

한국

THE RICHARD U. LIGHT FELLOWSHIP

UNOFFICIAL SAC GUIDE

2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

내용

A. What	should	I	bring?	
.....				4
B. You're		in	Seoul...now	
what?.....				6
a. Getting from Incheon to Sinchon				
b. Finding Housing				
i. Goshitel/Goshiwon				
ii. Hasukjib				
iii. One-Rooms				
iv. Homestays				
v. Dormitories				
vi. Arrival Housing				
c. Recommendations from Past Fellows				
d. Getting around Seoul				
i. Subway				
ii. Taxis				
iii. Buses				
C. Daily				
Life.....				
.....				15
a. Korean Food 101				
i. Staple Foods				
ii. Korean Barbeque				
iii. Cooling Foods for the Summer				
iv. Street Food				
v. On the Interesting Side				
vi. Foreign Food				
vii. Being Vegetarian in Korea				
viii. Eating Alone				
b. Korea's Café Culture				
c. Electronics				
i. Yongsan				
ii. Cell Phone				
d. Laundry				
e. Medical Care				
f. Korean Etiquette				
i. House Etiquette				
ii. Mealtime Manners				
iii. Paying the Bill				
iv. Appropriate Dress				
g. The Year-Long Fellow: What You Should Know				

- i. Visa
- ii. Alien Registration Card
- iii. Bank Account
- iv. Mobile Phone Contract
- v. Mail

D.	Traveling	and
Sightseeing.....		
....35		
a. Weekday/Weekend Trips		
b. Longer Trips		
E.	Useful	
Vocabulary.....		
.....39		
a. Food/Dining		
b. At the Post Office		
c. Housing		
d. Etiquette		
e. Healthcare		
F.	Only	in
Korea.....		
.....43		
a. Bangs		
b. Bars, Clubs, and Hofs		
c. Saunas, Bathhouses, and Dr. Fish		
d. Movie Theaters		
G.	Miscellaneous	
Information.....		
.....47		
a. Weather		
b. Mosquitoes		
c. Shopping for Souvenirs		
d. Online Resources		
H.	Language	Study
Advice.....		
....51		
a. Advice for Sogang University		
b. Advice for Yonsei University		
c. Advice for Korea University		
d. Advice for Ewha Womans University		
e. Advice for Seoul National University		
f. Advice for All Korean Programs		
g. Language Partners		
h. Avoiding English		
I.	Favorites of Previous Light Fellows.....	
.....60		
a. Jake Albert, SM '18		

- b. Andrew Chun, PC '15
- c. Zach Mankoff, DC '15
- d. Pek Shibao, DC '15
- e. Lizz Cotzomi, BK '15
- f. Elena Perry, BR '15
- g. Patty Lan, BR '16
- h. Mahir Rahman, SM '17
- i. Sara Cho, BR '18
- j. Dira Fabrian, GSAS '16

J. Credits.....
.....72

PLEASE NOTE: There are certain risks assumed when using the resources provided in this Unofficial Guidebook. The Light Fellowship Program provides this resource as a convenience, does not vet any of the suggestions, and makes no representations as to the qualifications of any of the recommendations or resources provided. Students must perform their own due diligence and use their own discretion and judgment when making decisions about housing, visas, health and safety etc. Students are also encouraged to ask their language programs directly about additional resources. Neither Yale University nor the Richard U. Light Foundation, nor any of their respective employees, is responsible for the accuracy of any of the information supplied in this Guidebook.

A. What should I bring?

뭘 가져갈까?

In addition to the basic clothing and toiletry essentials, plenty of **socks and underwear**. Laundry can be difficult sometimes, so make sure that you can get through a week or two (but don't worry about detergent and stuff, of course—the 하숙집 or 고시원 usually provide them—but be warned, there are usually no dryers and you will have to air dry your clothes).

Bath towels in Korea are the size of hand towels in America (but are super-absorbent). If you like big fluffy American towels, bring one with you.

A **thin robe** is a good idea if you're staying somewhere like a 고시텔 which has shared shower facilities. 고시텔 rooms also can be rented with private shower facilities (about 100,000 won more than regular rooms).

Although **deodorant** can be found, you may want to bring enough to last you, as there is not much brand variety. As far as other toiletries go, a number of American brands are well-represented in Korean stores (Neutrogena, Pantene, Head and Shoulders to name a few), but you will pay more for them in Korea than you would otherwise. For those who use them, **tampons** are difficult to find.

If this is your first time in Korea and you're not confident about your language abilities, you might also want to bring a good supply of **Advil** (apparently, no Korean drug works quite as well), **Day-Quil / Nyquil**, a stomach medicine, like **Pepto-Bismol**, or any other medication you think you may require during your stay. However, there are plenty of pharmacies where you can get medications that are quite inexpensive. **Melatonin** in Korea must be prescribed by a doctor.

For things like **vitamins**, you might want to check out iHerb.com, which offers discount prices on things like vitamins, natural skin and hair care products, and even some food products as well. Shipping to Korea is very cheap (only \$4! as of 2018) and very fast, so it's a really great resource if you need to take a lot of supplements but don't want to weigh your luggage down with them.

Lightweight rain gear. Fellows arriving in the summer will experience the Korean phenomenon known as 장마, the rainy season lasting from June into early August, in which hot showers pour down from nowhere. Umbrellas are cheap and easy to buy from vendors at most subway station exits, but a long, lightweight parka or some light rain shoes/boots just make getting to school that much easier. It might not be a good idea to bring heavy rain boots as it does get really hot even during the rainy season. 장마 is hot and wet at once, so avoid heavy coats. Despite the rainy season, Koreans do not really wear rain boots, but don't let this discourage you.

Plug adapters are cheap and easy to buy in small all-purpose stores (Daiso) around Sinchon, but if you have an international adapter at home, you can pack that, too. Korean plugs have two round prongs (Type F).

For L1-L2 students who have never been to Korea and are traveling without a more advanced speaker, the **first few days will be the roughest**, so you'll want to plan ahead of time what you'll do and where you're staying. Some fellows in the past have received help from their Korean TA in researching housing, finding hotels, etc. It's a good idea to **write down the address** of your destination (to your motel or hotel, wherever)—in Korean, not just in Romanized Korean—and just hand it to the taxi driver. (It is possible for the driver to mistake your pronunciation of "Sinchon" as "Sincheon" and take you to the other side of Seoul.)

Your passport, visa (if applicable), Light Fellowship documents, and a small amount of cash. This should be obvious, but make sure to bring all the important documents! Your Light Fellowship provided travel and health insurance will have policy cards that you should also bring along, just in case.

B. You're in Seoul...now what?

서울에 도착했다...이제 뭘 해야 될까?

a. Getting from Incheon to Sinchon or SNU

인천에서 신촌까지

Incheon is consistently voted one of the best airports in the world, and for good reason. The Arrivals area has a number of informational kiosks with knowledgeable, multilingual staff, located right in the middle of the floor. Ask at the Transportation Information Counter about which bus to take to your destination, what time to catch it, and from which door to exit the Arrivals area. The airport staffers will also provide you with a map of the Arrivals area and any other information you might need.

The Departures area is equally as modern, for when you leave at the end of your program. Do arrive at the airport at least two hours before an international departure. Especially during peak travel times, the lines can be long for checking in, even with the most popular carriers like Korean Air. But, back to Arrivals!

You can either take the subway or the bus to get into Seoul—but the subway is not recommended if you're carrying a lot of luggage. However, it is the cheapest option with fares as low as 5,000 won and it's fairly straightforward to navigate with the helpful signs and maps posted everywhere and online.

As for the bus ("airport limousine") route, if you are heading to Sinchon, where Sogang, Yonsei, and Ewha Universities are, take the 6002 Cheongnyangni bus to Sinchon subway station (신촌역 - 신촌오거리 현대백화점). Cross the rotary underground by entering the subway station and heading toward exit 2/3 (Yonsei) or exit 6 (Sogang). The bus also continues to the Ewha station (이대역) close to the school's main gate. The trip should take around 60 minutes by bus. If you are heading to the Seoul National University area, take the 6003 Seoul National University bus to the last stop, Seoul National University (서울대학교), 90 minutes.

You can check the bus routes and terminal locations here (updated March 2024):

https://airportlimousine.co.kr/en/sub/sub01_01.php

But we recommend checking in with the Transportation Information Counter to get directions to the bus stop and to confirm the route. The airport is also a good place to get some cash won from an international ATMs (the fees might be high) or a subway T

money card before you head out to the city. (Bring some cash with you if you want to do this as you need cash to load the card). The buses generally take metrocard for payment (fares run around 10,000 won) or you can buy a one time use ticket at the airport ticket counter. Buses are typically marked with a special red paint scheme with “Incheon airport” on the front and sides.

Lastly, you can also take a taxi for direct service to your arrival hotel or permanent housing (remember to write out the address to avoid mispronunciations!). This will be the most expensive option. If you do this, be sure to grab the white, orange or silver taxis! The black taxis are “luxury” taxis with higher fares and they will often try to lure in unsuspecting foreigners. Taxi stands are right outside the arrivals area and hailing taxis works with the same universal gesture.

b. Finding Housing

집 구하기

Housing options for Fellows in Korea are perhaps more diverse than they are for Fellows studying elsewhere. The likelihood that you’ll be able to live in a university dormitory is low (although it *is* possible, particularly at Seoul National and Ewha, so consult your language program for more information), so the responsibility of finding a place to live will fall to you. If you are studying at Sogang, the KLEC office can recommend some reputable places in the area, but don’t feel limited to these.

Previous Fellows have lived in 고시원 (goshiwon) (also called 고시텔 or 리빙텔), 하숙집 (hasukjibs), and 원룸 (one-rooms). While goshitels have typically been the most popular option for Fellows staying for only the summer, they are by no means the only or best choice. Each housing option has pros and cons, which should be weighed accordingly with personal preference.

i. Goshitel/Goshiwon 고시텔/고시원: Goshitel are small, dormitory-like rooms that are independent of any university. Rooms are generally very tiny (for a Yale equivalent, think L-Dub), but well-equipped: for your monthly rent, you’ll have internet, a small television, air conditioning, and a mini-fridge. Although the rooms are private, the walls in goshitels are very thin and you’ll be living in close quarters with others – so make sure to be mindful of noise levels, especially late at night. Students living in goshitels are often preparing for college entrance exams, and thus can get a little testy (get it?) if they are disturbed. Most goshitels do not provide food beyond round-the-clock rice and kimchi, so you’ll be responsible for procuring your own meals. Monthly rent for goshitels is often between 250,000-400,000 won (the more expensive rooms are slightly more spacious and sometimes equipped with a shower

room and sink. Also, depending on the owner, you might not have to pay the rent in full if you're not staying for the entire month—talk to them beforehand to make sure!). Generally, Light fellows who prefer goshiwons do so because of the independence and privacy (some hasukjib ajummas have been known to be a tad overbearing). Also a plus is the not having to pay for your monthly meals, which allows you to go eat out with friends and classmates, which you likely will do quite often. Things to check while touring goshiwons: cleanliness, AC levels (ask when they turn the AC on and check how strong it is), internet speed (ask to check it with your phone), laundry instructions, and food provided. You can also save a lot of money with this option. Here is one place to start: <https://goshipages.com>

ii. Hasukjib (하숙집): Hasukjibs are boarding houses that rent rooms out to students. They are generally run by an ajumma who acts as both the landlady and something of a surrogate mother for those living there. Every hasukjib has its own set of rules, so be sure to learn them and follow them! Hasukjib rooms are generally larger than their goshitel counterparts, but will most likely not be air conditioned or equipped with televisions or mini-fridges. Meals are included in monthly rent and will be prepared by the ajumma in charge – if you are worried about dietary restrictions, make sure to discuss this with the ajumma before moving in. The number of meals offered can also vary – some places will provide three meals a day, while others will only provide two (try to find a place that offers breakfasts – one Light fellow offered that starting his day with a hot breakfast and some Korean conversation was an excellent warm-up for his Korean classes). Hasukjibs are far more communal than goshitels – you will be sharing your meals with the other students living there, and thus will forge more personal relationships. While this can feel overly personal at times, previous fellows have offered that hasukjib life is much better than goshitel life for your spoken Korean abilities.

iii. One-rooms (원룸): One-rooms are essentially studio apartments. They are generally equipped with a bed, a kitchen, a bathroom, and laundry facilities. Unless you are staying in Korea for a year or longer, one-rooms are probably not a feasible option; unless you know a family friend who will lease you a one-room for the short term, you'll only be able to move into one if you go through a real estate agent (부동산, budongsan) and sign a contract. While the standard contract is for one year, previous Fellows have negotiated 10 month or even 6 month contracts. Deposits for one-rooms can be astronomical (think \$5000-\$7000), and you'll also have to pay for utilities, internet, etc. (these are included in the rent for some places). Depending on location, rent can be substantially higher than the rent at goshitels or hasukjibs, so students considering one-rooms should think about the possibility of moving in with a roommate.

iv. Homestays: Another option is a homestay, where you live with a Korean family in their household for a modest monthly fee. Prices are similar to what you would expect at a hasukjib and include most of the same things: housing, laundry, most meals, etc. You often will live in a guest room and have interactions with your host parents and maybe their children. There are websites dedicated to finding homestays, though often homestays are arranged through personal connections and family ties. Ask around!

v. Dormitories: Although most language programs don't open their on-campus dormitories to language program students, the SNU language school offers an option called "off-campus dormitories," which are basically one-rooms that you rent through the university. You can apply online once you've been accepted to the language school. One advantage to this method is that you'll know exactly where to go when you get off the airplane – no stressing over a housing search. The apartments are located in a neighborhood right next to the university, about a 15-20-minute walk or 5-minute bus ride from class, and are highly recommended – clean, well-equipped (including a refrigerator and microwave), and no year-long contract or huge deposit required! (However, you must pay up front for each term that you stay there, and the limit is three terms for each student.) (Note: Yonsei allows KLI students to apply for housing, but it's almost impossible to secure a spot. You have to apply as soon as it opens and it's basically luck-based).

vi. Air BnBs: Air BnBs have been a popular option for summer students. The costs can vary and are typically higher than any other local option, but can be comfortable for a short period of time, like the summer. Ultimately, you're less likely to interact with a local community in this option, but depending on cost and location, it can be more convenient. Students who are going for longer than a summer are not advised to live in Air BnBs long-term as this option impedes the residence permit process and you'll have to switch housing once you want to apply for an ARC.

vii. Arrival Housing: Because goshiwons or other living choices tend to vary from the pictures in the posting online, you should typically wait until you have toured the place in person to decide and pay for housing. It is often far easier to find a hotel or hostel for a couple of nights as a place to keep your luggage and a home base for finding housing. Then you can spend a few days checking out housing options before moving into the best one. However, finding, touring, and negotiating for housing may take more language ability (and/or a working cell phone) than the typical L1/L2 speaker has, so don't hesitate to reach out for help to other fellows or friends in Seoul! If you take this path, you should research in advance the locations of some hotels and motels in your language program area that you can go to when you arrive, as well as list on your immigration form for customs. Unlike in the States, there is often no need to

reserve, you can just show up. Surprisingly, Expedia.com is a good resource. While potentially more expensive, you can reserve hotel rooms on Expedia for a few nights and chances are the hotel staff will be international-friendly.

c. Recommendations from Past Fellows

집 추천

i. The Sinchon Area (Sogang, Yonsei, Ewha)

Shereville Livingtel 쉐레빌 리빙텔 [Suggestion from 2018]

The Shereville Livingtel was very clean, well-maintained, and run by a friendly manager named 김문남. There was a kitchen with free rice and kimchi, a washing machine (but no dryer), as well as internet, TV, and a mini fridge in all rooms. There were separate floors (and kitchens) for men and women, and the single sex floor rules were strictly enforced. Most of the people in the 고시텔 were Korean students, and usually kept to themselves unless they were interested in practicing their English.

Other Light Fellows have stayed in the nearby Mirae Goshitel 미래 고시텔, which has similar conditions (including very small rooms), and the Coco Livingtel 코코 리빙텔.

Sol Livingtel 솔원룸리빙텔 (Suggestion from 2018)

Another goshiwon popular in the Sinchon area is the Sol Livingtel, just a 5 minute walk north of Sogang University's main gate (on the fourth floor of an eight-story white building). The inhabitants include many foreign students – in fact, it's likely you'll recognize one or two classmates if you're studying at Sogang. Rent is surprisingly cheap given both the proximity to the university and the full-package of A/C, Wi-Fi, fridge, and television offered in each room (along with the usual kitchen and laundry facilities for tenants to share). The front door is secure-locked with a passcode.

The owner's English is better than most students' Korean will be at the end of L1/L2, which can be convenient on the first day in the city; however, he uses Korean with students who wish firmly to avoid speaking English. Like many goshiwon owners, he is strict about bringing opposite-gender friends to the building, even for a short day visit.

