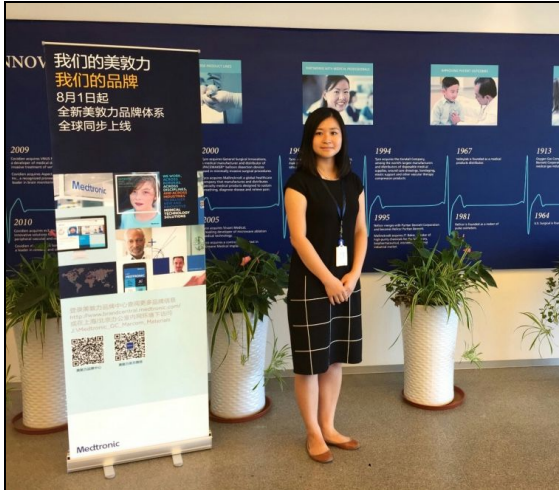


IIC student leads cross-cultural competency project in China

By Kaley Anderson, IIC graduate student



A professional internship or thesis is a capstone requirement for students in the International and Intercultural Communication (IIC) graduate program at DU. Students who choose the internship option often use the opportunity to gain experience in an international arena.

IIC student Joy Pan at Medtronic-Covidien

Joy Pan, second-year IIC student, completed an internship in Shanghai during summer 2015 and talked about her experience. Joy is originally from Quzhou in the Zhejiang Province of China. She noted how she was able to use the skills and concepts that she learned in the IIC program in her work that focused on cross-cultural competency and cross-functional alignment.

Q: Where did you do your internship?

Joy Pan: I interned with [Medtronic-Covidien](#) in southern Shanghai for 10 weeks this past summer. Medtronic-Covidien is a medical devices research and development center with approximately 250 medical supplier engineers and staff. I was responsible for a needs assessment project that aimed to increase employees' cross-cultural competency and cross-functional alignment.

Q: What were your job responsibilities?

JP: I worked independently to lay out plans, propose timelines, conduct interviews with managers, design and distribute online questionnaires, analyze interview and questionnaire results and present the results and my recommendations to the extended leadership team.

What I enjoyed most were my 28 interview sessions with directors, managers, senior engineers and staff within the Shanghai office and in other countries. My interviews shed light on how different cultural backgrounds can have a great impact on views towards collaboration, workplace technology and culture and communication in general.

Q: What did you learn during your internship?

JP: During the second phase of needs assessment, which was an online survey, I was challenged in phrasing questions in both Chinese and English so that they would make

the most sense to speakers of each language. Throughout this process I realized how much of a difference languages make and the power that translators have. I also was able to use and improve presentation and negotiation skills during the final presentation to the leadership group, and I learned about a decision-making group's efforts in leveraging resources for their employees and promoting corporate culture.

Q: How does your internship relate to your studies and future career goals?

JP: My focus in IIC is international education and intercultural training, so this internship was closely tied to my personal interests and career goals. It was really exciting to work in a multicultural environment and interact with colleagues from various cultures. This internship also gave me the opportunity to explore the complexity of a multinational cooperation and the significance of cross-cultural competency and cross-functional communication.