

Yonsei University Fall 2015



Hey potential Yonsei exchange student. This report contains a brief description of my experiences at Yonsei University and it will hopefully help you to choose Yonsei as your exchange destination. I will discuss the following topics:

- General Information Yonsei University
- Preparation
- Arrival
- Courses
- Finances
- Daily Life

If at any time you feel the need to ask any questions or are curious about something that is not mentioned in here, feel free to contact me at the mail address below:

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1. General Information Yonsei University

<i>Name University</i>	Yonsei University
<i>Location</i>	Sinchon Campus (not Songdo or International Campus) nearby student hotspots
<i>Address</i>	50 Yonsei-ro, Seodaemun-gu, Seoul 120-749 Korea
<i>Dorms</i>	2 dorms; SK Global (single and double rooms) & International House (only double rooms)
<i>Semester</i>	Fall semester 2015
<i>Pros</i>	The school campus is amazingly beautiful and high-tech. Close to all utilities and commodities
<i>Cons</i>	The University's organizational structure is below par

2. Preparation

Before you leave for Korea there is some prep work that has to be done first. I think the most important things that you need to take care of are

- (Online) Exchange Application for Yonsei University
- Getting your student VISA
- Get insurance
- Course Registration
- Accomodation

First things first, you must make sure you follow the steps to apply for Yonsei University. After you get your confirmation they will send you a package with documents required to apply for the student visa. Every person staying longer than 90 days in Korea need to have a visa. Notice that the visa is a single-entry visa, meaning you cannot leave and enter Korea again after your arrival. If you wish to travel around outside Korea, don't be discouraged because during Orientation they will explain to you how to apply for an Alien Registration card (similar to our Dutch ID cards) which serves as a multiple-entry visa. The link for the Visa application can be found below:

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/ambassades-consulaten-en-overige-vertegenwoordigingen>

After you took care of these two things, take care of your accommodation. There are two choices; stay on campus in the dorms (either SK Global or International House) or stay off-campus. I opted to stay on campus in SK Global and managed to get a single room. The housing is really competitive, just like everything else in Yonsei, so you need to set a timer for when the housing applications open up. Allocation of rooms is on a first-come first-serve basis and during check-in a tuberculosis medical report should be handed in. You can do this examination either here in the Netherlands or there, I would advise to do it here where there is no language barrier. As for off-campus housing I don't really have any experience, but I heard from friends that it was not too difficult. The link for the housing can be found below:

<http://ih.yonsei.ac.kr/>

Course registration opens up a few weeks before the semester starts and consists of multiple rounds, where each round has a different set of rules (detailed information will be provided by Yonsei University). The main point is that you need to know that course seats are very limited and competition is fierce, especially for economics/business courses. So, make sure you choose your courses before registration opens and register immediately after registration opens. In general, there are a wide range

of courses taught in English for all majors, so lack of choice should not be an issue. For the course syllabus for undergraduates and graduates see the link below:

www.portal.yonsei.ac.kr

Finally, before you leave make sure to get the necessary insurance and sublet your room if possible. I used AON student insurance for my stay. As for luggage tips, make sure you pack light and come back heavy. For those shopaholics amongst you, there is a shipping office on campus in case you might need it ;). Also bringing some typical Dutch food and beverages may be nice to present to some new foreign friends. Also a plug converter is not necessary as they use the same we have here.

3. Arrival

After your arrival at the airport, I think the most convenient way to get to your housing (be it on- or off-campus) is by taking a taxi. Especially looking at the amount of luggage that you are carrying and the fact that everything is new and foreign. It should be easy to get a taxi and it will cost you at most ₩65.000.

If you opted for the dorms, you can check in a week before classes start and you will be given a room key. After checking in you can go explore the campus and maybe Sinchon. In the following days a lot of orientation and group activities take place. My advice is to participate in everything and sign up for as much as you can, because this will enable you to meet a lot of people and at the same time experience all that Korea has to offer.