42Sharehouse <https://ssh42share.blogspot.com/> (Review from 2018)

This isn't your classic goshiwon or livingtel. It's essentially an apartment. The whole place looks like a single house but it's comprised of three separate apartments. Depending on the availability, you can either rent just a room in the apartment or the

whole apartment and share it between people. In past Light Fellow experiences, students have lived on the second floor three bedroom apartment (two singles and one large double). Each apartment has a kitchen (with a fridge, microwave, stove and rice cooker), washer (no dryer) and a shared bathroom. You also have access to the rooftop which is great for making international calls at random times. The house is about an eight minute walk from Sogang and a two minute walk from a convenience store. It's located near Daehung, Sogang and Sinchon metro stations so it's never hard to get home. When you pay rent all utilities are included including amazing A/C and Wifi. The front door is also secured with a passcode.

The owner's English is good enough to convey pretty much anything you would need to during your time there and sometime she even hosts little parties on the rooftop for everyone in the house to get to know each other.

Student Experience: Robert (Comments from 2016)

If you're considering getting a **one room / apartment for a longer stay**, avoid internet listings and be sure to go through a 부동산 (real-estate agency) – and to get recommendations for a good 부동산, as there are a *ton* of them and some of them treat foreigners much better than others. While some real estate agents will speak a little English, it's definitely advisable to bring a friend who can either translate for you or otherwise help you understand the exchange/contract. The process of getting an apartment also goes very fast – you will likely tour places the first day you meet an agent and can sign a contract that afternoon or the next day. As in America, the best time to find open apartments is at the beginning/end of a given month.

The payment system for housing in Korea is very different than it is in the United States. Most places require a very large deposit (the minimum for students in 2016 was around 5,000,000 won) that you will receive again upon moving out. The monthly rent varies on the size of the deposit (some places that require very large deposits might not even charge rent). Also note that most places are not very willing to make contracts for less than a full year (some will go down to 10 months or so, but each landlord varies), so you have a better chance of getting a good apartment if you act sooner. When considering expenses, keep in mind that heating in the winter can get very pricey.

Student Experience: Jeremy

I lived at the Herb House, located about halfway between Sinchon and Ewha subway stations. <https://herb-residence.seoulhotelspage.com/en/> Small rooms but the staff was friendly, A/C was reasonably strong, and the internet was fast. The goshi is co-ed. There was always rice, kimchi, ramen, and jam for bread. I chose this mainly for its

location, since it was situated in front of the other Sinchon Station **신천역** for the KorTrain rather than the subway, and it was a 8 minute walk through the station to the language building, which is closer to Ewha's back gate than the front.

ii. Seoul National University

Student Experience: *Dira*

Once you receive the acceptance letter from Seoul National University (SNU), you can apply for housing at its dorm. It is on a first-come-first-serve basis so the sooner you apply, the better the chance of you getting in the dorm. The dorm costs around 200,000 KRW and you will be sharing it with another or some other students. If you are not able to secure SNU's dorm, do not worry. There are many "one-rooms," "mini one-rooms," and **하숙집** in the area.

Nokdu or Daehakdong is the closest area to SNU. It is around 10-20 minutes walk from campus and you can also take the bus. Many SNU students also rent rooms in the area and there are many shops as well as restaurants around. I got help from a friend in finding my mini one-room but you can also go to a real estate agent (**부동산**), which are ample in the area. My mini one-room was located in **서울시 관악구 신림로11길 62-7 구) 대학동 251-38** and can be reached by phone at 02-873-5545. The room is furnished with a bed, a study desk, a small fridge and a small closet and has a bathroom inside. Inclusive of internet connection, water, and electricity, the cost was KRW 320,000 per month with a deposit of KRW 50,000. Usually, the higher the level, the more expensive a room is. The SNU dorm is cheaper but living in a one-room or mini one-room would give you more privacy.

d. Getting around Seoul

서울 둘러보기

i. Subway

지하철

The Seoul Metro is perhaps one of the most efficient and clean systems of public transportation in the world. It is also astoundingly easy for foreigners to navigate: every subway stop is labeled in Korean, English, and Chinese, and stops are announced in both Korean and English. Transfers are also announced in both languages. Most stations are equipped with electronic signs that inform passengers of train arrivals. The metro is open all day, except between 1AM and 5AM on weekdays and 12AM and

5AM on weekends; while this timing may seem inconvenient, the ease and cleanliness of the subway more than compensates for this.

When you arrive in Seoul, you should buy a T-Money card from any subway station, convenience store, or corner shop. This is the Korean equivalent of a MetroCard and can be recharged. It can only be recharged with cash. Remember to swipe your T-Money card before boarding **and after** departing from the subway or bus! Subway fares are adjusted based on the distance you travel. Base fare: 1050 won. You can use it to pay for taxis and even sometimes for entrances to museums and palaces.

When riding the subway, be mindful of the seats designated for the disabled, elderly, and pregnant persons, usually at the ends of each car, which will often be a different color than the other seats. It is also a good idea to give up your seat if someone looks like they need it more.

Also remember that subway lines are labeled based on important or crucial stops that appear on the line – *not* based on the line’s last stop, as it is in New York, for example. In order to figure out which direction you need to go in, you therefore need to know at least a few of the large stops that are also in that direction. There are maps at every station (both electronic and regular ones), but for smartphone users, you might want to consider downloading a subway map app. One recommendation is “Subway Korea.” Another is Duam Maps, **Naver Maps**, or Kakao Maps that allow for searching both Subway and Bus routes in a Google Maps like interface. Do not, however, use Google Maps; it tends to be fairly unreliable.

ii. Taxis

택시

If you need one, taxis are available at all hours of the day. Taxis are cheaper in Korea than they are in America. Be aware that depending on where you want to go, taxi drivers may turn you away. This is not uncommon, especially if you are trying to get a ride from Sinchon to Hongdae. You may have to try three or four, or catch a taxi on a different side of the street, before you come across a taxi that is willing to go in your direction. After midnight when the subway is closed, you will have to use a taxi to get around town, so be sure that you’re carrying cash or have enough money on your T-money card – which you can also use to pay for taxis – and remember that there is a 20% surcharge between midnight and 4am. Using your T-money card to pay for taxis is always a smart move, as it can prevent drivers from overcharging you.

Download the Kakao T app for Taxis. It can be downloaded and connected to your

Korean phone number and works essentially like uber. It will allow you to hail a cab anywhere in Korea. You can also use the option to pay the driver directly with your credit card or cash (if you are staying short term and do not have an ARC). This is also good to avoid being overcharged for taxi rides.

Be aware of the different kinds of taxis in Seoul. The most common taxis are white, grey, or orange, and generally charge at the normal rate. Black taxis, however, have "모범" written on top and serve as Seoul's "Deluxe Cabs." (The drivers are held to more rigorous safety standards, and some say the seats are more plushy.) These cabs are more expensive. You can hail them to impress a local friend, but know you're paying more than you need to. And be careful at the airport – as a foreigner you'll probably be offered a black cab for your long ride into Seoul.

iii. Buses

버스

Buses in Seoul are divided into four colors: Blue, Green, Red, and Yellow. Blue buses travel fairly large distances and pass through the central region of Seoul. Green "village" buses travel within fairly small regions and connect local subway stations. Red buses connect Seoul with nearby cities and tend to make fewer stops. Finally, Yellow buses connect urban and suburban regions. This general rule may be helpful in looking up what bus you need to take. Smartphone users can check routes and real-time bus locations with the free app "Seoul Bus."

Local Buses

Bus stations can be found every few blocks and can be identified by either a booth or a signpost with a picture of a bus. At each bus station, the list of buses and their routes are posted according to color. One thing to note is that bus stations can also be located in the middle of the road in busy areas. In such areas, crossroads connect the bus station to both sides of the road.

Bus fees can be paid with either cash or T-money. Be advised that you need to pull the yellow string or push a button to indicate that you want to get off at the next stop. When paying with T-money, don't forget to swipe your card when you get off the bus. You will be charged an additional fee depending on the distance traveled (this may vary a few hundred won). Be aware that neglecting to do this will result in a penalty fee the next time you use public transportation with T-money.

Distance Buses

If you wish to travel to distant regions (지방) you can use 고속버스. Major stations include 고속버스터미널, 남부버스터미널, 시외버스터미널 etc. Ticket prices may

vary from a few thousand won to ten or twenty thousand won. Tickets can be purchased in person at the major stations or online, with a Korean bank card. Long-distance buses tend to make short stops at rest areas. If you get carsick and would prefer saving time over saving money, trains and airplanes are also an option.

This (<https://www.lifeofbrit.com/how-to-buy-bus-tickets-in-korea/>) is a fairly comprehensive guide to buying bus tickets in Korea. If you have a Korean credit or debit card (which you can make for the summer at Woori Bank, or the local bank nearest your language school), you can book tickets online, just like booking Amtrak or Greyhound.

If you can buy tickets online, I would recommend Kobus (<https://www.koreantrain.com/>), if only because it is the one website where you can go through the entire ticket transaction in English. When you arrive at the station, go to an automatic machine where you can input either a) your date of birth (YYMMDD) and Korean phone number, or b) the card you used to purchase your ticket, and the machine will print your boarding pass.

If you do not have a Korean card, you should plan to arrive an hour early to buy bus/train tickets at the station directly.

When you board, the driver will take half of your ticket. Hold onto the stub of your boarding pass during the ride. Most 2+ hour bus rides will stop once for 15 minutes (which the driver will announce) for a bathroom/stretch/snack break. You may need the ticket stub to get back on the bus after the break.

C. Daily Life

서울 생활

a. Korean Food 101

한국 음식에 대해서 설명하기

i. Staple Foods 일반적인 음식

Sinchon and other neighborhoods around major universities are student neighborhoods, packed with tasty and inexpensive places to eat. Dining out in these restaurants, however, is a touch different than hitting up your local McDonald's in the States. When you walk into a restaurant, you'll probably be encouraged to seat yourself (unless you are with an extremely large crowd and significant table shuffling is

required). *분식* (*bunsik*, or small eateries) generally do not have standard menus – the menu will most likely be printed on the wall, and you’ll be expected to read it yourself and decide what you want fairly quickly. Oftentimes, a waiter or waitress will not even come over to your table, but will shout at you from across the room to ask you your order. In these cases, make sure you pronounce everything correctly! In some places, you will be given a pad that has the entire menu on it along with a pen – in these cases, you simply mark down what you want and return the pad to the waiter or waitress.

Unlike in American restaurants, you are completely allowed (and even expected) to shout in order to get a waiter/waitress’ attention – the appropriate expression to use is either “여기요!” or “저기요!!” It may take some getting used to, but you’ll find it difficult to get service at a restaurant otherwise!

A particularly popular franchise is *김밥 천국* (Kimbap Chungook), a Korean fast food restaurant that serves prototypical Korean food for students at very agreeable prices. These restaurants are ubiquitous and offer a wide range of typical Korean foods that you can sample for low prices. *김밥천국* (Kimbap Chungook, which translates to “Kimbap Heaven”) also sell rolls of kimbap to go, which make for a delicious and quick meal if you are eating in a hurry.

The student cafeterias at your university are also great options for lunchtime – it’s cheaper prices for a bigger portion. Going out for lunch with your classmates after school is a tasty way to practice Korean, a great encouragement to each other to attend the afternoon pronunciation and grammar clinics together, and an easy way to find scrumptious spots around campus. Paying for your share of the check is the standard method among your language school friends, so don't worry about haggling over the check in this case.

If you’re looking for some good *순두부*, there is a great restaurant named *돌깨마을* (suggestion from 2018) near Exit 7 of the Sinchon station. It’s a little pricier than *순두부* at nearby restaurants but the variety of meat that you can have in the *순두부* and the quality is worth the price difference.

There's also a great place for *순대국* (suggestion from 2018) – pig intestines soup – just a block or two south of exit 6 at *신촌* station. The restaurant is a chain called *청석골*, but the branch near Sogang reads “*감자탕 순대국*” in big red letters visible from the street, naming the two dishes it's best known for. Try either, they're delicious! For those studying at SNU, the nearby Shillim-dong neighborhood is famous for its “Sundae Town” (*순대타운*), a building packed with several different sundae vendors.

ii. Korean Barbecue 갈비

Make sure you experience the sublime Korean barbecue while you're in Seoul. The most popular kinds of barbecue include 갈비: Korean ribs (pork and beef are most popular), 불고기 (thinly sliced marinated pork or beef), and 삼겹살 (similar to bacon but thicker).

You'll be able to grill the meat yourself at your table, but make sure to wear clothes that you don't mind smelling of grilled meat! Trust us, the smell will stick.

Along with the meat, you will get 고추 (fresh green peppers), 오이 (cucumbers), 김치, 마늘 (garlic), 밥 (rice), and different types of 반찬 (side dishes). You'll also get 상추 (lettuce) to wrap the meat and rice, and a bean paste known as either 된장 or 쌈장, all useful words to remember when asking for refills. Order a bottle of 소주 (Korean alcohol) to complement your meal. 청하 (淸河), a drink similar to sake, and 백세주 are other drinks to try. If you're looking to try Korean beer, there is Cass (카스) and Hite (하이트). There is no shortage of good barbecue restaurants, but one popular and reasonably-priced chain is 새마을식당 (their "seven-minute" pork-and-kimchi jjigae is also not to be missed!).

Another excellent dish is 닭갈비: spicy Korean-style chicken barbecue. There are a few in most student neighborhoods – look for signs that say 춘천 닭갈비, but among the chains, 하늘본닭 is also good. And definitely ask for them to add rice to the 철판 (iron plate) afterwards to make delicious 볶음밥 (fried rice).

In Korea, you order meat in one person servings (일인분). This doesn't necessarily mean you can only eat that one serving they bring you! One person can easily eat up to 5 servings (depending on how much you can eat), but that's just the phrasing they use when ordering meat at Korean barbecue places.

iii. Cooling foods for the Summer 여름 음식

Koreans believe that eating hot and/or spicy foods in the summer is refreshing. 삼계탕 is especially popular. It consists of a whole young chicken stuffed with rice, dried fruits, ginseng, and ginger and is boiled in a broth until tender. It is believed that the nutrients in 삼계탕 help make up for the energy lost due to sweating and exhaustion in the summer.

If you're looking for refreshing food that is not hot, you can try a cool dish like 냉면: a popular cold noodle dish. You can order 물냉면 (which is in water) or 비빔냉면 (served with 고추장, it can be quite spicy). A really good 물냉면 restaurant is 함흥냉면, which is next to Paris Baguette on the intersection by U-Plex's famous red

structure (Suggestion from 2018). The most famous 냉면 restaurants, however, are located in Ojang-dong (you can expect to pay 10,000-11,000 won per dish, which is a few thousand won more expensive than most other places).

Another cold dish is 콩국수 (noodles in cold soy milk broth).

An excellent restaurant for this is 명동교자 in Myeongdong, which is also famous for its superb and distinctive 칼국수 (a noodle soup that is served hot). They're also very famous for their dumplings!

For dessert, try 팔빙수, a Korean shaved ice dish topped with fruit, ice cream or frozen yogurt, rice cake, and red bean topping. A good place to go for this is Milky Road near the Yonsei side of Sinchon Subway Station. There is also a place called Beans & Berries near Yonsei University that serves delicious 팔빙수. Iceberry and Red Mango specialize in variations of yogurt patbingsu as well, but without the red bean topping. You can also find 팔빙수 at many cafés such as Ti Amo. For a more traditional style of 팔빙수, check out 장꼬방 near Gangnam Station – but be prepared to wait in line! 장꼬방 also sells excellent 찹쌀떡 (chewy rice cakes filled with sweet red bean paste). Other very well known bingsoo places include 별다방 미스리 (Miss Lee Cafe) and 설빙 (Sulbing).

iv. Street Food

Although it's always wise to be cautious when buying food from street vendors, the streets of Seoul are fairly safe. You will likely see carts with a canopy that serve food inside and have seats for customers. These places are known as 포장마차 (pojangmacha). They sell food such as 떡볶이 (ddeokbokki, thick rice cakes in a spicy sauce), 순대 (boiled or steamed pig intestines stuffed with various ingredients), and 오뎅 (fried pressed fish cake on a stick).

The Korean version of toast is also very popular. It is sold in the morning in the street and often near colleges and consists of an egg omelet with vegetables and ham covered with a slice of cheese, dusted with sugar, and eaten in between toasted bread baked on a buttered grill with condiments like ketchup and mustard, a delicious snack for any hungry college student. Other street foods include 파전 (savory scallion pancakes), 만두 (dumplings), 김밥, 오징어 (dried and pressed squid or cuttlefish), a variety of tempura-style fried foods, and refreshing fruit drinks.

v. On the Interesting Side

For a great authentic experience, go out for 한정식, a traditional Korean meal served in many small courses. Jahamun is a great restaurant to try, although it's not in Sinchon. Visit jahamun.com for directions, and be sure to make a reservation in

advance. You can find a variety of 한정식 and fusion restaurants in 인사동 and a handful of fancy foreign bistros and famous 수제비 (a hearty dough-flake soup) in its fashionable neighbor to the north, 삼청동.

If you're feeling especially brave, try 산낙지, which is squid that is freshly cut, so the tentacles are still moving! If you don't mind tentacles wriggling in your mouth, try it, because it's very delicious. Be sure to bite hard, and dip it in 고추장! Just look for signs that say 산낙지. Be wary of prices, however.

