

What is the Value of the ZSEIFS Experience?

[Music plays]

JEFFREY SAMUELS, Ph.D. *Philosophy and Religion*: "I was encouraged to apply and I applied but there was some skepticism you know about does this really work and you know are the goals really fulfilled and how this works. And I became a convert when I was there, and so while I was there I was talking to Addie and Tim Rich about the possibility of maybe even doing one of these just because it was such an enriching experience in. I mean I think for everyone we got along smashingly well."

TIMOTHY RICH, Ph.D., *Political Science*, 2016 ZSEIFS South Korea Faculty Leader: "One of the strengths of ZSEIFS is that it encourages not only our faculty to go abroad and meet with scholars, centers related to their own interest, but see the interdisciplinary nature, let me backtrack- to see what's potential, the possibilities at WKU. I didn't realize that so-and-so was interested in this thing that's similar to what I do because I stay in my building all the time. I didn't know that you did this because this wasn't your main source of research, this was your secondary source or your secondary interest or your third interest or your new interest. So, I think there's a lot of things that's not just oh I find opportunities in that country, I find opportunities for funding, for hosting, but oh I didn't know there were five faculty here that had a roughly similar interest and now we can collaborate and I didn't even know this was a possibility before."

MICHAEL ANN WILLIAMS, Ph.D., *Folk Studies and Anthropology*: "I think it's so energizing and I think that's an important part of it too, that just you know we get stuck in these kind of ruts of the work we do and I think this sort of energy that comes out of participating in that kind of project is great. And I said, I think as an administrator although often we don't have enough time for our own research that there's lots of ways that we can help make things happen by being part of it as well."

JEFFREY SAMUELS: "Really learning about other programs and other colleges at the University and what faculty are doing here, and you know possible bridges that we could create because of that. So that was a positive outcome that I had no idea what would have existed. I, you know, and even study abroad and meeting with the students. Yeah I had that as a goal, but it far exceeded my expectations."

MICHAEL ANN WILLIAMS: "I think it became really clear just at the very beginning even when we first started meeting how different the angles were that people were coming from. I was so used to sort of talking to other folklorist anthropologists about culture and to hear people who were really coming at it from education or religion or psychology, just sort of I think we're so used to talking within our own discipline and sort of having a group of people all sort of approach the same culture from very different disciplinary orientations."

KIMBERLEE EVERSON, Ph.D., *Educational Admin, Leadership, & Research*: "Well before ZSEIFS I didn't really know what WKU did in terms of international experiences. I didn't know what it was the goals were or what it was we were trying to achieve. Anything like that, I didn't understand anything about what a partner university was I didn't know what that meant. I didn't know what these different kind of agreements were about. I didn't understand anything about exchanges or study abroads and so forth. So that was very useful to me."

JEFFREY SAMUELS: "The ZSEIFS program really helped me get a sense of study abroad. I've never led a study abroad before and I really got to see what goes into that, both from an administrative side as well

as from a student side, so I think that in the future it will, again, help me not just direct students to particular universities but also give students a taste of what studying abroad might feel like because I never studied abroad when I was a student so it would really help me kind of explain that to them."

HELEN STERK, Ph.D., *Communication*: "And I came to WKU and I knew internationalization was a major focus and I have to say that my experience with ZSEIFS gave me a very strong sense about how seriously it is treated here at WKU. It is not just sending somebody for a very short period to another place. The breadth of the semester-long programs became clearer to me, the possibilities for independent living for our students in other countries became clearer to me and I think given that we're a regional university and so many of our students haven't travelled much beyond their home county, and so know that there is a supportive context that will indeed enable them to be successful around them because of our international studies program you know it's made me really excited."

[Music plays]