

Kangxin Wu

Graduation Year: Sophomore

College: Architecture

Major(s): Architecture

Minors(s): /

Scholar Group Membership: Sorin Scholars, Great China Scholars

Did you received other funding for this project?: Great China Scholarship

Could you have completed this project without CUSE funding? Yes

More details on CUSE funding assistance?

Project Title: Influence of Taoism on Chinese and Western Architecture: Comparison between Chinese Gardens and Frank Lloyd Wright's Architecture

Project Location: Beijing and Suzhou, China

ND Faculty Mentor: Richard Economakis

Project Type: Research

Why did you undertake this project/experience? Deepen your knowledge of a topic or issue

Did your funded experience help you:

[Deepen your understanding of your coursework or field of study]: Very Much

[Discern your interests and post-bac goals]: Very Much

[Become confident in your ability to set and achieve your goals]: Very Much

[Gain a more nuanced view of local, national, or global communities]: Very Much

[Improve your written and verbal communications skills]:Very Much

Tell us about your experience.

I studied works and books of Frank Lloyd Wright in Notre Dame and Chicago, then over the summer I went to Suzhou and Beijing in China to investigate the traditional Chinese Gardens. I took pictures and did drawings of the buildings and luckily found many similarities behind the concepts of these eastern and western building designs. During the preliminary research, I studied that both architects of Chinese Gardens and Frank Wright follow the philosophy of Taoism. As I read Tao Te Ching, a book by the founder of Daoism Laotzu, I began to understand that it is possible to employ a philosophy in a different culture when the architect absorbed the essence and made adaptations instead of copying the form.

Describe the impact this project had, both on you as a student-scholar and on the people you worked with.

This is my first research project which makes me become familiar with the research process and developed my resource collecting skills. Since I am an architecture student interested in cross culture building designs, this research allows me to gain deeper knowledge in this particular field. I used this chance to become more familiar with the buildings of my favorite architect, Frank Lloyd Wright. I found evidence to support the relationship between Wright and Daoism which is largely

neglected. I also exchanged knowledge of Chinese architecture with my professor. I think this research shows a bridge between the east and west culture in the field of architecture.

Describe how this experience is connected to your plans as a student or future professional.

I think this research is related to my concentration in architecture learning. The research proved to me that it is possible to adopt a philosophy into the architecture of another culture. I might plan to do further research on eastern architecture designs. If I combine the knowledge of eastern architecture I gained in my researches with the focus of western classical architecture taught in university classes, I will be able to have adequate foundation for my own building design in my future career as an architect.

What advice would you give other students who are planning to pursue similar projects?

No one can finish a summer research in a week. It is important to plan early and invest time into the research. Time management is always important. From the beginning of writing a research proposal, you should start to think about it from the beginning of the semester rather than the week before the application deadline. During the research, especially those including international travels, you should read related books as references ahead of time. It is a good idea to read books and search online about the travel so that you will not forget to collect any resources.

I acknowledge that this form has been filled out truthfully and to the best of my ability. I understand that this information will be shared with many different CUSE constituencies. As such, I have provided as much useful information as I was able. I understand that CUSE will not complete my award disbursement until this form is successfully completed. If I have any questions or concerns, I will contact CUSE before submitting this form. To illustrate that you understand all of these points, please enter your Notre Dame email in the box below.

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