Also during orientation, they will explain to you how to get your alien registration card (ARC). Make sure you get this done as fast as possible if you plan on traveling in the near future. However, if you do not plan to travel, wait 4 weeks or so before applying so you will avoid the rush period. Applying for the ARC is the most annoying task ever. Also when applying make sure to choose for mail delivery, this will cost you ₩3000 and saves you a lot of time and hassle.

4. Courses

Like I mentioned before courses are abundantly available. As an ESE student it is mandatory to obtain 24 ECTS of which 12 should be obtained through business/economics/mathematics courses. Most regular undergraduate courses at Yonsei are worth 3 Credits, where 1 Credit equals 2 ECTS. The maximum amount of credits one can take at Yonsei is 18 Credits. It is wise to register for as many courses as possible during the course registrations because you will have plenty of opportunity to drop courses you don't like during the course-drop periods.

I took the following courses:

- International Money & Finance (6 ECTS)

This course was taught by a funny professor and involves the money market, real market and exchange market processes in depth. This course is very similar to what we have learned in our Macroeconomics course about money and exchange markets, but adds additional depth to the equilibrium process. The course structure is very simple and is graded on the basis of two exams (midterm and final). Unfortunately, during the course we switched from books a lot (3 times!) so that notation and even main macroeconomic theory changed continuously during the semester leading to a lot of headaches amongst the students. But all in all, I would say it is a very enjoyable course.

- Korean Economy (6 ECTS)

This course was taught by a very knowledgeable professor and is more like a history class than economics. You learn about the main causes of the Korean Economic revolution and its consequences. In particular, you learn the political and economic strife that Korea underwent to transit from being an underdeveloped aid recipient to a developed country. The lectures are, unfortunately, very boring and not much interaction is involved. The classes are boring because of lack of presenting skills of the professor but this by no means signifies that the course material is boring. To the contrary, it is very fascinating to learn about the development of the Korean economy. The grading is based off two exams, a group project and multiple small assignments.

- Econometrics 1 (6 ECTS)

This course was taught by a very enthusiastic teacher who clearly loves what he does. I already took this course before during my freshman year at Erasmus. This course provides basic analytical skills for Ordinary Least Squares regression, further information can be found on Erasmus' Econometrics program. The course material was for a large part very similar to what I did here, the biggest difference was that the focus at Yonsei lies in the mathematical aspect of econometrics and to a lesser extent its applications in real life whereas at Erasmus it's the other way around. As for speed of the study material, we covered the same subjects as we did here in more than twice as much time so I would say the tempo is quite slow, this holds for all my courses though. However, it was refreshing to learn the basics again and to view econometrics in another perspective. The grading is based off two exams and an empirical research paper done in groups.

- Intensive Korean Language Course Level 1

This course was the most fun and useful course I took. Although classes are daily, it never is tiring and classes are small and it is the best environment to make friends all while you learn to speak the language! Classes are given by two teachers, one for grammar and one for reading/listening/speaking. I must say it's really worthwhile to take this course as it is probably the fastest way to learn the language and everything you learn you can apply the very same day in real life. English is still not very well known in Korea and knowing a little bit of Korean will definitely make your stay more comfortable. The grading is based off two exams (subdivided in sections speaking/reading/listening/grammar) and multiple vocab quizzes during the semester.

5. Finances

	Expected costs	Realized costs
SK Global single room	₩ 2642.000	₩ 2642.000
Plane ticket to Shanghai Pudong (one-way ticket) from Schiphol Amsterdam	€ 800.05	€ 800.05
Plane ticket to Seoul Incheon (one-way ticket) from Shanghai Pudong	€ 241.49	€ 241.49
Plane ticket to Schiphol (one-way)	€ 800	

