



# PARENT GUIDE



## THE CHENGDU AMERICAN CENTER FOR STUDY ABROAD

Global Maximum Educational  
Opportunities, Inc.

Summer / Semester

# CONTENTS

## I. Introduction

---

- A letter to Parents
- Why China?
- About G-MEO
- Program Highlights

## II. Pre-Departure

---

- Conversation Starters
- Finances
- Checklist

## III. In Chengdu

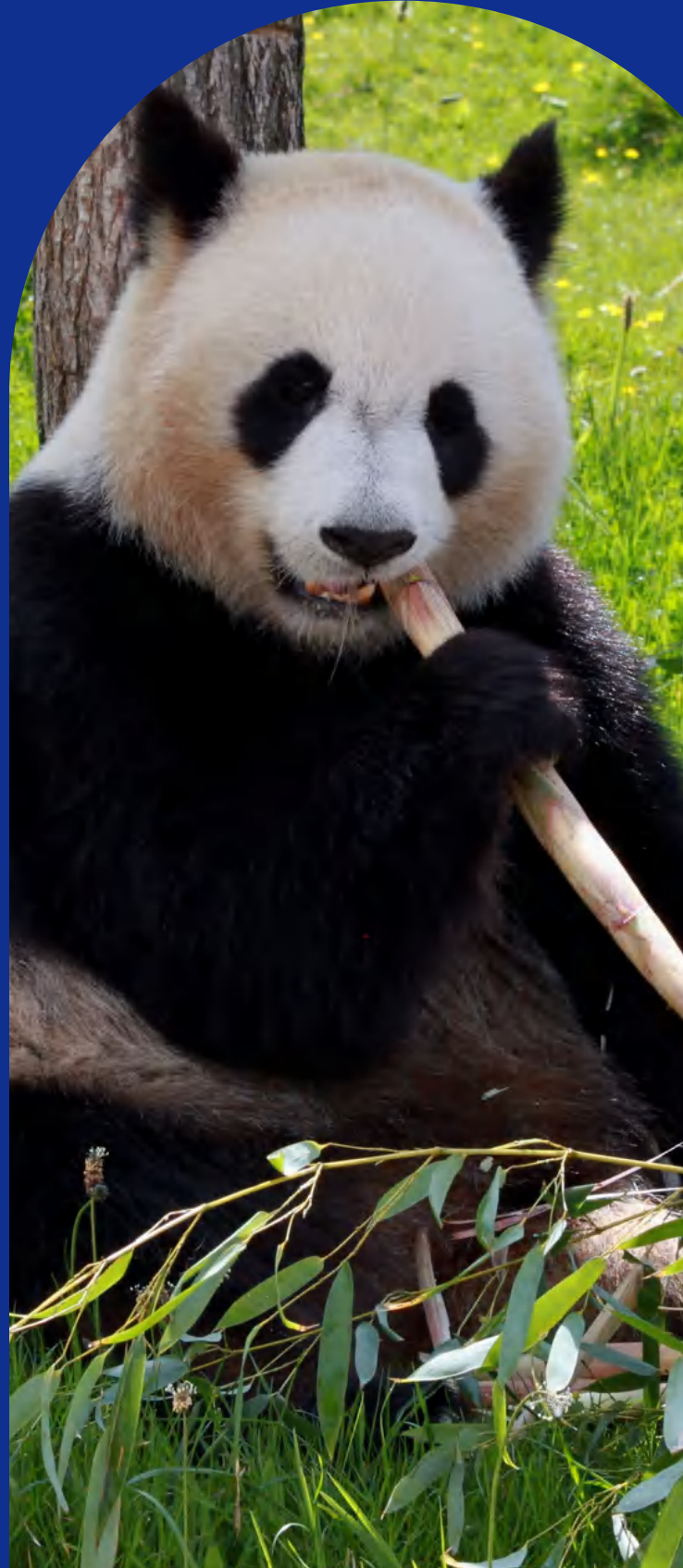
---

- Overview
- Meet the Chengdu Staff
- Staying Connected
- Student Testimonials

## IV. Returning Home

---

- Adjusting Back
- Careers and the Future
- G-MEO Impact
- The G-MEO Network



# I. INTRODUCTION

## A LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parent,

Thank you for supporting your child's decision to study abroad with G-MEO. We understand that you may be apprehensive about sending your child to an unfamiliar place, especially if this is their first time traveling abroad. We can assure you that your child's health, safety, and comfort is our top priority at all times.

