Donghua University: The Good, Great, and Amazing  
By: Carter Jones

Shanghai, China is one of the main hubs for international business; people from all around the world visit for work, leisure, and to study. Donghua University is amongst just one of the several notable colleges that call Shanghai home. After months of searching for the right studying abroad program, Donghua’s partnership program with the Fashion Institute of Technology and North Carolina State University seemed like the best fit. Looking back now I realize I made one of the best decisions thus far in my college career.

As an undergraduate in textiles, being able to communicate and understand the Chinese culture can be something that sets you apart from the rest. With China dominating manufacturing worldwide, many textile companies work with Chinese companies in order to create products and fulfill orders. Throughout my experience abroad I was able to get a better understanding of the culture and the people through trying new foods and learning some of the Chinese language.
Traveling also played a major role in helping understand the culture as well as the subcultures within the large country of China. First visiting Beijing, we immediately saw a major difference from the more familiar Shanghai. The food incorporated more thick sauces and varied signature dishes, their accents ended in more arrr sounds, and were less westernized overall. We also visited the Huangshan mountains, Zhujiajiao Ancient City, and many other smaller cities that surrounded Shanghai. Overall, traveling was the most amazing part. We were able to see The Great Wall of China, Summer Palace, Forbidden City, Temple of Heaven and many other historic sites.

Traveling as a group we were also able to form bonds with the people from not only North Carolina State University, but also FIT students as well. Being able to immerse ourselves in a new culture together was a fun learning experience that made us learn new things about not only each other but ourselves as well. After returning home it is
clear to see that I have made lifelong bonds with amazing people that I met throughout this program and my travels throughout China.

As an artist, I found Shanghai and my travels around China very inspiring. From beautiful ink characters to the architecture of the temples, I found great beauty in my surroundings. After many sketches and ideas that developed throughout the process, this experience really influenced my perspective as not only an individual but as an artist as well.
Overall, Donghua University was an unforgettable experience that continues to influence my life in a positive way. I couldn't be more thankful about this opportunity of a lifetime that already has benefited my life in so many ways. From traveling to amazing historic sites to creating everlasting bonds, I can easily say this was the best semester of my college career.