You can also try 족발, which is pig's feet. The smell can be nauseating, as you will notice when you walk by the 족발집 near the Sinchon Rotary, but you might find it delicious. Feel free to try chicken feet as well, but be warned! 불닭발 is among the spiciest dishes you can encounter in the country and can leave you begging for mercy.

vi. Foreign Food (외국 음식) - suggestions from 2018

If you're craving Western food, one place is Choi's Tacos in Sinchon. This is a popular place for Americans and Canadians and has great burritos. American chain restaurants such as Pizza Hut, Outback Steakhouse, and TGIF also have a pretty big presence in Seoul, but are often way more expensive (and fancy) than they are in the U.S.

Also popular (although not Western) is Korean-style Chinese food. 자장면 (noodles with black bean and pork sauce) and 짬뽕 (noodles with seafood in a spicy soup) are both commonly found in Korean restaurants. 탕수육 is another favorite Korean-Chinese dish of mine that might be good to add!! You can find it with 자장면 at most places!! You can often find these dishes for a cheap price anywhere in Seoul. Keep in mind that they differ from their Chinese counterparts, however.

샤브샤브 (shabu shabu) is a Japanese dish of thinly-sliced beef. You're served the raw slices, boil them in a soup, and help yourself – the slices are so thin they cook in only a few minutes. It is the equivalent to Chinese hotpot. Ask your Japanese classmates if they know any good places in your area for 샤브샤브 (or for any Japanese-Korean food). A great place in 신촌 for both 샤브샤브 and Korean dishes is 신촌칼국수, east of 신촌 station's exit 5. The owner is very kind and will hide any birthday cakes you bring in to surprise friends.

Another popular restaurant near the Sinchon Rotary is called On the Border. Head out exit 3 of Sinchon station, look for Burger King, and walk up the hill until you see On the Border to your left. It's on the second floor above Coffee Bean. This place has delicious Mexican food and on the third Thursday of every month, for \$25, there is an all-you-can-eat buffet and all-you-can-drink margaritas, a great place if you're craving foreign food.

You can also head to Itaewon 이태원 on the 6 line for all kinds of foreign food (the American military base is located here, hence the preponderance of ethnic restaurants), but the restaurants here are pretty pricey as they cater to foreigners.

Missing bread? A French-style bakery near Hongdae University's main gate, Paul and Paulina's, is worth a trip for every Korea Light Fellow. The bread is cheap and always fresh, and you can help yourself to warm samples at the front counter. The bakers there have mastered European bread-making – check it out online, as it's really well-rated by bread people! Also, the woman who runs the store is friendly, and will probably remember you if you practice Korean while ordering.

If you're looking for good ol' American McDonald's, head to the Sinchon Rotary (or any of the many other locations across the city). Or you can try a "bulgogi burger" at Lotteria, Korea's signature burger chain. Fried chicken is also very popular among students and can be found in shops near the rotary or just about anywhere in the city, including in 녹두거리 (the nickname of the main street of the 대학동 neighborhood between SNU and Shillim Station). There are many "fried chicken and hof" places, where you can eat fried chicken while drinking beer.

Former fellows have reported the food being sweeter than U.S. food.

vii. Being Vegetarian in Korea 채식주의자

It's not difficult to get common dishes in most Korean restaurants made without pieces of meat/seafood in them if you just ask the waiter to remove the meat/seafood when you order ("고기/해산물 좀 빼주시겠어요?"). Also note that the meaning of the word "고기" ("meat") in Korean does not include seafood, so if you cannot eat seafood be sure to specify that as well. Even if a food you had at one restaurant did not have meat in it, it's always a good idea to check before ordering since every restaurant's style is different. A simple way to ask if a food contains meat/seafood is "(food name)에 (고기/해물)이 들어 있어요?". Some dishes that do not feature meat prominently or can be easily made without it are 된장찌개 (though it often contains seafood, so check for that), most styles of 비빔밥 ("산채비빔밥" is a version of 비빔밥 that emphasizes vegetables but may be served with an egg), a lot of noodle dishes (칼국수, 잔치국수, 비빔국수, etc.), and several kinds of 국 (떡국, 콩나물국밥, etc.). Often, if you just mention to the waiter that you cannot eat meat or seafood they can help you figure out something to eat or will offer to prepare something suitable. The word for "vegetarian [person]" is "채식주의자."

Be aware, however, that fish oils, fish stock, or other meat stocks are used almost universally in preparing soups, stews, and even the seasonings for some vegetable dishes, and it may be difficult to have some foods prepared differently. If you're really

cautious about eating any animal-derived products it may be safer to stick to some of the vegetarian restaurants in Seoul. [Note from LF Staff: This section was last written before the pandemic and you can likely find more options for Vegan and Vegetarian food now. Some of these restaurants also may not exist anymore! - let us know!] There are a few vegan restaurants in the city, namely The Loving Hut in Gangnam, and Plant in Itaewon. In Sinchon, there also a fantastic Indian restaurant called Jyoti right outside exit 5 with a wide range of vegetarian options, so it's a perfect option for Yonsei and Sogang students for when you get sick of eating meatless 비빔밥! (Or if you're feeling homesick for New Haven's Indian lunch buffets.) Temple food is also a good option for vegetarians, and you can find some restaurants which serve it in various places around Seoul, particularly in the Insadong area.

Pescatarian Light Fellows who study at Korea University should consider eating at Alchon, a chain restaurant that specializes in 비빔밥-style rice mixed with fish eggs. The Korea University branch is located behind the 정경관, or College of Political Science and Economics Building.

viii. Eating Alone 혼자 식사하기

Just like in America, eating alone in full sit down service restaurants is not common, but in Korea, there are many smaller, quicker (but still sit down) restaurants people often go to alone. It's not difficult to find people eating alone especially in the mornings on their way to work or in less expensive, fast-service places like 김밥천국 or simple 분식 restaurants. You'll soon get a feel for what places expect groups of friends and which places cater to individuals or couples – just keep your eye out for what others are doing.

b. Korea's Café Culture

한국의 카페의 문화

Drip coffee is much less common in Korea than it is in the United States, and is usually quite pricey and limited to specialty cafés (look for them in places like the backstreets of 홍대). In major coffee shops everything is espresso-based, so ask for 카페 아메리카노 (Café Americano) if you're looking for American-style coffee. Cafés can be really expensive, so make sure to look for places near campus advertising student specials (for Sogang students, Coffee Break is right next to the main gate and they have very reasonable prices compared to nearby shops). University cafes will generally have much cheaper prices than places such as Starbucks, Angel-in-us, Cafe Bene, etc. Be warned, the prices in outside cafes can be almost double the price as American counterparts.

Also, if you can't find a coffee shop (or don't want to spend 6,500 won on a latte), you can get iced coffee at any corner store. Go to the ice cooler and grab a cup full of ice (they are pre-packaged), grab a pouch of coffee (usually stacked next to the ice cooler), and pour the coffee in. Voila, 2,000 won Iced Americano.

Tea, on the other hand, is everywhere. From the cheap bottles of 17차 and other cold barley, corn, green, and plum teas that stock convenience stores to the traditional teahouses lining 인사동길 to the fashionable 대학로 green tea house, O'Sulloc, tea comes in many varieties, and is delicious and easy to get.

Teashops are a specialty of the Ewha Women's University District. Cozy, intricately decorated cafes specializing in green tea lattes and an assortment of cakes provide a place for the students to chat or relax with their significant others. Some places we recommend are Trinitea II and 티앙팡, which offers an amazingly decadent "Afternoon Tea Set" special.

There are also a number of traditional teashops in Insadong. One that's particularly memorable is 반짝반짝 빛나는, which is famous for their 구운인절미.

Cafés can be very nice places to study with friends as they offer a relaxing atmosphere with music that is quiet and soothing. Some are themed, tasty, cool, and comfortable, making them great places for hanging out with homework or a friend on a hot, rainy, or hot and rainy summer afternoon in Seoul. Keep in mind, though, that if you plan to study at a café or plan to stay for a while, most require that you buy something to stay there - and remember that coffee is not too cheap in Korea (they're at least 8000원 usually).

c. Electronics

전기 제품

i. Yongsan 용산

Yongsan is the best place to go to buy your electronic necessities in Korea. The major things you'll be looking for are electrical power converters, a cell phone, a camera, and computer needs. Take the 2 line to City Hall 시청 and transfer to the 1 line to get to Yongsan. Look for Digital World (디지털 세상). Yongsan also sells tons of cheap DVDs, but they will probably be Region 3.

ii. Cell Phone 핸드폰

A cell phone is a must in Korea. If your phone is unlocked, it is easy to get an eSIM at the airport from any of the main providers. Do it at the airport and not online in advance because then you can get a 010 area code, which is necessary. Doing this means you can choose to have both phone numbers active. Some people get “Wifi eggs” which are basically portable WiFi pockets shaped like a portable charger. This is useful if your phone doesn’t support eSIMs.

Make sure you bring your passport for registration, as well as your visa (if you have one)! In the past, some Light fellows under the age of 19 had difficulty getting cell phone numbers. If this happens, you should consider wifi pockets.

The three most popular cell phone service providers are SK Telecom, LG Telecom and KT. Stores for these providers abound, so don’t worry about finding one when you need to recharge your phone! In some cases, only certain branches, the member centers, will do this (there is a KT store in Sinchon which provides this service). If you have KT, you can check your account balance by dialing 1500 on your phone. English-speaking service is available. As a warning, they won’t recharge your minutes on the weekends or on holidays!

Instead of a regular calling plan, another option would be to sign up for a monthly Wi-Fi plan—if you’ve already got a smartphone, that is. Most Koreans have a smartphone, and use the app “KakaoTalk,” which allows for text messaging and calling via Wi-Fi connection. Therefore, as long as you’ve got a Wi-Fi connection (which is most public places in Seoul, though primarily in buildings and not on the streets), it’s as good as having a calling plan. Past fellows who went with this option recommend the KT Olleh store in Hongdae. Wi-Fi is not always as common or as fast as you might expect, so buying a plan with data is well worth it if you spare a few extra bucks, but if you choose to go Wi-Fi-only, Olleh Wi-Fi hotspots are the most widespread around Seoul. Once registered at a rate of about \$8 a month, you can access internet at these hotspots, including on a smartphone you bring from the US.

iii. Cash and ATMs

- a) **Exchanging Cash** - You can exchange cash for Korean won. There are a lot of foreign exchange places in Myeongdong where you would have better rates than you would at the airport.
- b) **Withdrawing Cash from an ATM** For summer fellows, withdrawing cash from an ATM and spending it is likely sufficient. While having a Korean bank card can be useful (e.g. when reserving intercity bus tickets online), the hassle of opening a Korean bank account is too high. Yearlong fellows should also read

about banking in a later section. In general, if you find an international ATM (these are specially marked), you can simply use your U.S. ATM card to withdraw funds. Fees can be quite steep, so make sure to withdraw larger amounts (usually, ATMs allow for withdrawals up to 700,000 won). Before leaving, figure out the transfer fees for your bank in the US. Charles Schwab Debit cards reimburse you for ATM fees and Capital One Bank has 0 international transaction fees on ATMs, to name a few. Check with your bank. You can also deposit money to a bank with friendly international non-network ATM fees. KB Bank and Woori may also have a small fee for non-network usage, but it is usually nonexistent or insignificant. However, if you are planning to come back to Korea in the future, making a Korean bank account is convenient and you should read more later.

- c) **Credit Cards** - Credit Cards are accepted in some places in Korea. You should definitely get a credit card without foreign transaction fees if possible, if you're going to go down this route.

d. Laundry

빨래하기

Korean clothing is not as cotton-heavy as American clothing, and doing laundry is a different process. First, most Korean homes do not use a gas-dryer. Instead, clothes are washed and wrung inside a washer, then folded and hung up on a clothesline or rack to dry. For lightweight clothes or those with polyester or spandex blends, this repeated washing and hang drying gives little issue, but fellows should be aware that heavier polo shirts and jeans tend to stretch after a few months. Also, without dryer sheets providing softening, fellows should add softener to their loads to keep clothes from getting too stiff.

Students living in goshitels or hasukjibs will have access to racks and clotheslines, but those staying for the year should purchase their own racks and clothespins from Grand Mart, Daiso, or smaller stores such as those behind the Hyundai Department Store or on the way from exit 4 of Sinchon Subway Station to Ewha University. The summer's sudden rains can ruin a batch of clothes set out to dry, so doing laundry requires a good sense of the weather or a free day at home. If you get stuck in a rainy or cold spell, or if you have some dry cleaning to do, try visiting a neighborhood laundry (빨래방) or cleaners (세탁소).

Good laundries have big gas dryers and can take care of your clothes in just a few hours or a day. Clothes are priced by the kilogram, and even a huge sack of laundry

rarely costs more than 12,000 won to clean. Likewise, cleaners do a good, quick job of dry cleaning and often pick up and deliver for relatively little cost. Both are easy to find in most neighborhoods.

e. Medical Care

의료혜택

Fellows all have access to emergency Medical coverage through Yale.

The Korean medical care system is high-quality and professional, equal to if not frequently better than that of the US. Because Koreans have a centralized insurance and medical records system. For less serious illnesses (those that would not require immediate hospitalization), visiting a local clinic is often the best way to go. You can ask a Korean friend or relative about a good place in their neighborhood, or just go to some of the nicer-looking clinics around Sinchon Rotary. If you feel uncomfortable with the neighborhood or with describing your illness, taking a Korean friend along helps. The buildings across the street from the Hyundai Department store are packed with good dermatology (피부과), internal medicine (내과), and ENT (이비인후과) clinics, many run by adjunct Yonsei University School of Medicine faculty.

You will need your Alien Registration card or passport and a bit of time (clinics usually fill up at lunchtime), but once you see a doctor, you'll be treated courteously and professionally, and given a prescription to fill at a specified pharmacy (약국) nearby. Unlike in the US, clinics and pharmacies have a set relationship in Korea, so a prescription can only really be filled at the specified pharmacy. Because of universal access to Korean healthcare, even without insurance, most routine visits and procedures, even factoring in the cost of medicine, rarely cost more than 15,000 to 20,000 won. International clinics at hospitals (병원) like Yonsei Severance and Samsung Hospital, however, are a different story. Fellows should consult with the terms of the insurance and with the insurance provider's site recommendations in order to determine the best course of action in medical treatment.

For routine problems like headaches, stomachaches, diarrhea, muscle aches, cramps, and the like, fellows can simply go into a pharmacy and speak with a pharmacist, who will recommend a course of treatment and provide medicine, all for a very low cost.

For fellows who are staying for long term, you may be able to gain access to local health insurance after a certain point.

f. Korean Etiquette

한국의 예절

i. House Etiquette 집안 예절

Living in Korea means abiding by Korean household rules and customs. It's a good idea to be familiar on some level with what may appear offensive to friends, family, friends of family, or your hasukjib ajumma!

Although you're probably familiar with the Korean custom of removing your shoes before entering someone's home, you should remember that this also applies to the living areas of 고시텔 and 하숙집. There is usually an area outside the hallway door where you can remove your shoes and place them in a cubby. Each resident will get a key for his or her shoe cubby, in addition to the room key. Slippers are provided for walking up and down flights of stairs, going up to the roof, etc. For using the bathroom/shower facilities, there is usually a separate set of shoes that all residents share.

One thing that you will notice right away is that Koreans have a complicated system of sorting their garbage. Although Koreans pay for garbage disposal, recycling is free. Thus, in order to throw away the least amount of trash possible, recyclables such as cardboard, glass, metal, and plastics are all put into separate trash cans (with another receptacle for general garbage).

If you are staying at a 고시텔 or 하숙집, you will have to dispose of your 음식물 쓰레기 (food waste) in a separate container. This is usually a small plastic container near the sink in the kitchen. This cuts down on both smell and rot, and encourages you to waste less food! Depending on where you live, you will see any number of garbage cans specifically labeled. For example, in some neighborhoods, all recyclables are combined (ask your landlord), but regular trash and food waste are always separate. If you are living in a one-room or other situation where trash receptacles are not provided, be aware that the different types of trash usually have to be placed in special garbage bags you can buy at a local grocery store. Make sure you pay attention to what the labels say and dispose of your trash accordingly. If you don't, you can be sure that someone will come along to correct you.

Toilet paper is commonly available in restrooms in Korea, but you may sometimes have to pay for it in a vending machine outside the bathroom. Curiously, signs often advise you not to flush it down the toilet, but to dispose of it in garbage cans placed within the bathroom stall. The reason for this is that Korea's sewage system is not equipped to handle the extra burden; back-ups are common.

ii. Mealtime Etiquette 식사 예절

Because Koreans regard age and seniority very highly, you should always wait for the eldest or most senior person at the table to begin eating before you yourself begin. You should also never fill or refill your own alcoholic drink; it is, however, your responsibility to fill and refill your partner's drink. When receiving something from an elder, always receive it with two hands!

As a final note of caution, do not stick chopsticks or silverware straight up in a bowl of rice during a meal – it resembles an offering to the dead and will be taken quite poorly.

iii. Paying the Bill

In Korea, there is a tradition of 선배 (seniors) treating 후배 (juniors), so don't be surprised if your 형/오빠/누나/언니 treats you to dinner. But don't feel obliged to take their generosity or to have to treat your juniors. Koreans will understand that as a foreigner, you may not be used to this system of treatment.

