

# New Colombo Plan Exchange at NTU, Taiwan (Mobility)

September 2022 - December 2022



# Accommodation

- Macquarie doesn't have a special agreement with NTU regarding accommodation, and as space in the dorms is always limited, only a few of us were offered a place in the on-campus dorms.
  - It's around TWD 7800 (~\$380) a month for a single room in the Shui-Yuan dorms. Water's included, electricity isn't but it's cheap as chips. I very much enjoyed my stay in the dorms, so if you can get a dorm, it's a good and convenient option, but it can get lonely at times.
- Getting accommodation off-campus is a more reliable option, however it can be hard if you can't speak or read Mandarin, or don't have connections here who can help you find a place.
- For off-campus accommodation - Facebook groups are a good option (WhatsApp groups for exchange students work too). You can also stay in a hotel for the first week or so if you are struggling to find a place and look around physically. There used to be a website called MyRoomAbroad for international students but it no longer appears to be active.

# NTU Campus

- Really scenic and well-designed
- A fair bit larger than Macquarie's campus
- Ubikes (rental bikes) are everywhere
- Founded in 1928 during Japanese rule
- It can be hard to navigate at first, but it gets easier quite quickly. There's a fair amount of English signposting for the different streets, and a lot of the buildings are on Google Maps which makes things so much easier.
- Plenty of facilities including a really nice library, a sports centre with a gym and swimming pool, basketball courts and fields for other sports, a cafeteria and various other food and drinks places, convenience stores available on campus, etc.
- Situated near the districts of Gongguan, Shida and Da'an; these districts are therefore always bustling with student activity, especially Gongguan.



# NTU Classes

- The process of enrolling in classes seems intimidating at first, but you should be **assigned an NTU volunteer buddy** who can help you with that, and there are plenty of resources online dedicated to explaining it. In the end I think most of us ended up with almost all of the units we wanted.
- **How easy the classes are depends** pretty heavily on which classes you choose to take. Introductory Chinese is pretty difficult and time-consuming, but I've found my other classes to be engaging but not overly difficult.
- Courses are offered either in English or Chinese. Make sure you're searching for English courses if you aren't fluent in reading or writing Chinese.
- Unfortunately there's **no mid-semester break**, just public holidays scattered throughout the semester, so it's important to find time to rest during the weekends.
- **Most classes are also recorded** in case you're sick or can't attend the physical

# Finding NTU Classes

<https://nol2.aca.ntu.edu.tw/nol/guest/index.php>

Login


LOGIN

Where you are at now: [Online Course Information](#)

 **Fast Search**--Course title / instructor name / course number / serial number ...



Visitors: 23540714  
since 2005-06-23

 **Courses Conducted in English**--courses conducted in English...

 **General Courses**--the Chinese languages and literatures area - the foreign languages area ...

 **Courses by Dept/Grad. Institute**--College of

**Courses Conducted in English**

College:

Course title:  Instructor:

Class schedule:  Not limited  Limited:  Mon.  Tue.  Wed.  Thur.  Fri.  Sat.

Course Unit:  Not limited

Limited:  0 7:10~8:00  1 8:10~9:00  2 9:10~10:00  3 10:20~11:10  4 11:20~12:10  
 5 12:20~13:10  6 13:20~14:10  
 7 14:20~15:10  8 15:30~16:20  9 16:30~17:20  10 17:30~18:20  A 18:25~19:15  
 B 19:20~20:10  C 20:15~21:05  D 21:10~22:00

Each page shows the number of courses

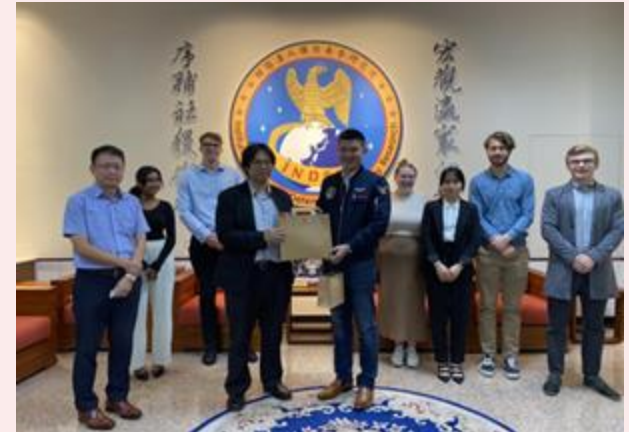
**2022-Fall** 1453 courses found in total:

