



Chinese Public Health: A Cultural Divide

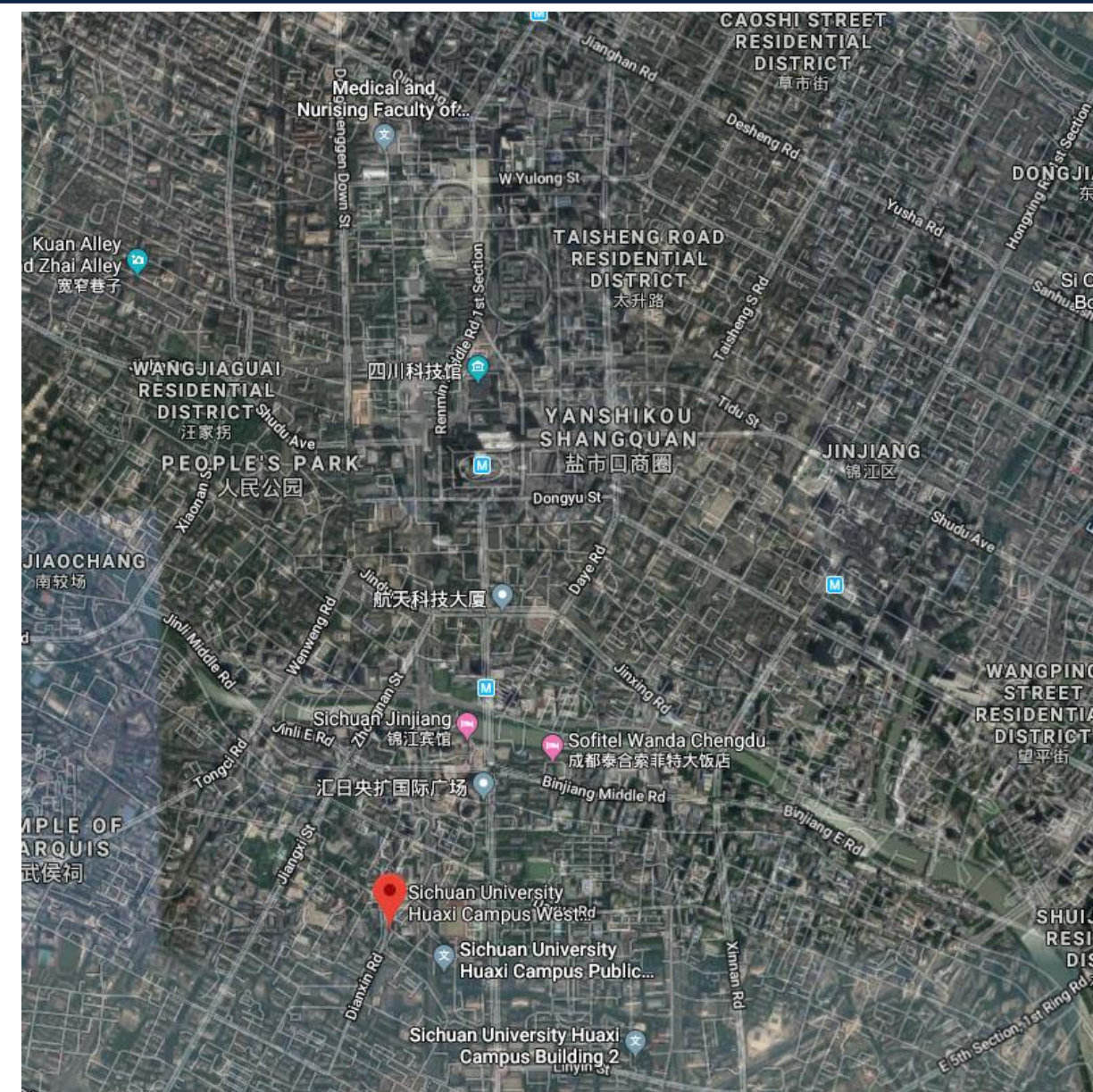
Jack Wegrzyn, Public Health, 2021

Cultural Exploration

SUMMARY

In July 2019, I spent two weeks in Chengdu, China studying public health on an international level. This study abroad program mixed classroom learning with cultural exploration in order to synthesize the two into a unique experience.

I spent time in Chinese public health establishments including the Sichuan Province Centers for Disease Control, Yulin Community Health Clinic, and West China School of Public Health. These experiences gave contrast to my views of public health that had previously only been made through a Western lens. In addition, I spent time with Chinese students exploring day to day life in China, eating traditional food, making the same commute as other students, and bonding even through a culture and language barrier.



SPICES

Through a cross-cultural internship study abroad, I was able to explore a foreign culture for the first time and experience firsthand the challenges of public health between different cultures.

HERBS

My activities in China focused on the proliferation of public health and crossing cultural boundaries to promote public health. This is representative of benevolence.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

My time in China left me with an experience that reflected many values of the Honors College. The primary one being cultural exploration and competency. As an American in China, I was exposed to a unique culture that is impossible to truly find in its purest form in the West. I also was given the opportunity to visit public health clinics and meet renowned public health professionals.



IMPACT

My time in China gave me my first experience in another nation. While I have wanted to work internationally for quite some time, this was my first actual experience in international work and it confirmed to me what I had hoped: I love working with other cultures and people who I would not normally be exposed to. My passion is grassroots work in communities that don't have access to the public health standards we are accustomed to in the United States and other nations, so being able to experience it firsthand was a highly impactful experience.

ADVICE

If you have the opportunity to do something you may never be able to again, seize it. Going to China is something I never thought I'd do and it ended up being a lifechanging experience.