

**Emily Falica,
B.A. Asian Religions and Cultures,
minoring in Professional Writing and
Political Science, 2020**

By Caitlyn Woitena

**English as a Second Language Teacher in
South Korea**

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Emily Falica graduated from Western Kentucky University in May of 2020 with a bachelor’s degree in Asian Religions and Cultures, and minors in Professional Writing and Political Science. Falica, originally from Scottsville, Ky., now lives in South Korea where she teaches English as a Second Language.

Falica had the privilege of studying abroad multiple times throughout her time at WKU. As a freshman she attended a faculty led trip to Morocco. From then on, she was hooked. Following her trip to Morocco, Falica traveled to South Korea her sophomore and junior year. Then to close out her senior year Falica participated in a research program in Costa Rica hosted by CIEE. Falica explains, “Studying abroad taught me so many things. The most important thing I learned was that hands-on experience is the best learning method. It really inspired me to want to continue my education in culture and religion in other places to broaden my worldview.” These experiences are what really showed her she wanted to pursue a career outside of the United States.

Falica describes her current job as “really intense.” She teaches 7-9 classes a day, so the workload is quite heavy. Despite the rigorous work schedule, Falica affirms, “I love my students and coworkers so much. It’s worth the workload in exchange for all the happy moments.”

Falica emphasizes the importance of her Professional Writing minor in her current job. “It’s really helping me communicate with my coworkers and students. In most of my professional writing classes we put a large focus on audience and style guides. Being aware of my audience at work helps me create a mental style guide for optimal communication. Being aware of different audiences has been key to making sure I’m communicating well with everyone in my

workplace.” Falica also notes, “The entire Professional Writing program turned me into a businesswoman before I graduated, meaning the writing skills and portfolios put me way ahead of my competition. I’ve been working with people on the other side of the world so my written communication skills and how I look on paper decided if I got the job or not. I’m not sure I would have landed an interview without the academic experiences I gained in Professional Writing.”

Falica advises all those planning to work abroad to, “make sure you have mentors and connections if you’re moving abroad for work! There is a lot of paperwork, government phone calls, and complications. Find someone who has done it before and ask for help.” Another piece of wisdom Falica provides is to be flexible with scheduling. “Flexibility is key when moving abroad or working in education. You need to be ready to visit immigration offices one day and then grade extra workbooks the next. I’m having the time of my life working here and experiencing new things. But I need to be flexible to maximize my experience.” Falica also encourages students who wish to work abroad to learn as much as they can about the country they would like to work. “Working abroad is also about research and resources. Finding out the norms for the place you want to work will be really important for landing a job and also deciding if that is the right place for you. Every bit of research helps down to resume and interview expectations. Focus on research and you’ll find your dream job!” she said.

Falica’s career aspirations have always been to be a professor for Asian studies. She intends to complete graduate school in South Korea. For now, she is enjoying an exciting place filled with plenty of new and exciting people.