This guide will address many of your questions and provide you with the information you need to support your child throughout the process. Together, we can ensure that your child has an amazing experience.

Sincerely,

G-MEO Staff and Support



# WHY CHINA?

## Broadening Horizons

You may be surprised that your child wants to study in China, but there are so many great reasons to choose this country:

- **Language** - Mandarin has more native speakers than any other language (929 million) and is the second most spoken language in the world (1.1 billion).
- **Business** - China remains a major economic power and major US trade partner.
- **Adventure** - You can explore the wonders of the ancient past while enjoying the perks of modern city life.
- **Affordability** - G-MEO makes it easy to fund your trip with scholarships and grants. Chengdu also has a lower cost of living so everyday costs will be less.



## Fast Facts

Studies\* show that students who study abroad:

- saw greater improvement to their GPA after they studied abroad than students who did not study abroad.
- are more likely to graduate than students who did not study abroad.
- are more likely to find employment within 12 months of graduation.
- are likely to obtain higher starting salaries than students who do not study abroad.
- have an easier time choosing a career field that suits them.

\*statistics published in the American Institute for Foreign Study report



# ABOUT G-MEO

## A leader in international education

Our organization, Global Maximum Educational Opportunities, Inc. (G-MEO), is a **Study and Internship Abroad provider** with programs located throughout China. Inspired by President Obama's 100K Strong initiative, Dr. David Chang, former President and Chancellor of NYU Tandon School, began the organization with the idea of promoting international education for students around the world. Our flagship program is at the Chengdu American Center for Study Abroad, located on Sichuan University's campus in Chengdu, China. We also maintain partnerships with Yuan Ze University, UESTC-Glasgow Joint School, and Shanghai Lixin University of Accounting & Finance. Since Fall 2013, we have enrolled 20 cohorts, totaling over 600 students from 25+ different U.S. universities.

## Dr. David Chang, Founder & CEO



David Chang, PhD was named president of Polytechnic University, now known as NYU Tandon School of Engineering, in 1994 and became Chancellor in 2005. Prior to this post, he was Dean of the College of Engineering and Applied Science at Arizona State University and Chairman of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Colorado.

Read Dr. Chang's full professional biography here: <https://www.gmeochina.com/gmeo-founder/>



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



## The G-MEO Difference

- **Transferrable courses** for all majors that keep your child on track for graduation.
- **Amazing locations** in Chengdu, Shanghai, and Taiwan.
- **Exciting excursions** led by G-MEO staff (included in the program fee).
- **Internships** in various fields for international work experience and resume building.
- **Quality housing** that meets international standards
- **Scholarships and grants** available to all applicants (see Scholarships page for more information).



# II. PRE-DEPARTURE

## PREPARING FOR ADVENTURE

as your child prepares to embark on a journey to China, we understand that you may have feelings of uncertainty and concern. You might wonder about the quality of food and housing in China, access to medical services, issues with language and withdrawing money while overseas. We encourage you to ask questions about these topics and talk regularly with your child about preparation and planning.

Keep in mind that you can be a part of the conversation without limiting your child's independence. With help from you and experienced G-MEO professionals, your child can navigate the pre-departure process and get ready for the experience of a lifetime.

Check out our pre-departure guide on our website for more details!



# CONVERSATION STARTERS

We recommend double checking these items with your child.

## Financial Aid

- Check with the financial aid office at your child's university to see if their aid is transferrable to G-MEO programs.

## Scholarships

- Check the G-MEO website to see a full list of offered scholarships.
- Note which ones your child is eligible to receive.

## Travel Documents

- Have a valid passport.
- Double check that it does not need to be renewed.
- Make sure you received a visa application package from G-MEO.

## Health

- Activate your account on the GoBlue website and checked to see if any prescriptions are available in China.
- If not, make sure you have enough of your prescriptions to last the full duration of your time abroad.

