

Harvard-KMU Exchange Program 2016 Student Interview Form

Dear all,

Thanks to all your contribution and dedication to the course, the 2016 Harvard-KMU exchange program—International Field Experience on Occupational Health and Safety was a big success. President Ching-Kuan Liu of Kaohsiung Medical University was really impressed by the course and would like you to share your experience with KMU faculty, students and alumni. We would like to ask you couple questions via this interview form and would gather your response to publish in the KMU Alumni Journal , 高醫人. We may also translate your response into Chinese in the article.

Please kindly return the form before January 31th, 2016. You do not have to answer all of the questions, only the ones with asterisk (*) are required. Your inputs are greatly valued.

Sincerely yours,

Pi-I Debby Lin
Course Teaching Assistant

1. Can you tell me your name and your program at Harvard? *

Jongeun Rhee

2. Why are you interested in the Harvard-KMU Exchange program? *

During my doctoral studies, I'm very interested in developing my doctoral research topic related to occupational health and conducting field research. My interest on occupational health continued from my master thesis which investigated the association between exposures to multiple occupational substances and lung cancer risk. One of my doctoral research idea is to investigate occupation and acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS), which has not been studied much in occupational health field. I've always felt lack of my experience in the field research because I focused more on wet lab research. However, I strongly believe that understanding population characteristics, exposures, and health outcome in the field is critical in not only conducting occupational epidemiology studies but also suggesting interventions for communities. I believed that that the course "Field Experience in International Occupational Health and Safety" in Taiwan would help me achieve my two main goals which is studying occupational health and having experience in field research.

3. What was your impression of Kaohsiung Medical University and Taiwan after the 14-day exchange course?

I could hear that KMU is a major private university hospital in southern part of Taiwan and also KNU conducts various research targeting on indigenous population in southern part. I also could experience that most of plants we visited send serious injured employees to KMU related hospitals. I felt that KMU has a critical role in occupational medicine and public health in southern part of Taiwan.

4. What do you think is the best quality of KMU students? How can KMU improve and what can the school and our alumni do to the fostering the growth of our students?

I was very impressed by KMU students especially their genuineness, hard-working, and kindness. I think those are incredibly important quality of course in general, but also in terms of being a great research. I've always believed that honesty and hard-working are the most important quality I need to have as a human being and a scientist. They showed me the most important quality I pursue.

5. What are the similarity you have noticed between Harvard and KMU students?

I've realized that we both are enthusiastic about occupational health and public health research. While I prepared the final presentation and paper with my group, it was very interesting to talk about occupational health related regulation and work environment between Taiwan, US, and my home country South Korea.

6. What difference have you noticed between Harvard and KMU students? In your opinion, how can the KMU students learn from Harvard students and vice versa?

I think we are taught to speak out our opinion and ask questions at Harvard. Since I also had my undergraduate education in South Korea, I know that discussion base lecture is not common. I think through this course KMU students can be more motivated to speak out their opinion and be less shy about asking questions.

7. What can you bring back to Harvard or your country from this exchange experience?

I think this exchange program is great in terms of students in occupational health major. It is a unique opportunity to investigate the manufacturing plant and study its occupational hazards, injury incidence, and come up with suggestion to improve worker's health. Especially it was very interesting we could have a chance to compare the situation in different countries; US and Taiwan. I would love to bring similar idea

to my home university in Seoul and give students chance to experience field investigation in different industries in different countries.

8. What was the most value lesson you learn from the exchange program?

Personally this exchange program gave me the first opportunity I could investigate the industry and study occupational hazards and related outcome. I realized how important field investigation and interviewing workers are in order to find out significant occupational hazards. Also I really liked being in the field investigation because I could understand the situation better. I think it is crucial opportunities for students who want to be occupational health scientist not only for KMU but for Harvard students.

9. Do you have any recommendation for the course?

I think it would have been better for us to study more about Taiwanese occupational regulations such as occupational insurance, maternal leave, and mandatory physical examination. I recommend that before going to Taiwan, the group could have homework or exercise to learn more about occupational regulations in Taiwan. And the group can get together before the trip with TA and discuss them. I think it would be definitely helpful before site visits and then students would have better insights of finding out potential occupational hazards on the sites.

10. What did you like the most about Taiwan?

It would say KMU students really made us happy during the Taiwan trip. By interacting with them, we could learn about the culture and history of Taiwan. That was most valuable aspect of this trip. Also I really loved Taiwanese food.

11. Please pastes any pictures you would like to include in the article on the form.



12. Is there any other thing you would like to include in the article?