When groups of friends go out to eat, there is a Korean tradition of taking turns to pay the bill. One person will cover one meal and friends will take turns covering the next meal and the next, etc. Again, as foreigners and students, don't feel obliged to follow this rule and if you're eating with friends from your program, chances are you will all split the meal. Also keep in mind that there is a sizeable number of Koreans who will expect to split a meal and not for one person to cover everything.

iv. Appropriate Dress

Koreans in Seoul are VERY well dressed! Women are especially conscious of their appearance and rarely go out without makeup, high heels, and perfect hair. Female students should keep in mind that Koreans do dress conservatively. Low cut tank tops are especially frowned upon; shrugs are a pretty common way to make tank tops seem a little less bare. Korean laundry machines are particularly rough on cheap clothing. Be aware that Korean sizes run smaller than American sizes. If you're looking for larger clothes, Itaewon (이태원) is your best bet (look for signs that say 큰옷). In addition, Dongdaemun (동대문) and Myeongdong (명동) are popular places for Koreans to shop for trendy clothing. In Sinchon, try the Japanese import UNIQLO for decent quality clothes at decent prices.

Adventurous clothes shoppers should check out 동묘구제 시장, an extremely bizarre market near Korea University. At certain times, vendors lay out enormous tarps on the street and pile up mountains of used clothes that sell for extremely cheap prices. Light

Fellows have gotten sweatpants here for 1,000 won and jackets for 2,000 won. Expect to be warned by everyone who hears you are shopping there to wash your clothes *thoroughly* before wearing them -- to get the bugs out!

g. The Yearlong Fellow: What You Should Know

한국에 일년 동안 있을 거면

Staying a year or more in Korea means establishing a life there in very practical ways. Whereas one can and should get by for three-month summer programs with a card phone, a C-3 visa (or no visa at all for US citizens if you stay no more than 90 days), and no bank account, those staying a year or more will need to take care of extended visas, registration cards, mobile phone contracts, bank accounts, and other practical matters of a long-term stay. These are detailed in the sections that follow. But because a mobile phone contract is contingent on a bank account, and a bank account is contingent on an Alien Registration Card, and an Alien Registration Card is contingent on the proper visa, the brief, ordered to-do list sketched out below is meant to introduce Academic Year and Summer + Academic Year fellows not only to the requirements of the long term stay, but also to the order in which they should be completed.

i. Visa Fellows staying in Korea for more than one term must apply for a longer-term visa. This is usually D-4 for US citizens, but differs by case, so do your research. By the terms of the visa, fellows must register with the Seoul Branch of the Korean Immigration Bureau (서울출입국관리사무소) within a few days of arriving in Korea (this period will be specified by a Korean Consular Officer and on an accompanying page of information when you receive your visa at the consulate). Detailed information is available on the homepage of the Korea Immigration Service (<https://www.immigration.go.kr/immigration/index.do>) Another useful page can be found here: https://www.visa.go.kr/openPage.do?MENU_ID=10101

ii. Alien Registration Card Registering at the Seoul Immigration Bureau allows you to obtain your Alien Registration Card (외국인등록증), your main form of identification while living in Korea, and to stay in the country legally.
See: https://www.immigration.go.kr/immigration_eng/index.do

iii. Bank Account The Alien Registration Card takes 10 days to process, but once you receive it, you can establish a bank account.
Banking is an essential part of life anywhere. Korean banks, like others around the world, offer consumers a host of benefits such as interest-bearing savings and debit accounts, credit cards, loans, investments, and so on. Electronic transfer is much more

common than check-writing in Korea, and banks have developed a number of systems to facilitate the movement of funds. These include not only the run-of-the-mill debit and credit cards, but also cell-phone touch debits and easy ATM funds transfers. Furthermore, major Korean banks and retailer have teamed up to offer discounts (할인) and bonuses (혜택) to customers on certain purchases.

For foreigners, however, navigating Korean banking can be a tricky process. Though a number of new laws and standards implemented in early 2008 promised to make it easier for foreigners to gain access to the world of Korean banking, implementation has been slow and uneven.

The first things that Light fellows should know are: (1) for students staying only the summer, getting an account is both impossible and not worth it (unless the student holds an F-4 visa and/or has relatives who can basically guarantee the account), and (2) for fellows staying the year, getting an account is both possible and worth it.

Establishing a Bank Account: Establishing a bank account in Korea requires proper documentation, a little research, and some help.

Documentation is key. Only those on longer-term visas (such as D-4 or F-4 visas) are eligible to receive an Alien Registration Card (외국인등록증), which is necessary for establishing both a bank account and a mobile phone account to which to link it. Banks often require **both** an Alien Registration Card and a valid passport to establish an account – so make sure to bring them both along. Furthermore, you should be able to provide the bank with a valid address and phone number at the time you apply for an account. As you'll need a bank account to set up a mobile phone account, this may be a bit tricky at first, but you can get around this by getting a good friend or relative to provide theirs at first, and then updating your information with the bank as soon as you've established your own account. (But in this case, make sure either to update your information immediately or to specify that you do not wish for the bank to contact you at the address or phone number, but rather, at your email address. Otherwise the bank will call your friend with any questions, and text your friend with any updates about transfers abroad, etc. Be advised also that Macs and browsers other than Internet Explorer can have a hard time displaying many Korean websites and photo-emails, like those from the bank.)

Once you have your documentation in order, you should do a little research to determine which bank is best for you – just choose one with a branch close to you and a good network of ATMs in the areas you frequent (among the biggest banks are KB[국민은행], 신한은행, 우리은행, and 하나은행). If you are just staying the year, paying your hasuk or goshi rent in cash, and plan to use an account only for your

savings, basic mobile phone bills, and debits, pretty much any bank will do. If you hold an F-4 visa, you are eligible to apply for a credit card, but actually getting one is another matter. If having a credit card is important to you, you may have to do some shopping around before you find a bank and a branch that will let you have one.

If you are renting an office-tel, you will find yourself paying multiple bills to multiple parties each month (one to your landlord, one to water, one to electricity, and so on). Because you will most likely be doing this via electronic funds transfers to these parties' bank accounts at different banks, you might consider establishing small accounts with each of these banks. This is because each transfer outside your bank (such as KB to 신한은행) incurs a small transfer fee, but multiple fees like this each month can add up over the year. If you know that you buy a lot of a particular product (such as books or makeup or luxury goods) and have a preferred retailer, you can shop around to see which banks have deals with those retailers. You should also determine whether you want to use online banking before beginning the process, and be ready to ask for an internet-banking enabled account when you apply. (Again, Macs do not work with Korean bank websites, so you'll need access to a PC to make online banking a possibility. Furthermore, Korean banks install a security certificate either directly to your computer or to a USB drive, so if you do not have a PC, be sure to ask for the latter.)

Last but not least, you should get help. While it is possible to do all of this completely by yourself, the help of a Korean friend or relative you trust goes a long way in establishing an account. First, no matter how prepared you are, you have to deal with a ton of documentation involving words you may never have heard. Getting past that is not impossible, but following the explanations about how to use online banking and the like can be hard. Second, scams perpetrated by groups of foreign criminals in Korea have made Korean banks wary of foreigners in general. Having a Korean citizen there with you often helps the bank make the decision to give you an account in your favor. So if you can, ask for help with this from someone you trust. However, if you choose Shinhan Bank, you can visit the Shinhan Global Center in Jung-gu. There, all the staff speak fluent English and are extremely helpful, so bringing a Korean friend is not necessary.

At the Bank: Once you have a bank account, you can apply for a mobile phone contract in your own name, and set up automatic payments for these bills and others (such as utilities in an office-tel). A basic account (계좌) comes with a debit card (체크 카드) and a magnetized account book (통장), both of which the bank will provide to you immediately upon establishing the account. You choose a PIN (비밀 번호). Either allows you to make withdrawals at an ATM, but inserting the account book into the ATM or giving it to a bank clerk for an update will produce an itemized record of

transactions involving your account. Each transaction record includes the date, name of the co-party account, amount transacted, and resulting balance. This account book includes your name, account number, signature, home branch, and a magnetized strip, so losing it is not a good idea. When you run out of space in your account book, you can ask for another one at the branch, at which point the magnetic strip is torn off of your used book and that on your new book is activated. Don't forget to withdraw your money and close the account before you leave.

Banks are usually open until 4 pm in Korea, and offer a range of services, including replacement cards and new account books, help with foreign currency exchange, and advice regarding accounts. These services are usually split into multiple categories and explained to you by a greeter, who helps you select which category of service you require and provides you with a number ticket. As in the post office, you wait for your number to appear above the tellers' counter and proceed to the appropriate teller. Many banks offer some assistance in English, but it is by no means guaranteed, so you'll need to try your best to explain yourself in Korean.

iv. Mobile Phone Contract Life is next to impossible in Korea without a mobile phone. While card phones provide a quick and easy solution to summer fellows, year-long fellows will inevitably require the more sophisticated plans, equipment, and rates available through mobile phone contracts. First, these contracts allow fellows to settle their bills automatically or at their nearest convenience store, eliminating the need to find the one store in Sinchon that allows card phone prepayments whenever they run out of minutes. Second, these plans offer lower rates on calls and texts as the volume of both increases with fellows' growing fluency in Korean and integration into Korean society. They also offer access to low-cost international calling useful in emergencies. Third, these plans offer fellows the chance to use better, more reliable phones. Most card phones do not last the whole year, leaving fellows yelling into dead microphones or texting without basic consonants. For little or no cost, however, mobile phone plans lasting 12 months or more give fellows access to sleek new cell phones crammed with dictionaries, subway maps, internet access, DMB, and a host of other features that make life in Korea much easier.

The biggest telecom companies in Korea are Anycall, SK Telecom, LG Telecom, and KT Olleh. Korea dominates the international mobile phone industry, and its streets are accordingly packed with mobile phone sales centers. But not all stores are created equal – most are just independent operators that come and go. For Light fellows, the best bet is to find a telecom company's own store (there are a few for each company in Sinchon, usually distinguished by their carrying only one product line and having a customer center staffed by uniformed service representatives of the company). You can also find these stores and their contact information by looking for them on Naver.

Dealing with the company itself offers not only straight answers about whether or not the company allows foreign users to sign a contract, but also the security that the contract you establish will be honored at any service site in Korea and that your information will be protected. Other phone sellers, by contrast, may just come and go in a few months.

Usually, you can set up one of two payment options. The first sends a paper statement to your address and requires payment by a certain date, just as any other bill. You can pay this bill at any major convenience store chain (CU, 7/11, GS25, etc.), of which there are plenty in every Seoul neighborhood. But for fellows who may move during the year or do not want to deal with the hassle of settling their bills in person each month, another option is to link the contract directly to your bank account. In this way, you can receive a statement via email each month, while the bill is automatically deducted from your account, leaving you free to vacation or move without worrying about settling the bill. If you discover a problem in your statement, you can print it out and take it up at a customer service center in Sinchon. For ease of use, we recommend the latter, with the caveat that you'll have to view the statement on a computer.

For those looking for a cheaper option for purchasing a phone (you'll still have to get a SIM card and monthly calling/texting/data plan from a major carrier), you can ask a trusted Korean friend or relative to help you buy a used phone on the website 중고나라 (www.junggo.com). As always, buyer beware.

IMPORTANT NOTES: You will not be able to get a phone from one of the carriers until you have already been in the country for at least three business days. So for those of you who are planning to land immediately before classes start, you'll have to go the first few days without a phone. If you must have a phone during this time, you can rent one temporarily at the Incheon airport or at one of the major carrier's global stores. KT Olleh has global stores in Hongdae, Itaewon, and Gwanghwamun, while SK has a global store in Euljiro (search for SK 을지로점). These are also an option for getting a temporary phone while waiting for your Alien Registration Card and bank account. The rates can be expensive, so you'll want to transition to a regular phone as soon as possible.

Also, for those seeking to make international calls regularly, you can look into simply using your Gmail account to make calls. If you turn on the Yale VPN, you can log into your Gmail account and make calls to the US for free. (It will assign you a random phone number, but it will be like a normal phone call, with your computer as a phone.)

v. Mail Post offices (우체국) abound in Seoul. Mailing letters, parcels, and packages in

Korea is faster, safer, and cheaper than in the United States. In addition, working with the friendly people at the Post Office to figure out the best options for postage provides a great way to improve your Korean in formal situations. All Light-approved sites in Korea are major universities with their own post offices and banks on campus, and the people working at these post offices have plenty of experience working with students from all over the world and with all levels of Korean proficiency, so there's no need to be nervous about any clerks "going postal" on you.

Locations: Most fellows will pass by the Sogang University Post Office, located just next to Café May and underneath the Cafeteria (학생식당) in K-building (K관), on a daily basis. Other Sinchon post offices can be found in the alley behind the ALPHA (알파문구) stationery store just off of exit 6 of the Sinchon Subway Station (신촌역 6번 출구), inside the Yonsei University Student Union Building (연세대학교 학생회관), or at the Alumni Association Memorial/ Student Center at Ewha University (이화여자대학교 동창회기념관/생활환경관). The Seodaemun Main Post Office (서대문우체국) is located about 500 meters to the west (in the direction of Yeonhui-dong [연희동교차로방면]) of the Yonsei Main Gate (연세대 정문), on the Sinchon side of the road.

Setup and Options: Post offices in Korea are set up much the same as those in the US – a mailing counter, a line, and a clerk's counter. Most post offices (like banks) have a ticket system to deal with their lines, so check for a ticket dispenser on your way in, and for your number to appear above a clerk's counter. You can purchase stationery and packaging supplies either directly at the post office, or at nearby stationery stores like ALPHA (알파 문구), Geulter (글터), university bookstores, or even Office Max (just outside the Sogang University Main Gate, in the Geogujang Building). But unlike the US, Korean post offices make tape, pens and markers, scissors, and box-cutters freely available for use at their mailing counters. Generally, fellows choose between 2 options for mail and packages – regular (일반 우편) and EMS (express delivery) – whether sending within Korea or abroad. Shipping packages by boat (which takes 2-3 months but is much cheaper than EMS) is also an option sending items back to the US; just be sure to tape up packages tightly and insure them if you value the contents. Just like Priority or Express mail in the US, EMS mail and parcels must be sent in EMS boxes and envelopes, available only at the Korean Post Office. (Don't worry – boxes cost next to nothing! However, they must be paid for in cash.) There are separate forms for domestic and international packages, and you can just ask a clerk for the right form before getting in line. Insurance, delivery confirmation, tracking, and other options are all readily available and easy to navigate.

Beyond this, several parcel delivery service (택배) options – including DHL, FedEx, Hanjin, and the Korean Postal Service's own service – are available for deliveries within

Korea and for parcel service abroad. DHL operates its own offices around the city, while FedEx operates from Kinko's centers. Fellows can look up these services on Naver and call to negotiate pick-up and delivery, or ask their language center office for help calling.

Getting Mail: Students staying in goshitels, hasukjibs, or office-tels should ask their landlord about mail particulars, but generally, mail comes to ground-floor mailboxes in these buildings, located just inside the doorway of most hasuks or goshitels, and inside the lobby of most office-tels.

Addressing Mail: The East Asian address system is the most common one in use in Korea. Although a recent law provided Korean addresses with a street name – house number system like that used in the United States, it is not yet commonly in use. Instead, Korean addresses locate a person first within a particular province or special administrative unit like Seoul or Busan [suffix 도 (province) or 시 (city)], then a particular administrative district (suffix 구), followed by a neighborhood (suffix 동), and then the building number (동) - unit number (호) combination. The name goes last, and the postal code is off to the side. Think of addresses in Korea as going from largest to smallest unit, where those in the US go from smallest to largest unit.

Therefore, addresses in Korea read:

[City] [District] [Neighborhood] [Building and Unit Number]
[Name]
[Zip code]

To give an illustration, a student living in Sogang University's Arupe Hall would have the address: Student Name, 1-1 Sinsu-dong, Mapo-gu, Seoul, 121-742 [Korea]. In Korean, this would become:

[대한민국] 서울시 서대문구 신수동 1동1호
Student Name (귀하우) 121-742

The country name (대한민국) is not necessary when sending mail within the country. The suffix 귀하 or 께 is attached to names to show respect to the receiver.

D. Traveling and Sightseeing

여행 관광 정보

a. Seoul Museums to Visit

1. [Leeum Samsung Art Museum \(삼성 미술관 리움\)](#)

There are two wings, a rotating contemporary exhibition and a permanent traditional exhibition. The permanent exhibit includes several government-recognized National Treasures of Korea, dating back thousands of years and spanning all of Korean history. A must-see for anyone interested in Korean culture or history.

2. [Korean Stone Art Museum \(우리 옛 돌박물관\)](#)

An incredible collection of stone art from throughout Korea's history, especially featuring Buddhist pieces. Getting here is a bit of a trek.

3. [The Blue House \(청와대\)](#)

Until summer 2022, the active residence and official office of the South Korean President, the Blue House was built at the convergence of three mountains, behind Gyeongbok Palace (경복궁) and at the center of Seoul. It was recently opened by the government to visitors, and you can make reservations online.