## Medical Records

- Contact your physician to complete all medical forms and get a copy of your immunization records.
- Make sure that all health forms are uploaded to the online application portal.

## Accessing Money

- Contact your bank and credit card company to let them know that you will be traveling abroad.
- Learn about ATMs, withdrawal fees, and card function overseas for your bank.

## Travel and Packing

- Enter your flight information (all flights, including connecting flights) to the online application portal.
- Check the airline's website for information about baggage policies.







# BUDGET

## Estimated Expenses

Expense	Amount All estimates are in US dollars (USD).
Living Expenses	\$300 per month
Books	\$200 to \$300
Airfare	\$700 to \$1500 roundtrip
New Passport	\$110 to \$190
Visa	\$140 to \$200
Local Transportation	\$8 for Transit Card (includes \$3 deposit + \$5 balance)
Wi-Fi Internet	*Free in the Dormitory and Center
Cell Phone	\$60 to \$180 for device, \$15/month for service
Accommodation	\$1000 per month
International Insurance	\$10 per week

## What's included in our Program Fee:

- Tuition & fees
- Internship Placement
- Cultural Excursions & events
- Pre-departure and On-site orientation
- Certificate of Ambassadorship from the Chengdu Municipal Government
- Buddy Program
- Airport Pickup
- Official Transcript (1)
- Welcome and Farewell Ceremonies

# CHECKLIST

## A few things to remember:

### Pre-Departure Forms

- Health Clearance
- Health History
- Immunization
- Assumption of Risk

### Travel Documents

- Passport
- Visa

### Payment

- Pay any remaining balance on your account

### Flights

- Book tickets
- Add flight information to application portal
- Check with the airline's baggage policy

### Medical

- Obtain prescriptions
- Check their availability in China

### Cell Phone

- Unlock your phone (if possible)

### Finances

- Notify your bank of travel
- be sure to pack credit & debit cards

### Packing

- China has almost everything you need, but be sure to pack any special preferences

### Study Abroad Office

- Check with your university study abroad office to make sure you completed all necessary steps and paperwork



# III. IN CHENGDU



## Adjustment & Change

After your child arrives in China, they will go through a period of rapid change and adjustment. As they get used to new housing, make new friends, and become accustomed to Chinese language and culture, our professional G-MEO staff will be there to provide support and assistance at all times.



Keep in mind that you may not be in constant communication with your child upon arrival. Try to have a positive attitude and trust in the G-MEO team to be there for your child as they get used to their new environment.



When you reach out, remember that there is a 12 hour time difference from the Eastern time zone as well as varying levels of internet access. It's important to be flexible and find a method of communication that works for both of you.

# Overview

## Health Insurance

All G-MEO students are enrolled in international health insurance, which includes accident and sickness insurance, emergency medical evacuations, accidental death and dismemberment insurance, and 24-hour international emergency assistance.

## Emergencies

G-MEO has its own Crisis Management Plan in case of an emergency. The 24/7 emergency hotline is **+86-158-2814-0846** for Chengdu.

## Orientation

Onsite orientation with our Chengdu staff members will take place at the beginning of the program and will last 3 days. This way we ensure that students are taken care of from day one and learn almost everything they need to know from the start.



## Airport Pickup

Onsite staff members arrange airport pickup and transportation to university housing after students arrive at Chengdu International Airport. It is important that students enter their flight information in our Online Application Portal.

## Housing

Students live in standard double-occupancy rooms for international students. Rooms are recently renovated and offer private bathrooms and Wi-Fi access.

## Weather

Weather in China varies significantly by region and season. Chengdu has an overall mild climate with four distinct seasons that include warm, humid summers and chilly winters.



# Meet the Chengdu Staff

## Your Child is in Good Hands

In addition to administering the onsite orientation, the Chengdu American Center staff are available 24/7 to provide students with guidance and support. Our team has worked with students for years and understand that everyone wants to have fun when they go abroad. Nonetheless, we always emphasize the importance of personal safety and give the students the tools to explore their new cultural environment in a safe way.



