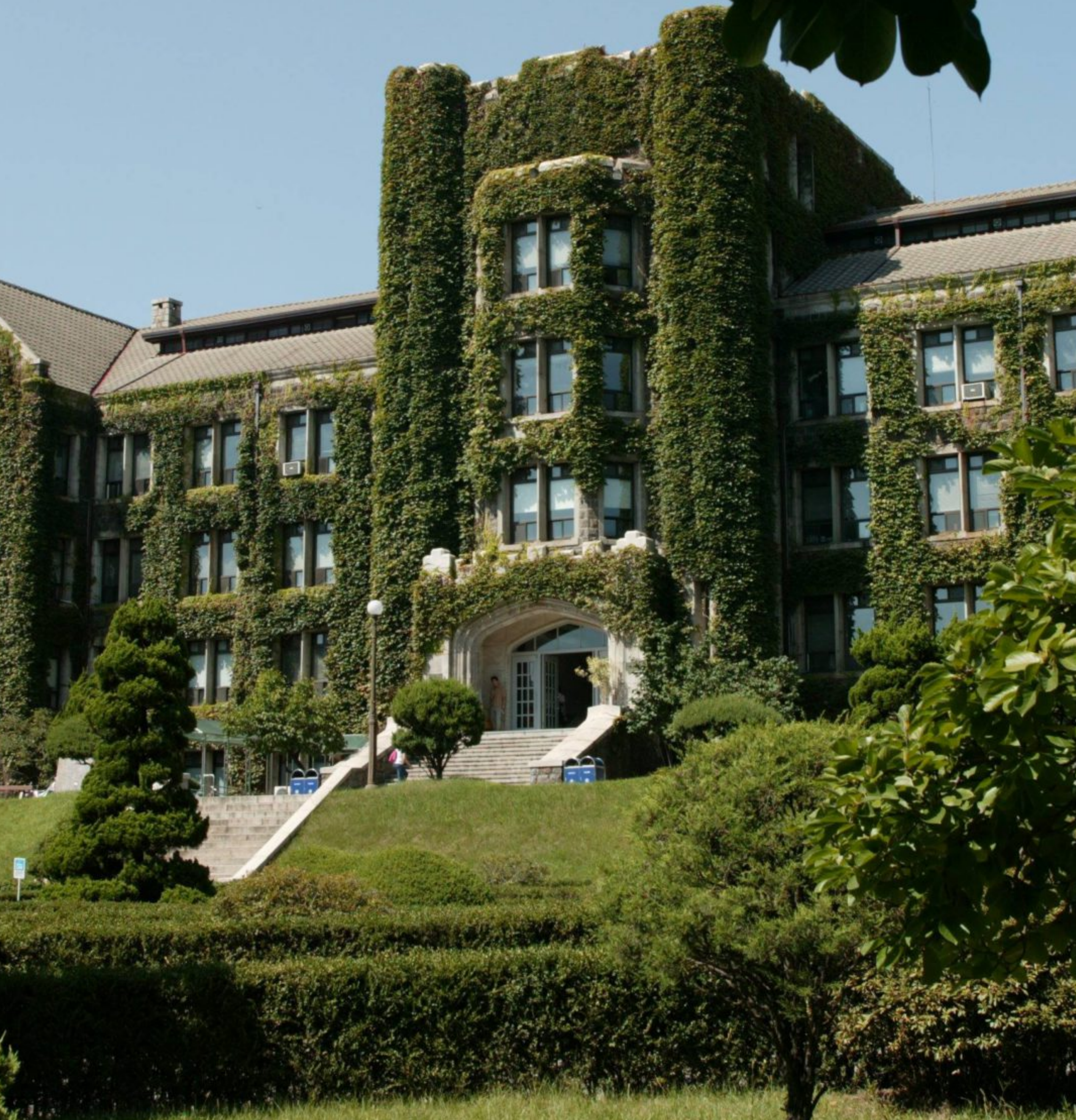


YONSEI

INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL



AN IN-DEPTH GUIDE TO YISS
AND STUDYING IN KOREA

BY MATTHEW NGUYEN, 2023

PHOTO COURTESY OF AKITA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Disclaimer:

This document is in no way affiliated with Yonsei University or Yonsei International Summer School (YISS), nor is it directly associated with Monash University.