4. [The Democracy and Human Rights Memorial Hall \(민주 인권 기념관\)](#)

Closed for renovations until 2023, you should absolutely visit if you have the chance. A site where dissidents were silenced is now a [museum to democracy](#).

5. [Yi Sang's House \(이상의 집\)](#)

[Korea's pre-eminent modern artist](#) at the beginning of the 20th century, Yi Sang wrote poems, painted, and tried his hand at architectural design. This is the house he lived in before he moved to Tokyo, where he died at 27.

6. [Lee Sangbeom's House \(청전 이상범 가옥\)](#)

Lee Sangbeom was Korea's leading landscape painter during the late Joseon and Japanese occupation periods. His house has been transformed into a museum, maintained and still lived in by his 4th and 5th-generation descendants.

7. [National Museum of Modern Art - MMCA \(국립 현대 미술관\)](#)

Conveniently located next to Gyeongbok Palace (경복궁), it features English-language exhibitions of modern art.

8. [Lee Han-Yeol Memorial \(이한열 기념관\)](#)

For Yonsei students, this memorial celebrates the life and work of student activist Lee Han-Yeol, whose death helped spark the 1987 Democracy Movement.

9. [Yun Dong-Ju Memorial Hall \(윤동주 기념관\)](#)

For Yonsei students, this memorial, on the site of Yun Dong-Ju's old classroom at Yonsei, features the work of perhaps Korea's most famous 20th century poet.

b. Seoul Places to Visit

1. [Euljiro Streets \(을지로\)](#)

Euljiro is a trendy area near the heart of Seoul. You can get a meal and walk around the shops—a mix of traditional and contemporary—at 인사동.

2. [Seoul Forest \(서울 숲\)](#)

A forest opened in 2005 as part of the government's urban greenery projects, it sits on the site of the old Joseon kings' hunting grounds. Now home to a large park, hip coffee shops, and public sports facilities, it is [worth a visit](#).

3. [Walk Cheonggyecheon \(청계천\)](#), Gwanghwamun 광화문 and City Hall 시청

After being buried for decades during Seoul's industrialization, the government artificially reconstructed the stream in 2005 to offer some nature in the city. Whether you step into the stream and play with the water or lie by the stream taking in the nice sun, it's a very relaxing place to be and is very popular among Korean couples, especially at night. The stream goes from Jongno, at the center of old Seoul, all the way east past the Great East Gate (동대문). Along the way, you will walk by Namdaemun Market (남대문 시장) and Gwangjang Market (광장 시장), where you can stop to shop or just get a bite to eat. If you're in the mood for some city scenery, Gwanghwamun 광화문 and City Hall 시청 are great places to go and explore.

4. [Visit Myeongdong Cathedral \(명동성당\)](#)

Built during a tumultuous period in Korean history, near the end of the Joseon dynasty, the seat of the Archdiocese of Seoul is full of history and represents much of the cultural changes Korea experienced as it opened up to the world. Politically, it was one of the central locations of the Democracy Movement, and the site of many protests.

5. Korean Sauna (찜질방)

This requires a degree of cultural sensitivity and courage. But if you can go with a friend, it is a cultural experience that money cannot buy. There are a number of foreigner-oriented saunas, which might be better suited for Light students. Here is a list I found online of some [popular places](#) in Seoul, but you should keep in mind that the cost of living in Korea has risen substantially in recent years, and most places will be 20-30% more expensive than listed here.

6. [Coex Mall \(코엑스\)](#)

The largest underground shopping center in the world, you can shop at one of Coex's countless stores, watch a movie at Megabox, or study at Starfield Library (별마당)

7. [North Seoul Tower at Namsan \(남산\)](#)

If you are going to make the obligatory visit, do not take the cable car, but walk down the mountain toward Jongno along one of the many footpaths around the tower. There are great views of the city as you descend. The mountain is one of three physical locations mentioned in the country's national anthem.

8. Yeouido (여의도)

A financial district at the center of the city, you can see the [National Assembly building](#), shop at the [IFC Mall](#), or walk down toward Han River to picnic.

9. Obligatory Picnic at Han River (한강)

If you enter near the center of the park at the 여의도 area, you can rent a tarp/blanket, get chicken at one of the stands, at the permanent floating store on the river, or order delivery to the designated delivery pickup site near the subway station. An obligatory event before you leave Seoul.

10. [Dongdaemun Design Plaza \(동대문 디자인 플라자\)](#)

You can get to the top of the structure by climbing up a set of stairs to a small artificially-made grass hill atop the complex with a great view of Seoul.

11. Apgujeong Rodeo (압구정로데오)

A nice area with good restaurants and shopping malls. The [Shinsegae Gangnam \(신세계 백화점\)](#) store became the single [highest grossing department store](#) in the world in 2021, passing Harrods of London.

12. Samchangdong and Insadong

The areas of Samchangdong and Insadong also have a lot to offer if you're into Korean traditional culture. You can see hanok villages that have been preserved for years as well as shop for modern clothes in a snug area between these traditional houses. You should definitely check out all the palaces (궁궐) when you're in Korea. Admission is usually very cheap or even free on some dates and they are definitely worth seeing in order to explore the vast history of Korea.

13. Amusement Parks

Lotte World (롯데월드) and Everland (에버랜드) are two popular amusement parks in Seoul, with Lotte World being one of the largest indoor amusement parks in the world, and Everland being Korea's largest amusement park. Lotte World and Everland are surprisingly cheap compared to American amusement parks and are most fun when with friends. You can get to Lotte World by taking the 2 line to Jamsil Station 잠실역. To get to Everland, you will have to take a bus. Sometimes buses can have spotty reliability and some former fellows have reported that some would not run or would not make the stops they said they would and reported waiting around for a while.

For somewhere not too far away, check out the Children's Grand Park 어린이대공원. There are a lot of rides aimed for kids and you might feel silly going but it's worth it to check it out! Take the 2 line to Konkuk University (건국대) and transfer to the 7 line, where you can take it one stop to the Children's Grand Park.

14. Hike Namsan

If you're looking for some light mountain climbing, there is a mountain

right in the center of Seoul at Namsan. In the center is Namsan Tower, which is very visible from the surrounding areas. Take the 4 line to Myeongdong 명동 and you should see Namsan Tower. Walk toward it and you will find a cable car you can ride to the top of the mountain. Alternatively, you could hike up the mountain yourself. Explore the peak and be sure to see the “couples’ locks.” On a clear day, the walk down gives you a great view of Seoul.

15. Bukhansan National Park 북한산국립공원

For mountain climbers looking for training or more challenging climbs, you should try exploring Bukhansan National Park 북한산국립공원, it has multiple trails with multiple peaks including the highest point of elevation in the Seoul Metropolitan area with Bukhansan itself. With that in mind, know that there are different points of entry for each trail, so plan your trip accordingly. Additionally, be sure to bring proper hiking gear, food, water, and some first aid supplies in preparation for the climb. The park will provide ample training for the more arduous trails outside of Seoul.

c. Other Activities

Festivals of all kinds are quite popular in Korea. While most festivals take place in the fall or spring, a good number are held in the summer. A popular summer bash is the Boryeong Mud Festival 보령머드축제, held in June at Daecheon Beach in Boryeong, Chungcheongnam-do (대전, 보령시, 충청남도). If you are into the arts, Korea is a growing culture hub for film and music with festivals in Incheon 인천, Daegu 대구, Jecheon 제천, and Jeongdongjin 정동진. For your inner child, check out the Muju Firefly Festival 무주반딧불축제.

Another great way to explore the city is to sign up for various activities. It is a great way to prepare for city life after college and can force you to apply all the language learning. Whether it is taking up a cooking class, learning some new dance moves, or trying your hand at some art, you’ll definitely make some local friends and can give yourself something to look forward to after 4 hours of class a day. Hongdae 홍대 is a hotspot for many of these leisure activities. You should explore blogs on Naver and Daum to find one that fits your interests.

A great way to make new Korean friends while visiting interesting places (including those that are difficult to get to without chartering a bus) is to attend meet-ups around Seoul. Just register on www.meetup.com and look for groups that match your interests. Past fellows have had good luck with groups like Seoul Global Expats and Climbing in Korea.

If you want to get discounts on trips and excursions of all types, try and get tickets at www.trazy.com before you go anywhere else. It's a website that caters to foreigners and gives out cheaper tickets to tons of different attractions, concerts and trips all over the country.

d. Longer Trips

장기 여행

If you have a weeklong vacation or more (i.e. if you are studying at Sogang or are a year-long fellow with breaks between terms), plan a big trip. It's easy to visit other areas of Korea by bus, train, or plane. You can catch buses to Honam 호남 in the Jeolla Province and Yeongnam 영남 in the Gyeongsang Province pretty much any time from Seoul's Express 고속 or Nambu 남부 terminals, located in Southeastern Seoul.

Try Gyeongju 경주, Daejeon 대전, Gwangju 광주, Donghae 동해, or Busan 부산, 설악산, or if you're in the mood for a real vacation, take a flight to Jeju-do 제주도, an island that is the Hawaii of Korea. Round trip plane tickets to Jeju-do are generally around 400,000 won but if you are lucky you may find cheaper prices. Alternatively, you can take a ferry from one of few different harbors around the peninsula, which will be cheaper than any flight. Many Koreans travel to the beaches of Busan and to Jeju-do in the summer months. Be sure to be prepared for crowds in Busan, or to book ahead for Jeju-do. Wherever you go, be sure to pack sunscreen and plenty of water because Korea is very hot and humid in the summer.

1. [Gangneung \(강릉\)](#)
 1. A popular beach destination on the east coast of Korea that you can get to within two hours.
2. [Gyeongju \(경주\)](#)
 1. Rent a pension in the countryside with friends for a weekend. You can also take a day trip here to see [Nami Island \(남이 섬\)](#), a popular day trip destination near Seoul.
3. [Busan \(부산\)](#)
 1. Take the KTX or fly down to Busan to spend a weekend in South Korea's leading port city.
4. [Gyeongju \(경주\)](#)
 1. The capital of Korea's Silla dynasty, Gyeongju is one of Korea's leading historical sites. You can see the unearthed tombs of the Silla monarchs, alongside palaces, gardens, and the [oldest astronomical observatory](#) in Asia—which is still standing today.

5. Jeju Travel Recommendations

* If you have an international driver's permit, you should visit. If you cannot drive a car, Jeju is very, very difficult and inconvenient to navigate. Taxi fees add up quickly, and they are in short supply outside of Jeju City.

1. Climb Hallasan (한라산 등산) (Center of Jeju)
 - a. Admire the Hydrangeas! They are beautiful and the navy-blue species is native to Korea, especially to Halla Mountain. Although listed as a historic site on all the maps, I would skip the temple, as it underwhelms.
2. Udo Island (우도) (East Side of Jeju)
 - a. Rent a bike and cycle around the island. There are stops where you can buy fresh (i.e., wriggling, live) seafood and shellfish from “Haenyeo” 해녀 (Jeju's traditional female divers—members of a UNESCO-recognized Intangible Cultural Heritage). You can also head to the beach and hop in for a swim. A perfect place to spend 3-4 hours in the afternoon.
3. Sunrise Peak (성산 일출봉) (East Side of Jeju)
 - a. A UNESCO-recognized World Natural Heritage Site, the cliff provides a lovely view of the sea and overlooks Jeju's east coast.
4. Eat Jeju Black Pork at Black Pork Street (흑돼지 거리) (Jeju City - North Side of Jeju)
 - a. A street full of restaurants featuring Jeju's famous black pork.
5. Dragon Head Beach (용머리 해변) (South Side of Jeju)
 - a. You can walk a scenic route down the cliff by the coast, shop or grab a bite along the port, and stop in one of the many local cafes to admire the view of the ocean.

More recommended places to go, in and out of Seoul:

- Daehangro 대학로 Arts District
- Dongdaemun 동대문 and Namdaemun 남대문 markets
- Incheon 인천 and Noryangjin 놀양진 fish markets Han Riverbank 한강
- Yeouido 여의도 and 63 Building
- Gwanghwamun area 광화문
- Myeongdong 명동
- Jongno 종로, Tapgol Park, 인사동, Samcheongdong 삼청동
- Cheongdong Theater 청동극장
- Seoul Grand Park Zoo 서울동물원 and Children's Grand Park 어린이 대공원
- Palaces (Changdeokgung 창덕궁, Gyeongbokgung 경복궁, Deoksugung 덕수궁)
- Temples (Jogyesa 조계사, Haeinsa 해인사, Songgwangsa 송광사, etc.)

- National Museum 국립중앙박물관
- Suwon 수원
- Chuncheon 춘천 (home of 닭갈비; also known for 남이섬)
- Gyeongju 경주 and Bulguksa 불국사, Seokguram 석굴암, Yeongnam 영남, Daegu 대구, and Donghae 동해 (East Sea)
- Jeonju 전주
- Yeosu 여수
- Paju Book City 파주시
- Busan 부산

E. Useful Vocabulary

중요한 단어

a. Food/Dining

음식/식사

Dishes 음식

갈비: Kalbi, Grilled ribs 닭갈비: Chicken kalbi 돼지갈비: Pork kalbi 소갈비: Beef kalbi
 김밥: Kimbap, Korean-style sushi rolls
 냉면: Buckwheat noodles 물냉면: In soup 비빔냉면: With hot sauce
 떡볶이: Rice cakes in spicy sauce
 돈까스: Tonkatsu, Japanese fried pork dish
 볶음밥: Fried rice
 불고기: Thinly sliced marinated meat
 비빔밥: Rice in a bowl mixed with vegetables, egg, and sometimes meat
 누룽지: The tasty crust of rice that forms at the bottom of a hot rice pot
 돌솥 비빔밥: In a stone bowl, it's hot and there will be 누룽지 at the bottom
 삼겹살: Grilled pork similar to bacon
 삼계탕: Chicken stuffed with ginseng, fruits, and raisins in a refreshing soup
 생선구이: Grilled fish
 순대: Boiled or steamed pork intestines stuffed with various ingredients; a kind of blood sausage
 순두부: Tofu soup with egg and often seafood
 알밥: Fresh salad greens topped with roe 산낙지: Freshly cut squid, tentacles moving
 칼국수: Somewhat thick noodles in a broth with refreshing vegetables
 파전: Fried scallion pancakes

팔빙수: A Korean dessert with frozen yogurt, ice, berries, other fruits, etc.
자장면: Chinese noodles w/pork & black bean sauce
족발: Pig's feet
짬뽕: Chinese noodles in spicy broth with seafood
찌개: Korean stew (김치찌개, 된장찌개, etc.)
우유: Milk
저지방: Low fat 무지방: No fat
소주: Soju, Korean alcohol
맥주: Beer 카스: Cass 하이트: Hite
백세주: A Korean alcoholic drink
청하: A Korean alcoholic drink similar to sake

Ordering 주문

* ___ indicates a blank spot where you would put in an appropriate word

___ 주실래요?
___ 좀 주세요
___ 주시겠어요?

All these are appropriate ways to ask for something.

___ 좀 더 주실래요?: Please give me some more ___

Useful words with which to use this phrase:

간장: Soy sauce
고추장: Hot sauce
상추: Lettuce
쌈장: Bean paste
된장 찌개: Bean paste casserole
마늘: Garlic
물: Water
반찬: Side dish
부침개: A sticky, flat cake

Miscellaneous 등

뭐가 제일 맛있어요?: What's the best dish? 뭐가 제일 많이 팔려요?: What dish is sold most? 뭐로 만든 거예요?: What's this made out of? 불판 좀 갈아 주세요:

Please change the grill

따로따로: Separately (for example, if you want to pay separately)

___을 빼주십시오: Please remove/leave out _____

b. At the Post Office

우체국에서

account book 통장

bank account 은행계좌

credit card 신용카드

currency exchange 환전

debit card 체크카드

deposit 입금

wire transfer 송금

withdrawal 인출

How much do you charge for a wire transfer? 송금 수수료는 얼마예요?

I would like to open a bank account. 은행계좌를 만들고 싶습니다.

c. Housing

집에 대해서

고시원: Small hotel-like dorm

하숙집: Smaller dorm-like living space

공간: Space, area

관리: Maintenance

난방: Heat

냉방: Air conditioning, also 에어컨

냉장고: Refrigerator

베개: Pillow

침대: Bed

변기: Toilet (refers specifically to the toilet, not the bathroom)

불: Light

선풍기: Fan

세탁기: Washing machine

세탁제: Laundry detergent

싱크대: Sink

아줌마: Term for a middle-aged woman, often the landlady of a 하숙집 is an 아줌마,
but call her 아주머니 to be polite

이불: Blanket

원룸: One-room, similar to an apartment

월세: Monthly rent

집세: House rent

치약: Toothpaste
칫솔: Toothbrush
비누: Soap
샴푸: Shampoo
하수구: Sinkhole
휴지: Toilet paper or tissue
끄다: To turn off
켜다: To turn on
막히다: To be blocked, stopped up
안 되다: To not work

d. Etiquette

예의

분리: Separation
쓰레기: Garbage 음식물 쓰레기: Food garbage
재활용: Recycling

* ___ -{아/어/여}도 돼요? May I ___?

