

Miriam Hernandez '26

Over the summer, I spent eight weeks on Princeton's Theological Seminary's campus taking part in the Princeton in Beijing language program. Although it normally takes place in Beijing, China, I still found myself immersed in the language and thoroughly enjoyed my time there. Those eight weeks were cut in half and were the equivalent of two semesters of undergraduate Chinese language courses. The small and intimate classroom size and attentive teachers both supported my growth in my Chinese language skills. In addition to class held Monday through Thursday from 8am to 12pm, we had individual meetings with one of our teachers for fifty minutes. Individual meetings were my favorite since I was able to ask any questions about the content and was able to more causally converse with my teachers about a variety of topics. Our Fridays' consisted of a weekly test which was on top of the daily quiz we had in class. With packed schedules, there was no way to avoid being immersed in Chinese. The most integral part of the program was the students' pledge to only speak in Chinese. My classmates and I were often corrected and provided better verbage to use which was a big help in better understanding how to communicate and express ourselves. With every chapter we covered, we learned more and more about Chinese peoples' daily lives, Chinese history, and Chinese education, etc. Given that our teachers were all from China, we were able to see what their perspectives were on these various topics. I thought it was incredibly valuable to my learning to hear my diverse teacher's stories. I will be continuing to take Chinese language courses this upcoming year, with the intention to minor in Chinese and study abroad in China. I want to be able to experience living in China and meeting more Chinese people to learn about their life and culture. As I continue to take Chinese here at Bowdoin, I want to apply what I have learned and continue to immerse myself in the Chinese language.