[<<PREV PAGE](#) [NEXT](#)

serial number	Designated for	Curriculum Number	Class	Course title Please click 'Course title' to get the Course Syllabus.	Specialization Program	Credits	Curriculum Identity Number	Full/Half Yr.	Required/Elective	Instructor	Selection method	Schedule Classroom	The upper limit of the number of students	Limits on Course-adding/dropping	Remarks
70609		AdvEng2001	05	Online English Program I (general)		0.0	004E20110	Half	Preassgn	SHAN, SHAN WANG	2	Mon,6,7 Foreign Language Teaching & Resource Center Room No.201(外教201)	40	Restriction undergraduates AND Restriction: sophomores and beyond,The upper limit of the number of NTU students: 40.	The course is conducted in English, description of the course conducted in English
														Restriction: undergraduates,The upper limit of the number of NTU:	Not open in course pre-registration period, The course is conducted in

# Professional and Academic Opportunities Pt.1

- Visit to the Taiwan **NextGen Foundation** think tank: Roundtable discussion regarding Australian-Taiwan relations
- Visit to the **Institute for National Defense and Security Research (INDSR)** think tank: presentation and Q&A on Taiwan's security environment
- Attendance of the “First Wave: Contemporary Australian and Taiwanese **Indigenous Fashion Exhibition**” in Tainan





# Professional and Academic Opportunities Pt.2

- **National Democratic Institute (NDI)** and Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) Joint Event: “Promoting Democratic Renewal Through Youth Engagement and Economic Inclusion”
- 2022 **Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)** Election Observation Program
- **NCP Scholars' Reception** at Woolloomooloo Café



# Language

- The main language you'll hear spoken in Taiwan is **Mandarin**. It's the official language of Taiwan, the language of most writing, and a lingua franca for speakers of Taiwanese native languages/dialects.
  - Several native languages/dialects exist and are spoken in Taiwan, such as Hokkien and Hakka, but you don't hear them much in Taipei City. Younger generations of Taiwanese often speak Mandarin better than any native Taiwanese dialect.
- Obviously this means that if you can speak or read Mandarin, you'll probably have an easier time getting around, talking to locals, reading signs, etc.
- That being said, **a lot of people in Taipei have at least some grasp of English**. Few people are fluent, but many know enough to give directions or serve you in a store.
- Picking up at least a few **Mandarin phrases**, using a lot of **gestures**, and **simplifying your English speech** (for example, replacing "hello, could I please have an iced latte?" with just "iced latte" or "latte, cold") can all help you be better understood if you only speak English.
  - Google Translate can be helpful but I've found I haven't needed it to communicate with people that much, it's more been useful for reading Mandarin text.
  - Outside of Taipei rates of English knowledge drop off considerably, so be prepared for that if you're travelling.



# Food



Gua bao (pork belly bun)



Xiaolongbao (Steamed dumplings)



Beef Noodle Soup

Stinky Tofu (the name says it all)



- A lot of Taiwan's tasty local food can mostly be found at **night markets**.
- In terms of pricing, local foods from night markets are between TWD 40-80 or (\$2-4). depending on what you buy. A sit-down meal of Asian fare will typically cost anywhere from TWD 100-300 (\$5-15), and Western food will be both even more expensive and far less good.
  - Just avoid pizza in general over here. It isn't worth the frankly exorbitant price considering its low quality.
- Convenience stores such as 7/11, FamilyMart, Hi-life, PX-Mart, Carrefour etc. also have a lot of surprisingly good options when it comes to snacks, meals and daily essentials and can be found everywhere in Taiwan.

Some dishes we had with a Taiwanese Local (includes grilled squid, beef skewers, seafood soup)



Beef Skewers at Ningxia Night market

## Places To Visit

- **National Taiwan Museum:** This is the oldest museum in Taiwan and if you like dinosaurs there is a whole floor dedicated to them.
- **Jiufen:** The Jiufen Old Street is another great place to visit, there are multiple narrow alleyways with food and drink stalls, souvenir shops and teahouses. There are also a few hikes you can do with a beautiful mountain top view. Cash is essential here.
- **Sun Moon Lake:** This is a famous lake located in the middle of Taiwan, known its breathtaking scenery, bike trails and also its aboriginal culture. The Formosan Aboriginal Culture Village is also a must visit and it also includes an amusement park inside! They are also famous for their black tea. We would recommend staying a minimum of 2 nights to get the best of it.