* ___ -(으)면 안 돼요 You may not ___

* ___ -지 않으면 안 돼요: You must ___

* 안 ___ -{아/어/여}도 돼요: You don't have to ___

건배!: Cheers! (a toast)
명함: Business Card
선배: Senior
후배: Junior
돌아가면서 돈 내다: To take turns paying the bill
챙기다: To treat someone
코 풀다: To blow one's nose
한턱 낼게요: I'll treat you

e. Healthcare

의료혜택

약: Medicine
멀미: Car/motion sickness

어지럽다: To be dizzy
 건강 보험: Health insurance
 고통스럽다: To be painful
 기침하다: To cough
 넘어지다: To fall
 다치다: To injure, be injured
 감기: Common cold
 독감: Flu
 두통: Headache
 목이 부었다: For the throat to be swollen
 미끄러지다: To slip
 ___(이/가) 부러지다: For (part of body) to break
 ___(을/를) 뺨다: For (part of body) to twist
 상해: Injury
 소화 불량: Indigestion
 ___(이/가) 아프다: For (part of body) to hurt
 알레르기: Allergy
 흉터: Scar

F. Only in Korea

한국에서만

a. Bangs (Rooms)

방들

PC bangs, DVD bang, board game bangs, noraebangs 노래방 (karaoke): these functional rooms are everywhere. Board game bangs are great places to go have a laugh with friends—the loser of the board game usually dons an embarrassing cap and gets clonked on the head by an oversized air-filled plastic hammer. As for 노래방, this experience *must* be tried by every Korea Light Fellow. Karaokeing with friends any night of the week is loads of fun, and you will not have trouble finding tons of buildings that have 노래방. If you don't have a favorite song (애창곡, preferably Korean) prepared already, get to work.

b. Bars, Clubs, and Hofs

술집과 클럽, 호프

The areas around Hongik Station 홍익역, Sinchon Station 신촌역, and Gangnam

Station 강남역 have tons of bars and hofs (hof is a corruption of a German word, and are beer houses popular with students—you will see many signs that say “fried chicken and hof”) for meeting up with friends. The area around Korea University 고려대 was once famous for its ubiquitous makgeolli 맥걸리, an unrefined rice wine, houses—rough-and-tumble wooden huts ladling out the cheap countryside liquor and hearty seafood pancakes 해물전 to 운동권, members of Korea's Minjung Democracy Movement in the 1970s and 1980s, but redevelopment in the Anam 안암 and 고대 (short for 고려대) areas has thinned out the numbers somewhat.

Still, the saying goes "the Yonsei student drinks beer, and the KoDae student drinks 맥걸리", so asking a 고대 friend out to 맥걸리 and 해물전 (especially on a rainy day) is bound to work out.

Hongdae (홍대), which can be reached on the 2 line at 홍대입구역, is especially famous for the party scene. Bars abound here and multiple clubs line the area, making it a popular place for students and foreigners on weekends. Keep in mind that because smoking is not outlawed indoors in Korea, you may find yourself around very uncomfortable levels of smoke. Expect prices to be around the 10,000 won range. Bring your passport or alien registration card for entry into some venues, but of course be careful not to lose them!

The last Friday of every month is Club Day in Hongdae – for only 15,000 won, you get unlimited access to around 15 different clubs, including the very popular Noise Basement. (On other days, there is usually a cover fee of 10,000 KRW for girls and 15,000 KRW for guys at each club). 강남, the area south of the Hangang River is also a popular, albeit pricier, place for bars and clubs.

Overall, 홍대 tends to be the popular spot for Korean college students. When asking about the party scene, even Korean adults and seniors know to ask about 홍대!

Although it's uncommon to find Korean girls and guys dancing together (they usually prefer to dance with same-sex friends), foreigners don't seem to have any problem with it. *Make sure to wear nice shoes (no sandals!), or you may get turned away!* There are these cheap jellies you can get at convenience stores for hangover prevention!

c. Saunas, Bathhouses, and Dr. Fish

찜질방과 목욕탕

찜질방, that is, the sauna, is a great thing to try if you're looking for an authentic

Korean experience. After paying an entrance fee of around 10,000 won (though cheaper ones charge around 7,000 or 8,000 won), you enter separate sex locker rooms and will likely visit a 목욕탕 first before changing into the 찜질방 uniform.

목욕탕, or public baths, are another quintessential part of Korean culture, and are commonly combined with 찜질방. Foreigners may find the experience to be a little strange and more than a little embarrassing, but it's definitely something worth trying. In the same-sex locker room, you remove all of your clothing (yes, you're naked) and proceed to the public bath area, which is also separated by gender. You are required to shower before entering the baths, so bring your own shampoo if you do not want to purchase some inside. (Soap is provided, however.) Once inside, you can experiment with any number of hot tubs, cool (or even cold) swimming pools, massaging waterfalls, and aromatherapy tubs. People young and old come to enjoy the baths with friends and family; don't feel ashamed about being naked in public. You may see people with large, ring shaped bruises on their backs; this is the result of cupping, a sort of suction therapy that is used to treat pain (similar to acupuncture). At the public baths, you can also get a traditional Korean exfoliation, a somewhat brutal scrubbing session. If you're interested, make sure to inquire about the cost.

After donning the 찜질방 uniform, you enter the sauna area (accessible to both men and women) where you will find steam huts, ice rooms, a large floor for resting, and a snack bar. Some places may offer other amenities for a price, including computer access, exercise facilities, and massage services. 찜질방 are usually open 24 hours a day, making it convenient to go at your leisure or even stay the night. Koreans believe that a good sweat is a way to cleanse and purify the body, and thus subject themselves to the scorching temperatures of stone-dome saunas. Burlap bags or sheets may be available to sit on or help shield your body from the infernal heat. When you've had enough (or when you're ready to pass out), you can enter a cooler room or re-hydrate with a cold fruit juice or iced green tea, available at the snack bar. Also try the 미숫가루, a cold sweet drink made of ground grains and beans, and 식혜, a rice drink so sweet and refreshing it will taste like nectar after a long session sweating. If there is a restaurant, try the 미역국, a traditional seaweed soup. If you're feeling tired, you can take a nap on the wooden floor in the center of the sauna, supporting your head with a wooden block.

If you visit a 찜질방 or 목욕탕, beware: thieves WILL capitalize on your carelessness. Patrons often take their smartphones to rest areas and fall asleep reading or listening to music, only to wake up with their phone and earbuds gone forever. And though buildings in Seoul are equipped with cameras, by the time your goodies are stolen and you've found the hooligan's pixelated face on the manager's security monitor, there is little anyone can do. Please know that 찜질방 are still perfectly safe and fun,

especially if you go with friends. Just secure everything you brought in the locker rooms, and if you sleep, sleep worthless!

d. Movie Theaters

영화관

Korean movie theaters are huge cineplexes with assigned seats and multiple theaters showing both Korean movies and popular American films. There is one movie theater in the Grand Mart Department Store building, a Megabox right next to Ewha Women's University in the Migliore Department Store complex, another called Artreon, reachable if you take the Ewha Women's University exit 4 at the Shinchon subway station, as well as the theaters at Yongsan and COEX. For students at Seoul National, there is a cinema on the 10th floor of the shopping center outside exit 3 of 서울대입구역, as well as one just outside 신림역. You can see a complete listing of movie theaters here: <http://m.ticket.movie.nate.com/czm/action/cfMain>

Movie theaters usually sell tickets in pairs by default—if you're by yourself, make sure you specifically ask for one ticket. Also know that in Korea, the earlier you buy your movie tickets, the better! This is because tickets are sold seat-by-seat, not general admission, and the best seats (front and center) get sold out quickly. Before you enter the theater, check the row and seat number printed on your ticket. Take a chance and be dazzled by a 4D movie, if you're up for it. And make sure to try the Megabox at COEX!

Note that while Korean subtitles are provided for American movies, English subtitles are not always provided for Korean movies! If you want to watch a Korean movie with subtitles, make sure you confirm whether the movie theater that you plan to go to has them available before you purchase tickets!

G. Miscellaneous Information

기타

a. Weather

날씨

The summer weather, which most Light Fellows in Korea will experience, can be extremely hot. The hottest days in Korea are known as 폭날. This happens from

around early June to late July. Expect very humid days – sometimes it will be muggy and cloudy, other days the sun will beat down on you.

You also should be very aware of 장마, the rainy season, which occurs for a good deal of the summer. Definitely bring rain gear, and know that even with rain gear and a good umbrella, chances are you will get wet. As a rule, once the monsoon season starts, keep an umbrella with you at all times. It has a tendency to start raining heavily with no warning.

Autumn is arguably the best season in Korea. Temperatures are similar to New Haven, and typically there are relatively few rainy days. The fall colors are spectacular – you can see the golden leaves of ginkgo trees in several neighborhoods around Seoul, but if you enjoy hiking, make sure to check out some of the mountains around Seoul. The 오색 trail at 설악산 is well-known and rather easy as long as you stick to the valley.

Winter is cold and sometimes snowy and some fellows report feeling colder than in New Haven. Good boots and a winter jacket are definitely necessities. If you have a spare weekend, try hiking Sobaeksan 소백산 or Taebaeksan 태백산, two mountains famous for their snow-covered landscapes in winter. There are also a few ski resorts within 1-2 hours of Seoul.

Spring tends to be wet, but the flowers in Korea are beautiful. Check out the cherry blossoms in the Yeouido neighborhood along the Han River. For a fun weekend in the country, you should explore Boseong County 보성군, famous for its green tea fields. If you want to explore food and fun, check out the Jeonju International Film Festival 전주국제영화제, Korea's second largest film festival next to Busan's and debatably the most respected.

b. Mosquitoes

모기

Summer downpours bring pools of dirty rainwater, and pooled water is the perfect breeding ground for blood sucking mosquitoes. If you don't proactively guard against them, depending on your housing, it's almost guaranteed you'll be kept up all night by their bites – and this can last well into October. For repellent, go to GrandMart 그랜드마트 right at Sinchon Rotary, across from Hyundai Department Store and diagonally across from the McDonald's building. In the basement, you'll find the market and drugstore oriented products. There should be a whole shelf of mosquito killer ranging from incense to plug-ins to spray (incense usually works best if you put it by your window). If you can't find it, ask for 모기약. You can get repellent almost

anywhere, but big stores are best for variety. A common brand of repellent is 에프킬라.

For students not studying in the Sinchon area, you might find it a bit of a stretch to go all the way across Seoul to get this. For those studying in the SNU area, look for the E-Mart express that branches off of the main road (where most housing branches from). It's located about two blocks further away from SNU as the Caffe Bene (which would probably put it about one block away from your housing).

SNU Student Narrative: At SNU I stayed in the dorms and never opened my windows, and the mosquitoes still somehow got in...definitely be proactive in repelling them because they are very aggressive (I can't even say how many I killed with blood in them after they already bit me, gross lol), they will literally bite any exposed area so I had them on my hands or face since those were exposed while I slept at night.

c. Shopping for Souvenirs

기념품 사기

Dongdaemun and Namdaemun are both great places if you're looking to shop, as is the underground mall at Central City in Gangnam. Cheap clothing and all kinds of odd items that should suit your needs abound. Insadong is a good place if you're looking for little traditional trinkets, as you will find all kinds of items that make great souvenirs. Make sure to bargain a lot, as the sellers will expect you to do so. Myeongdong is another good place to go, but prices might be somewhat higher. You can also head to Itaewon but be warned that prices will be most likely be *very* high. You can also check out the basement area of Express Bus Terminal Station in Korea as they have a huge underground market for very cheap clothing and souvenirs.

d. Online Resources

온라인 정보

Blogs from Korea abound. As you will be a blogger yourself, it is worth taking a few hours to explore the South Korea blogosphere. What you will find may inform, interest, annoy, or discourage you, but keep this in mind about blogs: they are meant to be published quickly. So while the best blogs muster multimedia symphonies to make their fresh points, remember to treat them as what they are: working theses meant to be engaged. So engage them: comb them for cool places to go, ways to get around, vacation ideas, food recommendations, language-learning advice, funny anecdotes, and novel ideas, and weave them into your own experience. You can also search

relevant hashtags on Instagram and Tiktok to find videos and clips of students and visitors in Korea.

Other Websites:

<http://www.naver.com>

This is the most widely used homepage in Korea. Some 60-70% of all Koreans use Naver for search purposes. One of its nice features is its 지식iN search. The Knowledge Search returns user-generated answers to all kinds of questions such as how to cook ramen.

<http://dic.naver.com>

This is the address for Naver's Dictionary, arguably the best online dictionary. The company put in quite a bit of investment to develop it. It features example sentences for Korean words, Korean-English/English-Korean dictionaries, an encyclopedia, a user-generated slang dictionary, etc.

<https://map.kakao.com/?index.jsp>

Here's one of the best maps online (Daum is the second most used search portal site after Naver). You can learn how to take mass transit from one place to another using 대중교통길찾기 (at the top of the site). Inside the map, to the top right, you can access satellite view (스카이뷰) and street view (로드뷰). Before you go anywhere in 경기도, you can check how the place looks from the street. Daum Maps also has a great app for smartphones.

<http://www.gmarket.co.kr>

GMarket is the most widely used site for online shopping for Koreans, a parallel to Ebay and Amazon for Americans.

And of course you can learn more about Korea using all kinds of other online resources. Youtube is not as widely used in Korea as in the States, but includes lots of videos taken by Koreans and foreigners in Korea.

e. Useful Apps

-Subway Korea (English/Korean): Although you can find a physical copy of the map in the subway station, it's always helpful to have an electronic version on hand. This app gives you the different routes you can take to get to your destination, whether it be

through minimizing transfers or shortening the commute. All of the transit information is provided in real-time when you're connected to Wi-Fi. Even when you aren't, you'll still have access to the subway map and be able to see how long your commute will take.

-Naver Map: This app is what Koreans use instead of Google Maps to get around. This is an all-in-one app that tells you how you get to your destination by car, public transportation (including buses and subways), biking, and walking.

-Kakao T (English/Korean): While cab rides in the states are almost always more expensive than public transportation, taxis in Korea have affordable rates, and are great options for when you're out late and the subway has stopped running. People will usually stand on street corners to hail cabs, but this method is generally unreliable and time-consuming. To reserve a cab with Kakao T, all you have to do is input your location and intended destination. The app also gives you the option to send notifications to your friends regarding vehicle information, pick up time and location, drop off location, and your estimated time of arrival. At the end of the ride, you can pay the cab driver directly through cash, card, or the T-Money card.

-KakaoTalk (English/Korean): You'll find that almost everyone in Korea uses KakaoTalk (as opposed to texting) to communicate! As long as you have internet access, you'll be able to message, make calls, and send pictures/videos through this app for free. This also means that you can use KakaoTalk to contact family and friends back home, provided that they also have the app.

-Naver Dictionary (English/Korean) or Papago: This probably won't come as a surprise to you, but Google translate is not very accurate when it comes to Korean. The Naver translate app is a great alternative--it's easy to use and its translations are pretty spot-on!

-Mangoplate (English/Korean): This is the Korean equivalent of Yelp. You can look up restaurant ratings and reviews based on either the type of food you're in the mood for, or the area you plan to eat in! Mangoplate also has lists of restaurants put together by app users that you can refer to throughout your trip for inspiration (i.e. 20 Best Bunsik Spots in South Korea).

-Yogiyo/배달요기교 (Korean only): Food delivery is huge in Korea, and for good reason--it's fast, convenient, and free! Although you can have your food delivered simply by calling the restaurant, you can also order your food via apps like Yogiyo. You need to have a phone number to use.

H. Language Study Advice

언어 공부의 비결

a. Advice for Sogang University (서강대)

Sogang University, traditionally the most popular choice for Light Fellows, is a great place to make many friends with whom you can speak Korean. Because the program is populated mostly by students from various countries (the vast majority of whom are from China or Japan), the common language will naturally be Korean, and thus as long as you make plans to hang out often with your classmates (which will likely happen – you have to try really hard not to), you will have no trouble with speaking practice.

It can be very easy, however, to get used to only hanging out with your classmates, which can detract from meeting native Korean speakers. One resource that Sogang provides (which is unfortunately not yet available for all levels) is language partners. If your level offers that opportunity, try your best to take it because it is a great way to meet a Sogang student and to branch out to more native speakers.

Sogang University is well known for focusing largely on speaking practice, so make sure you put yourself out there and use your spoken Korean as much as possible. The Sogang program covers one lesson over two days (up through level 5) so there will be much fast-paced vocabulary learning. Though there aren't any quizzes to prepare for, make sure to do 예습 (studying in advance) for vocabulary and grammar every night so that you do not feel lost in class. You will be expected to have at least some grasp of the material before going into class. As for the writing class, make sure you finish the writing assignments on time because they *will* become overwhelming if you leave them all to last minute. Completing them in a timely manner and considering the teacher's feedback makes preparation for the writing exams infinitely easier.

