



最近有不少读者来信，希望Karen能介绍下美国的校园生活。应“蜂蜜”们的要求，本期Karen将与大家分享在美国的学习经历。究竟美国的课堂与中国有什么不同呢？下面我们一起来看看吧！

## American Classroom

撰稿: Karen

Recently when chatting with friends and families from China, I'm often asked about my student life in America. I find it's beyond my belief how casual American students and professors are. You can sit Indian style with your legs tucked close to your body or you can sit with one foot propped<sup>[架; 支撑]</sup> on the chair.

Some professors don't mind if their students call them by their first names. I mean, in China we often call our teachers by their family names followed by their academic titles *all the time*.

For instance, at first I felt awkward<sup>[尴尬的, 不合适的]</sup> calling my professors Sheryl or Marc as if we were long-time buddies. But after hearing other classmates using the same addresses<sup>[称呼]</sup>, and since confirming with my professors, I am relieved to address them casually.

I still remember our professor asking us to move the chairs in a circle on my first day to class in America. It was an undergraduate writing class. Our class had about twelve to fourteen students. It wasn't a big class at all compared to the Chinese classes in universities which usually consist of twice or more students. Since there weren't any desks for students in the classroom, each chair had an extended writing pad—we could sit the way the professor

wanted, which I thought facilitated the classroom interactions. It felt fresh and respectful to make eye contact with everyone in class. We became the center of the class instead of our professor, who in China would normally keep lecturing at the podium<sup>[讲台]</sup>.

What amazes me most in an American classroom is that students can bring food if there is no special forbidden notice. I'm not a snack person. Plus, I'm so well trained in China about no food being allowed in class. I was at first shocked when I saw my classmates munching<sup>[津津有味地嚼]</sup>

chocolate bars or potato chips during class. How can they feel so at home while having classes? And the instructors didn't feel bothered by their students' eating. In fact, usually in the last class of the semester we are encouraged to celebrate the end of the semester with our snacks. We bring food to the classroom and share with one another. In the meantime, we would read aloud our signature writings. It's so much fun.

The entire classroom experience in America is like a casual conversation with people who share the same interest—relaxing yet rewarding. That is probably why I often feel my three-hour graduate class passes quickly and unnoticeably. ☺

