

# NCC Monthly Report (January, 2019)

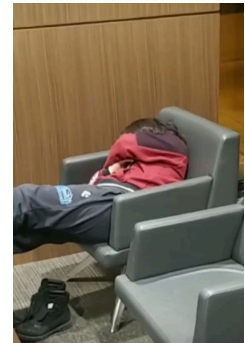
Chihiro Kitamura

## New Year in the US

It was the first time in my life to experience New Year's Day in foreign country. We gathered at our friend's house and had a little countdown party on the day. Compared to Japan, I thought the New Year's Day here is not a big event that much, while Christmas is a very significant event for family. Therefore, I was surprised that my friend who is in the varsity basketball team said that they would have a practice from January 1<sup>st</sup>.

## Winter Term

Winter term started from January 2<sup>nd</sup> this year and I am taking English, German, TESOL and self-defense classes. Compared to the last term, it became much easier for me to join the class, which means that I could be able to raise my hand to share my ideas and discuss more with American students. Therefore, I am sure that my English skills, specially listening and speaking are improving than before. As always, we have a lot of homework, so we often study until midnight and sometimes felt asleep while studying like the picture that my friend posted on her Instagram. One of the reasons why I like NCC is definitely because there are many spaces on campus where students can study until midnight. Even



..... we have Starbucks on campus to get coffee for our study friend. That is why even though we are sometimes overwhelmed by too much stuff to do for class, we can survive and enjoy learning with friends who also work hard together. Of course, on the weekend, we enjoy a lot not studying but hanging out with friends. The picture was taken when international club when to skating.

## Challenge of Living in Chicago



This winter, we experienced incredibly cold weather here. All the classes were canceled due to the bad weather and students got alert from the department of campus safety that we should not go outside as much as possible. However, it was impossible because we needed to go outside to go to the cafeteria and get foods. I never forget how my body hurt because of the wind though I had more than four layers including thick enough jacket. It was very serious, but actually it was one of my funny experiences here.

## NCC Monthly Report (February, 2019)

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### Winter Term

As always, classes were hard and we had a lot of homework. Under the situation, basketball games were my motivation. My professor of TESOL class always says that motivation goes up, learning goes up. I strongly believe her because literally my motivation went up thanks to basketball and learning went up. I studied very hard not to miss their games that happened two times in a week. Also, I would like share how self-defense class was fun and meaningful. I



decided to take the class just because my friend invited me to take it together. However, the class was not only fun to learn but also very practical for women and also for teachers to protect ourselves. In class, we learned how to defense and those ways were very similar to the wrestling.

I didn't know why but my teacher really liked me and my friend's performance and he finally scouted us to join the varsity women's wrestling team. In addition, in this term of TESOL course, we had class observations and teaching practicums at English Language Institution of NCC. It was great experience for us to learn how to teach English learners who are adults and studying English for entering the degree seeking program at college level. I'm so thankful that I have precious chance like this and keep improving my career as a student teacher.



### New Friends Best Friend

The big change of this term was that the community became wider and I got so many new friends. Since NCC is a small college, friend's friend will be my friend with no reason. Now, I know so many Japanese major people, theatre major people, German major people, and some athletes. Even if some of them are just "Hi!" friends, I am happy to have so much connection no matter the age is and the major



is, which is a different from Japanese university community I think. The biggest encounter was definitely Ariana, one of my best friends now. Since we got to know each other because she was my friend's friend, we study together, eat together and even workout together. Also, I every time learn a lot of words, cultural differences, and how to be a social butterfly like her through hanging out with her. I cannot wait welcoming my friends to come to Japan in near future.

## NCC Monthly Report (March, 2019)

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### The End of Winter Term

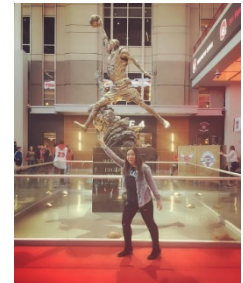
The first few weeks of March were very busy weeks for NCC students. As I talked in previous report, in the week 10 and the following week for finals, most of students need to study hard for their final grades. I had German final test, final paper for English class and final test for self-defense class. We all studied until midnight every day together and helped each other a lot. Thanks to my friends and of course my efforts, I could get As for my grades and be on the Dean's list again. Remembering the classes I took in winter term, I am thankful all my classmates who got to know each other through the classes and give me great experience. Especially, by taking German class, I could communicate more with American students compared to other classes.



### Spring Break



We had 10 days spring break between the winter term and the spring term. I decided to stay on campus over the break and hang out with my friends. The schedule on normal days were really simple. My friends and I usually studied, did some workout and basketball, cooked dinner, and watched movies. I know I got fat since I came here...so over the break I almost every day went to the gym and played basketball. I hope nobody will say that I get fat when I come back to Japan. Also, we had Chicago trip one day. It was so much fun!



### The Beginning Spring Term

For spring term, I am taking education, TESOL and the field experience, and interpersonal communication classes. Compared to last two terms, this term is very busy because of a lot of homework especially readings. Also, class contents became more difficult and tough to understand. However, I am really enjoying those classes because the classes are so interesting and the professors are entertaining. I am sure that I will be crying two weeks later from now because of midterm exams but I am also sure at the end of the term that I will have something great that I can experience only here. Again, learning style in American college is hugely different from Japanese universities. Even though it is so challenging and tough, I really like this environment now.