

UVU Students Visit Kyrgyz Republic

UVU students experience Central Asia

Kyrgyz Republic is one of the countries that gains independence when the USSR fall away. The country's location is in the middle of Central Asia, near China, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan. With Russia being the biggest influence, so close location put Kyrgyzstan reliable on the resources from Russia. Main language in the country that is spoken by citizens is Russian, however the official language being Kyrgyz. During our visit to the Kyrgyz Republic we were able to visit places such as: Supreme Court, National News Agency, US Embassy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Academy of climate, museums, and many restaurants. The overall experience was amazing.



UVU students meet with Dr. Bolot Moldobekov, co-director of the Central Asian Institute of Applied Geosciences,

Never in my life I knew that country as Kyrgyzstan existed and few weeks later, I was able to witness it for myself. The people of Kyrgyzstan are beyond generous and welcoming. Every night we were treated as royalty. We had dinners schedules for us, and a personal transportation given to us for every place we visited. We were able to have lunches with a Deputy Chair of the Supreme Court who not only invited us to have a lunch with her after our meeting where she hosted us at the Court but remembered to give us her contact info for when we are in town next time and if we needed anything to reach out.



A Group photo near the Kyrgyz traditional dwellings - yurts

As students, we were able to have lectures on the topics that mattered to us and would lead us and guide us through the real-world experiences. We were able to ask crucial questions for the country such as the legal system and the way it works. The influence with Russia and

their input in the country's economy. The way the climate change works and how the resources are shared between the neighboring countries. Who is the biggest threat? Corruption in the country and the prevention levels. If there is enough awareness between the public and the media about the key issues within the country? Simply the questions that a political science student would wonder about a country that is being visited. There is so much to say about Kyrgyz Republic. But at most the country is trying to rise against the circumstances they were put in by changing their government system as well as implementing best practices from the influences around them. For example, the Kyrgyz Republic is the first country in Central Asia that implemented electronic voting and that is something they are very proud at.



Enjoying traditional food in a local restaurant



Group photo during visit at Osh market

Overall, my experience was positive, and I was able to learn so much. The country is growing and changing and there is a lot to learn from the people of the Kyrgyz Republic. With the United States help they are focusing their efforts on bringing better education into the county as well as staying away from Russian influence in their home. By doing so they partnered with the United States to get more funding to improve reading levels in grades 1-4 as well as opening stores that advertise Kyrgyz books that are being translated from Russian language to their native language. The country is growing and making some big changes and I was glad to have the opportunity through UVU study abroad trip to learn about it.

Victoria Bindrup – Utah Valley University student