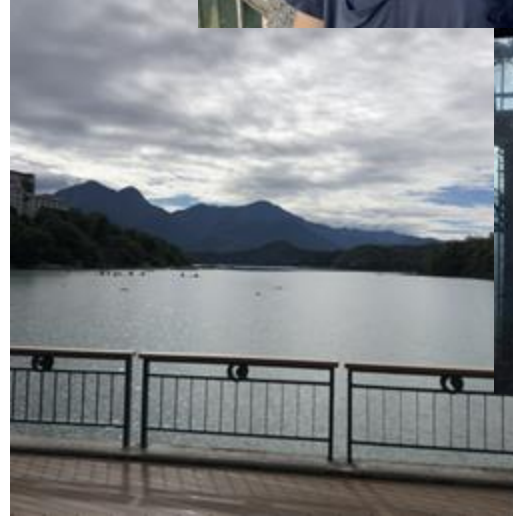
# Places to Visit 🌍



**Jioufen**



**National Taiwan Museum**



**Sun Moon Lake**



# Places To Visit

- **National Palace Museum:** Tons of very old Chinese artefacts that were taken from the Mainland by the Nationalist Party when fleeing. Fascinating for those interested in Chinese history.
  - **Zhishan Garden:** Right next to the National Palace Museum. Really beautiful scenery, statues, a lake with so many fish in it. I'd recommend doing both of these in one day.
- **Kaohsiung City:** It's a much greener and spacious city than Taipei with many attractions to visit including Spring and Autumn Pavilions, Dragon and Tiger Pagodas, Lotus Lake and various temples.
  - **Cijin:** A small beachy island you can reach via a five-minute ferry from Kaohsiung. Large seafood markets, nice coastside walks. Perfect for a warm day.
- **Elephant Mountain:** A short, pleasant hike within Taipei, with beautiful views of the city and another cool spot to see, **Taipei 101**. Go at night to see the whole city lit up.
- There are also some other popular destinations that we didn't get time to visit - Taroko Gorge, hotspots (popular in winter and at various locations - Beitou is highly popular) and also the surrounding Taiwan islands.



# Places to Visit



**National Palace  
Museum/Zhishan Garden**



**Kaohsiung**



**Elephant Mountain**



# Nights Out

- In terms of pubs/bars for talking and mingling, there are a few more foreigner-focused bars I've got a lot out of. Revolver and ON TAP are good to check out, but my regular is Another Brick. Because it's so close to campus it's always packed with other NTU students, so it's a great place to meet new friends.
- **Most nightclubs are situated near Taipei 101.** There's often an entrance fee but that usually comes with a few drinks included which is nice.
  - Drinks are about the same as they would be in clubs in Sydney, unless you're going to more upmarket places.
- There are **plenty of LGBTQ+-friendly bars and clubs** in Taipei, and due to the thriving scene they're usually busy and a great place for a night out.



# Safety

- Taiwan has been ranked the **second-safest country in the world** in regards to crime. Violent crime is rare, I haven't encountered any instances of scamming or pickpocketing. Obviously still exercise caution; don't take random gifts from strangers on the street, know where your phone and wallet are at all times, the usual.
- Most blogs and websites report that Taiwan, Taipei particularly, is **generally safe for women**. Still, exercise caution as you would do here.
  - "94.63% of residents in Taiwan feel safe walking alone during the day and 86.42% at night"
- If you're part of the LGBTQ+ community, you shouldn't have to be too concerned about your safety. Taiwan is one of the most **queer-friendly** places in Asia, and people in Taiwan are generally quite reserved and polite, so you shouldn't have much of a problem.
  - Also Taiwan's Pride events tend to happen at the end of October. So that's pretty cool!

# Transport Options

- **The MRT.** Honestly a brilliant bit of infrastructure. While largely restricted to Taipei only, it's very easy to make sense of once you get used to it, it's cheap, Google Maps supports it, it's clean, the other commuters don't bother you or scream down their phone to their friends about how drunk they were last Friday as if the whole rest of the carriage wants to hear them.
- **The bus.** These can be a bit spookier to use if you don't know Chinese or aren't familiar with the routes, but I generally haven't had a problem with them. Most of the time I just followed what Google Maps told me and I was golden.
- **U-bikes.** There are rental stations dotted everywhere around Taipei, with very low fees charged by time. Fair warning though: some places in Taipei were definitely designed with bikes in mind, and some... definitely were not.
  - All the above options can be accessed with an EasyCard. Your student ID functions as an EasyCard, and you can also purchase and recharge EasyCards from convenience stores.
- For train or bus transport to other cities like Kaohsiung, you might need to book tickets online.

# Miscellaneous Things Of Note Pt.1

- It's safer to **avoid drinking the tap water** unless you boil it first. Bottled water is cheap, water dispensers can be found around campus and in many residential buildings. It's a good idea to bring a sizeable water bottle with you so you can keep a lot of clean drinking water in your apartment at all times.
- It's quite common for apartments in Taiwan to not have kitchens. This isn't a big deal, because it's **often cheaper to eat out** than it would be to cook at home anyways, and it's not like you were actually going to be cooking for yourselves, right?
- Taiwan is a largely **cash-based economy**. Bring a wallet and always carry around a reasonable amount of cash. I tend to withdraw TWD 2000-3000 (\$100-150) at a time and withdraw more when I run lower than TWD 500.
  - Plenty of ATMs around Taipei can process withdrawals from Australian bank accounts for little to no transaction fee. You *can* start a bank account while over here, but for a semester's stay, I haven't found it to be necessary
- It gets **VERY hot and VERY humid** in the (northern hemisphere) Summer and early Fall months, and **VERY rainy** and quite cold in the late Fall/Winter. Dress and pack accordingly; bring both warm and cool clothes, and pack an umbrella/buy one over here.
  - Don't forget that Taiwan is in the northern hemisphere; it's hot in the middle of the year and cold at the end.