This document is merely a reflection of my personal experiences as an international student and aims to guide those interested in attending this (or similar) programs in South Korea.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO YONSEI UNIVERSITY AND YISS

Yonsei University is deemed one of the three most prestigious universities in South Korea. It was founded in 1885 and is the oldest private university in Korea. Yonsei has 20 graduate schools, 23 colleges, and 161 subsidiary institutions.

Yonsei International Summer School began in 1985 and is a program for all higher education students, including current Yonsei students, current exchange students at Yonsei University, and most importantly students from all around the world.

To find out more about Yonsei University, visit here:

https://www.yonsei.ac.kr/en_sc/

To find out more about Yonsei International Summer School, visit here:

<https://summer.yonsei.ac.kr/home/>

Yonsei International Summer School (or YISS), is a 4-6 week program that runs during the Korean Summer (generally late June - early August). This year's (2023) dates ran from 27th June until 20th July for four-week courses, and until 3rd August for six-week courses.

Note that these dates do not accurately align with the Monash Semester dates, and therefore I missed 2 weeks of classes at Monash.



*Photo depicting Underwood Hall, Yonsei University Sinchon Campus.
Photo Courtesy of McDonnell International Scholars Academy.*

APPLYING TO YISS

Applying to YISS is a fairly straightforward process, as their website and portal are easy to navigate and they are generally quite responsive if you need to contact them for any reason.

The application period for 2023 was from January 2nd until May 11th, so you have plenty of time to consider your options! The registration tab on their website provides all the information you need, but I will summarise everything here and try to highlight the most important points.



You'll need a couple of key documents in order to apply for YISS; the most common being a passport. However, you'll also need other documents such as a certificate of enrolment from Monash University.

As a currently enrolled student at Monash, you'll be required to provide a transcript verifying your enrolment at Monash University, issued within the last 3 months of when you apply. Monash offers a Certificate of Enrolment (CoE), but you will have to pay. In 1st semester of 2023, it cost \$27, GST included.

You'll also be required to pay an application fee of 100,000KRW (about 116AUD at this point of writing, October 2023), which is non-refundable.

The tuition fee must be paid if you have been successful in your application. The cost varies depending on the number of courses you wish to enrol in, with the minimum being 1 course, and the maximum being 3.

Currently, 1 course costs 1,650,000KRW, 2 courses cost 3,050,000KRW, and 3 courses cost 3,650,000KRW.

Furthermore, if you have been successful in your application, Yonsei also requires students to verify that they have valid travel insurance during their time abroad. This will be another expense coming out of your own pocket that you should consider.

A variety of scholarships are available, which you can find out more about under the Registration tab on the YISS website. Notably, all students at universities that are a part of either APRU or AEARU receive a 100,000KRW scholarship. Monash University is a part of APRU.

COURSE ENROLLMENT

Most universities in South Korea complete their enrolments in a 'first-come, first-served' manner, and Yonsei University is no exception. It is vital to log on and select your courses as soon as the registration period opens!

It'll be important to know which courses you are interested in by having a look at their Courses page, under the Program tab. YISS offers a wide array of courses that students can enjoy, ranging from the humanities, business, science, and of course Korean Language.

Detailed course descriptions are available on their page, outlining what content will be covered, any prerequisites, resource requirements, evaluation, and class times.

Each course is worth 3 Yonsei Credits. I have not applied to see if these can translate into recognised credits at Monash, but seeing as semester-long and year-long study abroads are available through Monash at Yonsei, there is a chance. (Regular semester courses at Yonsei University are usually worth 3 credits).

Class hours are subject to change, but I have attached the 2023 class hours below:

6-Week Track (Jun 27, 2023 ~ Aug 3, 2023)

Period	Class Hours	Reference
Online Video Lectures(On-Demand)	Flexible	Pre-recorded video lectures are provided. Students can take each class at their own convenience.
1	09:00 ~ 10:40	
2	11:00 ~ 12:40	
3	13:20 ~ 15:00	
4	15:20 ~ 17:00	

4-Week Track (Jun 27, 2023 ~ Jul 20, 2023)

Period	Class Hours	Reference
Online Video Lectures(On-Demand)	Flexible	Pre-recorded video lectures are provided. Students can take each class at their own convenience.
1A	09:30 ~ 12:00	
1.5A	10:50 - 13:20	Entrepreneurship And Management (IEE3585-01) only
2A	13:30 ~ 16:00	

Classes only run from Monday - Thursday, giving students a 3-day weekend!

