

# My Taiwan Study Abroad Experience – And Gilman Scholarship Information

My name is Thomas Otto, and I am a University of Minnesota graduate with degrees in Finance and Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. I am also a Chinese Flagship Program alumnus, having recently completed my Capstone year. As part of the program, I spent the past year at National Chengchi University (NCCU) in Taipei, Taiwan. This immersive experience allowed me to build on everything I learned in Flagship while using Mandarin in every aspect of my academic, professional, and personal life.

## Internship, Classes and Daily Life

During Capstone, I interned at the Institute of International Relations (IIR) at NCCU, contributing to research on U.S.–China–Taiwan relations. At the same time, I took advanced courses in Mandarin, including an economics course taught entirely in Mandarin. Beyond academics, the Flagship program organized cultural trips around Taiwan, and I also took part in the host-family program and the student-buddy program. Together, these experiences strengthened my confidence in applying language skills in professional, academic, and everyday settings.

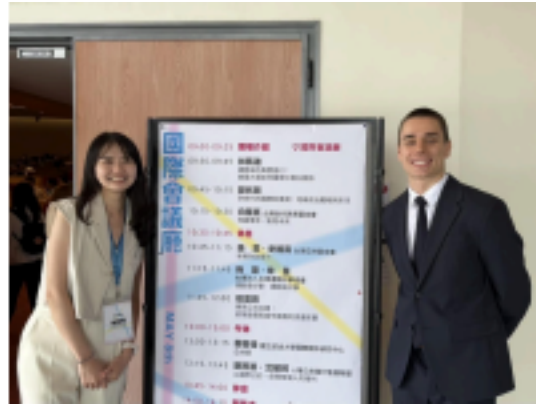
## The Gilman Scholarship

My Capstone year was made possible in part by the Gilman International Scholarship, a U.S. Department of State program that provides funding for undergraduates with financial need to study abroad. I am deeply grateful for this support, and I encourage other Flagship students to consider

For any questions, feel free to contact me at [otto0238@umn.edu](mailto:otto0238@umn.edu).

Gilman when planning for their own Capstone or other study abroad opportunities.

For more information about the Gilman Scholarship, visit: <https://www.gilmanscholarship.org/>.



*With my teacher following my final presentation*



*With my host brother and classmate*



*Fellow UMN students at banquet dinner*