with other interns or locals that knew how to navigate through Beijing.

What surprised me most about study abroad was...

how much support I received while abroad. There was someone to help me whenever I needed it! This help came from other interns, the CRCC staff members, my co-workers, and even Beijing locals! I became more comfortable receiving assistance from others.

My last bit of advice:

Take the chance! Studying or interning abroad is a once in a lifetime opportunity that shouldn't be ignored. There's an unforgettable experience waiting for them overseas if they're willing to go for it!