If you are enrolled in the 6-week program, you can also take courses from the 4-week program if you wish.

KOREAN LANGUAGE COURSES

If you are looking to complete a Korean Language Course, Yonsei offers ample courses to choose from. Most Korean Language classes require you to enrol in the 6-week program. The 4-week program only offers basic Korean classes, similar to Introductory 1 at Monash.

6 week Korean Classes are divided into Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced, with each level being further split into 3 different levels.

If you are unsure of your level, Yonsei runs a placement test that you can partake in a day before classes start, which they will then grade and allocate you to a more appropriate level if required.

From my experience, I had just completed Introductory 1 at Monash and therefore placed into Introductory 2 at Yonsei University.

At the time of writing this, I have almost completed Introductory 2 at Monash and found that the majority of content covered in Monash Introductory 2 has been more or less identical to what was covered in Yonsei Introductory 2.

Korean Language Classes utilise Yonsei's very own Korean textbook, which you will be required to purchase at their bookstore on campus. I believe this cost around 30AUD, but it is essential as it comes with a workbook which we used for homework.



Through talking with friends I made whilst at YISS, it seems that most professors are kind, and understand that the majority of students also want to explore Korea and have an enjoyable time.

As a result, the workload should be easily manageable regardless of the course you enrol into, but many courses do have an examination of sorts, so if you want to score well, you'll have to study a little more toward the end of the program. My class received homework after every class, but we got together afterward and usually completed it within an hour or so.

It's also important to highlight that 6-week courses likely clash with the beginning of Monash's semester 2, and you may not want to fall too far behind with Monash content. Weeks 5 and 6 at YISS coincided with Monash's weeks 1 and 2 for me.

Attendance at classes is mandatory at YISS, with the baseline policy being that if you miss more than 1/3 of your classes, you will automatically fail.

This policy can vary depending on your professor as well. For example, Korean Language classes require you to be present for at least 80% of classes, otherwise you cannot receive a grade for your final assessments.

DORMITORY APPLICATION

Yonsei has dormitories available on campus, but places are limited and again, distributed on a 'first-come, first-served' basis. As a result, it is pivotal to apply as soon as the application period opens if you want to stay on campus.

The two main dormitories available are the SK Global House and the International House. SK Global House offers both twin rooms and single rooms, with twin rooms being cheaper. International House only has twin rooms available, and is a female-only dormitory.

Dormitories have access to a shared kitchen and gym, as well as study rooms and common rooms on each floor (in SK Global House). There are also laundry facilities at a cheap cost, and 24-hour front desk availability if you have any questions.

As I stayed at SK Global House, I will be speaking from my experiences, which may not be entirely applicable to International House. Additionally, I met many students staying at a third dormitory, WooJungWon, but I have zero idea how to apply for it as it wasn't an option in the dormitory application form.

Below are the 2023 costs for each room type available:

Room Type	6 weeks (KRW)	4 weeks (KRW)
	Jun 25, 2023(from 2 PM, Check-in) Aug 4, 2023(by 11am, Check-out)	Jun 25, 2023(from 2 PM, Check-in) Jul 21, 2023(by 11am, Check-out)
Sk Global House - Double Room	1,008,000	655,200
SK Global House - Single Room	1,472,000	956,800
International House- Double Room (Female Only)	884,000	574,600

Please note that dormitories do not have any meal plan available.

The dormitories have quite a few rules, but as a result are quite safe and secure. Some rules included that no guests are permitted past the gates in the lobby and that you shouldn't allow other residents into your rooms. In SK Global, males and females were also split depending on floors.

Each SK Global room comes with storage for clothing, a large desk and shelves, a small fridge, and a private bathroom. The bathroom is a wet bathroom, so it is advised to buy bathroom slippers. Additionally, a mattress is provided (and a bedframe for that matter), but many students complain that it is quite uncomfortable, so a mattress topper may be a good investment if you prefer.