**Sara Luo**  
**Director of the Chengdu American Center**

Sara earned a M.A. in English at Sichuan Normal University and holds a certificate in Chinese-English translation. Prior to joining the G-MEO team, Sara worked as an English teacher at Sichuan Tianyi College.

**Lily Huang**  
**Program Coordinator**

Lily earned an M.A. in Literature in 2017 from Sichuan University. Majoring in Modern Foreign Language Education and Educational Technology, Lily has a high level of English proficiency as well as a rich teaching experience.



# Staying in Touch

## Connecting with Your Child Overseas

After your child lands in China, we understand that you may want to reach out and make sure that everything is going okay. International calls can be expensive, so we recommend that you consider email or downloading a messaging app on your phone. Just remember that your child is in a different time zone with varying levels of internet availability. Try to be patient and understanding if you don't receive an immediate response. G-MEO staff members are always on hand to help, they are your child's best resource when they have questions or concerns.

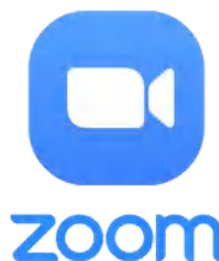
## Easy Ways to Stay Connected

Popular free messaging apps (both allow voice and video calls):

- iMessage
- WeChat

Apps and sites for video calls:

- FaceTime
- Skype
- Zoom





# STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

Making the Most of China

## Health & Wellness

As a student with asthma, Maman Cisse had to be aware of air pollution that could impact her health. “The program has the best doctor in Chengdu (the English speaking Clinic and with insurance that covers all the expenses). Also, the G-MEO main office has bottles of oxygen that are always available in case of emergencies, which has come to aid several times.”

## Unique Hands-on Experience

Jonathan Cruz completed an internship at Equity Law Firm in Chengdu. “Equity Law Firm has a friendly college environment, which means that everyone is around the same age...Another advantage is that at Equity Law the bosses give me the opportunity for ‘hands on’ experience. An example of that would be the ‘mock trial’ that we had as the interns were participants.”



## III. RETURNING HOME

### Back to “Normal” Life

Students returning home from study abroad often find that what was once familiar has become unfamiliar. This phase, known as ‘reverse culture shock’, can often cause students to experience feelings of frustration, irritability, and loneliness. In this period of transition, we encourage you to be patient and look for ways to help your child gradually settle back into life at home. G-MEO will send a welcome home package with more information about reverse culture shock and suggestions for helping your child settle in.



# Careers and the Future

## What's the Next Step?

Studying abroad is more than just an academic and cultural experience. After returning home, your child can translate their time abroad into professional opportunities. Try talking with your child about their professional interests and think of ways that G-MEO and China can fit into a career track.

## Conversation Starters

### Resume Updates

- Adding their study abroad experience with G-MEO and China to their resume.
- Highlight coursework, independent research, or internships that might stand out to an employer.

### Job Search

- Consider applying for jobs with companies that work with China or other asian countries.
- What are the resources offered by your child's university Career services office?

### Cover Letters

- Consider specific skills gained while abroad. Be able to explain and expand on these when applying for jobs.

### Campus Ambassador

- G-MEO Campus Ambassador opportunity
- How could this leadership opportunity boost your resume?







## Student Testimonials

### The G-MEO Impact

While studying at the Chengdu American Center, Tailor Dortona completed an internship with the Chengdu Disabled Person Federation and continued to work in this field after returning home.

**“I am now an Ambassador for the 100K Strong Foundation and as such, I was invited to attend a cocktail reception and dinner at the White House Historic Society to hear the Deputy Secretary of State speak about US-China relations.”**

Austin Harris, who also studied with G-MEO in the Spring 2015, told us about his plans to work in China after finishing our program.

**“I will be heading to Hong Kong to start a full-time position at the Lingnan University as a Visiting English Tutor in the English Language Support Centre.”**



# The G-MEO Network

Feel free to contact our team and share your future experiences with us! We're always excited to hear about the success of our alumni.

**Don't Forget to Follow us on Social Media**



**@gmeochina**



**[www.facebook.com/gmeochina/](http://www.facebook.com/gmeochina/)**



**[G-MEO LinkedIn](#)**