Sogang does not arrange field trips or cultural excursions for KLEC students. There is a list of suggested foreigner-friendly school clubs (some of which include traditional Korean arts or music) but actually getting involved with them is quite an endeavor. Even if you manage to hunt them down, club members may not be as receptive to foreigners as the flyers advertise, depending on the club and your level of Korean. Ultimately, you will have to spend your own time and resources to participate in cultural activities during your time in Korea.

Tips for Individual Levels:

Level 2: Students who have completed L2 Korean at Yale more often than not will be placed in Level 2 at Sogang. This means that the grammar at beginning of the course will be a bit of review, but don't be discouraged – Sogang's classes are *much* faster-paced than Yale's and you'll be learning a lot more supplementary material. Teachers are very generous when it comes to teaching extra vocabulary students need to express their thoughts; make sure to write those words down!

While Sogang does not provide language partners to Level 2 students, Light Fellows are provided one-on-one sessions with a Sogang instructor. The meetings are twice per week, and it is an opportunity for students to practice speaking Korean with a native, ask questions about material covered in class, and/or learn vocabulary and grammar from higher levels, depending on the needs of the student. The individual sessions are what you make of it; just be sure to discuss your goals with the instructor.

Level 3: If you go in straight from Yale's L2 Korean into Level 3, you will likely find yourself struggling to keep up the first few weeks. Within a few weeks though, you will find yourself adjusting to your teacher's Korean and you will definitely feel more at pace with your class. Don't be too hasty about trying to start Level 3 if you will be studying at Sogang for more than one term. If you come into level 3 from level 2 you'll be on the same page as the rest of your classmates and will have a much stronger foundation to build on.

As Level 3 is the level at which you are able to start expressing yourself more conversationally, it's a good time to really bond with your classmates. The level is also filled with much useful vocabulary in getting around Seoul, so be sure to use that to your advantage as well.

There is also a lot of difficult grammar learned in Level 3 that does not correspond to any grammar in English. Although it will be difficult to grasp at first, you will find that over time the grammar will sink in, and if you proceed to higher levels, you will be able to understand the grammar on a finer level. For Level 3, try to focus on understanding the situations in which you can use the grammar and not so much the exact meaning of it.

Level 4: Level 4 is more relaxed than Level 3 in that the grammar is more intuitive. Vocabulary becomes much more advanced at this point, so make sure you keep up. You will also learn to converse about a variety of topics, so it would be a good time to try to befriend a native speaker and ask them to speak with you about these topics.

Level 5: Generally considered the most intense level at Sogang, Level 5 is where you will start learning 5 or 6 grammar patterns a week instead of the usual 2 or 3. There is

also a lot of vocabulary to be covered, so make sure you study ahead and also review. You start to have discussions about more difficult topics and you begin to gain the skills to debate about controversial topics, so be sure to find a Korean friend to practice with if you haven't already. The level is intense, but very rewarding once you get through it and you will really feel more confident about your Korean once you finish the level.

Level 6: This level is a culmination of everything you've learned and there is no formal grammar taught at this level, so you will likely find yourself having a lot more free time. Take advantage of it to meet with both in-class friends and out-of-class native speakers as it's a great time to hone and fine-tune your speaking skills. In class you'll participate in a lot of debates and discussion, so there will be plenty of formal academic practice as well.

b. Advice for Yonsei University (연대)

Yonsei University hosts the oldest Korean language program. It's well known for its somewhat rigid style of teaching and rote memorization, but fellows have come out of this program showing major improvement in reading and writing. The speaking practice will not be as central to the program as you'll find in Sogang University, but those seeking skills in Korean that extend beyond conversational speaking may prefer Yonsei's style of teaching.

A former Light Fellow who attended both Sogang University and Yonsei University gives the following advice for comparing the two schools:

"Having attended both the Sogang KLEC and the Yonsei KLI, I have a unique perspective about what differentiates Yonsei from the other language institutes. I found that while Sogang is a bit fun and conversationally-focused, Yonsei is for the serious language-learner, especially he or she who intends to pursue a business role in Korea. The homework and overall pace was far more intensive than Sogang. I definitely believe that one has to review both grammar and vocabulary on a daily basis if one is to not fall behind. However, at the end of the day, you have a large selection of grammar and vocabulary within your arsenal.

However, I have a few criticisms about Yonsei. Yes, you become a great writer by the end and you may be able to read a newspaper and otherwise difficult works with ease. But can you converse well? Maybe. Or maybe not. I have found that on the whole, those who attended Sogang's language institute had better conversational skills compared with Yonsei students. In addition, Yonsei tends to have a very predictable daily structure, with a huge emphasis on rote memorization and repetition. Every day begins with reading a small dialogue and learning the grammar and vocab. Then, every

student is expected to memorize the dialogue and repeat it in front of class. Sogang, however, allowed students to alter the dialogue to their liking and give more of a presentation.

Thus, if you are the sort of student who needs to have a very strong written and reading-based foundation to the Korean language, perhaps for post-graduate education in Korea or a post-graduate career that requires Korean skills, then I would highly recommend Yonsei University. If not, however, do yourself a favor and have fun at Sogang!”

Another former Light fellow who attended Yonsei University also had this to say about student life at Yonsei University.

“Aside from classes, the program also provides a small class field trip for students to get to know each other. There are also other after class extracurricular activities such as a cooking club but when I was there not many students participated. Probably the best way to bond with your fellow classmates is having lunch together after class at the heavily discounted student cafeteria. Decent food for great prices and you get to choose from nearby cafes to study and work at with your new friends.

Another fun thing you get to do with your classmates is the end of semester show, in which you and your classmates have to get together and perform a play. You have to work together with your classmates to write an original script and then perform it in front of all the other classes. It’s part of your grade but it’s also a fun way to work together with your classmates. Though scripts involving crossdressing are generally discouraged, students find it hilarious and a good majority of the performance you watch will feature some crossdressing of some sort.”

c. Advice for Ewha Womans University (이대)

Ewha Womans University may be a private women’s university, but do not be fooled by the name: the language program is open to everyone! Most of the Ewha University Light Fellows have complimented the program’s teachers, who often made an effort to help students outside of class and answers any questions. The program is fairly balanced, but you’ll find that classes offer you many opportunities to improve writing and reading practice. This is where Ewha’s textbook really shines.

Outside of the caring and laid back environment of the classes, the language program helps integrate you into campus life at Ewha. There are several extracurricular activities that you can participate in while in your program. Ewha’s proximity to

Sinchon makes for fun day-to-day adventures after class, and you're never too far from any of the other fellows studying at Yonsei or Sogang, or from the other big student hub, Hongdae. Students regularly grab lunch with each other right after class, which opens up another opportunity to both befriend your new classmates and use that Korean you learned promptly.

Since Sinchon is surrounded by so many universities, there is a great selection of housing options in goshiwons and officetels, but Ewha also offers housing on campus in their dormitories. Rooms will be nearly comparable to a small single, but if you're looking for convenience and are willing to spend a little extra in your housing budget, they're a good option to consider.

Be aware that students tend not to study with each other unless someone makes a move. If you are into group studying, which is especially helpful for dictation, you should consider making friends early and setting a study agenda. Ewha also provides the opportunity to get a Korean tutor. Take full advantage of that so you can get more practice time hearing more natural Korean.

One fellow who attended both Yonsei and Ewha compares the schools and gives the following advice:

"I would say that the atmosphere at Ewha was more caring and laid back. I think that the teachers at Ewha were more likely to put in more effort to help students outside of class and answer questions without judgement. While teachers in level 3 at Yonsei were more sassy and interesting, I felt out of place asking for explanations of grammar patterns and vocabulary which weren't highlighted in the textbook. In terms of the material, I would say that the amount covered each day was about the same but Ewha felt more balanced between reading, writing and listening while Yonsei placed more emphasis on grammar and vocabulary. Outside of class, Ewha offers more extracurricular activities with field trips and clubs while Yonsei also offers field trips but no regular club activities."

e. Advice for Seoul National University (서울대)

Seoul National University, like Yonsei, has a reputation for focusing less on speaking and more on advanced reading and writing so it has been generally recommended for heritage learners or people who are confident in their speaking skills. In recent years, however, most Light fellows at SNU have found the program to be well-rounded, and probably less rigid and old-fashioned than Yonsei. The textbooks have also been very recently updated and are quite new. At the upper levels, there are often opportunities within the SNU classes such as debate and speech competitions (with cash or

scholarship prizes).

A unique feature of Seoul National is its location in the southern region of Seoul, next to Gwanaksan (Gwanak Mountain). The location of the school has many advantages, such as the cleaner air and the quieter atmosphere (especially compared to Sinchon). However, because of its location, students who decide to live closer to central Seoul will be faced with a long commute, and students who live near or on campus will find themselves faced with a similarly long trip to many of Seoul's main attractions (although the campus is close to Gangnam). Take advantage of your location as a way to make new friends and immerse yourself in Korean in an area with a smaller population of expatriates. A note for those who choose to live near SNU is that you will be living 20-30 minutes away from the majority of the fellows (Sogang, Ewha, and Yonsei are all located in the same place), and you may find it difficult to connect with them as often as you might like. However, this 20-30 minutes on public transportation in Korea is very normal to get around places and you can always meet up halfway with fellows at other universities. You should expect around 20-30 minutes of travel no matter where you decide to go. But this does help for those students who are seeking to have a summer less focused on experiences with other fellows and more focused on experiencing the country itself.

Seoul National University fellows also get the opportunity to be paired up with a "Buddy". Your buddy will be a current student at Seoul National University who has specially been paired up with you to help you practice your Korean and just take you around the city to sightsee or visit museums or whatever you would like to do. We highly recommend you to take advantage of this opportunity as you will be given an individual guide to Seoul and will have someone to constantly practice your Korean with. They go through a rigorous application process to be chosen as buddies so you will be paired with some of the best and most fun students on campus.

f. Advice on All Language Programs

It is important to note that none of the language programs are perfect. While transitioning from the engaging, tight-knit atmosphere of Korean at Yale to Korean at the language programs in Seoul, you may be discouraged by the lack of spontaneity and relative dryness of the class environment, but hopefully you will come to appreciate the differences that the programs offer. You'll be in class with many people who will only be able to speak to you in Korean, and you'll be challenged to listen to constant Korean for extended periods of time. When you are deciding which program to attend, really think about the skills you want to build upon and how long you plan on studying either in Korea or when you come back to Yale. With this in mind, check out the blogs and reports from previous Yale Light fellows, ask around, and talk to you

language instructor. Remember that you play a big part in what you will get out of a language program, so always remember to supplement class time with self-study and speaking practice. Every day is a new opportunity to practice, either informally or formally.

One Light Fellow had this to say about making the most out of language study:

“It is easy to treat the class environment as an insignificant part of Korean language learning because it does little in applying the material. However, I learned that instead of taking the program at face value, I realized I needed to make the program work for me. So, I made more of an effort to ask more in depth questions in class and really utilize my teacher as an important learning resource. It is important to set goals for language learning and be realistic about what you can actually accomplish and not let the grades and exams define and guide how you want to study Korean. So get the most of what you can from class and try to find resources outside of class to pick up where the classroom leaves off.”

g. Language Partners

Meeting with a language exchange partner is a wonderful way to get conversational practice, learn more natural-sounding Korean, and make friends. Almost everyone in Korea studies English in some capacity and, if you look in the right places, you should easily be able to find someone willing to help you with your Korean in exchange for English conversation.

If your program doesn't have an institutionalized language tutoring program, it can seem difficult to find Koreans who have enough time to meet regularly for language practice. However, a good resource to start out with is www.conversationexchange.com, a website devoted to language exchange – it is heavily frequented by native Koreans in and around Seoul. Meeting people from the internet is common in Korea and doesn't carry the stigma it does in the United States, but common sense, of course, still applies. Some universities also have online forums for people seeking language exchange: Sogang's can be found at <http://klec.sogang.ac.kr/5000/4000.php>.

Another good strategy is to ask your friends in class if they have Korean friends. A large number of them will, so it's not a bad idea to ask them: 소개해 줄래(요)? (will you introduce them to me?). It's a great way to form bonds with both your in-class friend and the Korean speaker and you'll find yourself getting lots of practice along the way too.

Finally, you can meet new conversation partners by attending language meet-ups

around Seoul. Language meet-ups are convenient because you don't have to schedule anything in advance, and everyone's eager to talk to other people and to practice language, so it usually won't be awkward. Here's one good resource for language meet-ups: <http://www.meetup.com/Languagecast/>.

h. Avoiding English

With the lack of a language pledge and the other Yale students in your program, it can be difficult to force yourself not to use English. If you are staying in Korea for a year, it will be easier, as there will be fewer Yale students around (generally 2 or 3 at most), so you will find yourself distributing time more evenly between friends from class and Korean friends.

Students often comment that speaking in Korean with English-speaking peers can feel awkward at first, but you'll adjust quickly. It's also important to begin speaking in Korean from day one: if you start off speaking with a new friend in English, chances are you'll keep speaking in English.

And as much as in-class learning is important, it is also important to use Korean in as many out-of-class situations as possible. Put yourself in situations that will require you to speak Korean. Taking trips on weekends and during vacations is a great way to do this: you will *need* to use Korean to get around a place like Jeju Island or one of the provinces outside Seoul. If your *hasukjib* or *goshiwon* has a television (most *goshiwon* rooms come with a small TV), take advantage of it. And though it may be tempting to buy English-language books, especially during a year-long stay, take a stab at reading something in Korean for fun: 만화 (comics) are great for any level, and upper-level students can take advantage of things like contemporary short story collections at any bookstore.

i. Tips for Studying Vocabulary

Often the biggest difficulty when studying Korean is acquiring the massive number of words needed for advanced proficiency. Those who have successfully learned Spanish or French in high school may find this effort more taxing than what they're used to, simply because Korean does not have hundreds of words already familiar to an English speaker.

There are great electronic resources out there, however, to help you use your time efficiently while studying hundreds or thousands of new words. Past fellows have used flashcards apps such as Anki for computers and smartphones, or Flashcards Deluxe for smartphones. Both will schedule your review of a given word according to how well

you've shown you know the word (ensuring you aren't wasting time trudging through lists of words you already know well). These are robust pieces of software, with features like sound and image, syncing and backing up of flashcards across multiple devices, and downloading flashcards from public sources.

I. Favorites of Previous Light Fellows

a. Jake Albert, SM '18

Light Program and Year: Sogang University
Level 2, Summer 2013

Best travel experience: Jeju Island. Find a way to get there.

Favorite Korean food: Korean barbecue, probably 삼겹살 in particular. It's so satisfying to cut and cook it right where you're sitting. Trying dozens of types of ramen was great, too (I had only had Shin Ramen before this summer!)

Favorite memory: I crossed 마포 대교 (one of Seoul's large bridges across the Han River) on foot with a friend. Starting at a park on the south bank of the Han River around 11pm, we made our way back to 신촌 by 4 or 5 in the morning. The park is fun to start off with – everyone's out with their friends having a good time on a warm Saturday night. And walking across the bridge is beautiful, if the weather's good. The view's great, cars rush by, and all along the walkway are signs with illuminated jokes, messages, and pictures. I wasn't prepared for the emotional weight of the place, though – it's a notorious suicide point, and the true purpose of those encouraging signs becomes all too clear as you reach the center of the bridge. It's chilling, but touching. Now that I've learned more, I'd love to go back to reread all those messages. Plus hopefully I'll get more of the jokes now.

Advice for future Fellows: If you have a hobby, keep it up during your time in Seoul! The university where you're studying might have a student club filled with Korean kids that do what you do. Outside campus, too, there are all kinds of interest groups to find. It's a good way to make friends fast and overcome any initial shyness speaking Korean – plus you learn cool jargon to impress other Light Fellows with (“Oh, sorry, I forgot we didn't learn how to say ‘wide-angle lens’ back at Yale...”).

[Music, Dance, Math, Painting, Soccer...] is the universal language of mankind, I'm sure



some adult has told you; go use it to work on the not-so-universal language you're there to study!

c. Zach Mankoff, DC '15

Light Program and Year: Sogang University, Summer 2013

More about my picture:

This was taken while hiking Bukhansan. It's about halfway to the top.

Where did you stay?

I stayed in goshiwons. It was basically a bed, a mini-fridge, and a desk (and not really any dressers; I lived out of my suitcase) with communal washing machines and kitchens, with free kimchi, rice, and eggs at all times. Mine also had an in-room



toilet and shower. They cost about 400,000 to 500,000 won per month, though you can get one without an in-room bathroom for as low as 200,000 to 300,000 per month. I stayed in one for the first month that had no air conditioning (be sure to check before you book a month) and then I moved to Canvil Goshiwon, which had air conditioning, for the rest of my time in Korea, for about the same price. There are plenty of places to stay right around the Sinchon area, but it is good to do some research beforehand. This website (http://www.habang.co.kr/b_go_se_en) is a good resource to use for finding housing, although the website doesn't always reflect the actual goshiwon, so be sure to look when you get there as well.