SK Global offered free bedsheets, quilts and pillows, but you may also want to have your own just in case. Also, the rooms don't have toilet paper or toiletries in general, so you may want to bring your own, or you can buy some from the emart just downstairs!

You can find pictures of the dorms under the Housing tab on their website. I would also recommend checking any vlogs on Youtube by past Yonsei students if you wish to see more about the dorms and dorm-life.

If you want to use the laundry service available, you'll need to buy a laundry card and top it up frequently (similar to a myki). One wash costs 900KRW, as does one dryer cycle. An iron is also available for free use.

SK Global also offers music rooms with access to a piano and guitars, which you can apply for at the front reception.

You will be required to comeback each night, though there is no curfew time. If you wish to stay out for the night, you will need to apply either at the front-desk or through the Yonsei Portal. Though this may be troublesome at times, it does allow you to stay elsewhere at night if you plan ahead!

As such, this does provide the option to travel elsewhere in Korea (or even outside of Korea) considering you have a 3-day weekend. I know many students headed to Busan or Jeju Island, with some even travelling to Japan.

If you are unsuccessful in your application for on-campus housing or do not wish to stay on campus, Yonsei also offers some off-campus alternatives, though they do not assist you with the process. You can find more information on the off-campus options on the Overview page under the Housing tab.

SK Global and International House are both located next to each other but are a little further from the 'main area' of Yonsei's Sinchon Campus. Walking to the main gates can take 15-20 minutes if you walk along the main road, or 10-15 minutes if you cut through the mountainous terrain behind the Severance Hospital. Keyword mountaineous. Both these dorms are located East of the main gates.

You can also catch the bus for two stops, as it is very convenient and frequently comes. The bus stop is just down the road and stops right after the main gate.

Fortunately, if you are taking a Korean Language Course, your class will be in the Korean Language Institute (KLI) building, located opposite both SK Global and International House!

WooJungWon is located North of the main gates and is about a 15-minute uphill battle from the main gates.

As aforementioned, SK Global has direct access to a small communal area containing some restaurants and an emart which is open 24/7 where you can buy essentials, snacks and drinks. Though International House is right next to SK Global, they also have their own emart.

There is also a CU mart down the road, and a cafe, bakery and pharmacy around the corner. Overall, the dorms are located very conveniently, and you have access to public transport nearby to get to other places.

From the dorms, the closest metro station is either Ewha Women's University Station or Sinchon Station, both being about a half-hour walk or 20 minutes by bus.

EXTRACURRICULARS

As a part of YISS, you have the opportunity to attend a variety of events that they host specifically for YISS students.

There are campus tours available, as well as a welcome and graduation ceremony. The welcome ceremony provides you with a hardcopy information booklet about YISS, services you can use at Yonsei University, as well as a detailed campus map that can be especially useful when navigating their large and beautiful campus.



You can view all the available extracurricular activities available on the Extracurricular Activities page under the Program tab, but note that many events are again 'first-come, first-served', and that there may be an application fee depending on what activity you sign up for.

In 2023, the largest activities only had 120 places, whilst over 2000 students enrolled in YISS this year.

Some popular activities included a Seoul City Tour, Taekwondo classes, and a dance class at 1MILLION dance studio.

Many of these activities can be done yourself, so if you aren't able to get a place, don't worry too much. In fact, it may even be cheaper to do some of these alone!

WHY YONSEI?

Yonsei has a whole page called Yonsei Advantages under the Introduction tab on the YISS website, and I'll highlight key reasons that make YISS and Yonsei University stand out.

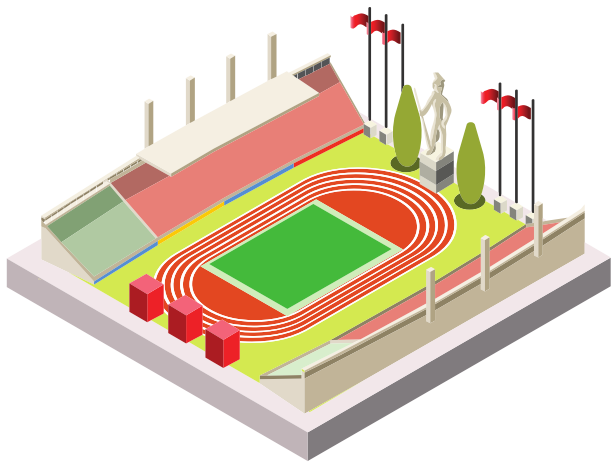


#1. LOCATION



Yonsei's main campus is the Sinchon campus. It's located right opposite the main street, filled with small cafes, restaurants, arcades, karaoke rooms, and more. Furthermore, it's a 10-minute walk from the main gate to Sinchon station, and the trendy location of Hongdae is only one stop away.

