Introducing UCEAP Connect

UCEAP is proud to announce the launch of UCEAP Connect, a website for UCEAP alumni and friends. UCEAP Connect will focus on four different professional engagement and networking opportunities. Find and reminisce with fellow alumni, become a mentor for a student or young professional, stay informed about UCEAP programs and volunteer opportunities and expand your professional network. Over 1,000 alumni and friends have joined. Log on and start connecting!
John Frankl is the Associate Dean for International Affairs and a Professor of Korean and Comparative Literature at Yonsei University. He started studying Korean in 1987 while at UC Berkeley and spent his junior year abroad. Not only is John fluent in Korean, he is also a skilled martial artist with a black belt in Jiu Jitsu. We recently asked John about his life and career since studying abroad.

Tell us the highlights of your professional career. What are your proudest achievements? Although I always try to be more grateful than proud, I would have to say returning to Yonsei as a young professor, and then rising up the ranks from assistant to associate to full professor is one of my proudest achievements. Unlike in the U.S., tenure is not given until one is promoted to full professor, which took me a full ten years. During and after that time, I have written books and articles, and also been appointed to a number of administrative positions. What actually gives me the most satisfaction, however, is that I have been able maintain balance through it all. I never have and never will put my professional life before my wife and daughter, or before my own physical and mental health. I am thankful that I have managed to meet my professional goals without sacrificing all of the things that bring meaning and joy to my life.

Who was your favorite professor and/or what was your favorite class while abroad? I had a year-long class on Chinese characters with Professor In-cho Chun, who is now retired but was then in the Department of Chinese Language and Literature. It was not a Chinese language class, but rather an advanced Korean language class where we had to commit about 1,800 Chinese characters to memory. Aside from the fact that the class itself has proven tremendously helpful to me for the past 29 years, he was a wonderful teacher with a unique and energizing blend of old-school Korean strictness and lighthearted humor.

What's your favorite study abroad memory? There are so many it is really difficult to choose just one. But one of which I am most proud and that led to many other wonderful memories is my immediate choice to move out of the international dormitory and into a local boarding house. This meant living, eating, and quite a bit of drinking with Korean university students. Of course, it also very much helped me in learning the language and the culture.

How did study abroad affect your life choices? I enjoyed my time in Korea and at Yonsei so much that I returned immediately upon graduating from Berkeley. I enrolled in the Department of Korean Language and Literature where I earned an M.A. in modern Korean fiction. I went from there to Harvard for my Ph.D., then back to Berkeley for a postdoctoral fellowship. Both of these were in modern Korean fiction as well. For the past thirteen years I have been a faculty member at Yonsei, where I am now a full professor and serving a second term as Associate Dean for International Affairs. So it is no exaggeration to say that my study abroad affected both my choices and trajectory immensely and very positively.

If you were to give advice to current UCEAP students, what would you say? The first piece of advice may seem quite pedestrian, but I believe it to be extremely important: spend an entire year abroad. There appears to be a worldwide trend away from traditional study abroad programs in
favor of single semester or even shorter summer/winter programs. Undergraduate students are understandably eager to earn their degrees as soon as possible, but a great many of them will also live to see 100. Taking an extra semester means almost nothing in this larger calculus, but can be extremely significant in terms of how well students get to know another country, its people, language, and culture.

Send us your alumni story. We would love to hear from you!

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**Student volunteers with white shark research**

(Kasey Mitchell on Robben Island Ferry with Table Mountain in the background)

During her semester abroad at University of Cape Town in South Africa, Kasey Mitchell had the opportunity of a lifetime to work with the well-known White Shark Diving Company in Gansbaai. "In May and in early July, one of the strangest incidents ever to occur in that area was happening. Two brother orcas had infiltrated the bay and began killing great white sharks. I witnessed and assisted in the necropsy of the largest white shark dissection to happen in South Africa. It was confirmed that the orcas were killing the sharks mainly for their livers (the most nutritional part of the body). It was humbling to see the way nature behaves and just how fragile the ecosystems can be, even with the apex predator as part of it. We need to understand them and protect them if we wish to keep our oceans healthy for the future."
UCEAP would like to thank Captain Fatty’s Brewery, Santa Barbara Woodfire Catering and our faculty, staff and friends for supporting our Sips for Scholarships fundraising event in support of our 2017-18 Guardian Scholar, Juliana Nicolas. We are close to meeting our goal of $2,500 and hope to raise enough to offer a second scholarship. Help support former foster youth and their dream of studying abroad. A gift of just $5 a month makes a big impact! Give today.

All UCEAP alumni are eligible for a guaranteed $5,000 scholarship per year toward a master’s degree program at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey. The Institute offers graduate degrees in International Policy & Development, Master of Public Administration (MPA), Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Global Impact Management, International Education Management, International Environmental Policy, International Trade & Economic Diplomacy, Nonproliferation & Terrorism Studies, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), Teaching Foreign Language (TFL), Translation and Interpretation, and Translation & Localization Management, as well as other joint degree and certificate programs. Read More.

Save the Date for our 50th anniversary of student exchange with Hebrew University and Israel. Saturday, June 2, 2018 at UCLA. Contact alumni@eap.ucop.edu for more details.

UCEAP has a powerful and expanding network of 100,000 alumni in every field and every corner of the world. Whether you want to take the next step in your career or simply catch up with old friends, you'll find many ways to reach out, link up, and join the conversation. We look forward to seeing you soon!
It's easy to update your Email Preferences. Be sure to add alumni@eap.ucop.edu to your address book or safe senders list so our emails get to your inbox. You may also review our Privacy Policy.