

**2018 International Winter School
Northwestern Polytechnical University**



**A Report on
Experience at Winter School**

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My Experience

The Winter School Program 2018 was organized by Xi'an based Northwestern Polytechnical University (NPU). Over 100 students from different parts of the world attended this program. The majority of the students were from Malaysia, Indonesia and South Korea. It was a great privilege for me to attend it as a representative of AIT. The teachers and the student volunteers all were very helpful to us and made sure that our stay there was comfortable.

The challenging part for most of us was the freezing weather. However, getting to see the snow for the first time made it all worth it.

During the two weeks at Xi'an, we got the opportunity to visit many historical places and got to know a lot about the history of China. It was amazing to see how China was able to achieve so much even in those ancient days. I was especially amazed by the Terracotta sculptures depicting the armies of ancient Emperor of China.

Besides the visits to historical places, we also visited the new campus of NPU. We celebrated our New Year's eve there. We made traditional chinese dumplings together with our new friends. There was a small fair organised by students with lots of fun games. After that, we attended a grand New Year countdown show with lots of performances from the students. The event seemed very well organised and all the performances were wonderful.

We visited the new campus again about a week later for a demonstration of planes that the NPU students had built themselves. It was really great to see students flying those aircrafts.

As for the courses within campus, I took basics of software engineering course as my elective course. To my surprise, most of the students who attended this course were not from IT background. The classes were taught by students rather than the professor himself. And the content of the course was a little too basic for me. So, I felt I did not gain much from this course.

However, other chinese courses were a lot of fun and I learnt a lot. The classes for chinese instrument guzheng, paper cutting, tea making all were very interesting and a very new experience. Other workshops that were focused on encouraging entrepreneurship and informing about the rising entrepreneurship culture in China were all intriguing. I was surprised to know how well the Chinese government supports entrepreneurship and is even willing to update the outdated policies of the country to facilitate the upcoming businesses. We got to know about the innovative business models that are blooming in China due to the ubiquitousness of the internet. We experienced first hand how the Chinese society is on its way to becoming cashless and how they had become accustomed to this new lifestyle.

Food at Xi'an was one of the highlights of this trip. We were amazed by the variety of dishes available within the campus cafeteria. One thing that we noticed right away was that the portion of meals were huge, almost double the amount of food that we normally eat. And surprising the prices were quite cheap. It was a lot cheaper than the cafeteria food we have at AIT. One negative aspect of NPU's cafeteria we found was that there was specific time for meals. If we go late then we will be left with cold leftover dishes or at worse no food at all.

My recommendation for the program is about the daily schedule. Our day started with classes at 8.30 AM. The classes ended around 11.30 AM and the next scheduled activity was around 2 PM till 4.30/5 PM. I think the afternoon sessions should have been conducted immediately after lunch at 1 PM. This way the students would be free by 4PM and would have enough time to explore places on their own.

To sum up, the 2 weeks stay at Xi'an was a great experience. I feel really fortunate to have had the opportunity to attend this program. I am thankful to all the teachers, volunteers and fellow Winter School attendees for making it a very memorable event.