#2. FACILITIES



Yonsei has many facilities available for students, such as a gymnasium, 24/7 study center, cafes and cafeteria on campus, as well as counseling services and a global lounge for international students. You can also visit their museum and watch student plays if available during your time at YISS.

#3. ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE



Yonsei University is one of the most prestigious universities in South Korea, and for good reason. As a private research university, they offer a strong, academically renowned curriculum for all their courses, passionate teaching staff, and many notable alumni, such as Bong Joon-Ho, famous for directing the movie 'Parasite', Exo's Luhan, and my favourite idol J.Y. Park.

#4. GLOBAL REPUTATION



Yonsei holds a highly regarded global reputation, with a strong international student body. They have global connections with other institutions and offer visiting students cultural experiences and support services. Their facilities and teaching staff are dedicated and kind, allowing students to gain invaluable knowledge during their time there.

ALTERNATIVES

YISS isn't the only program Yonsei offers. They also offer a Winter Abroad at Yonsei (WAY), which you can find about here: <https://winter.yonsei.ac.kr/main/Default.asp?mid=m00>

This program runs from late December to late January, which may be a better option to avoid clashes with Monash semester dates.

Other universities also offer summer programs for international students. Amongst the most famous universities in South Korea, Seoul National University offers an International Summer Program (ISP), and Korea University offers both an International Summer Campus (ISC) and an International Winter Campus (IWC).

Find out more using these links:



Seoul National University

International Summer Program: <https://summer.snu.ac.kr>



Korea University

International Summer Campus:

<https://summer.korea.ac.kr/all/src/main/main.php>

International Winter Campus:

<https://winter2.korea.ac.kr/winter/index.do>



Yonsei University

Winter Abroad at Yonsei:

<https://winter.yonsei.ac.kr/main/Default.asp?mid=m00>

These three universities make up the 'SKY' universities, or the three most prestigious universities in South Korea.

STUDYING IN KOREA

This section is where I'll detail my general experience studying abroad in Korea, and any tips for general travelling or studying that I have thought of if you're interested.



Seoul is a bustling city, home to nearly 10 million people, so being able to navigate around both Seoul and other cities is essential. Google Maps doesn't work very well in Korea, so I would recommend downloading Naver Maps. It functions similarly to Google Maps, showing you how to get around, when public transport arrives, alternative routes, etc. Additionally, it displays business opening hours and contact information.

Most businesses and people use KakaoTalk, an application similar to LINE or WhatsApp, if you've used them before. Having a Korean phone number unlocks a bunch of features on the app, and even makes some businesses discoverable (I wasn't able to make a booking through messaging until I set my verification number to my Korean number). Therefore I'd also recommend getting an e-sim that comes with a Korean number able to be used for verification purposes.

Papago is a must-have app as well. It's a translation app created by Naver, a Korean Conglomerate, and its translations are far superior to that of Google Translate.

Kakao T and UT are taxi apps (UT being the Korean version of the Uber app). Taxis are extremely convenient to use, and fairly affordable as well. You'll see plenty of taxis on the road, but using apps can still be helpful.



Finally, I'd highly recommend travelling around Korea (using KTX) and getting to know more about their culture. Visiting smaller cities unlike Seoul or Busan can help you immerse yourself further, as there may not even be English on signs or menus!

Hopefully this guide has provided some useful information and inspired a couple of you to study in Korea (or abroad in general). Programs like YISS are good opportunities to experience studying abroad, especially if you are concerned about committing to a semester or year-long exchange.

I'd highly recommend checking out Yonsei University's [LinkedIn](#) to see photos of their campus, and their [Global Instagram](#) to see what events and student culture they have.

Thank you to everyone who reads this!

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