# Miscellaneous Things Of Note Pt.2

- If you need to take any controlled substances with you (ADHD medication for example), don't take more than a six-month supply with you, ensure you're taking it in its original container, get whoever prescribed it to you to write you a letter to Taiwanese customs, and **DECLARE IT. Drug smuggling in Taiwan is a very serious offence**, so it doesn't hurt to be careful.
- Two visa options are a 90-day Visitor Visa or a 180-day Resident Visa, but we could only get a single-entry 90-day Visitor Visa due to Covid. If you do have to get a 90-day Visitor Visa **we could extend our Visa while in the country.**
- Taiwan is a far more multicultural country than many other countries in Asia. Especially in Taipei, you'll see a fair few foreigners, usually expats or other foreign students. So don't expect particularly high levels of prejudice or bad treatment, but don't expect to be given too much special treatment because you're so different and unique either. As with anywhere, you're just a person around other people.
  - Outside of Taipei on the other hand, there are far fewer foreigners and you are more likely to get a few weird looks

# Miscellaneous Things Of Note Pt.3

- **Try to be careful in political discussions** regarding Taiwan's relationship with China. As a foreigner everybody's pretty forgiving, but it can save some awkwardness if you take the time to think about what you say to make sure you aren't accidentally insinuating something the Taiwanese might take umbrage with.
- It's a good idea to try and **make some local friends** as well as other foreign friends. Locals can help recommend you good places to visit, eat or hang out, and obviously having a Mandarin-speaking local friend is a great chance to practice your Mandarin, have a more ground-level cultural experience, find spots you wouldn't have found otherwise, etc. Don't let yourself become TOO trapped in the foreigner bubble.
- **Find a balance between work and play!** Try hard in your exams, go to as many academic events as possible, but don't forget to explore, make friends, and experience Taiwan from the ground level. If you go all this way just to spend all your time in your room, you're going to kick yourself for it later. Trust me, the time goes past quicker than you think.

# Some Good Differences with Life in Australia

- **Transport is awesome!** Ubers are cheap, buses are everywhere, the MRT is incredible, and U-bikes are cheap and easily accessible.
  - Note that MRT and bus services stop at around midnight, so practice riding your bike before you go because you will likely be doing a fair bit of it in Taiwan.
- **Food is everywhere** and a lot cheaper than in Australia - particularly at night markets.
  - However you may find that a lot of the food at night markets is similar and quite oily, so don't expect to be eating there every night.
- The **nightlife is more vibrant** and lasts a lot longer than it would do in Sydney.
  - It's typical for clubs in Taipei to open at 10-11pm, start popping off around midnight, then close at around 4am, with many spots open later.
  - Clubs and bars are also often clustered together in similar areas so **bar hopping is nice and easy** (Taipei 101 for the big nightclubs, Ximen for the gay bars, Zhongzheng District for student-frequented bars, etc.)



# Some Less Positive Differences with Life in Australia

- There are an incredibly **small number of rubbish bins, bubblers, and public toilets** in public areas in Taiwan, something that can get very annoying at a night market, and so you will likely have to take your rubbish all the way home.
  - I have found that MRT stations are great hubs for bins, public toilets, as well as drinking water
- There is also different etiquette in terms of using space in walkways or public places in Taiwan; people are much more likely to take up the whole footpath or stand in front of an exit. I have found that people over here seem to be a bit less spatially aware.
- Beaches are certainly not like those in Sydney and most surprisingly, you aren't actually meant to swim in most of them, so don't go to the beach on a hot day expecting to cool down!
- Toilets also are often not the same type of toilet that we use at home and require squatting, and toilet paper is also scarcely found, so make sure to check before using one.
  - Toilets at university and MRT stations usually have both types though.
  - Also you **can't flush toilet paper** over here, you need to dispose of it in a bin instead. This takes some getting used to.

# Any Questions?

- Ask them!
- If you needed to contact any of the students for answers or advice, you can find our emails down below:
  - Benjamin Wood: [benjamin.wood4@students.mq.edu.au](mailto:benjamin.wood4@students.mq.edu.au)
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**If you're willing to be contacted by the next cohort for questions, talk to SSC about adding your emails (and any information updates) to this presentation**