What to eat: Food is generally pretty inexpensive. The amount per day that Light allocates for food is more than enough. You can get a good meal for 5000 to 6000 won, and something a little fancier (like barbecue or Shabu Shabu) will cost 8000 to 10000 won. If you want to save money, the cafeteria (at Sogang) only costs 2000 to 3000 won and has decent food. Street food is generally pretty safe; I didn't hear of anyone getting food poisoning and we all ate a lot of it, though always use your judgment. For breakfast, I usually got a 김밥 from a street vendor or from a takeout restaurant and ate it on the way to class. Most western food is not all that great and relatively expensive (though still cheap compared to food in the US). If you have a

coffee habit though, it will be expensive to maintain in Korea. A drip coffee (with no milk) can often be 4000 won (though the café at Sogang and some subway stations sell coffee for around 1000 to 2000), and anything fancier will usually cost 5000 to 6000 won.

What to do: Lots. One thing that isn't really emphasized in any travel book but I really enjoyed is going to indie rock concerts. A lot of bands play concerts in bars or small basements venues around 홍대 and other areas, and going to the shows are a lot of fun (though there will usually be a lot of other Americans in the crowd). Admission is usually cheaper than clubs for the basement shows, though larger concerts and foreign acts get quite pricey. There are bands from just about any genre (classic rock, punk rock, electronic, hip hop, heavy metal, blues, jazz) playing on any weekend night. Club Spot, right off Hongdae park, is a great punk rock venue if you're in to that type of music. This (<http://www.koreaguide.com/concert-calendar/>) is a great website for finding venues and bands. Most bands will have a couple of songs on Youtube or their Facebook page if you want to check them out before going to a concert.

Favorite Korean food: 수제비. Also, try 산낙지 (live octopus) if you can. It's a great experience and it's really tasty too.

Favorite memory: Hiking Bukhansan.

Favorite store: I don't have a single favorite, but it's a lot of fun to browse through the art galleries in Insadong. The chains of cosmetic stores (like Innisfree) also have some nice products (like green tea lotion) that you can't find in the US.

Favorite café: I don't remember the name, but there is the café next to the Hyundai department store in Sinchon. It's on the 2nd floor of a building that has a 노래방 on the first floor and a goshiwon on the top three floors. It's a little pricey but it's a really cute café and it's great place to hang out and study.

Best travel experience: Jeju-Do. There is a lot to do, and it is nice to be away from the anxiousness and business of Seoul for a couple of days. Hiking Hallasan is awesome, as is going to the beaches and Sunrise Peak. You can take a weekend trip there for a couple hundred US dollars.

Advice for future Fellows: Explore Seoul and Korea as much as possible. I found some awesome places just by wandering (or jogging) around. And try to meet a language partner. It will help your speaking ability a lot.

d. Pek Shibao, DC '15

Light Program and Year:
Sogang Level 3, Summer 2013

Where did you stay? I stayed at Sol Livingtel 솔리빙텔 just north of Sogang. Rooms are relatively cheap and it's only 5 minutes away from campus. One downside though is that the owner is really strict about the no-visitors policy.

What to eat: There's lots of good food everywhere around Seoul, but if you're living in Sinchon here are

some recommendations: the hot dog stand right outside 현대백화점, the 칼국수 restaurant near Sinchon Station Exit 5, Gamaksae 가막새 makgeolli bar, and the 가쓰돈 restaurant right opposite Sogang University's main gate. In addition, the very best meal I had in Seoul was probably the samgyetang 삼계탕 at Toseokchon 토속촌.



Favorite Korean food: Not *technically* a food, but I would have to say indulging in makgeolli 맥걸리 (unfiltered rice liquor) was a defining part of my Seoul experience. It comes in a variety of different flavours, all of them delicious, and there are even specialty bars that serve nothing but various types of makgeolli (as well as a makgeolli school near Jongno!).

Favorite memory: Climbing to the top of Bukhansan 북한산 and enjoying the best view of downtown Seoul ever. Otherwise, being boiled alive inside the ovens disguised as saunas at Dragon Hill Spa (or any 찜질방 really) is a highly recommended, almost entirely safe way to confront the limits of your mortality.

Favorite café: I love cats, and there are a multitude of cat cafes around the Hongdae area if you just google for them (Tom's Café being probably my favorite). That being said there's basically every single kind of specialty café you can think of in Seoul, so don't be afraid to get out there and explore!

Best travel experience: I spent my week-long break travelling across Korea visiting major historical landmarks and Buddhist temples, and it was definitely the highlight of my time in Korea. Of the places I visited, Tap-sa 탑사 near Jeonju 전주, Gatbawi 갯바위 near Daegu 대구, Bulguksa 불국사 in Gyeongju 경주, and Yeosu 여수 stand out the most. Jeju Island 제주도 is also a must-visit.

Advice for future Fellows: It's been said over and over again, but absolutely make the effort to go out and meet everyday Koreans! More often than not they'll be interested

to speak Korean with a 왜국인, and having local friends will open up secret places and opportunities that most exchange students never discover. Just to give a few examples, Light fellows in my year have made friends their local convenience store clerks, joined hip-hop dance groups, and even gotten into relationships with people they met while 소개팅! On a smaller scale, going to the weekly LanguageCast meetups in Hongdae or Anam is also an excellent way to meet friends and practice your language skills.

e. Lizz Cotzomi, BK '15

Light Program and Year: Sogang University, Summer 2013

More about my picture:

We took this picture at the top of Hallasan, the tallest mountain in Korea, located on Jeju Island. The hike took a total of about 9 hours, but the view from the summit was totally worth it!



Favorite Korean food:

There's a little restaurant right across from Sol Livingtel by Sogang that makes amazing해장국.

Also, while technically not real food, 빙수 was another one of my favorites. It's perfect on those hot days. As someone who ate 빙수 every day during my last week in Korea (My plan was to eat a lot of it, so I wouldn't miss it back in the States. Didn't work), I would recommend going to Baskin-Robbins and Meal Top.

Best travel experience: Going to Jeju Island!! The island, like the weather and beaches, is absolutely gorgeous! We (most of the Light fellows + some Sogang friends) stayed at a small guesthouse by the ocean for about a week. Blue skies and fresh air (a nice break from the Seoul smog), some of the best 삼겹살 ever, and breathtaking landscapes... definitely grab some friends and go if you get the chance. (For any K-drama fans out there, you'll find that the Boys Over Flowers theme song is the perfect soundtrack.)

Advice for future Fellows: Really make an effort to get to know native Koreans. I used the website <http://www.conversationexchange.com> to meet local Korean college

students for language exchange. Not only was I able to improve my speaking skills, but also made new friends who showed me around Seoul and taught me a lot about Korean culture and cuisine. We still keep in touch via Skype ☺

f. Elena Perry, BR '15

Light Program and Year: Seoul National University, Academic Year 2012-2013

More about my picture: This was taken on the peak of Sobaeksan, which is a few hours outside Seoul. It is a popular mountain for winter hiking – the snowy scenery was spectacular, and we managed to get perfect weather. I went there with a group from www.meetup.com, called Climbing in Korea.



What to eat: The neighborhoods around SNU are packed with restaurants. If you're eating alone, you can go to any of the 분식 restaurants, like 김밥사랑, where you can get all sorts of Korean comfort food, like 김치볶음밥 or 떡볶이. I especially liked the 김밥 from a small shop called Rolly Bob's, which is just past Shillim Church (신림교회). I also really enjoyed 설렁탕 (sometimes written as 설농탕), which is a noodle soup with a milky-white broth made by boiling ox bones for several hours; it was the perfect dish for cold winter days. There is a well-known (and very good) chain restaurant for 설렁탕 located near exit 3 of 서울대입구역. If you like 순대 (blood sausage), or want to give it a try, I recommend 순대타운 in Shillim-dong: it's a collection of several different 순대 restaurants all on one floor of a building. I'm not even a 순대 fan, but I liked the kind that is pan-fried and served with dipping sauce.

Best travel experience: I had so many amazing travel experiences in Korea – mostly small day-trips for hiking, kayaking, etc. – but my three favorite were 설악산 in the fall, 소백산 in the winter, and 제주도 in the spring. The fall colors are gorgeous all over Korea, but 설악산 is one of the best spots. Likewise, the views from 소백산 in the winter were breathtaking. 제주도 is especially beautiful in the spring and summer; I recommend walking along the Olle Trail, which follows the coast.

Advice for future Fellows: If you will be staying longer than one term, I recommend looking into getting a part-time job, even on a volunteer basis. For example, I'm a biology major, so I worked part-time in a lab at SNU while taking my language courses.

Doing so gave me insights into Korean life and culture that I wouldn't have had otherwise, and I developed lasting friendships with my co-workers.

g. Patty Lan, BR'16

Light Program and Year: Ewha Womens University, Summer 2014; Yonsei Univeristy Fall 2014

Where are you staying? 하숙집

What to eat: Everything at 광장시장 is delicious if you are willing to be adventurous but if you go, be sure to try 빈대떡. It is a mungbean savory pancake which used to be considered poor man's 전 because flour was difficult to come by back then. The paste used to make the pancake is ground fresh at the stands and fried right in front of you. Fried chicken and beer is a national symbol and no experience in Korea can ever really be complete without having some 치맥. An alternative to morning 김밥 is toast, which is a hot sandwich made with delicious Korean bread, toasted on a griddle. There is a toast stand right on the corner at the big crosswalk in front of 연세 정문. For fish lovers out there, there is great grilled fish in Seoul. They tend to come whole so avoiding bones is tough but, the taste is definitely worth it. Finally, my favorite 떡볶이 place is called Ice Cream 떡볶이 near Ewha. The sauce here is perfectly spicy, sweet and creamy and they it in packages if you plan on making it at home yourself (you know what my luggage is going to be filled with).



What to do: I definitely recommend visiting places outside of the city to see what the rest of the country is like. All the trains and buses in South Korea are really convenient to use so be sure to take advantage of that. Traveling to out-of-town festivals are the perfect excuse to leave the city and experience more local culture and traditions. While using the website meetup.com, you can also go paragliding, caving and zip lining in the beautiful South Korean countryside just hours away from Seoul. I made pottery while I was at Yale and found a traditional Korean potter to give me classes every week in 이천, the ceramic center of the Joseon dynasty.

Favorite memory: My favorite memory definitely had to be when I went to a 찜질방 in Busan after hiking around the mountain there all morning. It was the most relaxed I have ever felt.

Favorite store: My favorite store of all time is Daiso. It's a stationary store meets home goods store and it sells just about everything you will need and want for the lowest price possible. Even when I just wander into the store I never leave empty handed. They're all around Seoul so definitely visit sometime!

Advice for future Fellows: Living in a foreign country, while fun and exciting, can also be stressful and tiring. Do not be ashamed when you have those days when you need to stay in and recharge instead of exploring 24/7. Pace yourself and treat yourself to convenience store ice cream often.

h. Mahir Rahman, SM'16

Light Program and Year: Ewha Womens University, Summer 2014; Korea University, Academic Year 2014-15

Where are you staying? Currently a homestay in Mapo-gu, but will be moving to a goshiwon in Anam-dong soon. I wanted to see what it living with a host family was like while studying here. While I am glad my host family doesn't speak English, they also speak with 사투리 (dialect), making it really difficult to understand what they say at times. Also homestays are not often close to where you plan on studying. I managed to find mine through a summer research position but I am looking forward to moving closer to school so I do not have to worry about dealing with a commute.

More about my picture: This was taken at my favorite city in South Korea: Busan. Busan can be viewed as the anti-capital: it's artsy, it's coastal, it's warm. The coolest thing about Busan in my mind as a film-junkie is the Busan



International Film Festival, simply known as BIFF around Korea. Not only is the biggest in the country but makes a notable impression among the film festival circuit. Come explore art in this town and take cute photos like we did!

Favorite Korean food: I'm a huge fan of 순두부찌개 (soft tofu stew) either with or without the 고추장. A guaranteed good time!

Advice for future Light Fellows: For year-long fellows, you are in it for the long haul. Trust me, it will suck sometimes because the language learning may make you feel like you're in high school. If you find yourself dealing with pedagogical problems, adapt

your language learning environment to fit your needs. On a more personal note, take care of yourself. There are a good number of Yalies here during the year, whether they are undergraduates also abroads, alumni, or affiliates. However, reflect on the fact that you are essentially on your own. That shouldn't scare you, though. Please use the time you have on your own to foster your identity if you came to soul search. If you want to cultivate what your aspirations are, do so because you don't need a Yale classroom in order to reach them.

i. Sara (Youn Jung) Cho, BR'18

Light Program and Year: Seoul National University, Summer 2015

More about my picture:

I went on a Bingsoo adventure this summer. I LOVE bingsoo so so so much that I decided to try to go to as many bingsoo places as I could this summer in Korea. (I think there was a point where I had eaten bingsoo literally once every day.) This was one of my favorites at a cafe called Miss Lee Cafe. It was the biggest bingsoo ever and even my friend and I couldn't finish it.

What to eat:

SO MUCH FOOD. Food is so cheap in Korea (of course depending on when you go). American chains and places that sell western food are generally on the expensive end, but you go to Korean restaurants, the food is super cheap and can range from between 5000 -10000 won. Street food is also very cheap and although it doesn't seem to be sanitary as it is sold in the open, it's pretty safe to eat. Street food can range between 1000 - 5000 won and it makes for a great late night outing with your friends. The BINGSOO is so good in Korea. I highly recommend exploring different bingsoo cafes as it is just in general a great place to hang out with friends and a bingsoo (which can range from 6000 - 10000 won) can



easily be split between two people.

What to do:

There is so much to do in Seoul. The public transportation system is so well organized that it is very easy to do weekend trips and even after class trips in a day! I especially enjoyed going to the traditional areas of Samchangdong and Insadong. These areas have well preserved traditional Korean hanoks and sell traditional trinkets and just offer a lot of insight into Korean culture. However, these areas also have a modern twist to them in that there is a lot of individually owned boutiques that sell clothes or accessories and there are lots of cafes and restaurants within the village of Korean hanoks that you can explore. The atmosphere is very cute and some might describe it as hipster, but I absolutely loved going there.

Favorite Korean food:

BINGSOO. But besides bingsoo, I really like eating 닭갈비 which is a spicy Korean-style chicken barbecue. After you grill the spicy meat on a pan (which is often served with melted cheese to dip in like fondue), most restaurants offer to make fried rice on the hot pan with the remaining hot sauce. That fried rice is literally my favorite part of eating 닭갈비.

Favorite memory:

Taking a cooking class near Ewha University with my classmates.

Favorite store:

There is so much cheap shopping in Korea. I highly recommend going to the shopping basement at Express Bus Terminal and the shopping basement of Gangnam Station or going to Myeongdong.

Favorite café:

I definitely loved Osulloc which is a cafe based from Jeju-do that specializes in green tea. Their green tea ice cream is hands down the best I've ever had. Although they're based from Jeju-do, they have many locations throughout Seoul so they're not hard to find!

Best travel experience:

I think just exploring the city with my friends on afternoons or weekends was a lot of fun. I was able to visit all the Korean palaces, visit several museums, go to shopping

areas, explore Jeju-do, have fun at Everland, attend concerts, experience a cat and dog cafe and so much more.

Advice for future Fellows:

I would definitely recommend exploring Seoul as much as possible. If you don't know where to start, just jump on the Green line subway and get off at a random stop. You won't be disappointed with what you find.

j. Dira Fabrian (GSAS '16)

Light Program and Year: Seoul National University, Summer 2015

Where did you stay?

I stayed at a “mini one-room” located in 서울시 관악구 신림로11길 62-7 구) 대학동 251-38 and can be reached through phone at 02-873-5545. The room is furnished with a bed, a study desk, a small fridge, a small closet, and has a bathroom inside. There is also a common kitchen and laundry room in the building so it is very convenient. Inclusive of internet connection, water, and electricity, the cost was KRW 310,000 – KRW 350,000 per month (depending on which floor you live in) with a deposit of KRW 50,000. In addition, the 아저씨 is very nice and helpful. 대학동 (or also known as 녹두) is around 15-20 minutes walk from campus. Alternatively, you can also take the bus or the free shuttle that SNU provides (the shuttle only goes from 녹두 to the SNU’s Student Center and back). This area is lively and safe with many shops and restaurants so it is understandable that many SNU students also rent rooms here.

What to eat?

My top list would include charcoal-grilled chicken kalbi in Jeju, 갈비 짬 in Suwon, grilled fish in Nokdu, and one of those 라볶이 restaurants, such as 먹쉬돈나. Also, definitely try the street food. They are cheap and delicious!

What to do?

Travel! It will not only enable you to learn more about the country, its history, and culture but also force you to practice the language because in most places, people cannot speak English. Be bold and explore alone at times. South Korea is safe and you’ll be surprised at the wonderful experiences that await.

Favorite memory?

Hiking! It is tiring but the view on top is always worth the strenuous effort. I hiked 낙산, 한라산, and 서장대 at 화성 Fortress. Actually, most tourist sites in Korea are on hills so you would have to hike at one point. I also enjoyed exploring the city with my SNU buddy. I didn’t only get to practice the language but also learn a lot about the city and Korean history, economy, politics, and culture from his explanations.

Favorite place in Seoul?

청계천 and 한강 Park. Both are also great places to escape the summer heat.

Advice for future Fellows?

Get the Seoul subway and bus app, as well as the Naver Dictionary app since it is way more accurate than google translate.

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