

My CTY Summer Program Impressions

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I have just returned from my summer trip in the USA. I spent there a beautiful month full of studying, meeting new people and exploring new cultures and traditions. Let me share some of my experiences with you.

The course I was studying was called The Mathematics of Competitive Behavior and it was held at Princeton University, New Jersey. The main topic was game theory but we also learned something from economics, combinatorics and real-life applications of the game theory such as in politics or economics. We had classes every weekday, 3 hours in the morning and 2 hours after the lunch. There were also 2 hours of evening class but that was a time to work on our assignments and talk to teacher if we didn't understand the topic.

In the first few sessions, we were introduced to the basics of game theory, we learned how to find a solution to a game and how to analyze strategies of each player. However, it was not all about theory and memorizing. Our instructor involved us into variety of activities – we played games together or against each other. Each of these activities had a real sense, we could learn a lot of things while playing. We came with our own ideas and solutions and found the best strategies by ourselves. We also had discussions about the problems and games, what helped me better to understand and remember what we had learned.

In general, the course was very interesting and I enjoyed every single session. For example, we were taught about the methods of fair division and we could try it on a real cake (we had to divide the cake between 18 people so that everyone was satisfied with his piece). We learned about various types of auctions and then, we got plastic chips and could bid 'money' on toys which had been offered.

Besides studying, we had a lot of activities every day. We could choose sports (basketball, football, yoga...) or passive activities (painting, board games...). I have met a lot of new friends and had a lot of fun. Most of them were Americans but I met also people from China, Thailand or Malaysia. We had to speak English so I could practice my conversational skills what was very important for me.

Moreover, I appreciate the opportunity to spend three weeks at one of the most famous universities in the world. We had a tour of Princeton Campus which was very nice.

After the three weeks at Princeton University, we spent 4 beautiful days in New York. Although we were very busy, I enjoyed it a lot. Mr. Brodsky and Mr. Herman showed us the best of the city. For me, the most impressive was the 9/11 Memorial and the view from the top of the Rockefeller Center. We also had a pleasure to visit the Bohemian National Hall and meet our sponsors and previous CTY students.

Thank you for your generosity and for the opportunity to spend summer in the USA, to learn new things and meet new friends.