Centermark Hotel Seoul (7 nights)	₩ 508,200	
T-money card (Transportation)	₩ 2500 and up	
T-money card deposit (1 month)	€ 100	₩2000 + 5000
Books	€ 200	
Visa China (1-entry)	€ 71.30	€ 71.30
Visa Korea (student D2 1-entry)	€ 48	€ 48
Sim card	₩39.000	₩39.000
Phone data bundle 2GB a month		₩21.000
Clothes	€ 1500	
Going out	€ 1500	
Yonsei Global Tour 1		₩10.000
Yonsei Global Tour 2		₩10.000
Yonsei Global Tour 3		₩10.000
Alien registration card + shipping fee		₩30.000 + 3000
(Airport) Taxi Sinchon to SK Global or hotel		₩65.000
Meal at university	₩3000 - ₩7000	
Meal in city	₩4000 - ₩20,000	
Korean BBQ (normal)	₩7000 - ₩10,000	
Korean BBQ (Hongdae)		₩17,900
Miscellaneous	€ 2000	

6. Daily Life

Seoul is vibrant city that truly never sleeps. Many restaurants and shops are open 24/7 allowing for a late night snack or shopping. For those who want to see some historic sites, there are various palaces and temples nearby like the Gyeongbok palace. Entree fees are cheap and most sites are very easily accessible by public transport.



During my exchange at Yonsei I mostly travelled around either by foot, subway or taxi. Going to the nearby student hotspots like Sinchon and Ewha can be done within 15 minutes on foot from the dorms. If you decide to go clubbing it's best to take the subway, which has a very easy system that you will get used to almost immediately after your arrival. Make sure to get a T-money card that is the equivalent of our public transportation card, however it can be used as a means of payment for many other things except for public transport. You can buy one at almost every subway station and subsequently charge it. Did I already mention that transportation is dirt cheap? For instance, going by subway from Incheon Airport to Sinchon will cost you about 5 euros, and that's for a one hour drive. Although public transport is great and rarely has any delays (contrary to our NS) it closes really early around midnight depending on the location. So what will you do when you miss the last subway home? Just take a taxi and if you split the costs with three other friends it will be approximately the same price as taking the

subway. Or you could explore the night life more and just wait for the next subway in the morning, which is also not so uncommon.

If you like clubbing, Korea is a great place to be. There are numerous clubs nearby in Hongdae which is just one subway stop away from Sinchon. Most university students go here to relieve their stress after exams or just to have fun. If you like a classier venue with better drinks and famous performers then Gangnam is the best place to go to. Unfortunately, it will take you about an hour to get there by subway and you most definitely won't make the last subway home.



Also if you are a foodie Korea is perhaps not the best place for you, as most Korean dishes are pretty similar and there just isn't that much variety. But, if you like meat, spicy food, and alcohol then you will like it just fine. Korean BBQ is a big here, you will find them in every street where you can eat to your heart's content because most of them

are all-you-can-eat. My personal favorite is the KBBQ in Hongdae above the MCDonalds, it's a bit more expensive 18,000 won but definitely worth it. Another popular dish is called Chimaek which is a word combination of Chicken and Beer and that's literally what you will eat, chicken fried, spicy, sweet you name it and almost accompanied with a lot of beer. Next to KBBQ and Chimaek there are loads of small Korean restaurants offering bulgogi and various kinds of spicy stew called sundubu. Most dinners and get togethers involve large amount of Soju or Makgeolli (Korean rice wine) which are the pride of Korea. Also if you don't want to go to the food, you can easily let the food come to you. Using the food-order app, Yogiyo, which is the Korean equivalent of our Thuisbezorgd but 100 times better. Korean restaurants deliver everything, any time and everywhere, especially during exam period you will notice the amount of delivery scooters parking up in front of the dorms. Last but not least, Korea is home to an enormous amount of coffee shops and dessert cafes, it's a bit pricy to go everyday but it's definitely worth it to go and try them all out.





Off course being in Korea doesn't mean you have to stay in Korea. To the contrary, it's very easy to travel around to neighboring Asian countries when you are in Korea. For example, I went to Taiwan, Japan, Jeju island (technically still Korea) and China (twice!). Travelling around is affordable and after meeting new friends you will experience that travelling in groups will be one of the best times of your life. Looking back on my exchange I regret that I didn't travel even more and explore more, both Korea and Asia in general. I hope you will be able to see and experience the things I encountered and do even more.

I hope this short report got you excited enough to choose Yonsei University as your exchange destination and if you think you are not convinced yet contact me on the mailaddress below and I will help change your opinion.

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