

Hungi's favorite Asian, NaHae's Awesome Chapel Speech

Coming here from the other side of the world, I have experienced several cultural differences. Because I grew up in a country where most people were very conservative, for a while I had difficulties adjusting to this new liberal culture. Of course there was and is still a language barrier, different food styles and school systems, but today I want to briefly talk about one particular difference, which is the relationship between faculty and students. In Korea, all students from the time of Kindergarten take ethics classes, in which they are taught to strictly respect -- that is to behave and speak properly to -- our teachers. For instance, if we meet teachers on the hall way, we have to bow at 45 degrees as we say hello to them. At my middle school, some of the more strict teachers even carry protractors with them and check our bowing angles. They would then say "Go!" and we would bow at 45 degrees before walking away. In classes, we usually have to listen to what the teachers say rather than express our own ideas. Therefore, for me at least, teachers were very scary figures whom I was afraid to approach. Then I came to Westover to study abroad, and my views of teachers changed because of the following incident, which occurred during my freshman year. As usual I was walking through the Red hall to go up to my room, and I saw a senior giving a hi-five to the teacher

saying, "Yo man, what's going on, Hungi?" and Mr. Hungerford went, "Nothing much! What's up with yo?" I was very shocked. I stood there for 2 minutes with my mouth opened thinking 'OMG Did she just call teacher's nickname? '. Though at first it was a total shock for me, as I had more encounters with teachers, my thoughts of them started to change. I realized that I could more easily approach my teachers here and even tell them my problems, whereas in Korea I could never joke or tell my thoughts or feelings to a teacher since I was afraid that I would disrespect them. However Korea taught me a kind of respect that I am grateful for. I learned to respect the law and therefore learned to respect others, and I learned especially how to respect my elders. Still, there are faculty here with whom I became quite close, and I like joking with some of my teachers like my advisor Laura V, my dorm parents and lastly, Mr.Hungerford.