



Brandeis University

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Dear International Student,

I am writing to you at the request of the instructors in the English language program to encourage you to devote your full attention to improving your English language skills this year. About 20 Chinese graduate students have received a Ph. D. degree in my laboratory over the past 25 years. Their success after they left Brandeis, whether they returned to China (7 of them) or stayed in the US depended very heavily on their ability to communicate in English both orally and in writing. English is now both the universal language of science and the universal second language. Your career opportunities will be much greater if you are fluent in English.

It is not easy to improve your language skills, but it gets harder with age, so I hope you will concentrate on it now. The effort will make your future years more productive even if you plan on returning home after graduating from Brandeis. One of my former graduate students is now a Principal Investigator at the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Guangzhou. He recently sent me a draft of a paper that needed major editing for English before it could be submitted to a journal. You have the opportunity to master English at the age of 18, which is much easier than for a graduate student or postdoctoral fellow who is 24-28. If you concentrate on it now, your four years at Brandeis will be both more productive and more enjoyable.

Best wishes,

Barry B. Snider
Chair, Department of Chemistry