

Me: So this is an interview for the Journalism assignment. How long have you been stayed in UIUC and champion around here?

Huang: So, I graduated in 2015, and I came back this May to work in Champion area. So I can say that I have been here for 5 years

Me: So you have been here for a really long time. You know, there are a lot of Chinese students in Champion, but actually, when some older students told the younger students like that , although you have been in the U.S, after 4 years or 3 years you will finally find that, you still, uh... Most of your friends are still the Chinese, so it is really hard for you to get involved with native speakers group. So how do you think about this problem.

Huang: So you are talking about the problem of blending-in, right?

Me: Yeah

Huang: So, hmm, I have to say, hmm...I'm more experienced in U.S than you probably, because I came to the United States for High School back in 2008. But in a private high school, the community is very diverse, so you have like around 4 hundred people, uh, 4 hundred students and one hundred faculties. You get the chance to get to know different varieties cultures, and , have interactions with American students, daily interactions with American students. Well, in university, you have a huge amount of populations of these students, which you have the options to choose which you want to interact each days. That's mainly the reason why we want to talk with people with the same background culture. So, you see, that we have like communities, student organizations, titles like Taiwanese Students Associations, Chinese Students and scholar Association, like that. Most of them are kind of comfort zone to prevent us from blending in. That might be the reason why we tend to group together, like people from the same culture tend to group together. Well, hm, the thing is, I want to talk about a very controversial topic, that people talk about discriminate, or like, tag people, you know what I mean, by tagging people. So the thing is, think about American students always think that people from Asia are similar, they have the same culture background, but actually we are not. We are different. So people from mainland China are different from people from Taiwan. American ?? students from China. That's why we give ourselves tags when we diverse ourselves. So that's the main issue I think in UIUC. UIUC has a huge international students base population, before we enter the real American society, we tag ourselves that we are from Mainland China, we are born Chinese, we are different other people. That's the issue we want to solve, but that is the issue I don't think is solvable in foreseeable future. So, you got any questions?

Me: Yeah, you talk about a very interesting topic about the tags, discrimination.....because of these tags, students may feel comfortable with these kind of tags, they will adjust...But that could not help them to get involved in the culture here.

Huang: Ok, you are being very enthusiastic about these blending in. But...Hu, I want to say it's a good thing, definitely a good thing, it's good thing to blending in. But, uh, I don't want to be like discouraged. You will never blend in American Society. I'm not sure which grade you are in, freshman? Sophomore?

Me: Sophomore, but I am a transfer student, so just like a freshman.

Huang: That's just freshman. Let's talk about a scenario, when an American student wants to have conversation with you, what kind of situation will be when American students approach you, Hey, do you know this? do you know that? Can you imagine a scenario how this suggestion will be like...

Me: Maybe just like we talk about some normal things like the food, the courses we take, that would be a very smoothly conversation, but when we talk about something like, the movies, the pop stars, and or some daily things, I can't understand them, and the conversation may...

Huang; Shift

Me: Yes.

Huang: So, I have major conflict with American students when it comes to culture share. They tend to ask very controversial topic like China's relationship with Tibet, China's relationship with Taiwan, Conflict going on in Hong kong, things like this, very conflict topics about we to share. But I have to say that, could you imagine that you are going to the zoo, you're looking at

animals, you are interested in their living behavior, but you don't want to know or like be one of them. So this is discouraging, but I have to say that how it is in most of time in the past 9 years I have stayed in America. I want to correct that I do have America friends, they have different priority they like when they want to communicate with me with me. They want to know the things they are interested in. For new students, like you, just came to the states, you want to know what's popular in America, what does normal American citizens live like, what will they do everyday, they are not gonna to share with you. Or it is not like an interesting topic they would like to share about. So that's why you were see this difficulties to blend in, especially in college in university in a huge population university like this. There were culture things you will never understand when an American students grow up, they go through high school, they probably NH drinking ,like drugs, permissions on Marijuana, these kind of topics, that's the topics the culture influence them, that's the young fresh blood culture influence them, you will never know about them, because you are??/ in the university when they are fully mature influenced, so you will never share about that part of >??, So that's why I said it's hard for you to blind in. But I have to say, now let's change the topic to a little bit encouraged. We are all part of the society, America only have 2 hundred years history, people are all from everywhere, you can now consider yourself like a new immigrants, or some sort of immigrants, bring your own culture to America, with your own understanding of your culture to America society. So we have to create our own society. I want to share what our culture is to American students, they allow us to do that, that is the greatest thing about America. But we don't want their sympathy to us, we don't want to change us just like America. That's not a good way, that's not the reason we want to stay in the states, get influence, get fully influenced, change who you are, where you come from. Yeah, that's...

Me: Yeah, I see. But you know, someone may say that when we come to a new culture, we shall try to understand it, not be influenced to be like them but at least mix it the cultures,. You know, because , hm,, I can understand why you say that we have our own culture and we should hold who we are, but for a society, it's not a stable structure for society with people thinking things like these because people stay at their own group, they would think like I should hold my own ideology, my own opinions, but when we see around the society, if everyone thinks like this, maybe the different groups can't reach the common sense.

Huang: So, So like, can you imagine like right now you are freshman in college, you think you are not part of the culture group, you want fully blend in. Let's do that. Could you picture a scenario when you are fully blend in. You are like senior in college. You went to some part time job, you went through some internship in Journalism, you are totally fluent in English. You can share you opinion to your colleagues and friends. What kind of person are you, you think you are fully blend in. What are your capable of doing at that moment.

Me: I must say I'm a multi-culture person at that time

Huang: Do you think....What's your diversity of you and the friends you talk with?

Me: Since I am a multi-culture person, I can reach out to different group, different people. I can understand the difference between the culture and I can understand what they think.

So..Maybe I will have a bigger picture, bigger social circle...

Huang: That's very ideal, but I totally agree what you want to do. But...

Me: It's hard?

Huang: It's not hard, it's just making yourself not very comfortable. I have to say, I have already got a job, most of my colleague are Americans. I must introduce more about myself. My job is technic sale. Technic sale is a very special career , you will use English to talk with your clients, and provide your technic expertise to them. But, hm... most of my colleagues are American, I'm the only Asian in my?? which makes me very special. But still I can't fully blend in, like in the working circle, in working daily bases. You...It's normal, you have normal conversation with your colleagues, but you cannot blend in after work life. So the American have beer after work. I can do that, but that's not part of me. That's not the things I want to do. They talk about Civil War issues going on in Virginia, I have the opinion in that. I just don't want to share it, to make a voice of myself. And i don't feel like I have a standing point to make that voice. So that's why I don't think I can fully socially blend in to their group. Even though I'm one of their colleagues.

We work perfectly in their daily work, but not as very close friends. So that's the situation you are gonna face when you are graduated from the university and get to work, get in to jobs. So it is still a problem, people still tend to group together, in their same culture group.