

NCHU – Beyond my expectations

Summer 2018, as a senior student in Vietnam National University of Agriculture, I was about to finish my undergraduate thesis; waiting for the thesis defence; wondering what should I do next, should I go to work or should I study master? At the threshold of life, I was dipped in a lot of unanswered questions about my next step.

One day while I was staying at home, I accidentally watched a piece of news on TV about a flower farm named Hualu in Taiwan. The way Hualu farm runs their business was special and outstanding. Instead of applying traditional farming method and earning profit from selling their flowers, they provided a tour in their farm. The tour included flowers watching and self-making attar, which means tourist not only visited the farm for sightseeing but also could experience do-it-yourself (DIY) activity – making attar from flowers. That farm had drawn a lot of tourists' attention by providing leisure activities on agricultural land. They called it "agritourism". That was the first time I heard that terminology and I felt "WOW, so interesting, **AGRITOURISM**, it could be applied in Vietnam, I should learn more about this"

Right after knowing that term, I started looking for information about agritourism on the Internet. Agritourism is the combination of tourism and agricultural activities, which can bring a lot of benefits in terms of economy, education, and environment. Taiwan is a role model of transforming successfully from traditional agriculture to agritourism. The more I read, the more I felt finally I found the light at the end of the tunnel. I think agritourism can be the solution for a lot of problems in Vietnam's agriculture. I want to empower agritourism in Vietnam. I desire to study more about agritourism. **I long for going to study about agritourism in Taiwan.**

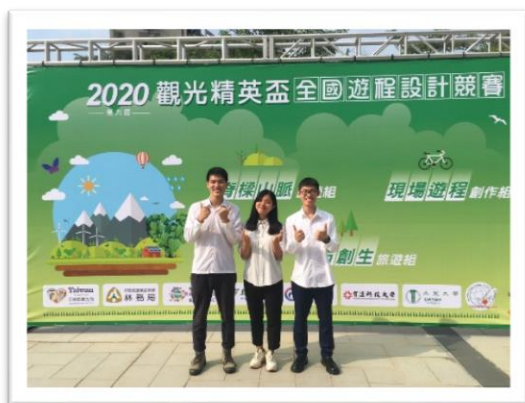
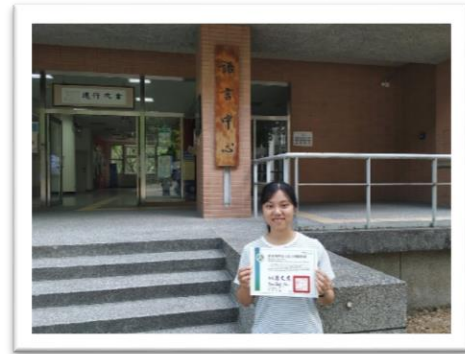
After identifying my own orientation, I started searching for the suitable university and found out that **NCHU ranks no.1 in agricultural field**. From NCHU website, I reached to the International Master Program of Agriculture (IMPA)'s introduction and course list and realized that IMPA was what I was looking for – an English taught program with diverse choices of major including agritourism.

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To be honest, at first, I only hope to study agritourism in Taiwan and experience something new. But now, after more than one year studying in Taiwan, everything goes beyond my expectations. Not only studying agritourism, but I also have great chances to meet new friends, open my mind, learn Chinese, and dig into Taiwanese culture.

NCHU is a professional learning environment which promotes and maximizes students' ability. Recalling the first time I went around NCHU, I was overwhelmed by the state-of-the-art buildings on an eco-friendly campus with plenty green space. Besides modern facilities, diverse teaching methods and enthusiasm of Professors encourage me to study and develop myself day by day. Through discussion and exchanging ideas with Professors and classmates in an open and constructive way, **my critical thinking skills has been evoked and improved significantly**. Most of courses in NCHU provide at least one field trip for students to visit farms, companies, or institutes off-campus, which enhances student's practical knowledge and skills.

NCHU is one of the best environments for international students to learn Chinese. There are free Chinese courses provided by university. Professors are patient to guide students from zero to basic communication. It is easy to find a range of quality books for self-studying Chinese in NCHU library. Last but not least, Taiwanese friends in NCHU are so friendly and willing to help international students. I was also lucky to meet a great friend who enthusiastically taught me Chinese. With all of that big supports, **I successfully achieved TOCFL level 3 within one year studying Chinese.** I absolutely did not expect that wonderful thing before I came to Taiwan.



Studying in NCHU, besides my own major – agritourism, I also get a lot of opportunities to **challenge myself in other extracurricular activities.** It could be a time trying to make “湯圓” and learning more about Taiwanese culture. It could be a time joining in a volunteer project, arranging, and conducting everything from an idea to real actions. It could be a time taking part in a National Tour Design Competition and presenting in Chinese for the first time then being a winner

in Central part of Taiwan. There were numerous of amazing experiences that I had never imagined that I would have in my life. But miraculously, NCHU has brought me to the wonderland and led me experience all that fruitfulness.

In the end, I just want to say, if someone ask me “if I could go back to summer 2018 – the threshold of my life, would I choose NCHU again?” I can answer without any single second of hesitation: “Yes, absolutely!”

*Thank you NCHU, for embracing me!*