

## 2013 Fall Scholarship Essay

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In the context of a bear stock market and a collapsing real estate market, for Chinese people, the best investment one can make is to invest in you; and an exchange opportunity abroad at UCLA is absolutely one of the smartest choices for me.

In the long term, "Study Abroad" is a blue chip, which will bring me a generous lifelong bonus. My return comes primarily from a set of improved thinking skills. During a semester's exchange at UCLA Economics department, I can greatly sharpen my critical reasoning and enhance my quantitative ability. Sometimes, we Chinese students are forced to learn by rote. For instance, I still recalled while I was studying Macroeconomics, I often had to sacrifice my reasoning on some open questions and replaced it with a standard answer from the textbook to earn a higher score. In contrast, according to course descriptions at UCLA, a three-hour lecture is followed by a one-hour discussion section. I will surely raise my hand and express my interpretations of critical economical issues; an act though encouraged yet still perceived weird in a Chinese classroom. What's even more appealing is the supplementary Laboratory tutoring for several courses, like ECON 106EL (Economics for Entrepreneurship Laboratory). Such a great opportunity is beyond imagination for undergraduate Economics student at my home university. Besides, I am truly excited to study in a hall where UCLA's Professor Emeritus Lloyd Shapley, the Nobel Prize Laureate, gave his lectures.

"Study Abroad" also performs extremely well seen from a short term perspective. I can make a great leap towards my dreaming career as a consultant. A four-month internship with A.T. Kearney convinced me that I had keen interest and competency in becoming a consultant. Right now, I am equipped with good critical thinking skills and interpersonal skills entailed by a management consulting career, yet according to my supervisor, a Yale graduate, international experience is kind of a MUST for consultants, because recruiters believe that success in studying abroad shows that the candidate can think, work and live independently (and so do I). In this sense, a semester's exchange experience at UCLA can polish my resume incredibly and help me secure a position at a world leading consulting firm. Of course, the thinking and interpersonal skills I hone will make me an outstanding consultant in the long run.

In fact, to study abroad is not only a highly rewarding investment judged by my mind, but also an adventure I know I have to take from my heart. To study Economics at UCLA will be a perfect opportunity for me to right a wrong. In my senior year, thanks to my exceptional academic record and creativity in academics, I was recommended to graduate department of Foreign Language Study. Although Finance appeals enormously to me, unfortunately, I chose

to stay in my comfort zone and turned down the adventure. Now I seriously regret this decision. Thus, a semester's exchange abroad is a second chance to find the best in me. In addition, as a huge fan of American culture, I will never really know whether I fit in or not until I go on this adventure. I want to have a taste of America by studying with UCLA students, coming from diverse background and with different talents. I am eager to know things like how they balance their time between writing a paper aiming at an A and hitting the beaches at the weekends and so on.

In sum, a semester's studying abroad experience at UCLA will definitely be one of the best investments and the most exciting adventures for me. Therefore, I am determined to join this study abroad program and start a new chapter in my academic life and my career.