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[Home](#) > Students Study Energy Business, Economics, and Policy in Dalian, China

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Seven Penn State students recently returned from the Dalian University of Technology (DUT) in China as part of a six-week study abroad program to generate interest among junior and senior undergraduate students in business, economics, and policy as related to energy and the environment. During the program, students gained an understanding of how China, which has the second largest economy in the world, is dealing energy and environmental challenges caused by the growth of the Chinese economy.

Summer 2014 marked the launch of the DUT study abroad program, which takes advantage of a strong collaborative relationship between Penn State and DUT that started in 2009. DUT, founded in 1949 with a focus on engineering, is one of the top national universities in China. Since then DUT has developed programs in applied science, economic management, and humanities. Due to DUT's excellence in engineering, energy, and environment research, Penn State has established close ties with DUT through the development of the Penn State and DUT Joint Center for Energy Research (JCER), which facilitates collaborative research ventures in technology and energy sciences and promotes the exchange of faculty and students. The JCER offered student support for the study abroad program in 2014.

Zhen Lei, assistant professor of energy and environmental economics is the faculty advisor for the DUT study abroad program. The program is offered through the energy business and finance program in the John and Willie Leone Family Department of Energy and Mineral Engineering but is open to all majors. Students travel to DUT for six weeks in the summer and take two pre-determined academic courses. Students can also take a Chinese language course and tours of neighboring cities during the summer term.

Students from the 2014 group described the DUT study abroad experience as ?life changing? and ?unforgettable.? The students were able to experience Chinese culture in five cities, including Dalian, Dandong, Xi'an, Panjin, and Shanghai in addition to learning about Chinese history and economy.

For more information about the program, visit the [study abroad at DUT webpage](#). [1]

Tags:

[News Archive](#) [2]

[News Page](#) [3]

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[2] <http://www.energy.psu.edu/jcer/content/newsArchive>

[3] <http://www.energy.psu.edu/jcer/content/news>